**Bilingual Ways with Words: An ethnographic study of language and social constructions in a kindergarten dual language class**

By

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"Now to the one who can do infinitely more than all we can ask or imagine according to the power that is working among us— to him be glory…"

(Ephesians 3:20-21a, International Standard Version)

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In the Spring of 2014, I was assigned to a 5th grade dual language immersion (DLI) classroom in a U.S. public school to complete the practicum component of my master's degree in bilingual education. In the months I spent in that classroom, I noticed the emotional and social implications of bilingualism as it was understood from monolingual frameworks and the students' struggles regarding their social and academic identities. There is one memory in particular from those days that changed the course of my life as a classroom educator and set me on the path to research emergent bilinguals' social perceptions and negotiation strategies in DLI classrooms.

I still remember that Friday morning when the students entered the classroom and the teacher began to go over the results of the math section of the standardized tests, they had taken a few months back. The teacher started by telling the children that they had done especially badly on the test compared to the other 5th grade class. She emphasized that this class was part of the DLI program, and the other class was the mainstream 5th grade class. Then she asked: *"Why do you think you did so bad on the test?"* One brown hand went up immediately: *"It is because we speak Spanish,"* he said. Then he added, *"If you speak Spanish, you are less smart."* The teacher did not seem particularly disturbed by the comment. She just went on to say that the students in her class were as capable as the students in the other class; they just had to work harder. Then she asked the children to get their math books out and continued with her lesson.

I was particularly struck by the complexity of elements that converged in that single interaction and the simplicity with which the teacher addressed it. I began to wonder how occurrences like this one were shaping the learning experiences of these children. I considered how the attitude of the teacher shaped their lives, and how this teacher's words and non-reaction

sustained the negative perception these children had toward their dominant language, to the point of blaming it for their poor test results. Most of all, I felt the need to know more about how children were perceiving and responding to the multiple messages associated with social constructions such as race, ethnicity, and bilingualism that they were receiving daily in DLI programs. That episode, along with the many other situations I witnessed in that classroom, made me realize that in order to better understand the nature of the learning experience in DLI settings, it was necessary to listen to the voices of the children at the center of it. That was the exact moment when this study was born.

The above-described event spurred in me a desire to delve more deeply into the multiple social factors that coexist and shape learning (or experiences) in DLI classrooms. The pronounced disparity in the school achievement of language minority students in the U.S. has prompted me to problematize unidimensional explanations and investigate the multifarious experiences of emergent bilinguals.[1] Even though these programs were created to support these students, they are still influenced by broader social ideas and power dynamics. Thus, my research takes as a starting point the debates that surround the education of linguistically diverse students in American schools and examines the experiences of children in dual language immersion (DLI) programs.

Dual language immersion is emerging in the U.S. as an effective approach to support the academic and linguistic development of emergent bilinguals, and these programs are expanding across the nation (Harris, 2015; Mathewson, 2017; Wilson, 2011). DLI programs bring together

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[1]I use the term emergent bilinguals to refer to students learning two languages following Ofelia Garcia's line of argument, which explains that "calling these children emergent bilinguals makes reference to a positive characteristic—not one of being limited or being learners, as LEP and ELLs suggest" (Garcia, 2009, p. 322). By using the term emergent bilinguals, I have chosen to focus on the potential of these students rather than any suggested problems or limitations.

majority and minority language speakers with the aim of bilingualism and bi-literacy for both groups of students (Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers, 2007). Nevertheless, the proliferation of these programs has prompted warnings from prominent researchers in the field, who have cautioned that these learning environments produce issues of inequity and dissimilar power dynamics (Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Flores, 2016; Valdes, 1997). Contrary to what some people may assume, DLI programs are not comprised of mostly Latin@[2] students, or a combination of White, middle-class and low-income Latin@ children learning through the use of two languages. These programs include "children of diverse cultural, racial and socioeconomic backgrounds, in many different combinations" (Varghese & Park, 2010, p. 19). This amalgamation of social and linguistic components reveals a complexity that calls for in-depth research exploration in these school settings (Palmer, Martinez, Mateus & Henderson, 2014). Although there is extensive research regarding DLI programs in the US examining the conflicting sociocultural dynamics surrounding language diversity and bilingualism, there is a dearth of research that brings the perspectives of young emergent bilinguals to the forefront.

The present study seeks to better understand how emergent bilinguals themselves perceive, take up, and negotiate the intersection of social constructions such as language, social class position,[3] race and ethnicity[4] in DLI classrooms. My research aims to shed light on the

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[2]This study uses the term Latin@ to move beyond gender binaries. The term denotes students who identify as being of Latin American heritage.

[3]Pierre Bourdieu contends that "individuals of different social locations are socialized differently. This socialization provides children […] with a sense of what is comfortable or what is natural (he terms this *habitus*)" (Lareau, 2003, p. 275). This study uses the term social class position based on Bourdieu's (1984) sociological theories.

[4]Race and ethnicity are highly contested terms in the social sciences in general and they are often loosely blended in American society. The terms take on an added complexity when applied to an ethnic label like *Latin@*, since the category covers a range of skin pigmentations, cultural backgrounds and other sociocultural matters, and is often conflated with *Hispanic*. This study uses the term race as Amanda Lewis (2003) conceptualizes it— a shifting category that is socially and educationally constructed rather than biologically fixed. Ethnicity in this study denotes a category referring to "cultural practices and outlooks of a community, which identifies them as a distinctive social group. Ethnicity is a social phenomenon, which has no basis in human biology" (Giddens & Sutton, 2013).

intricate processes that these students engage in as they use language to enact and negotiate their identities and interactions (Gee, 2011) within tenuous social and linguistic intersections in DLI settings. In addition, this research inquiry aims to expand on recent work examining the intersection of race and language (Alim & Smitherman, 2012; Alim, Rickford & Ball, 2016; Flores & Rosa, 2015) by analyzing social class position in an early childhood setting. This study draws from the idea that race is always produced in combination with social class and other social constructions (Alim, 2016).

The examination of these ideas, I argue, play a significant role in elucidating the nature of bilingual students' learning experience. Furthermore, the exploration of these notions holds the potential to illuminate the ways in which language practices and interactions may be shaped by social constructions from a very early age. Finally, the type of analysis I have undertaken in this study is particularly consequential at the current juncture when the demographics of the United States are undergoing marked shifts, producing heightened conflict regarding the educational prospects of minorities.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to better understand how emergent bilinguals in DLI contexts perceived, enacted, and negotiated the tenuous intersections of race, ethnicity, social class position, and language. Through extensive fieldwork and the use of multiple data sources, I examined in detail how the perceptions and the interactions of kindergarten children and their teachers jointly constructed consequential notions of (raced and classed) language ideologies and practices. Two overarching questions guide my research:

1) How do kindergarten emergent bilinguals in a dual language immersion class perceive and respond to socially-constructed notions such as race, ethnicity, social class position, and bilingualism?

2) How do kindergarten emergent bilinguals in a dual language immersion class enact and negotiate the intersections of race, ethnicity, social class position, and language?

To answer these questions, I conducted a qualitative study of a Kindergarten emergent bilinguals' class (the Bears) in the DLI program at Oakville Elementary School. My findings reveal that children, as social actors, are not simply passive receptors of ideologies, but are actively engaged in making their own judgments as they engage in sociocultural processes (Park, 2011). This study shows how children perceived social constructions through messages both outside of and within the classroom. Further, they responded to and negotiated social constructions through the deliberate use of their communicative repertoires, what I have identified as their *Bilingual Ways with Words*.

## Overview of Dissertation

This dissertation is structured into seven chapters. Following the introduction of the study here (Chapter 1), in Chapter 2 I review empirical literature on how DLI settings have been conceptualized and studied over the years, the tenuous relationship between race, social class position, and language in these settings, and how my research seeks to fill some of the gaps and extend the literature on DLI educational contexts. I addition, I outline the theoretical perspectives that inform my analysis into the phenomena of children's perceptions and responses to social constructions in a kindergarten DLI program.

In Chapter 3, I describe my methodology, the research setting, and background of the study. Additionally, in this section, I justify my employment of an ethnographic case study

approach, and then introduce the case detailing data collection and analysis processes. The findings of the Bears case are presented separately in Chapters 4 and 5. Each chapter centers on answering one of the overarching research questions. In Chapter 6, I use the metaphor of the Bears class as ecology to provide a holistic analysis of the research context, the social actors in it, and other significant findings. I conclude the dissertation in Chapter 7 with a discussion of the implications and limitations of this study as well as its contributions to dual language education, school communities, teacher education, and educational policies.

# CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Historically, bilingual education has been connected to perceptions of nationalism, and socially-constructed ideas of identity and diversity, among other issues (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2010; Garcia, 2009; Ovando, 2003). Within this context, the changing socio-political environment in the U.S., as well as pedagogical, linguistic, and socio-cultural notions have impacted dual language classrooms and the ways in which these spaces of learning have been conceptualized for young emergent bilinguals (Garcia, 2009). With this in mind, in this chapter, I begin by reviewing empirical literature on DLI and two-way immersion (TWI) contexts, considering specifically qualitative research studies that have analyzed some of the most compelling issues associated with these educational programs. Then, I provide an overview of how the current study aims to fill some of the gaps found in the literature and extend current pedagogical and theoretical understandings. Lastly, I outline the theoretical framework drawing on sociological studies of social (re)production in schools (Anyon, 1997; Noguera, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999), social constructionist studies of bilingual education (Zentella, 1997; Palmer, 2009), and the emerging field of raciolinguistics (Alim & Smitherman, 2012; Alim, Rickford & Ball, 2016; Flores & Rosa, 2015). These concepts supported my investigation into the phenomena of socially constructed notions and emergent bilinguals' perceptions, responses, and negotiation strategies of these ideas in a DLI program.

## Literature Review

Dual language immersion (DLI) or two-way immersion (TWI) programs, have taken the lead in the country recently, offering new avenues to support the academic and linguistic development of emergent bilinguals in inclusive school settings. This contemporary educational approach espouses "rich promises" (Lindholm-Leary, 2005) to provide equitable educational

alternatives within changing demographic contexts in the U.S. However, this assurance has come with some "cautionary" notes (Valdes, 1997).

DLI or TWI programs have been developed as program models focused on providing educational opportunities to emergent bilinguals from minority and majority language groups (Kirk Senesac, 2002). These program models are variously known as dual maintenance bilingual education, dual or two-way dual language education, two-way immersion, dual immersion, and dual language immersion programs (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2010; Howard, Sugarman, & Christian, 2003; Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers, 2007). Lindholm-Leary (2004/2005) explains that dual language programs include four important features: 1) Instruction and classroom interactions take place in English and another language where the non-English language is used at least for 50% of the instruction. 2) Emergent bilinguals from two different home language groups are together in an integrated setting during most of the content instruction. 3) Both groups of emergent bilinguals carry out work in both languages in an equitable proportion. 4) The day contains instructional periods in which emergent bilinguals and teachers use only one language.

Similarly, Howard, Sugarman & Christian (2003) mention that there are three characteristic criteria in TWI programs. First, the programs must include approximately equal numbers of language-minority and language-majority students. Second, the programs are integrated, meaning that both language-minority and language-majority students are "grouped together for core academic instruction" during most or all the school day (p. 3). Third, core academic instruction to both groups of students is provided in both languages. However, based on the program model, "initial literacy instruction may not be provided to both groups in both

languages, but by about third grade, regardless of program model, all students are generally receiving literacy instruction in both languages" (Howard, Sugarman & Christian, 2003, p. 3).

The perspective of "language as a resource" (Ruiz, 1984) is reflected in these programs, which aim to fully develop bilingualism and biliteracy in emergent bilinguals while also helping them to succeed academically in both languages (Mora, Wink & Wink, 2001). In these settings, emergent bilinguals learn two languages simultaneously, and appreciate their differences (de Jong & Howard, 2009; Howard, Sugarman & Christian, 2003; Lindholm-Leary, 2001, 2005; Palmer, 2009). Furthermore, these programs are considered enrichment, as opposed to remedial programs (de Jong & Howard, 2009).

Sonia Soltero (2004) in her book *Dual Language: Learning and Teaching in Two Languages,* alludes to the fact that, despite many controversies regarding bilingual education programs, DLI represents an educational approach that helps learners to recognize their differences and feel that their identities are validated. Additionally, Soltero (2004) indicates the recognition within DLI that learning a language goes beyond the simple ability to communicate. Soltero (2004) is not alone in her support of dual language programs. These program models have been identified by a significant body of research (e.g., Alanís, 2000; Carter & Chatfield, 1986; Christian, 1996; Collier, 1995; Collier & Thomas, 2004; Lindholm-Leary, 2001, 2004/2005; Thomas & Collier, 1997a; 1997b, 2002; Skutnabb-Kangas & Cummins, 1988) as the best way to provide "minority students with equitable education, as well as developing bilingualism in language majority students" (Mora et al., 2001, p. 4). Some researchers have suggested that considering their "pluralistic philosophical underpinnings and structure, DLI programs can have a powerful impact on immigrant communities and student learning" (Varghese & Park, 2010, p. 74).

DLI programs aid students in developing cultural and social sensitivity that fosters collective growth while promoting inclusion and diversity in school settings (Howard, Sugarman & Christian, 2003; Lindholm-Leary & Borsato, 2001; Palmer, 2009). Crawford and Krashen (2007) note that, "promising results have been reported for *dual language* or *two-way bilingual* programs, which have become increasingly popular in recent years" (p. 28, emphasis in original). Howard, Sugarman & Christian (2003) provide an extensive review of research data related to academic achievement and positive language and literacy outcomes of students in these settings, as well as the cultural context and social impact of two-way programs. This report, together with a review of research on academic achievement in English and math conducted by Lindholm-Leary (2005), points to the consistently high levels of achievement among emergent bilinguals in DLI classrooms (Cazabon, Nicoladis & Lambert, 1998; Collier & Thomas, 2004; Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 1997, 2002; Howard, Christian & Genesee, 2003; Serrano & Howard, 2003; Perez, 2004; Stipek, Ryan & Alarcon, 2001). In the same way, significant ethnographic research has revealed that the principles and practices of DLI programs can provide consequential support for influencing educational practices and positively benefit the lives of emergent bilinguals (Freeman, 1998; Gonzalez & Arnot-Hopffer, 2003).

As stated above, the research literature widely supports TWI or DLI programs as the favored model of bilingual education. However, more recently, some researchers (Flores, 2016; de Jong and Howard, 2009; Palmer, 2008; Valdez, Freire & Delavan, 2016, among others) have voiced concerns related to issues of social class, linguistic power, and the struggle for space for a minority language and culture in dual language settings, given U.S. history. These concerns align with Brenda Juarez's (2008) perceptions of the complexity found in dual language classrooms and the historical marginalization of language minority students in U.S. public schools

(Valencia, 1991; Davidson, 1996; Valenzuela, 1999; Valdes, 2001). Juarez (2008) contends that much has been written regarding the benefits and promises of dual language (DL) education for promoting equity in school settings (Lindholm-Leary, 2005; Collier & Thomas, 2004), but "less examined is how [the] line of social division emerges and is maintained in DL education" (p. 232). In her 2008 study, Juarez found that in the focal dual language classroom, language minority students' cultures and native languages were not only commonly associated with social and academic problems but were constantly identified as the cause of the problems.

Scholars such as Edelsky & Hudelson (1980), Fitts (2006), Potowski (2004), Valdes (1997), Vasquez (2003) and Palmer (2009), among others, have also expressed their apprehension towards the complexity of sociocultural, economic, and political factors that intersect in DLI settings, and the degree to which those factors impact balanced language use and opportunities for emergent bilinguals to learn majority and minority languages (Crenshaw, 1989; Lee, 2014). These concerns coincide with Langenkamp's (2005) assertions regarding "empirical evidence concerning bilingualism in the US as a pedagogical asset [which] has been found to depend upon students' higher socioeconomic status" (p. 117; Zhou, 1997a). English as the language of power in the U.S. has a very strong influence in the language practices of emergent bilinguals and the power relationships that manifest in DLI settings (de Jong, 1996; de Jong & Howard, 2009; Freeman, 1998; Torres-Guzman, 2002; Valdes, 1997).

In the same way, Howard, Sugarman & Christian (2003) state that the "high status of NES [Native English Speakers] in general, especially when those students are from higher SES [socio-economic status] backgrounds than language-minority students, is one potential reason for the dominance of English in TWI programs" (p. 40). Langenkamp (2005) found in her study that English was the preferred language in all school spaces. Further, when a choice between Spanish

and English had to be made, Spanish became subordinated to the English language. Lindholm-Leary (2001) and Potowski (2004) documented a similar tendency among emergent bilinguals who chose English over Spanish regardless of their native language. Carrigo (2000) found that native English speakers not only resisted speaking Spanish but also made derogatory comments about that language. Moreover, in Soyong Lee's (2014) study of a Korean/English TWI program in California, the researcher found that the competing status of the minority and majority languages in that setting framed the language choices of emergent bilinguals and led to under-use of the minority language during interactions. This phenomenon has been recorded in other contexts by Hadi-Tabassum (2006), Palmer (2008), Potowski (2004), Quintanar-Sarellana (2004), Stipek, Ryan & Alarcon (2001), and Vasquez (2003), among others.

Differences in the prestige and necessity of learning English reflect wider societal structures (Smith, Arnot-Hopffer, Carmichael, Murphy, Valle, Gonzalez & Poveda, 2002). Valdes (1997) explains, "for minority children, the acquisition of English is expected. For mainstream children, the acquisition of a non-English language is enthusiastically applauded" (p. 417). Hakuta (1986) also highlighted the paradox between scorn for bilingualism attained by immigrants versus admiration for bilingualism attained by majority speakers in school.

Some scholars have found that intergroup dynamics and external pressures associated with DLI classrooms lead minority-language emergent bilinguals to internalize negative societal attitudes toward their native language, bilingualism, and toward their ethnic groups, a pressure unknown to majority-language emergent bilinguals (Moll & Dworin, 1996; McCollum, 1999). In addition, some of these programs often maintain a strict language separation, overlooking important modern theorizations of multilingualism (May, 2014) such as translanguaging (Garcia & Wei, 2013) and translingualism (Canagarajah, 2013), which point to the creative ways in

which language users move fluidly between different codes in meaning-making (Hawkins & Cannon, 2017). As a result of language separation, students are restricted and hindered in using their full semiotic and linguistic repertoires when learning and constructing meaning in these settings (Hawkins & Cannon, 2017). With respect to this issue, Palmer & Martinez (2016) explain that the ways in which emergent bilinguals use complex discursive practices in DLI classrooms is still misunderstood, as many of the current approaches to teaching these students continue to be informed by "monolingual perspectives on language that overemphasize linguistic structure" (p. 383).

In addition, Meshulam & Apple (2014), Juarez (2008), and Palmer (2010) have highlighted issues of race and power differences between socioeconomically and culturally different groups of students, along with their families, in DLI programs. Carrigo (2000), Parchia (2000), and Krause (1999) have documented the minimal success of African-American students participating in DLI programs, alluding to issues of race and cultural (mis)understandings that result in lack of support for these students in DLI settings. Nelson Flores (2016) has criticized racial and linguistic ideologies in DLI classrooms, such as the assumption that the native English speakers are to be White. Flores (2016) expresses that "the uncritical equating of native English speaker with the dominant culture erases the anti-blackness experienced by Black native English speakers both inside and outside of school." Moreover, Flores (2016) strongly warns against "*fetishizing two-way immersion programs as the gold standard for bilingual education*" (emphasis in original), keeping in mind the hyper-segregation of American society. DLI programs aim to maintain an equal balance of majority and minority language speakers, but in hyper-segregated schools where minority children are the major or only racial group, Flores (2016) asserts, "to insist on two-way immersion as the gold standard is to deny Black students in

segregated schools the opportunity of bilingual education." According to Flores (2016), it is crucial to promote models for "high-quality bilingual education that are responsive to the many different student demographics that exist across US schools." One successful example of high-quality bilingual education that was responsive to different students' demographics was documented by Bartlett & Garcia (2011) in their research at a high school in New York City. Their work revealed how a dynamic bilingual pedagogical approach that took into account students' culture and environment helped emergent bilinguals to succeed academically. This study highlights the significance of having high-quality bilingual options available to low-income diverse communities so that they can have access to good programs just as wealthy communities do.

In the same way, Palmer (2010) identifies as an equity matter the fact that in DLI settings, half of the spots are reserved for language-majority emergent bilinguals, thus reducing the access of language-minority students to these programs. The researcher concludes that in most cases "the program will inevitably end up serving the needs of the dominant majority, leaving Latino and other minority students out of the picture, except insofar as their interests converge with those of the dominant majority" (Palmer, 2010, p. 110). Similarly, Valdez, Freire & Delavan (2016) claim that the mainstreaming of DL education has become a type of gentrification in the sense that "trends in DL have pushed out ESL and other non-privileged students from multilingual education options" (p. 4, referring to emergent bilinguals from language backgrounds other than those represented in DL programs). Furthermore, Cervantes-Soon (2014) contends that in dual language settings "language might be perceived more as a commodity than as a tool for significant cross-cultural understanding" (p. 71). There is thus a risk that these programs may mislead concerned observers and obscure problematic issues by

providing "the community with the illusion that the needs of displaced and subjugated 'others' have been addressed" (Grinberg and Saavedra, 2000, p. 433).

Esther de Jong (2002) found that the two-way bilingual program that was the focus of her research was developed in "response to the social segregation of bilingual program students in the school and to halt the trend of white middle class parents removing students from the school district ('white flight')" (p. 3). A similar argument was made by Wiese (2004), who reports in her study that part of the vision of the studied school in creating the bilingual program was to bring back some of the "white families that years before had been doing the white flight to private schools" (p. 75). Chaparro (2017), in her study of a two-way immersion program in an urban public school in Philadelphia, also found how social dynamics, such as gentrification and immigration, influenced the creation of a program that was part of a system reproducing privilege in terms of class and race. These findings demonstrate the intersection between social class, race, and language in DLI settings.

Amanda Lewis (2003) and Deborah K. Palmer (2009) have specifically examined the interconnection between race and language in bi/multilingual settings, delving into the intricate issue of how race shapes and influences people's understandings and interactions. Their explorations have addressed the ways in which social constructions such as race, language, and social class affect the power dynamics in multicultural classrooms. Lewis' (2003) sociological perspective and chosen methodology in her book, *Race in the schoolyard: Negotiating the color line in classrooms and communities*, provided pivotal insights for my research by demonstrating critical ways to study how students learn about race and language in school contexts. In particular, Lewis' (2003) study provided an important foundation to explore how language and race serve to establish distinct privileging and segregating patterns in public schools. The

research I conducted sought to expand upon Lewis' prior work by looking simultaneously at race, ethnicity, social class position, and language in a DLI context.

Deborah Palmer's (2009) study, *Middle-Class English Speakers in a Two-Way Immersion Bilingual Classroom: "Everybody should be listening to Jonathan Right Now…,"* explores the complex dynamics of social class and linguistic power contained in the choice of language use and participation patterns of English-and Spanish-speaking students. Palmer (2009) found that the race, social class, and language of the native English-speaking children influenced the conversations and participation patterns in this DLI setting. My study builds on Palmer's (2009) work by delineating and examining the diverging linguistic dynamics in bilingual spaces. It also extends Palmer's work by adding the perspective of students and teachers to the examination of the race, ethnicity, social class position, and language intersections in a bilingual context. By investigating the perceptions of emergent bilinguals and their interactions within a bilingual setting, my research aims to analyze both how students perceive their circumstances and also how those perceptions play a role in their interactions as ethnic minorities and majorities and as bilinguals in U.S. classrooms.

As this literature review shows, there is extensive research into DLI programs in the U.S. illuminating the conflicting sociocultural dynamics surrounding language diversity and bilingualism. However, there is a dearth of research that focuses on how emergent bilinguals themselves perceive, take up, and negotiate social constructions such as race, ethnicity, social class position, and language in these contexts. This indicates that this research area has been under-studied and under-theorized. My research project aims to fill some of the gaps in the literature and to shed light on the complex processes that these students engage in as they use language to enact and negotiate their identities, interactions, claims, impositions, appropriations,

and resistance (Gee, 2011) within tenuous social and linguistic intersections in American bilingual settings. This will help to meet the significant need for a robust examination of power dynamics in these contexts, as social and linguistic struggles may continue to reflect wider societal trends. In this broader context, the "rich promises of DL education" (Lindholm-Leary, 2004/2005) must be considered not only in academic and linguistic terms, but also from sociocultural perspectives, taking into consideration the wider social landscape in which these programs operate.

## Theoretical Framework

This qualitative inquiry engages sociological studies of social (re)production in schools (Anyon, 1997; Noguera, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999), social constructionist studies of bilingual education (Zentella, 1997; Palmer, 2009), and the emerging field of raciolinguistics (Alim & Smitherman, 2012; Alim, Rickford & Ball, 2016; Flores & Rosa, 2015) to investigate how emergent bilinguals perceived and enacted social constructions in a DLI program. Using the notion of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989), which denotes the ways in which social constructions such as race and gender interact on multiple levels to shape people's experiences, I investigated pivotal social connections within a DLI educational setting. Applying an intersectional lens, this study focused on three goals: first, it sought to advance what Alim & Smitherman (2012) call, "language race—to think about the linguistic dimensions of race" (p. 169), taking into consideration that, as Bucholtz (2011) argues, "language is often overlooked as an analytic concern in research on race, yet it is nonetheless central to how race is culturally understood" (p. 5).

Second, this study explored the role of social class position (Bourdieu, 1984) in DLI spaces. Pierre Bourdieu (1984) contends that, "individuals of different social locations are

socialized differently. This socialization provides children [...] with a sense of what is comfortable or what is natural (he terms this *habitus*)" (Laureau, 2003, p. 275). Keeping in mind that DLI programs are composed of children of different ethnic, racial, socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, in various combinations (Varghese & Park, 2010), the exploration of the role of social class position and the *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1984) embodied by individuals who have experienced different socialization processes helped to illuminate points of social and linguistic inclusion and exclusion in the studied learning space (Blommaert, Collins, & Slembrouck, 2005).

Third, this research aimed to examine how social constructions such as race, ethnicity, social class position, and language impact notions of bilingualism and the language practices of emerging bilinguals in a DLI class. Considering that researchers such as Garcia & Kleifgen (2010) have argued that the practice of strict language separation and language sheltering has dominated bilingual settings, it was important to investigate how more current ideas such as dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging (Garcia, 2009), among others, were taken up and understood in DLI settings. This examination facilitated "new ways for understanding how sedimented notions of languages and identities emerge at the nexus of multiple shifting discourses that are in constant negotiation and conflict" (Aneja, 2016, p. 577).

This research employed the framework of raciolinguistics (Alim & Smitherman, 2012; Alim, Rickford & Ball, 2016; Flores & Rosa, 2015) and sociological theories of social class position (Bourdieu, 1984) to focus on two specific aspects of the intersection of language, social class position, race and ethnicity. First, it looked at linguistic resources "as being employed by speakers as they shape and engage in processes and projects of identification" (Alim, 2016, p. 2; Gee, 2011). And second, it sought to understand how raciolinguistic ideologies (Flores & Rosa, 2015) produced "racialized speaking subjects who are constructed as linguistically deviant even

when engaging in linguistic practices positioned as normative or innovative when produced by privileged white subjects" (p. 150). To this end, it explored how the white gaze was connected to both speakers and listeners as they engaged in linguistic practices. To the speakers, as they engaged in highly-valued linguistic practices of "whiteness;" and to the listeners, as they construed the linguistic performance of language-minoritized speakers as sub-standard or unnatural, this was based not on an impartial characterization of their language, but rather on the racial standing in society (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p. 151).

Relying on a constructivist paradigm, this research looked at students' interactions in a kindergarten DLI class to elucidate the ways in which emergent bilinguals perceived and performed socially constructed ideologies of intersectionality within this learning context. By examining the discourses and interactions of kindergarteners and their teachers, what language did, what functions it served in the moment and what function discourse, as more broadly constructed (not only language in use, but also language plus other "stuff"—Gee, 2011), fulfilled in the studied setting, it was possible to investigate what utterances revealed about social constructions and the notions that surrounded language use in the focal context. The complex nature of these understandings furthers a discussion regarding the value attached to ideas beyond the commonly-discussed issues of race, ethnicity, national origin, language proficiency, and even what is perhaps regarded as nativeness or non-nativeness, to alternatively consider how is it that participants' "doing of language creates new spaces of possible identification (Harissi, Otsuji, & Pennycook, 2012, p. 530; Aneja, 2016).

**Identity**

The notion of identity is central when exploring social constructions because it permeates the actions of individuals and reflects their social and linguistic perceptions. In this study, the

notion of identity is used as Gee (2011) conceptualizes it: the "different ways of being in the world at different times and places for different purposes" (p. 3). Gee (2011) maintains that "language allows us to be things" (p. 3) and to take on distinct socially-situated identities. This is important because our ability to accomplish things rests on the identities that we are able to claim and speak from. This idea of identity which centers not exclusively on what speakers want to accomplish with their talk, but significantly on their social identifications in a specific context and through engaging in different actions (Gee, 2011), aided me in my examination of the complexity contained in the studied dual language space.

The identities individuals assume, reject, challenge or negotiate, as Hawkins (2004) explains, are the result of a "complex integration of diverse sociocultural experiences, the sociocultural experiences of others in the interaction, the structure and flow of language, participation and negotiation in the interaction, and the larger cultural and institutional settings within which the interactions take place" (p. 18). Through the enactment of a distinct identity (or identities), speakers use language to make or build things in the world. In effect, all actions and utterances are identity moves, or make identity claims (Gee, 2011). However, individuals cannot claim an identity (consciously or unconsciously) just because it is their perception. People have to be afforded that identity by others in the social space and must be recognized as the person they think they are positioning themselves to be (Hawkins, 2004). And it is precisely in this positioning and identity claiming where socially constructed notions come into play.

**Sociocultural Frameworks & Children as Meaning Makers**

Traditional child development literature has "conceptualized the socialization of children as a process in which complete adults instruct and train incomplete children, who thus imitate and mirror adults" (Mackay, 1974, as cited in Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001, p. 20). From this

conventional perspective, children are not capable of understanding abstract social concepts such as class or race because their lives are not thought to be organized around such ideas (Holmes, 1995). Developmental perspectives, many of which have been highly influential in education research, understand racial awareness as part of a linear process associated with cognitive maturity (Piaget, 1952). Thus, components associated with racial attitudes, for example, were deemed "too sophisticated to exist as such in children" (Aboud, 1988). These ideas, however, have been refuted as recent theoretical developments in sociology, anthropology, and psychology have considered sociocultural perspectives examining the role of culture in children's experiences, and the interaction of different activity systems in people's lives (Vygotsky, 1980).

From a sociocultural perspective, child development and socialization are viewed as interactive and multi-directional rather than as a passive linear process. Children do not merely individually internalize the external adult culture. Rather they are social actors and active meaning makers that contribute to their cultural communities through their negotiations and interactions with other individuals (Burner & Haste, 2010). Even though children do learn a significant amount of information from others, and take up existing systems of meaning, they also engage in the creation of their own shared structures of meaning and explanations which may or may not follow adult structures of the world (Graue & Walsh, 2000).

In this research, I consider children as active social actors and meaning makers. They construct knowledge that they negotiate and produce with others. I argue that through interactions and their participation in their bilingual worlds, these children (re) create and/or reproduce practices and social meanings ingrained in particular cultural settings (Quast, 2017). As these children gather understandings from their bilingual social worlds, they co-construct their reality in sophisticated, meaningful, and complex ways.

**Social Class Position**

Drawing from sociological theories of social class position advanced by Pierre Bourdieu (1996), this study examined one kindergarten DLI class to better understand the "different social worlds that ma[de] up the social universe [in the setting], as well as the 'mechanisms' that tend[ed] to ensure their reproduction or transformation" (p. 1). For Bourdieu, social class involved the structural relationship between "the material (or "economic") and the symbolic" (Weininger, 2002, p. 122). In his book *Distinction* (1984), he writes:

> Social class is not defined by a property (not even the most determinant one, such as the volume and composition of capital) nor by a collection of properties (of sex, age, social origin, ethnic origin — proportion of blacks and whites, for examples, or natives and immigrants — income, education level, etc.), nor even by a chain of properties strung out from a fundamental property (position in the relations of production) in a relation of cause and effect, conditioner and conditioned; but by the structure of relations between all the pertinent properties which gives its specific value to each of them and to the effects they exert on practices. (p. 105)

Bourdieu (1991) considered that social class analysis had to involve a concurrent examination of symbolic and economic relations and their structure in social collectivities. Based on this notion, in this study, I investigated how emergent bilinguals negotiated material and symbolic goods (e.g., economic resources, language use, personal dispositions, etc.) in this DLI setting through their social and linguistic practices.

One of the main concepts from Bourdieu's theories used in this study is Habitus. This notion is defined by him as a socially constituted system of dispositions that orients "thoughts, perceptions, expressions, and actions" (Bourdieu 1990a, p. 55). This idea points to actions that

are generated from a "pre-reflexive basis—that is, without recourse to conscious reflection on rules or estimations of results" (Weininger, 2002, p. 131). These actions are part of the way in which individuals understand and make everyday decisions in the context they inhabit. The concept of habitus, however, should not be merged or confused with that of "habit" (in the common sense of the word); habit implies action that "would only be able to forego reflection to the extent that it was routinized and repetitive. To the contrary, dispositions may generate actions—or as Bourdieu prefers to say, practices—that are highly spontaneous and inventive" (Weininger, 2002, p. 13). One of the examples provided by Bourdieu (1990b, 1990a) to illustrate this distinction is that of a skilled musician, someone who is able to improvise within the context of a particular harmonic structure without the need to mentally rehearse other variations before playing them. Bourdieu contends that it is the set of experiences of a particular class condition—which characterizes a distinct location in the social space—what imprints a distinct set of dispositions on different individuals. The habitus, according to Bourdieu, is formed differently according to the location of each subject in the social field. This concept was useful in my examination of the students' actions and ways to negotiate social goods and resources in the DLI class because it helped me to examine how their different ways to interact in different situations revealed dissimilar processes of socialization that brought about discernible social and linguistic dynamics.

Another important concept from Bourdieu's (1992) theories is his concept of field. He describes field as a system of social relations (network) structured at different levels where individuals, institutions, and different collectivities exist in constitutional relation to each other. These relations regulate and recreate social activity in the many forms that it takes. Furthermore, because they are part of a structure, the positions between their occupants can be outlined and the

engendering premises supporting their relations can be determined (Grenfell & James, 1998). Bourdieu & Wacquant (1992) contend that there is a twofold nature in social reality. It exists “in things and in minds, in fields and in habitus, outside and inside social agents” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 127); and when there is an encounter between the habitus and the social world of which this is the product, the result is a sense of “ease” and belonging (Khan, 2011). “It is like a ‘fish in water’: it does not feel the weight of the water and it takes the world about itself for granted” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 127). Bourdieu’s ideas regarding habitus and field guided my research as I focused on the structure of social relations in the focal setting at the macro and micro levels.

Finally, Bourdieu’s concept of capital was also helpful when exploring the social dynamics at play in the Bears class. Bourdieu (1984) regards as capital “the set of actually usable resources and powers” (p. 114). These resources or accumulated “social energy” can take different forms, thus, his idea of capital cannot be contained in a single general notion (Bourdieu, 1986). For Bourdieu (1986), “the structure of the distribution of the different types and subtypes of capital at a given moment in time represents the immanent structure of the social world” (p. 241). The intrinsic structure of the social world of the Bears class is what I set out to investigate as I analyzed the arrangement and distribution of resources and power in this context. A full exploration of Bourdieu’s (1986) notion of capital in his analysis of capitalist societies is beyond the scope of this study. However, his conceptualizations concerning different types of capital (i.e., symbolic, cultural, social) were useful as I conducted my analysis.

**Classroom Ecology**

By engaging in a deep analysis of the social context, interactions, and language practices of kindergarten emergent bilinguals and their teachers, this research aimed to reveal significant

insights into the intricate realities and ecologies of DLI spaces. In this regard, Hawkins' (2004) remarks on the metaphor embedded in the concept of classroom ecology are worth quoting at length here:

> Classrooms are complex ecosystems, where all of the participants, the practices, the beliefs, the forms of language, the forms of literacies, the social, historical and institutional context(s), the identity and positioning work, the politics and power relations, the mediational tools and resources, the activity and task designs, and the influences of the multiple local and global communities within which they are situated come together in fluid, dynamic, and ever-changing constellations of interactions, each one impacting the other. This is not a static process, but one that shifts with each new move/interaction, and as new organisms enter the environment, as ecological systems do. It is a fragile balance, and in order for it to "work"—to have the inhabitant life forms survive and prosper—we need to understand not only the individual components, but also the ways in which the patterns and the ebb and flow of contacts and engagements result from and contribute to the whole. (p. 21)

I used this ecological analogy, which views classrooms with respect for the full multiplicity and synergistic roles of their multifarious components, as an aid in my detailed analysis of the many aspects that compose the learning contexts and experiences of the focal emergent bilinguals.

**Raciolinguistics**

This study uses the concept of raciolinguistics as Alim, Rickford, and Ball (2016) employ it—an "umbrella term to refer to an emerging field dedicated to bringing to bear the diverse methods of linguistic analysis […] to ask and answer critical questions about the relations between language, race, and power across diverse ethnoracial contexts and societies" (Alim,

2016, p. 27). From a raciolinguistic perspective, I critically examined language as it was utilized within the school space, not only to increase the marginalization of racialized and minoritized groups, but also for two other purposes: to compensate for oppressive language practices that unfairly demote minority languages and to aid in deconstructing stereotypes, as well as discriminatory discourses, about the speakers of those languages (Alim, 2016). By theorizing language and race together using a raciolinguistic lens, I was able to pay "particular attention to how both social processes mediate and mutually constitute each other" (Alim, 2016, p. 3). From this perspective, this study looked at how participants constructed and negotiated different understandings through social processes and interactions, based on the view that the person is socially constructed, and this construction process is rooted in language and interaction (Burr, 1995).

**Monoglossic vs. Heteroglossic Language Ideologies**

Monoglossic language ideologies take the monolingual learner as the norm when it comes to language learning. When talking about bilingual learning, this morphs into a view of the bilingual learner as a 'double monolingual' – learning two languages separately at the same time in equal measure (Garcia, 2009; Heller, 2006). This perspective was prevalent in much of the early research conducted in bilingual settings (Grosjean, 1989). Hence the instructional practices that were applied to bilingual situations failed to consider the possibility of significant differences between bilingual and monolingual situations (Dworin, 2003; Moll & Dworin, 1996; Valdes, 1992, 1997; Zentella, 1997).

As research on bilingual learning has advanced, this idea of the double monolingual has been increasingly criticized. Rigid monoglossic language ideologies fail to account for the actual language practices of bilingual speakers – the ways in which their languages

interact with each other all the time in fluid and dynamic ways. Thus, scholars are now moving towards viewing languages and language practices as "a fluid, complex, and dynamic process" (Flores & Schissel, 2014, p. 459) and, relatedly, a view of bilingualism as dynamic.

Understanding language learning in this more dynamic way is underpinned by a heteroglossic understanding of language learning. Garcia (2009), for example, identifies the "dynamic meaning-making discursive processes of bilingual populations as translanguaging, and she uses this concept to argue for a move […] toward a dynamic approach to bilingualism" (Flores & Schissel, 2014, p. 460). From this perspective, rather than expecting bilingual speakers to perform and learn like monolinguals, bilingualism is understood as fluid language practices employed by speakers who make use of their entire linguistic repertoire, depending on the context, time, focus, task and/or who they are interacting with (and for what purpose). Examining the language practices and perceptions of children and teachers in the focal setting helped me to uncover the language ideologies guiding their understandings of bilingualism.

**Translanguaging**

Garcia (2009) uses the notion of translanguaging, a term borrowed from Cen Williams (Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012) and popularized by Baker (2001) in the UK, to denote the "multiple discursive practices in which bilinguals engage in order to make sense of their bilingual worlds" (Garcia, 2009, p. 45). Multiple researchers around the world are now using this term to examine language practices in bilingual classrooms (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Garcia, Makar, Starcevic & Terry, 2011; Li, 2009). The idea of translanguaging

challenges monolingual assumptions of language learning and uses students' emerging bilingualism as resource, rather than perceiving it as a hindrance to the language acquisition process (Garcia, 2011). This notion focuses on the language practices of bilingual people who use both languages (and other communicative resources) in communication to make meaning of the complexity of their bilingual worlds.

Translanguaging has replaced a previous understanding of how bilinguals move between languages, which was termed as 'code-switching.' Translanguaging is different from code-switching because it doesn't imply that bilinguals simply go from one language code to another – moving across language boundaries. As Garcia (2011) explains:

> The notion of code- switching assumes that the two languages of bilinguals are [still] two separate monolingual codes that could be used without reference to each other. Instead, translanguaging posits that bilinguals have one linguistic repertoire from which they select features strategically to communicate effectively. (p. 1)

Bilingual speakers thus adapt their language practices to fit specific communicative situations. This adaptation within an overall linguistic repertoire, that includes simultaneously all the languages and features of language that they know, is one of the aspects I was interested in examining in detail in the studied context.

Finally, it is important to mention that while schools are popularly imagined as the great equalizers, sociological research in education has soundly demonstrated that schools reproduce structural inequalities in the U.S. (Anyon, 1997; Eitle & Eitle, 2004; Kozol, 1991; Noguera, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999). Moreover, the abundance and diversity of discourses regarding dissimilar student populations in U.S. classrooms and the implications of these discourses for teaching and learning render it crucial to consider how students locate themselves at the

intersections of multiple socially constructed boundaries (Lee & Anderson, 2009), and how these boundaries manifest themselves through language practices.

Figure 1(below), summarizes how I draw from multiple theoretical perspectives to investigate the complex reality of children and their teachers interacting and negotiating their relations through languaging in a DLI setting.

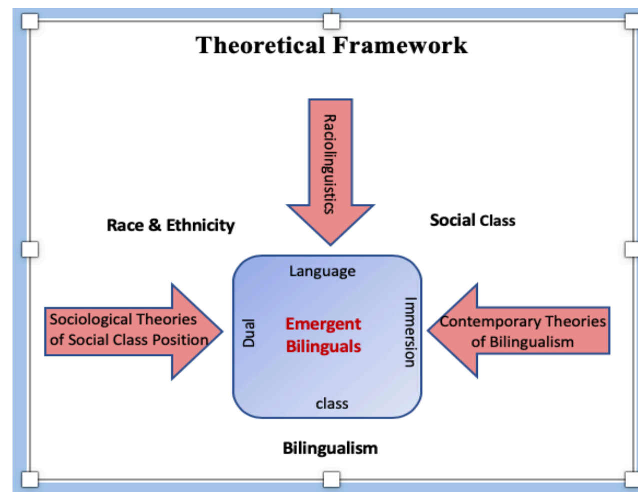


***Figure 1.*** Theoretical Framework of the Study

# CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS & SETTING

I read once somewhere, "it's all in the perception, it's all in the story," and as an emerging ethnographer these words have come to mean a lot to me. In October of 2017, I visited the children in the Bears class for the first time and met the students I was going to follow for the next eight months for my dissertation research. I wanted to examine how kindergarten emergent bilinguals in a DLI class perceived, responded to, and negotiated socially-constructed notions such as race, ethnicity, social class position, and bilingualism. When I met the 17[5] participants I describe in this study, however, I knew I was in for an interesting story. This Kindergarten DLI class at Oakville Elementary School (OES) was a unique socio-cultural and educational microcosm in which the children's perceptions, responses, and negotiation strategies were going to take my mind through that sort of window that looks inside another window and into an even smaller window. Indeed, the candid voices of these young learners all of a sudden transformed my questions into breathing relationships.

In this chapter, I describe the research approach I used to understand these children's experiences. I demonstrate my epistemological stance as a researcher: that there is no ultimate detached truth to be found, but that our knowledge of reality is co-constructed among different actors. This research philosophy necessitated that I rely on an interpretive research paradigm seeking to understand the world inhabited by the participants, aiming to look for explanations from their perspectives instead of attempting to forge explanations from an external observer's perspective. I begin by providing the background of the study, including the role of policy in the creation of the DLI program. Then, I offer a description of the research setting in which this

[5] Another student joined the class later in November, so I ended with 18 participants.

study took place. Next, I describe in detail my research approach, methods of data collection, and the process of data analysis. I end the chapter with a focus on my researcher positionality.

## Background of the Study

In the past two decades, Latin@s have increasingly migrated to geographical areas throughout the U.S. that have not historically had a visible Latin@ presence (Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Ennis, Rios-Vargas & Albert, 2011). This "New Latino Diaspora" (Worthman, Murillo Jr., Hamann, 2002) has created different socioeconomic, academic, and cultural dynamics in established—and mostly homogeneous—communities. The literature shows that much of this population growth has occurred in predominantly White areas, which have not traditionally been gateway communities for immigrants (Worthman, Murillo Jr., Hamann, 2002). Thus, public schools have had to respond to an increased number of diverse and non-English speaking learners. These demographic changes frame the broader social and educational context of this research study.

My research site was a DLI program at Oakville Elementary School (OES). OES is located in the relatively small[6], economically affluent Wisconsin city of Springville[7]. Springville's economy employs 10,557[8] people. Most jobs are found within the healthcare, educational, professional, scientific and technology services. Households in Springville own an average of two cars and have a median annual income of $65,283, which is more than the median annual income in the U.S. ($61,372[9]). The population in Springville is 81.4% White,

[6] Population 18,478
[7] This and all names of places and people used in this study are pseudonyms to protect the confidentiality of the participants.
[8] All data presented has been taken from: https://datausa.io/ unless otherwise stated. Every time I have included the reported statistics, I use their chosen terms.
[9] https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2018/income-poverty.html

6.3% Hispanic[10], 5.68% Black, 4.51% Asian, and 1.87% two or more races; and 11.2% of its residents speak a language other than English. The number of people living below the poverty line in Springville has risen—from 5.1% to 8.06%—in the last eight years; this percentage is lower than the national average of 14.7%, but still crucial for this non-gateway community for immigrants.

In the past ten years, Springville School District (SSD), which served approximately 7000 students in the 2016-2017academic year, has seen its student of color population more than double from 13.5%[11] of the total student body to 27.9%, with the Hispanic enrollment increasing from 4.4% to over 8% during that same time period. Table 1 below shows some of the demographic changes in the student population in SSD over the decade before I conducted my study.

*Table 1.*
**Springville School District Enrollment by Race (2006-2016)**

| | White | Hispanic | Asian | Black | Two or More Races | American Indian | Pacific Islander | Total Percentage of students of color |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2016-2017 | 72.2% | 8.5% | 9.2% | 4.5% | 5.2% | 0.4% | 0.1% | 27.9% |
| 2015-2016 | 74.1% | 8.4% | 7.9% | 4.5% | 4.7% | 0.3% | 0.1% | 25.9% |
| 2014-2015 | 75.8% | 8.2% | 7.4% | 4.0% | 4.2% | 0.3% | 0.1% | 24.2% |
| 2013-2014 | 76.2% | 8.3% | 6.9% | 4.2% | 4.1% | 0.3% | 0.1% | 23.9% |

[10]Demographic websites and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in the state use the term Hispanic to denote individuals of Latin American ancestry who have a connection to the Spanish language or speak Spanish at home. I have chosen to use the term Latin@ in my study to focus on the Latin American heritage of the participants rather than named languages (Pennycook, 2010). However, every time I have included statistics from demographic websites or the DPI, I use their chosen terms.
[11] Data collected from the Wisconsin Information System for Education and the District website.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2012-2013 | 77.6% | 8.0% | 6.3% | 4.5% | 3.3% | 0.3% | 0% | 22.4% |
| 2011-2012 | 78.5% | 7.3% | 6.0% | 5.3% | 2.5% | 0.2% | 0.1% | 21.4% |
| 2010-2011 | 80.2% | 6.4% | 5.6% | 5.5% | 2.0% | 0.2% | 0% | 19.9% |
| 2009-2010 | 83.1% | 5.4% | 5.6% | 5.5% | N/A | 0.3% | N/A | 16.8% |
| 2008-2009 | 84.2% | 5.0% | 5.0% | 5.6% | N/A | 0.3% | N/A | 15.9% |
| 2007-2008 | 85.5% | 4.5% | 4.6% | 5.2% | N/A | 0.3% | N/A | 14.6% |
| 2006-2007 | 86.4% | 4.4% | 4.0% | 4.9% | N/A | 0.2% | N/A | 13.5% |

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2017

SSD is generally considered to be one of the best in this Midwestern state, with modern facilities, high state school report cards, and a generally well-to-do and supportive community. However, in this district, 18% of the students qualify for free and reduced lunch, and 5% of the students are considered English Language Learners (ELLs). SSD represents a microcosm of the changes that are happening in Springville at large. As previously-mentioned, Springville has not traditionally been a gateway community for immigrants. Nevertheless, like other communities within the state, it has experienced a significant immigration influx over the last ten years. My study considers the situated issues non-gateway cities face when dealing with demographic shifts, the role DLI programs play in how the cities deal with these changes, as well as the concerns and empirical evidence put forward by multiple scholars (Cervantes-Soon, (2014); Flores, (2016); Palmer, (2010); Valdes, (1997); Valdez, Freire & Delavan, (2016) among others) regarding the complexity of sociocultural, economic, linguistic and political factors that intersect in DLI settings.

**The Role of Policy in the DLI Program at SSD**

Policies at the federal level, such as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), signed into law in December of 2015, and at the state level, like Wisconsin's Bilingual-Bicultural Education statute (Subchapter VII of Chapter 115), played a momentous role in the creation of the DLI program at SSD. The implementation of the new federal ESSA policy, replacing the 2001 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislature, provided more flexibility to states in terms of classification and assessment of English learners. This new policy allowed school districts such as SSD to consider options like DLI programs to address the needs of their linguistically diverse students, while still including other school populations.

At the state level, Wisconsin's bilingual statute specifies "trigger" numbers, requiring school districts to provide bilingual services in schools that serve at least twenty students who speak the same non-English language in grades 4-12. This number decreases to at least ten students in grades K-3 (115.97.2-4). Schools like OES in SSD were out of compliance with this statute since it met the "trigger" number for bilingual services but did not have the adequate resources or programs to abide by this requirement. SSD administration opted for the implementation of a DLI program at OES, seeking to comply with the state policy (DLI program teacher, personal communication, September 27, 2017).

Against this backdrop, SSD opened its first DLI program in Oakville Elementary School (OES) in the Fall of 2017. Taking into consideration that one of the 2016-2019 school district goals is to "ensure an inclusive, innovative, inspiring, culturally and linguistically responsive and supportive learning environment for all students" (Springville School District website, 2017), embracing dual language immersion appeared to be one of the steps the district was taking to

create learning environments that support linguistically diverse students and provide quality instruction.

## Research Setting

Using purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2012), I selected Springville School District (SSD), an affluent, predominantly White, suburban, Midwestern school district that, as mentioned above, opened its first DLI program at Oakville Elementary School in the Fall of 2017. This district was particularly interesting because it had a reputation for high student achievement; even so, opportunity gaps existed between racial majority and minority students (SSD employee, personal communication, May 2017). Moreover, the demographic shift that has been changing the landscape of the U.S. since the 1990s (Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Ennis, Rios-Vargas & Albert, 2011) had occurred incrementally in SSD, urging the school community to actively consider issues of equity and diversity among the student population. In this district, 26% of the student population is students of color (8% Latino, 8% Asian, 5% Black, 5% two or more races, 0.3% American Indian). Eighteen percent of the students qualify for free and reduced lunch, and 5% of the students are considered English Language Learners (ELLs).

The elementary school where the DLI program debuted, OES, had the largest Latin@ population in the district—22%. In the year in which I conducted my research, the program opened at Kindergarten level only. The program model was a 50/50, two-teacher model where students received 50 percent of their academic instruction in Spanish and 50 percent of their academic instruction in English. One teacher taught in Spanish and the other in English. Students switched teachers partway through the school day (SSD website, 2017). The participants were 18 kindergarten emergent bilinguals (the Bears class) and their English and Spanish teachers in the DLI program.

I became interested in conducting research in this setting because, as mentioned above, it was the first DLI program to open in this district. Furthermore, this was going to be the first formal academic experience of these students in a school setting, thus providing the opportunity to explore the beginning of the identification process, and how social constructions manifested and intersected in different ways in this space. In addition, even though several studies have been conducted in Kindergarten DLI classrooms (Leoni-Bacchus, 2002; Hausman-Kelly, 2001; Gort & Sembiante, 2015; Pontier & Gort, 2016), they have not directed their attention to how emergent bilinguals understand and navigate the intersectionality of race, social class position, and language in these settings.

The studied DLI program had a committed and highly qualified staff (Fitts, 2006; Escamilla, Baca, Hoover, Almanza de Schonewise, Chavez, Fitts, 2005) that was assembled while keeping in mind pedagogical, sociolinguistic, academic, and cultural considerations (DLI teacher, personal communication, September 27, 2017). Thus, this program provided fertile ground for focusing my examination on sociocultural and linguistic issues, rather than academic or programmatic considerations. Lastly, over the previous two years, I had developed a good rapport with administrative personnel and teachers who granted me entrance to the site. My familiarity with the culture of the school and staff was beneficial to continue establishing relationships of trust in this location (Shenton, 2004).

**The Micro-Context of the Setting: Organizational & Sociopolitical Elements of the DLI Program**

From its inception, the DLI program at OES faced challenges. Spurred by the "rich promise" of dual language education (Lindholm-Leary, 2005), and the rising statistics in the number of Latin@ children attending district schools, SSD decided to open its first DLI program

(English/Spanish) in the Fall of 2017. The program aimed to "ensure an inclusive, innovative, inspiring, culturally and linguistically responsive and supportive learning environment for all students" (SSD website, 2017). It made sense to open a DLI program at OES, the elementary school with the largest Latin@ population in SSD.

Surrounded by the aftermath of one of the most controversial and conflicting U.S. presidential elections of modern times (2016) in terms of racial and ethnic relationships, the SSD district administration was committed to designing and implementing a high quality DLI program (DLI program teacher, personal communication, September 27, 2017). However, what the district administrators did not take into consideration was how the sociopolitical climate of the country at large was going to impact the Latin@ and White families in the district. For example, for a program that they thought was going to be highly sought out by Latin@ & White families alike, the DLI program did not get as many students as expected. According to one of the teachers involved in the process, the reason may have been connected to the wider socio-political climate of the nation and its ramifications in the state and the city of Springville (DLI program teacher, personal communication, September 27, 2017).

Many of the Latin@ families in the city, one of the teachers mentioned, felt unsafe and decided to move out of the state while some others decided to return to Mexico. She expressed, *"I was talking to one of the restaurant owners nearby and he was also saying that he has lost many of his workers because they have left. Many of our families have moved because they are afraid."* (personal communication, September 27, 2017). This unexpected demographic turn in the community left the DLI program at OES with few Latin@ families willing to enroll their kindergarten children in the program. Some of them considered, according to some conversations the teachers had had with several families, that it would make them a clear target for immigration

issues, and it would place them and their children in a vulnerable position (DLI program teacher, personal communication, October 12, 2017). Thus, lack of kindergarten Latin@ children to enroll in the program was the first hurdle the DLI program at OES encountered, although it was not the only one. Surprisingly, White parents at OES didn't come in large numbers to join the program either. One teacher mentioned that they were expecting to have White parents "lining up" outside of the school wanting to have their children in the DLI program, but this didn't happen (personal communication, October 12, 2017).

The administration's expectations regarding the presumed popularity of the DLI program among White parents was reasonable, especially if we consider scholarship that points to White, middle-class parents choosing to enroll their children in DLI programs as a way to gain access to linguistic and cultural capital for their children (see for example Cloud, Genesee & Hamayan, 2000; Doherty, 2009; Silver, 2011, among others). According to the Spanish teacher, the lack of interest among the White families in the program may have also been connected to the larger sociopolitical climate of the country and the controversial rhetoric that still reverberated in many counties of this Midwestern state. In addition, the teacher also mentioned that she personally thought that White parents at OES were mostly afraid that their children were not going to be the best in their classes (personal communication, October 16, 2017). In other words, she concluded that in a community where parents made sure to provide the best head start for their children, focused on boosting their children's confidence, and signing them up for extra-curricular activities to further their future educational aspirations, the DLI program at OES represented an experiment that many of them didn't seem to be willing to participate in. Being faced with this situation, the administration at SSD started recruiting children from within the district, but outside of the OES area. The result was a DLI program that deviated in more ways than one from

the ideal DLI program teachers and administrators had envisioned

**Oakville Elementary School (OES)**

OES has the largest Latin@ population among the elementary schools in the district—22%. Its total student population in 2017 was 350 students in grades PK-4, and its minority enrollment (including Latin@) was 43%, which is more than the state average of 29%. At OES, 36% of the students were eligible for free lunch, a rate that was significantly higher than the average for SSD (26.7%). In the 2016-2017 school year, the majority, 197 students, or 56.9% of the student population at OES identified as White, making up the largest segment of the student body. Hispanic students made up 21.2% of the student body. A typical school in Springville is made up of 79.3% White students, so OES has a slightly different ethnic distribution compared to other schools in the city. In the 2005-2006 school year, 228 students, or 61.1%, identified as White, and only 71 students, or 19%, identified as Hispanic. In addition, 15% of all students at OES are currently considered to have limited English proficiency. This number is much higher than the median across all reported elementary schools in this Midwestern state (5%).

Finally, in terms of economic disadvantage, OES has also seen an incremental rise in its numbers. In the 2005-2006 school year, 36.7% of the students were classified as economically disadvantaged, while in the 2016-2017 academic year this number climbed to 40.5%. This last number looks alarming when compared to the national poverty rate for children that year, which was 19%[12]. In the present research, these demographic and socioeconomic trends are markedly significant because they point to the combination of social factors that converge in DLI programs, and to the broader contextual factors associated with the focal setting. As Weis & Fine (2012) explain, "social theory and analyses cannot afford to separate the lives or safe spaces or

[12] https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cce.asp

even conditions tagged as social problems from global and local structures" (p. 175); and this relation seemed to be particularly important as I analyzed social constructions in the DLI program at OES.

**The Bears Class**

Despite the less than ideal circumstances[13] surrounding the opening on the DLI program at OES, the district administration went ahead with plans to start the program. They had invested a lot of effort, money, and resources to open it, and it was too late for them to deviate from the plan (DLI program teacher, personal communication, October 12, 2017). Thus, the DLI program was launched with 34 children (divided into two classes of 17 children, the Bears and the Lions) and two teachers (Ms. Gabby, the Spanish teacher, and Ms. Rosie, the English teacher substituting for Ms. Nancy, the head English teacher). From the two classes that comprised the DLI program, I chose to study the Bears class. One of the main reasons I chose this class instead of the Lions was because I received 100% consent from the parents and teachers and assent from the children to conduct my investigation. The second reason was because the racial, ethnic, social, and linguistic makeup of the class was very diverse. Thus, it was an ideal setting to explore children's perceptions and negotiation strategies in regard to social constructions.

Each one of the children in this group added a new layer of complexity to their shared environment. These students, who spent most of their school days moving between the English and Spanish classrooms, represented a wide spectrum of racial and ethnic backgrounds including African, African-American, Latin@, mixed race, and White. Their social class[14] was also varied.

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[13] Besides lacking the number of dominant Spanish-speakers for the program, they also had to find a replacement for the head English teacher who was on maternity leave.

[14]Following Bourdieu's (1984) rationale, social class was determined taking into account the structure of relations (symbolic and economic) in the lives of the participants. Additionally, I took into consideration the definition of social class that other scholar have used in the past: "one's position in the economic hierarchy in society that arises from a combination of annual income, educational attainment, and occupation prestige (Kraus, Park & Tan, 2017, p. 423; Adler, Boyce, Chesney, Cohen, Folkman, Khan, Syme, 1994; Oakes & Rossi, 2003).Thus, social class in this

According to their teachers and the home information they had access to, most children were from a working class and middle-class background and several of them were from an upper-middle class background. This was also a surprising fact for the teachers because they expected to have more students from an upper-middle class background considering that SSD is a relatively wealthy school district.

Speaking about the linguistic backgrounds of the Bears, out of the 17 students that comprised the class initially (in late November another student joined the class), the Spanish teacher declared: *"maybe four or five could be considered dominant Spanish speakers, if I am being generous"* (personal communication, October 12, 2017). What she meant by this was that not all of the children who were identified as dominant Spanish speakers used that language as their main vehicle of communication outside of school. All of them were emergent bilinguals, and in some cases, English was their preferred language. Table 2 below shows in detail the racial, ethnic, social class, and linguistic background of the children in the Bears class.

*Table 2.*
**Racial, Ethnic, Social, and Linguistic Background of the Bears Class**

| Name | Racial/Ethnic Background | Social Class Background | Language (s) spoken at home | Dominant Language[15] |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gwen | Black (African) | Middle Class | German, English | English |
| Isabel | Latina | Working class | Spanish | Spanish |

study was established by considering the zip code of the students' homes, the type of homes they lived in, and occupation of the parents. The children from a working-class background lived in small apartment complexes in some of the low-income areas of Springville; their parents worked in the service industry (e.g. hairdresser, cook, custodial work, etc.) and in some cases were receiving some form of financial assistance from the government. The children from a middle-class background lived in houses located in areas that were generally considered affordable in Springville. The parents of these children were in professions like school teaching and mid-level administrative positions. The children from an upper middle-class background lived in bigger houses, in some of the most expensive areas of Springville. The parents of these children worked in white collar jobs performing managerial and high-level administrative work.

[15] In this study the children's "dominant" language was determined using a combination of three identifying factors: 1. Asking the teachers what they considered was the "dominant" language of the student (the one the child used the most when communicating) and how the student had been classified in the program (English language model or Spanish language model). 2. Asking the students during the interviews about the language they preferred to use when communicating. 3. Observing the language practices of each student in the school context.

| Mario | Latino | Middle Class | Spanish & English | Spanish |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nelly | Latina | Working class | English & Spanish | English-understands and speaks some Spanish |
| Iker | Latino | Working class | Spanish | Spanish |
| Alberto | Latino | Middle class | English & Spanish | English |
| Suri | Latina | Middle class | Spanish & English | English- understands and speaks some Spanish |
| Cindy | Mixed race<br><br>(Latino & White) | Middle class | English & Spanish | English |
| Lina | Mixed Race<br><br>(Latino & African-American) | Working class | English | English |
| Joseph | Mixed Race<br><br>(Latino & White) | Working class | English | English |
| Lydia | Mixed Race<br><br>(Latino & White) | Working class | English | English |
| Kevin | White | Upper-middle class | English | English |
| Tyler | White | Middle class | English | English |
| Kasey | White | Middle class | English | English |
| Ellie | White | Middle class | English | English |
| Jacob | White | Upper-middle class | English | English |
| Emma | White | Middle class | English | English |
| Jabbar (joined the class in November) | Black (African-American) | Working class | English | English |

The diverse sociolinguistic, ethnic, and racial context of the Bears class was further compounded by the presence of very different teachers and support staff. The Spanish teacher, Ms. Gabby, was a self-identified Latina, bilingual, from Puerto Rico. The substitute English teacher, Ms. Rosie, was a reading specialist, monolingual, White teacher, from the Midwest. Ms. Nancy[16], the classroom head English teacher, was a White, bilingual teacher, from the Midwest. The support staff was comprised of two contrasting groups of people assigned to each classroom

[16] She returned to school in late November.

(English & Spanish). In the English classroom, all the staff were monolingual, Midwestern, white women, while in the Spanish classroom the support staff were bilingual, Latin@, brown women. The apparent differences between these groups of people seemed to reveal a clear racial, ethnic, and linguistic line of division in this program (Juarez, 2008).

The particular conditions and elements associated with the DLI program at OES, and the Bears class by default, illustrate the diverging realities interacting in contemporary school settings. The DLI program this class was part of differed significantly from the ideal DLI program models discussed in bilingual education literature (e.g., Lindholm-Leary, 2005; Cloud et. al.). From the language arrangements to the curriculum employed, it all seemed to scream at times, as the Spanish teacher said, *"we're flying the plane as we're building it"* (personal communication, January 23, 2018). But such is the precarious existence of a significant number of our present-day, public-school communities serving culturally diverse students and emergent bilinguals (Cervantes-Soon, Dorner, Palmer, Heiman, Schwerdtfeger, Choi, 2017). Opening a DLI program is never an easy endeavor. It was precisely this complex reality I sought to better understand as I spent one academic year delving into the multilayered realities that converged under very particular conditions within the Bears class.

## Research Approach

Various methodological approaches have been used to study dual language spaces of learning and their impact on emergent bilingual children. However, after an extensive review of the literature, analyzing my overarching research questions, and examining distinct possible methodological approaches (and associated tools), I found that an ethnographic case study was the best approach for examining the phenomenon under investigation. A case study methodology is typically used to achieve a thorough understanding of a specific situation and its meaning for

the subjects involved (Merriam, 1998). As Erickson (1984) explains, “what makes a study ethnographic is that it not only treats a social unit of any size as a whole but that the ethnography portrays events, at least in part, from the points of view of the actors involved in the events” (p. 52). In addition, because I was interested in answering “how” and “why” questions (Yin, 1994), this methodology helped me to focus on “the process rather than outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than confirmation” (Merriam, 1998, p. 19). Moreover, I was able to “get as close to the subject of interest” as I possibly could (Bromley, 1986, p. 23), delve into the intricacies of the phenomenon under study, and discern what people were, as opposed to what they were not, and how the individuals I studied made “sense of things” (Kirkland, 2014, p. 184).

Finally, an ethnographic case study approach enabled me to study the uniqueness of this kindergarten class drawing on multiple sources of information (participant observations, semi-structured interviews, video-recorded lessons) to uncover knowledge that would have been difficult to have access to otherwise (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1998). Since case studies are characterized by their acute descriptions and examinations of a “single unit or bounded system” (Smith, 1978), and ethnography produces detailed, rich descriptions and analyses that aim to unpack the particular, not to assess the general, I believe the combination of my research approach and ethnographic tools yielded the type of data that I needed to answer my research questions.

In this year-long ethnographic case study, the single unit of analysis was the DLI kindergarten class and the social unit it represented (Merriam, 1998). This inquiry examined the participants’ interactions in depth to thoroughly understand the context, gain an emic perspective through fostering relationships of trust, and describe activities in detail in order to advance the

understanding of socially constructed notions of diversity and their effects in bilingual contexts (Merriam, 1998). As mentioned above, I chose to conduct a single case study because it afforded the individualized attention to interactions that is essential for gathering the detailed and varied data needed for my analysis. Regarding this Palmer (2009) explains, “there is much to be learned from a single case in terms of intricacies of interaction” (p. 184). The questions guiding this ethnographic case study are:

1. How do kindergarten emergent bilinguals in a dual language immersion class perceive and respond to socially-constructed notions such as race, ethnicity, social class position, and bilingualism?
2. How do kindergarten emergent bilinguals in a dual language immersion class enact and negotiate the intersections of race, ethnicity, social class position, and language?

## Data Sources

Taking into consideration that the use of ethnographic methods involves a “deliberate inquiry process guided by a point of view, rather than a reporting process guided by a standard technique or set of techniques” (Erickson, 1984, p. 51), I selected several ethnographic research tools which I considered would adequately guide my case study exploration to gather appropriate data for my research. My data sources consisted of participant observations, semi-structured interviews, and video-recorded classroom interactions.

### Participant Observations

Some of the strengths of this tool resided in the affordances that it provided to get closer to a situation (a fish in water), while also allowing me to, importantly, “stand away from it (a curious observer peering into the fish bowl).” (Kirkland, 2014, p. 187). As a participant observer, I was able to participate in the day to day activities in the research setting, which helped me to

develop rapport with participants and to gain an emic perspective. I interacted with the students during regular lessons and assisted them in the classroom during structured (individual and group work, class projects, etc.) and unstructured (snack and lunch time, free choice activities, etc.) time. I recall one incident in particular, which confirmed to me the significance of this tool for my research purposes. One morning, as I arrived in the classroom and started to join children in their free play time, one of the children from the table I had joined raised her voice and pointing at me she asked the teacher: "Ms. Gabby, is she a child?" (field notes, 03/13/2018). Having spent several months in the classroom, I realized that, as a participant observer, I had developed such a good rapport with the children that they were trying to confirm if I was one of them. Spending ample time with these children aided in the goal of gaining an emic perspective and understanding the phenomenon from the participants' point of view.

In addition, this tool allowed me to represent a close and socio-culturally adept outlook. I was able to conduct my research not as an external observer, but as an individual who could examine the context carefully because I was participating in it. Within this context, I was able to get close to the action in order to describe and record thick and textured accounts that could reflect the richness of the observed experiences. As a participant observer, I spent over 230 hours in the field, over a period of 8 months, and produced three entire notebooks of field notes, and over 100 pages of typed notes. My descriptive and detailed field notes (Dyson & Genishi, 2005) recorded emergent bilinguals' interactions with peers, teachers, and school staff focusing on the linguistic and non-linguistic resources they employed in communication. I also recorded analytic memos during my field observations to maintain an ongoing conversation with the data (Saldaña, 2015).

Additionally, I used a separate notebook to document my personal reactions and impressions in the field, and to record my own "interpretive post-observation reflections" after each visit to the site (Lucero, 2012). These reflections were helpful to me to keep my own biases in check, and they also served as a tool to process my understandings, taking into consideration that my positionality as a researcher influenced the way I saw and understood the phenomenon under study. My time as a participant observer helped me to develop social agility and interactional acumen, as well as a sensitive way to perceive and observe what might have been invisible to the untrained eye (Kirkland, 2014). Participant observations (Creswell, 2012) were conducted two times per week during the school year of the study (2017-2018). I planned this intensive long-term involvement to reduce "reactivity" to my presence over time (Maxwell, 2013). As I described above, in time, I was perceived by the students as another "child" in the classroom.

To answer the first and second research questions, I used a structured observation strategy (Appendix C) to observe for emergent bilinguals' intra-group interactions (dominant English & dominant Spanish speakers), their inter-group interactions, and the interactions with the English and Spanish teachers in structured and unstructured time. In addition, as a participant observer, I was able to investigate students' interactions as emerging bicultural and bilingual individuals (Fitts, 2006), noticing emergent bilinguals' language choices (Appendix D). I observed how subjects in the studied setting continuously and actively built and rebuilt their "worlds not just through language, but through language used in tandem with actions, interactions, non-linguistic symbol systems, objects, tools, technologies, and distinctive ways of thinking valuing and believing" (Gee, 1999, p. 12). In addition, I looked at the contexts within situations and the purposes for which emergent bilinguals used English, Spanish, or both

languages, and the constraints and affordances of the environmental and ecological variables. As Aneja (2016) explains, the racialization of language and language users is not only linked to "accents and language varieties [it is] also connected to a social context, namely the "officialness" of the spaces in which they are used" (p. 581). Through these observations, I was able to better understand the role of the DLI space in the language practices of these students (Blommaert, Collins, & Slembrouck, 2005), the ways in which the children used language, and how these language practices changed over time.

**Semi-Structured Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews allowed me to gather accounts from my participants in order to better understand their views, beliefs, and opinions. Semi-structured interviews provided different and relevant perspectives into the researched context (Wiese, 2014). Furthermore, they contributed significant data to complement participant observations, and video recordings which I used to create a more accurate picture of the classroom environment and interactions. Using semi-structured interviews, I gathered verbal accounts from teachers and students that helped me to make inferences about the phenomenon under study. I situated these accounts in respect to the observed interactions that I documented before and after the interview to gather a better understanding of their social significance in the space (Jerolmack & Khan 2014, p. 184).

To answer my research questions, I conducted three semi-structured individual interviews (Appendices A & B)—one at the beginning of the school year, one mid-year, and one at the end of the school year—with the teachers and all emerging bilinguals participating in the study. Interviews were audio-recorded and conducted in the language (s) of preference of the participants. The interviews provided significant practitioner and student perspectives on the world of the class. The initial interview helped me gain an important overview of the

participants' perceptions and responses regarding messages associated with social constructions such as language, social class position, race, and ethnicity in this context. The second interview provided opportunities to elicit more information from the subjects after developing rapport during the first half of the school year. The final interviews gave me an opportunity for member-checking at the end of the study and a way to triangulate my findings and confirm the accuracy of my interpretations (Shenton, 2004).

The interviews with the teachers supplied a different—and pertinent—practitioner perspective into the world of the classroom, especially because this class had three different teachers during the academic year and each educator displayed dissimilar teaching practices. The voices of the teachers helped me to make sense of some of the interactions I witnessed in the classrooms. They provided important information about the children, their behaviors in and out of the classrooms, and the students' home lives which was useful when examining interactions within this setting (Hood, 2011). Additionally, the teachers' interviews helped me to understand how they themselves perceived social constructions in the program, their viewpoints regarding race, ethnicity, social class position, and language, their rationale for their decision-making processes regarding teaching and learning, and how their views may have had an impact on the processes of identification and identity performance of these students. It is important to mention here that these teachers were participants in the ecology of the class, and therefore played a significant role in shaping what happened within it. The processes that took place within this class were not static but fluid, and many changes were brought about by the interactions happening in this setting.

Considering the young age of the emergent bilinguals, I used sociograms, pictures of classmates, and drawings to help the children feel comfortable during the interviews and to elicit

information during our conversations. The use of these tools allowed me to create a safe space where I could "listen to [the students'] voices" (Hawkins, 2005); their voiced perceptions were important to investigate interpersonal, intergroup and intragroup relationships and dynamics. The semi-structured interviews also allowed me to have focused conversations around the themes of school and classroom interactions, friendships, language use, and bilingualism. In addition, they afforded me the flexibility to probe for further details or discuss specific topics in response to observations. These interviews provided both perspectival and speech data for my analysis.

**Video Recordings**

Video recordings afforded the space to delve into a more granular analysis of different interactions. This research tool allowed me to examine in detail audiovisual data that provided significant insights into the linguistic and social exchanges in the learning context. Classroom settings are busy and fast-paced environments where a great number of interactions take place constantly; and even though I was a participant observer in the setting, I realized that I was only going to be able to gather a certain amount of data through observation and field notes. The video recordings were an extra "set of eyes" in the field that aided me in the creation of a more accurate and nuanced picture of the research context and the interactions that took place within it.

I video recorded interactions in the English and Spanish classrooms twice a month (over 32 hours of video recordings), the first two days of each month, to capture the social and academic dynamics in these settings and the classroom discourse of the participants. Having set video recording dates allowed me to compare the observed exchanges from month to month noticing the ecology of the classrooms and how relationships were changing and developing in the studied settings. I video recorded formal instructional times (Math, Literacy, Science, Circle

time, etc.) in both English & Spanish classrooms, as well as, non-formal learning times, such as free-play time, classroom breaks, and transitions. I chose to video record these times because I wanted to examine students' and teachers' formal and informal interactions These video recordings also allowed me to explore the role of the learning space in how interactions were shaped and negotiated at different times. Table 3 below shows in detail the data sources I employed to answer each one of the research questions.

*Table 3.*
**Research Questions and Data Sources**

| | Participant Observations | Semi-structured Interviews | Video recordings |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Research Question 1:** How do kindergarten emergent bilinguals in a dual language immersion class perceive and respond to socially-constructed notions such as race and ethnicity, social class position, and bilingualism? | X | X | X |
| **Research Question 2:** How do kindergarten emergent bilinguals in a dual language class enact and negotiate the intersections of race and ethnicity, social class position, and language? | X | X | X |

## Data Analysis

To analyze the data collected through field notes, semi-structured interviews, and video recordings, I used critical discourse analysis (Gee, 2011) as my primary analytical tool to study in detail the language used by participants and their interactions, keeping in mind that "to understand anything fully you need to know *who* is saying it and *what* the person saying it is trying to do […] who we are and what we are doing when we say things matters" (Gee, 2011, p. 2-3, emphasis in original). Using critical discourse analysis as a linguistic method of analysis under the umbrella notion of raciolinguistics (Alim, 2016) allowed me to further engage in critical interpretive conversations regarding the relationship between social constructions such as language, race, social class position, and power across diverging racial and ethnic contexts

(Alim, 2016).

Employing critical discourse analysis, I focused on the seven building tasks of language: significance, practices (activities), identities, relationships, politics (the distribution of social goods), connections, signs, systems and knowledge (Gee, 2011), in order to analyze how subjects in this setting continuously and actively built and rebuilt their "worlds not just through language, but through language used in tandem with actions, interactions, non-linguistic symbol systems, objects, tools, technologies, and distinctive ways of thinking valuing and believing" (Gee, 1999, p. 12). During my time in the field, I wrote researcher memos to track emerging themes, ideas, and reflections while in the focal setting. These memos helped me during my data analysis, along with my field notes, to provide some context for the speech and recorded data.

I listened to all the interviews and watched the video-recordings several times. From the video recordings, I identified '"speech events"— singular events inside speech situations (e.g., a conversation between students at the carpet)—that explicitly or inexplicitly addressed themes such as race, ethnicity, language use, social class position and bilingualism (Alim & Smitherman, 2012). I was conscious of the fact that when it comes to social constructions, the manifestations of these notions may be subtle. In fact, in some cases these may be reflected or represented in interactions where they may not be explicitly addressed at all. Therefore, I reviewed the videos multiple times, flagging those instances that I considered represented significant speech events connected to the studied phenomenon. For example, I noticed in several videos that over time, in the Spanish lessons, White middle-class and upper-middle class children took on the role of the "language brokers" in the Spanish classroom. After watching the videos in chronological order several times, I observed how some of these children began using translation and language brokering as a way to exercise power and gain control of the classroom

interactions (for more on this see Chapter 5). Field notes helped, during this stage of the data analysis, to provide a context to aid in the process of selection.

After this, I transcribed (and translated when necessary) all the interviews and the identified speech events examining them closely. I chose to do the transcriptions and translations of the interviews and videos myself to make sure to capture the richness of the spoken interactions. Once the transcriptions were completed, I reviewed the data carefully and created a set of open and descriptive codes (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). Some of these codes were: bilingualism, monolingualism, language ideologies, DLI program, children's strategies, teachers' strategies, race, ethnicity, social class, etc. The coding structures were adjusted and verified as I reviewed the data multiple times to foster a process of analytical refinement. After this, I used process and pattern coding (Saldaña, 2016) to code my field notes, interviews, and other speech data. During this process, I took notice of the similarities and differences, flows, and structures present in the data. In this stage of my analysis, I used coding categories informed by the research questions and theories guiding my explorations. Some of these coding categories were race vs. ethnicity, habitus, symbolic capital, language use, dynamic bilingualism, separate bilingualism, language and space, language and race, embodied identity, positionality, etc. I conducted numerous repeated readings in order to develop a coding system for speech extracts. The transcribed speech events and interviews provided me with "naturalistic speech data in which to ground my analysis" (Lucero, 2012).

Next, I examined the data thoroughly multiple times focusing on comparing and contrasting the data from the interviews, video-recordings, and field notes. In this stage, I focused on who was using what language (s), the message that was conveyed, in what situations,

and for what purpose. As part of this round of analysis, I examined questions such as the ones posed by Gee (2011):

1. How is this piece of language being used to make certain things significant or not and in what ways?
2. What practice (activity) or practices (activities) is this piece of language being used to enact (i.e., get others to recognize as going on)?
3. What identity or identities is this piece of language being used to enact (i.e., get others to recognize as operative)? What identity or identities is this piece of language attributing to others and how does this help the speaker or writer enact his or her own identity?
4. What sort of relationship or relationships is this piece of language seeking to enact with others (present or not)?
5. What perspective on social goods is this piece of language communicating (i.e., what is being communicated as to what is taken to be "normal," "right," "good," "correct," "proper," "appropriate," "valuable," "the way things are," "the way things out to be," "high status or low status," "like me or not like me," and so forth)?
6. How does this piece of language connect or disconnect things; how does this make one thing relevant or irrelevant to another?"
7. How does this piece of language privilege or disprivilege specific sign systems (e.g., Spanish vs. English, etc.) or different ways of knowing and believing or claims to knowledge and belief (e.g., Science vs. "common sense," etc.)? (pp. 16-20)

This examination helped me to explore language attentively "informed and guided by

ethnographic and theoretical understandings" (Podesva, 2016, p. 216). This analytical tool guided the development of "an ongoing and evolving set of codes" (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998) from the data such as: language status, school linguistic norms, classroom linguistic norms, identity enactment, language and power, spoken messages (regarding language, race, ethnicity and social class), unspoken messages (regarding language, race, ethnicity and social class),etc.

Subsequently, I took a mixed approach to the data analysis, one that was both iterative and theoretically based. In vivo coding allowed me to highlight the language used by participants and the different meanings ascribed to it. As I proceeded, I inductively identified other codes in the data such as belonging, acceptance, otherness, linguistic deviancy, linguistic normalcy, translanguaging, language brokering, linguistic accommodation, grouping strategies, identity negotiation, monoglossic perspectives, heteroglossic perspectives, etc. to also shape my analysis. I adopted an intersectional approach to the data, bearing in mind that race is always produced in combination with social class and other social constructions (Alim, 2016). From this perspective, I focused on the "different rules of language use" that certainly play a role in how different ethnic and racial groups communicate (Alim, 2016, p. 169). Then, I used deductive coding to create a recursive data analysis process (Graue & Walsh, 1998). I drew on the three different data sources above-described for triangulation, as a way to avoid validity threats in this case study (Maxwell, 2013; Palmer, 2009). Furthermore, I strove to provide an accurate and transparent report of my data and analysis, including a "thick description of the phenomenon under scrutiny," and regularly assessed the adequacy of the used methods (Shenton, 2004, p. 69).

Finally, taking into consideration that discourse analysis cannot be taken to "reveal a 'truth' lying within the text," and the consequent need to acknowledge my own research findings as "open to other, potentially equally valid, readings" (Burr, 1995, p. 75), at the end of my data

analysis, I did a final member check with the participating teachers (about the data pertaining to them) in order to improve the accuracy and validity of my findings. For the students, I added elements of member checking in the final interview. The participants' comments were considered when working on the final analysis of the data in relation to the research questions underlying my inquiry and the final report of the findings. Once all inputs and biases were taken into account to the best of my ability, I carried out the final interpretation and analysis that were mine to make.

## Researcher Positionality

In social research, reflexivity plays a crucial role because it points to the singularity of our perceptions and the multifaceted nature of the world we seek to study. Without a diligent interrogation of who we are, the ontologies of our research, and how we understand the world, we, as researchers, run the risk of neglecting the complexity of human lives and a world of possibilities beyond exclusive versions of the "truth." Thus, we must engage in critical self-reflection to become aware of how our epistemologies may shape and guide our investigations. This is one critical aspect I have considered throughout this research.

Being conscious of my researcher subjectivity made me aware of particular interpretations and of how the data analysis was going to be impacted by my biases (Creswell & Miller, 2000), presumptions (Crotty, 1998), and assumptions (Charmaz, 2006) based on my various personal and historical experiences. As a bilingual, mixed-race, middle-class, Latina, who grew up in Colombia and attended public schools in a country with pronounced linguistic homogeneity in educational settings, my perceptions have been influenced by my own experiences and background. I have also lived and worked in different countries as an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher, which has provided me with a broad understanding of the

diverging social meanings of the categories of race, ethnicity, social class and the pivotal role of language.

My own language and cultural practices have positioned me in different roles in the various nations where I have lived. In some places, my bilingualism, skin color, and phenotypical features have been considered desirable and therefore have granted me a high status in those locations (e.g., Thailand and Mexico). However, the same physical features and linguistic skills have also rendered me as the marginalized Other in another places (e.g., England and the U.S.). These experiences have convinced me of the socially-constructed nature of ideas connected to race, ethnicity, social class and language, and how they can be understood and negotiated differently according to the perceptions of different social actors. These understandings were inevitably brought into all parts of my research project and impacted how I considered the interactions among the researched subjects. As Peshkin (1982) contends, subjectivity is like a "garment that cannot be removed […] subjectivity is at play in all researchers whatever their methodology, the nature of their research problem or their reputation for personal integrity" (p. 286).

As a way to mediate the relationship between my own subjectivity and the critical analysis of the phenomenon under study, I strove to be aware at all times of my own biases in regard to aspects such as language marginalization, discrimination, and social privilege. With this in mind, I engaged in daily work that involved critical self-reflection regarding my research involvement, educational background, and limited understandings within the studied setting. I wrote journal entries to examine my preconceptions in light of relevant theory and to explore themes associated with race, ethnicity, social class position, and bilingualism in the researched context. It was within this self-reflective disposition where I found a balanced place where I was

able to forge significant understandings of how race, ethnicity, social class and language intersected at different points in the focal setting, and to connect empirical findings to theoretical considerations.

Being a bilingual, culturally, and linguistically diverse kindergarten teacher helped me to create a good rapport with teachers and children in the studied setting. In a program that was in its first year, and lacking Spanish speakers, a bilingual volunteer was welcomed with open arms, especially in the Spanish classroom. Thus, my biliteracy skills in English and Spanish provided a certain level of "insider" status that aided in my research endeavors. This distinct position enabled my easy access to the setting and facilitated conversations regarding issues of race, ethnicity, social class, and language with the teachers and students. In particular, my conversations with the Spanish teacher, I believe, were facilitated by our similar linguistic, social, and ethnic backgrounds (Lewis, 2003). However, it is important to highlight at this point that even though I shared a similar ethnic, language, and socio-economic background with some of the teachers and students in this study, there were still some clear national identity distinctions and linguistic aspects, such as an accent variation (e.g., Colombian versus Mexican, Puerto Rican, Bolivian, etc.) that marked at times my outsider status in this context. As Schweber (2007) points out, "I'd be a fool to think that my positionality [didn't] matter" (p. 74), particularly because my linguistic register at times was different from the ones used by the Latin@ students and the Spanish teacher in the study, which created some times a break down in our communication.

Finally, I believe that my ethnicity helped me to become, in time, another member of the studied group. At times it felt as if I was just another brown woman in the DLI program, which seemed to be the setting where brown women were found in the studied school. I also felt that,

sometimes, my ethnic background and researcher position were clashing. Even though I tried to be aware of my emotional involvement at all times, there were many moments where, as a brown Latina, I empathized with the struggles of the teachers and some of the students in the program. At those times, I always went back to self-reflection and my theoretical understandings in order to keep a researcher distance with the researched subjects. I had to remind myself that despite feeling like an "insider" at times, there were still some broader images and narratives that I was missing (Schweber, 2007). This introspective disposition helped me to focus on the rich facts that I was observing rather than on the stirring turbulence around them.

# CHAPTER 4: THE BEARS CASE

**"Well, sir, if things are real, they're there all the time."**
**"Are they?" said the Professor; and Peter did not quite know what to say"**

— *C.S. Lewis, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

**"There is no truth, there is only perception"**

— *Gustave Flaubert*

The Bears class was comprised of 18 students with diverse racial, ethnic, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds. These characteristics played a significant role in how they interacted with each other and understood their bilingual world. Contrary to what some traditional theorists of child development have argued regarding children's inability to understand abstract social concepts such as class or race (e.g., Goodman, 1964; Holmes, 1995; Porter, 1971), the actions and behaviors of the children in the Bears class showed that they were not passive receivers or reproducers of adult messages. They were actors who provided their own explanations (Vygotsky, 1962), used their entire repertoires to respond to their perceptions (Rymes, 2010), and played an active role in constructing the bilingual world they inhabited (Alim, 2016; Gee, 2011; Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001).

My exploration of verbal and non-verbal interactions and exchanges in the Bears class reveals that the children perceived and responded to racial, ethnic, social, and linguistic understandings in complex, covert, and overt ways that elude easy explanations. In this chapter, I focus on three particular aspects: first, I identify the messages regarding social constructions such as race, ethnicity, and language conveyed to the children in the Bears class inside and outside the classroom. Additionally, I analyze how these children perceived and responded to

those messages through different processes of socialization and systems of classification. Second, I document the ways in which the children in the Bears class were actively engaged in forming their own judgments and engaging in sociocultural processes (Park, 2011). Finally, I discuss how these children perceived and responded to intersecting social constructions such as race, ethnicity, social class, and bilingualism through the deliberate use of their entire communicative repertoires (Rymes, 2010) using the input received from different sources.

My analysis highlights how the children in the Bears class were constantly analyzing their surroundings and examining the people and social relations in it (Gee, 2011). These children received input regarding social constructions from their surrounding environment, adults, and each other—and then remade or used it in their own interactions. These findings challenge the assumption in much of the conventional child development literature that has "conceptualized the socialization of children as a process in which complete adults instruct and train incomplete children, who thus imitate and mirror adults" (Mackay, 1974, as cited in Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001, p. 20). While children do learn a significant amount of information from others—after all, as human beings we "do not create our personal and social worlds out of nothing" (Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001, p. 20)—what is truly fascinating is how these children take the elements they find in their school environment and negotiate them, through languaging, in concert with peers and teachers, to make sense of and shape their social world.

**Messages Outside and Inside the Classroom**

Over the years, theorists of child development have argued that children are incapable of understanding or expressing particular social concepts unless the messages received come from an adult (see Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001 for a critical review). Furthermore, developmental perspectives, many of which have been highly influential in education research, framed racial

awareness as part of a linear process associated with cognitive maturity (Piaget, 1952). From this perspective, not enough attention was given to "the meanings that children learn to attach to racial and ethnic differences and the processes through which they engage in such meaning-making work in their encounters with different people in different contexts" (Park, 2011, p. 392).

Both the idea that children imitate adults' modeling and Jean Piaget's developmental theories have been found wanting as researchers have focused on taking an all-encompassing approach in order to examine how children make sense of their social contexts (Mead, 1934; Park, 2011; Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2011; Vygotsky, 1978). In so doing, scholars have found that children use language and other mediating tools to engage in and make sense of the world (Vygotsky, 1962). From this socio-cultural perspective, I argue that the children in the Bears class perceived social constructions such as race and ethnicity through a combination of messages conveyed outside and inside the classroom. These perceptions were mediated through language and other semiotic tools and responded to in various ways.

**Social Constructions and Systems of Classification: Race, Ethnicity, Social Class & Difference**

Oakville Elementary School (OES) felt like any other primary school I had visited in SSD. The entrance was decorated with colorful murals and children's artwork. In the office, I was greeted by a friendly secretary who welcomed me without asking many questions other than whose classroom I was going to visit. As I moved through the school, I felt the noise and chatter of children filling every corner of this airy space. OES had light colored walls, big windows, and multicolored decorative boards in English and Spanish at the main entrance. At first glance, it seemed that the bilingual signage and decoration posters on OES' main floor communicated diversity, inclusion, and cultural awareness. However, as I spent more time at this elementary

school, I started to notice conspicuous elements that had escaped my initial assessment. For instance, most of the children that I encountered in the hallways—not attending classes but taking "time-outs[17]" or being "monitored" by school staff—were children of color (African-American, Indian, and Latin@s). In addition, most of the school personnel, including teachers, were White. This racial and ethnic contrast caught my attention when I reviewed the student minority enrollment statistics of this school (43%) before one of my visits. Having such a diverse student body made me wonder about the lack of teacher diversity. The majority of teachers were white. The only noticeable exceptions were the bilingual support staff who were mostly brown women.

These two factors connected to racial and ethnic considerations in this context, I argue, were messages expressing very particular ideas of difference, authority, belonging, and classification in this space (Hall, 1997; Lewis, 2003; Olsen, 1997). They are the two important points I want to make about the way otherness was represented at OES. First, most of the children that the students in the Bears class observed as "troublemakers" or "not following rules," as they walked the halls at OES were children of color. In fact, in their own classroom, they often had a visit from a 4th-grade African-American boy who was sent there to "take a break." Second, the adults who were "enforcing the rules" and therefore deciding what was "acceptable"—or not—were White; the few non-White staff members were working to support the White teachers. Here, there is an underlying theme of race, ethnicity and difference. (Hall, 1997). What these children saw, I contend, was how a dark skin color (African-American, Indian, Latin@) was associated with particular behaviors (and punishments), while white skin (teachers in positions of authority) was correlated with power and acceptance.

[17] Children who were exhibiting behavior in class deemed unacceptable were removed from the classroom environment temporarily to "take a break."

In the context of OES, race and ethnicity became signifiers attached to certain groups of people and behaviors. As Hall (1997) expressed, "race works like a language;" and within the particularly racialized "system of communication" at OES, race and ethnicity, as signifiers, pointed to:

> systems and concepts of the classification of a culture, to its making meaning practices […] those things gain their meaning, not because of what they contain in their essence, but in the shifting relations of difference, which they establish with other concepts and ideas in a signifying field. (Hall, 1997, media interview)

The school experiences of the children in the Bears class in the "signifying field"—the space constituted by interwoven concepts that together make a whole— communicated critical messages about race, ethnicity, difference, and classification. But what is pivotal at this point is that, as Van Ausdale and Feagin (2001) express, "through experience, meaning moves beyond the recognition of shape, color, and size and proceeds toward recognition of relations and critical symbols" (p. 25). Through daily interactions at OES, racial and ethnic definitions and classifications started to operate and function in the Bears class. Meaning floats, as Stuart Hall (1997) points out, and "'the work of 'fixing' meaning to a particular representation is connected to the preference or privilege given to a particular message" (p. 228).

Thus, I witnessed children in the Bears class complaining about the behavior of a Black student and just laughing at the same behavior when performed by a White student. For example, when Tyler, a White student who had some behavioral difficulties (identified in his Individualized Education Plan), went to play with Emma and Gwen, he was always welcomed. However, when Jabbar, an African-American student, approached them to play he was almost always ignored or rejected by their playgroup. This may not have seemed significant as an

isolated occurrence, but what caught my attention was Emma and Gwen's separate and distinct interactions with Tyler and Jabbar during play time. On one occasion, Emma and Gwen had spent a significant amount of time building towers using blocks; Tyler approached their table and asked if he could play with them, they both smiled and said yes. After a while, Tyler seemed to have grown tired of the game and knocked down all the blocks—on purpose—and started laughing when he saw all the blocks on the floor. Emma and Gwen saw this and started laughing with Tyler while picking some of the blocks from the floor. The incident seemed to be taken as a funny one (field notes, 01/29/2018).

Nevertheless, that same week, Jabbar approached Emma and Gwen asking them if he could join them in their building game; they both ignored his request and kept on building. After a few minutes observing them quietly, Jabbar left the table but on his way out, he knocked down some blocks because he moved the table inadvertently. He started laughing when he saw the blocks on the floor. Immediately, Gwen and Emma started yelling at him and complained to the teacher about what Jabbar had done (field notes, 01/31/2018). This occurrence was not taken as funny, as in the case of Tyler's incident, but as aggravating and malicious. One may say that this could simply be explained by Emma and Gwen just not wanting to play with Jabbar because they didn't like him as a person and not because of his race. But after examining the data several times and reviewing the interactions of the children in the Bears class, I noticed that there was a distinct incident that may have accentuated a connection between Jabbar's race and "trouble-making," as I will explain.

When Jabbar joined the Bears class in November (a situation that I will return to in the next chapter), he didn't know any of the children; he was the only African-American in the class

and his dominant language was English. He seemed to be having a hard time in his new Spanish classroom as my field notes document:

> *"Jabbar remains quiet most of the time. Today I approached him after lunch because he was by the door and didn't want to come inside. The Spanish teacher wanted me to check on him, so I approached him and asked if he was ok. He looked at me and started crying, he said he wanted to go home."* (field notes, 11/14/2018)

Coming to a new school and classroom for the first time is hard enough, but for Jabbar, this situation was compounded by the fact that he knew no Spanish and was joining a DLI class later in the year when most students already knew each other and had already formed relationships. In particular, he seemed to be having a hard time in the Spanish classroom where he kept saying to the teacher, *"I don't know what you are saying, I don't know what is going on"* (field notes, 11/29/2017). One day, however, when Marcus (the African-American 4th grader who was constantly sent to the Bears English classroom to "take a break") entered the classroom and sat on his customary chair in front of the rug, Jabbar's eyes lit up. He called Marcus and started talking to him, saying, *"I know you, (Jabbar smiles) you are friends with my brother, I have seen you playing with my older brother"* (field notes, 11/15/2017). Although Jabbar and Marcus talked only briefly, this occurrence seemed to have created particular associations for Jabbar in the Bears class. After this conversation, some children asked Jabbar and Marcus if they were related, *"do you know him? Is he your brother?"* (field notes, 11/15/2017). It seemed as if suddenly the children started to see physical similarities between these two students, and from that time onwards, I noticed a significant change in Jabbar's interactions with some of the students in the Bears class.

Prior to his conversation with Marcus, Jabbar was isolated and very quiet in the classroom; the other students just played with the friends they had already made. But after his conversation with Marcus, Jabbar started to be characterized as "angry," "annoying," and "mean" by some students, who started to complain about his behavior (field notes, 01/31/2018). This was a clear pattern in the students' interviews:

| Interviewer's Questions | Response | Students' Names |
|---|---|---|
| *[…] And who do you* <u>*not*</u> *want to read a book with?*<br><br>*Why not these two?* | *Jabbar and Sury*<br><br>*because Sury hugs a lot and that annoys me, and Jabbar is* ***<u>mean</u>*** | Mario |
| *[…] So, you would invite [to your birthday party] everybody but not Jabbar?*<br><br>*Why not Jabbar?* | *Uh hum…*<br><br>*He* ***<u>kind of bugs me</u>*** | Ellie |
| *Would you like to invite Jabbar to your birthday party?*<br><br>*Why not?* | *No*<br><br>*Uhmm, because […] I could only invite some* | Jacob |
| *Why is Jabbar not your friend?* | *Because Jabbar is really* ***<u>annoying</u>****, he kind of pokes me and stuff, I don't really like it […] I already told you* ***<u>he's pretty annoying</u>*** | Kasey |
| *Why is Jabbar not your friend?* | *Because Jabbar* ***<u>bugs me</u>*** *about everything* | Lina |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Who would you invite to your birthday party?* | *I don't want to invite Jabbar because **he will break the toys of my brother*** | Isabel |
| *Who do you like to play with?* | *Jabbar is the only person I don't want to play with because **he is not my friend*** | Iker |
| *You don't you like to play with Jabbar? Why?* | *I don't like to play with Jabbar because **he is just… I don't know*** | Tyler |
| *Why wouldn't you want to work with Jabbar?*<br><br>*Because…*<br><br>*He is angry?* | *(long pause)*<br><br>*Because he is **angry***<br><br>*and **he looks like a monster*** | Gwen |

As I mentioned before, when Jabbar joined the class, the other children didn't seem to notice him at all. In fact, when I conducted the mid-year individual interviews with the children, only two students noticed that Jabbar's picture was up with the rest of the Bears class pictures (field notes, 01/17/2018). However, after that one interaction with Marcus, another African-American student and someone known in the Bears class as a "student who gets in trouble," the data suggests that children in this class started to actively construct racial concepts and ideas about Jabbar utilizing features from their surrounding environment to create negative social categorizations such as "trouble-maker" (Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001). From the 17 children interviewed in the Bears class, over half of them associated Jabbar with a negative characteristic; the other half of the class said that they did not play with him (interviews, 2017-2018).

Notwithstanding these apparent patterns, it may seem plausible to construe the particular traits associated with Jabbar as dependent on his individual personality rather than on his racialization as a black “Other” (read “trouble-maker”) in this class. Nonetheless, the video-recorded lessons make it difficult not to see clear correlations between outward appearance and the children’s inferences of personality characteristics. Students including Emma, Kasey, Ellie, Gwen, and Mario seemed not to be bothered by Tyler when he exhibited disruptive behavior (speaking loudly to students, laughing at them, poking them, etc.) in class; but the same students moved away from Jabbar and complained about his behavior (touching them to get their attention, asking them questions, etc.) when he interacted with them (video recordings, 2017-2018). I realized that there were apparent racial dynamics at play among these students. I further corroborated this when I had informal conversations with the children. Often times they would dismiss Tyler’s behavior as “too silly,” while describing Jabbar’s as “angry” (field notes, 01/23/2018).

Finally, it was Gwen and Tyler’s answers in their interviews about why they didn’t like/want to play with Jabbar which provided critical data for my analysis. Before their interviews, I had noticed that children were rejecting Jabbar, but I couldn’t connect their behavior to any specific factors until these children provided their responses. In the case of Tyler, his answer revealed that he couldn’t even identify the reason why he didn’t like to play with Jabbar **(I** ***don’t like to play with Jabbar because he is just… I don’t know)***. He knew there was something about Jabbar that he didn’t like, something that didn’t “feel right,” but he could not explain what it was. Gwen, however, pointed specifically to where she saw the problem. It was Jabbar’s look (phenotypical features) that made her somehow reject him (***he looks like a monster, he is angry)***. Her answers made me aware of the processes of racialization—choosing a

phenotypical feature to separate an individual attributing certain qualities based on experience, which leads to treating a person differently based on those attributes (Hoyt, 2016, media interview)—at play in this setting, and how these children were mapping racial meanings and systems onto human bodies (Alim, 2016; Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000). In this regard, Nethery (2018), speaking about the white gaze, explains how "the identity of a person of colour is taken from them, moulded into something monstrous within the white imaginary and subsequently returned to the person of colour in that monstrous form" (p. 281).

The responses and attitudes of these children revealed how systems of classification, as Hall (1997) expressed, "are used in order to divide populations into different ethnic or racial groups and to ascribe characteristics to these different groupings and to assume a kind of normal behavior or conduct about them" (media interview). Jabbar seemed to be "invisible" in the classroom until he was associated with a particular individual (Marcus the "trouble-maker"), and from that moment on, specific inferred characteristics began to be assumed as "normal" behavior (mean, angry, malicious) for him. The analysis of these interactions also evidences how children make sense of and respond to their perceptions. In the case of Jabbar, even though no adults were specifically characterizing him as a "trouble-maker" in the classroom, some children started creating those associations. Consequently, the messages they perceived from their surroundings were used to reinforce their established classifications.

For example, when adults talked continuously about Jabbar's ongoing tardiness to class, students in the Bears class were listening to it and making their own conclusions. I observed this when I asked Gwen one day about Jabbar and she said, *"Jabbar is eating breakfast, he is always late to class*" (field notes, 03/14/2018). I found the latter part of her remark very interesting because it reminded me of how meaning is "fixed" to a particular representation (Hall, 1997).

Some of the children in the Bears class started to create their own categories by making sense of what they saw in the hallways, the interactions they witnessed in the classroom, and the comments they heard from teachers and staff personnel. In this way, Jabbar was constructed as a "trouble-maker" because he looked like the students who were constantly in the halls, he had a connection to Marcus—and therefore must be a "trouble-maker" like him—and he was always late to class (deviant behavior).

Moreover, students' dissimilar attitudes towards Jabbar and Tyler for similar behaviors in similar circumstances are a telling example of how systems of classification operate. On repeated occasions, I noticed how Tyler and other White students in the Bears class were often given the benefit of the doubt when questioned about their actions and behaviors, while Jabbar and some dark-skinned Latin@ students were often simply considered as "trouble-makers" by some adults, and children (field notes, 03/28/2018). An important point to highlight here is how these children, as social actors, learned to interpret everyday interactions and from their interpretations, they transformed their behavior from thoughts into action (Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001). In the Bears class, students were forming classifications and being classified by perceptual and experiential distinctions. This, in turn, led to specific categorizations in regard to race, ethnicity, and difference in this context.

Some useful concepts to explore at this point in the analysis are Bourdieu's (1979) ideas in relation to the connection between space and consciousness. Even though Bourdieu's theories relate specifically to notions of social class, I argue, following Alim's (2016) line of reasoning, that race is always produced in combination with social class and other social constructions. For Bourdieu (1980), consciousness is always rooted in the human body, which is situated in the physical world (Ostrow, 2000). His notion of habitus was advanced as a "concept to explain the

process by which, in a socially plural situation, all individuals internalize as a guide to their actions and attitudes, the partial structural explanations of their situations which impinge upon them partially as a consequence of those situations" (Robbins, 2000, p. 16). This notion of Habitus is closely interrelated to Bourdieu's concept of field, a setting constructed by agents and in which their actions are located, have meaning and receive recognition (Robbins, 2000). In addition, Bourdieu (1977) asserts that "as an acquired system of generative schemes objectively adjusted to the particular conditions in which it is constituted, the habitus engenders all the thoughts, all the perceptions, and all the actions consistent with those conditions" (p. 93). Bourdieu's ideas of habitus and field shed light on the examination of the Bears class interactions because they point to how these children were able to understand the conditions at OES (the field) through their habitus of experience, and the racial and ethnic messages they perceived from the context.

The way students in the Bears class interacted with one another and how they perceived ideas of belonging and otherness in this space seemed to have been connected to the manner in which their actions were located and received recognition (e.g., funny vs. malicious) in the OES field. Thus, students like Tyler may have felt empowered by the conditions of the surroundings, the messages they perceived at OES, and the processes of socialization connected to these. This amalgamation of experiences may have provided what Bourdieu (1979) calls a "feel for the game." Tyler seemed to be aware that his behavior in this space, in part because of the way he looked, was accepted as "normal" and "funny" (he would laugh when adults were reprimanding children of color in the classroom and ignored the same adults when they were talking to him, something that was not condoned by adults when  a child of color did it) (field notes, 04/11/2018).

On the other hand, a student like Jabbar, who joined the class late in the year, was Black, and was unaccustomed to the routines of a DLI classroom, was classified into a racial group connected to singular characteristics, behaviors, and conducts that rendered him as the "dark", "malicious," "Other." Thus, phenotypic signs, such as skin color, and the behaviors associated with them, were used by children in the Bears class to create racial categorizations with their associated characteristics. These epidermal and mental connections, I maintain, served to create a particular logic of race, acceptance, and separation in this class—a logic that also revealed the intersection of race and dissimilar socialization processes (Laureau, 2003). This confining narrative, "inscribed" on some children's skin and perceived through a specific social lens, constructed "a fictive garb of race whose determinations are as arbitrary as they are damaging" (Cobb, 2015). I confirmed this as I documented the seating arrangements at the cafeteria during lunch:

> *Even though children can choose where to sit and whom to sit with, during lunch time it seems that there is a clear split: white children are sitting on one side of the table and dark-skinned children are sitting on the other side of the table* (field notes, 02/21/2018).

The interactions described above reveal how the relational dynamics of power, acceptance, and rejection are intricately connected to symbolic manifestations, social constructions, perceptions, and the relationship between the space and the individual (Bourdieu, 1977; Hall, 1977, Vygotsky, 1978). As Tony Morrison (1993) remarks, "insiders and outsiders are constructed and reified as the natural or essential result of group characteristics" (as cited in Brantlinger, 2003, p. 39). These characteristics unequivocally serve to construct racial and ethnic "realities" that can guarantee the "truth" of the things we perceive.

**Social Constructions and Systems of Classification: Language Use, Belonging, Race and Ethnicity.**

In addition to racial and ethnic signs and semantics, there were also linguistic markers of acceptance and belonging at OES. Communication in this school was almost always conducted in English (with the exception of the bilingual staff and some parents). From the entrance door (both secretaries were monolingual) to the all-school assemblies, school interactions outside of the Spanish classroom occurred in English. This particular aspect caught my attention as I was examining the environment outside the Bears' classrooms:

> *During school assemblies, the Spanish language is ignored or missing from the interactions. Videos are presented in English and all the communication is conducted in English unless there is something specific that the 'Spanish classroom' is doing.*
> (field notes, 02/07/2018)

The general school environment, and all-school gatherings in particular, cemented messages of linguistic belonging and otherness at OES. The Spanish language was never openly portrayed as part of the learning setting but rather as a distinctive Othering trait of the DLI classes. The only person speaking in a language other than English, most of the day, was the Spanish teacher. She tried to use every single opportunity to include the Spanish language in the everyday activities of the school, (e.g., during recess, lunch time, field trips, school functions, etc.) but without much success. In OES, therefore, one of the "unspoken" messages regarding the English language was its normalcy and belonging in this space.

On many occasions, I saw the children in the Bears class looking uncomfortable as they walked around the school premises having to listen to the Spanish teacher's directions in Spanish. I sensed that this somehow marked them as outsiders in this environment. Their feelings

of uneasiness were reinforced by other adults who interacted with these children. For example, one day as the Bears class was going downstairs to get their lunch and the Spanish teacher was telling the children, in Spanish, to be quiet, another teacher who was passing by said, *"How are they going to do what you ask them to do when they don't understand what you're saying?"* The Spanish teacher came to me and said: *"It's an uphill battle"* (field notes, 11/15/2017). All of the children in the Bears class witnessed this interaction, in which English was clearly identified by a teacher (who was White and therefore perceived as someone with authority and belonging in this space), as the normative language (the one everyone understood); the Spanish teacher—and the language she was using—was relegated to the role of outsider/Other. In this way, the Spanish language was designated as a deviant linguistic code and English, as a social construction, was used as a tool to classify groups of speakers in this setting (Alim, 2016; Otheguy, Garcıa, & Reid, 2015).

Sadly, that incident on the stairs was not an isolated occurrence for the Bears class. One day in the cafeteria, the Spanish teacher brought a CD in Spanish to be played during lunch time. Since children were listening to music in English every day, she thought it would be a good idea to also play music in Spanish (Ms. Gabby, personal communication, January 23, 2018). Ms. Gabby, the Spanish teacher, gave the CD to Ms. Nancy, the English teacher, for her to ask one of the support staff to play it, but the lunch room assistant refused to do it:

> ***English Teacher:*** *She wants the Spanish CD on*
>
> ***Support Staff:*** *No, this is an English space, Spanish is in her classroom.*
>
> (field notes, 01/23/2018)

After this interaction, the English teacher commented that she was in shock because she couldn't believe this person was saying that Spanish belonged in the Spanish classroom and not

everywhere in the school (field notes, 01/23/2018). Ms. Nancy, as the English teacher and therefore someone who "belonged" in the school, had never encountered an episode like this one before. She said, *"This is a communal space! I am going to buy a Spanish CD myself, and I'm going to ask her to put it on again to see if she does it."* The Spanish teacher commented, *"I want to cry, this is what I have been dealing with from the beginning of the year."* To this, the English teacher responded, *"Unbelievable!"* and the Spanish teacher retorted, *"Passive-aggressive racism"* (field notes, 01/23/2018).

There are many elements that intersect in this incident, but the two things that I will focus on are, firstly, the understanding that this school community had of the place of the Spanish language: "*Spanish is in her classroom."* Secondly, the ethnic discrimination associated with the Spanish language. For the support staff person who didn't want to play the CD, the Spanish language (and bilingualism for that matter) had no place outside the Spanish classroom. This was a clear message that the students were internalizing. I corroborated this a few days after the incident when I sat down with the Bears class in the same cafeteria during their lunch. I asked them if they spoke in Spanish at lunchtime, and all of them answered that they didn't. One of them explained that they spoke only English because that was the cafeteria and *"you don't speak Spanish in the cafeteria"* (Lydia, personal communication, January 25, 2018).

The words expressed by students when asked about their language practices at the cafeteria show how these children made sense of the incident they witnessed and actively re-shaped it as part of the social world they inhabited. At no point during the described incident did any of the adults involved explicitly tell the children, "you don't speak Spanish in the cafeteria." However, after witnessing this event, some of them took the message that they received from their surrounding social environment, synthesized the elements it contained, and made it into one

of their social and linguistic norms: "never speak Spanish at the cafeteria" (Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2011; Vygotsky, 1978). Figure 2 below shows a visual representation of this process.

***Figure 2.*** Message Processing into Social and Linguistic Norms.

In this way, strong messages of language separation and language status were being perceived and acted upon by the children in the Bears class.

With regard to ethnic discrimination associated with the Spanish language, it is apparent in the described episode that the Spanish language was not simply perceived as a "foreign" vehicle of communication, but that there were also cultural traits (such as music) that under the white gaze (Rosa & Flores, 2017) were sanctioned as "not belonging" in the general school space. Thus, people who spoke Spanish in that context were constructed not only as linguistically deviant but also as outsiders in relation to the rest of the school community (Gee, 2011). The support staff person seems to have felt that it was her duty to remind the Spanish teacher, the English teacher, and by default the children from the Bears class—who were witnessing this

episode—that they needed to limit their "abnormal" linguistic practices to the sanctioned space assigned within the school: the Spanish classroom.

This event reminded me of what anthropologist Mary Douglas, in her book *Purity and Danger* (1966), refers to as "matter out of place." Douglas (1966) explains that every culture has an order of classification built into it that appears to provide some stability to the culture. Within this order, people know their places and their ranks—in particular, which ones are considered inferiors and which superiors. The presence of something in a place where it doesn't belong is disturbing—what she calls "matter out of place." What she means by this, as Stuart Hall (1997) explains, is:

> You don't worry about dirt in the garden because it belongs in the garden but the moment you see dirt in the bedroom you have to do something about it because it doesn't symbolically belong there. And what you do with dirt in the bedroom is you cleanse it, you sweep it out, you restore the order, you police the boundaries, you know the hard and fixed boundaries between what belongs and what doesn't. (media interview)

"Cleansing" and "sweeping out," I contend, is what the support staff person was doing in the described incident. She was restoring the order and policing the boundaries ("*Spanish is in her classroom")* to maintain what she considered the natural—English speaking—order at OES.

Another aspect of this event worth examining is the intersectional dynamic of race, ethnicity, language, and power at OES. The responses of the two teachers to the previously-described incident reveal the preeminence of systems of classification in this setting, and the second-order effects of those systems on the children. The above-mentioned interaction seems to suggest that at OES it was understood that the English teacher had more "social power" than the

Spanish teacher (the Spanish teacher gave her the CD instead of asking herself). The English teacher certainly seemed to think so herself: "*I am going to buy a Spanish CD myself, and I'm going to ask her to put it on again to see if she does it"* (Ms. Nancy, personal communication, January 23, 2018). The looming question is: why did she think that if the Spanish CD was hers it was going to be treated differently? It may be that because of her job at the school (teaching English) and her race (White), the English teacher felt she could go to the support staff person and ask for something as a member of the dominant (accepted and authoritative) group (Gee, 2011), something the Spanish teacher didn't think would be effective if she were the one asking for it.

In addition, it is important to examine here the intricacies of racial and ethnic connotations operationalized beyond phenotypical considerations. I have not yet mentioned that the Spanish teacher, even though she identified herself as Latina, looked phenotypically European-American (dark blonde hair, light skin, and green eyes), so one might have expected her to be perceived as another White person in the school. However, this was not the case. What the data shows is an active linguistic "darkening" process connected to the DLI program at OES, which I will explain next.

**The Fluidity of Racial Identification**

Before the implementation of the DLI program at OES, Ms. Gabby was working as a kindergarten teacher in one of the mainstream kindergarten classrooms at OES. She commented that she always felt herself to be "*just another teacher, part of the team*" (personal communication, February 20, 2018). But once she started working as the Spanish teacher in the DLI program, she felt her own colleagues' perception of her start to change:

> *Once I started speaking Spanish it was as if they started to avoid me, they didn't include me in their conversations […] in fact one of the teachers told me, 'I can hear your accent more now that you are speaking Spanish all day.' I wonder, what did they think I spoke before? Did they think I never spoke Spanish before?* (interview, 02/20/2018)

As soon as Ms. Gabby became the Spanish teacher in the DLI program, she started to undergo a process of linguistic racialization that shows the "fluidity of racial identification," or what Alim (2016) has called *transracialization*— "a dynamic process of translation and transgression […] rather than being fixed and predetermined, racial identities can shift across contexts and even within specific interactions" (p. 35). In the case of the Spanish teacher, she went from being another "White" person in the school based on her appearance alone, to becoming a linguistically racialized Other. Her use of the Spanish language "darkened" and "Othered" her in the OES context. In relation to this Alim, Rickford, and Ball (2016) explain that language plays a "central role in the construction, maintenance, and transformation of racial and ethnic identities" (p. 7). The linguistic stigmatization that this teacher underwent ("*I can hear your accent more now that you are speaking Spanish all day!")* should be understood, as Flores & Rosa (2015) explain, "less as a reflection of objective linguistic practices than of perceptions that construe appropriateness based on speakers' racial positions" (p. 152).

All these intersections of dissimilar social constructions become more compelling when analyzed alongside created systems of classification at OES and their broader impact on the students in the Bears class. A detailed examination of the data suggests some similarities between the way in which Jabbar was racialized as a "dark" Other by some students in the Bears class (see the first part in this chapter), as soon as he was connected to Marcus and his "trouble-making" behavior, and how the Spanish teacher was also racialized as a "dark" Other by some of

her OES colleagues as soon as her language skills marked her as an outsider. In both cases, it is noticeable how systems of linguistic, ethnic, and racial classification operated in the OES space. It would be reasonable to think that since the linguistic racialization that the Spanish teacher was experiencing was happening at the "adult" level (teachers were making the comments to her and not directly to the children), this might have been ignored by the children in the Bears class and should not have had an impact on them. However, as I have previously mentioned, these children were constantly analyzing their surroundings and crafting understandings of the people and social relations in it (Gee, 2011).

Thus, as I noticed exchanges in which some teachers put their hands in front of the Spanish teacher's face and said to her *"I don't speak Spanish, don't speak in Spanish to me"* (field notes, 01/25/2018), clearly marking her as an outsider, I also started to observe instances in which children bluntly said to her, *"I have no idea what you said because that was in Spanish"* (field notes, 11/14/2017), marking her as an outsider in their interactions, as well. Carrying this process even further, some of the students started to construct the Spanish teacher, because of the language she spoke, as someone who could not be trusted. For example, when she called Jabbar to come to the board to answer one of her questions, Jabbar was hesitant to follow her instructions. Initially, I thought he had not understood what the teacher was saying. However, when Joseph started to translate for him and told him in English what the teacher was asking him to do, I realized that Jabbar's hesitation was not related solely to communication difficulties, but also to the teacher herself and how she was generally being perceived. Jabbar repeatedly told Joseph, *"I don't trust her, I do not trust her"* (field notes, 12/14/2018). Here I contend that the interactions which the students in the Bears class noticed between the Spanish teacher and other

teachers communicated to them, once again, specific ethnic and linguistic messages that they perceived and remade into their own sociolinguistic codes.

It would be reassuring and comforting to say that the incidents presented in this chapter were isolated events that were not part and parcel of the educational experience of young children in this DLI class and did not reflect the general school climate at OES. Unfortunately, this is not so. These incidents were only a few of the many interactions I witnessed and documented where social ideologies intersected at different points to construct people in particular ways. These interactions communicated messages to the children in the Bears class, heightening their perception of certain distinctions, and constituting some of their ideas regarding race, ethnicity, social class, and language use.

## Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented the case of the Bears class and analyzed how the children in this class perceived and responded to social constructions, such as race, ethnicity, social class and language. I have noted the input they received from different sources and examined the ways in which these children are not simply passive receptors of messages and ideologies but are also actively engaged in forming their own judgments, participating in the creation of systems of classification, and engaging in sociocultural processes.

The studied interactions illustrate the reality of social constructions perceived by these children through different messages and creating discernible responses. The significance of these perceptions, using Gustave Flaubert's words, is that for these children, they become the "truth." In the case of a DLI program, such as the one the Bears class was part of, particular "truths" can be used to reproduce systems of power and to create structures constraining racially, linguistically, and economically-stratified populations (Apple, 1982; Gee, 2011; Althusser, 1971;

Anyon, 1981; Bernstein, 1975; Hawkins, 2005). As Garcia-Sanchez (2016) expresses, schools are not simply learning sites, but crucial spaces in which issues of racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity are ceaselessly negotiated, confronted, and reproduced.

The analysis of these data within the context of the goals of DLI programs raise some significant questions. For instance, do these educational spaces truly promote social, linguistic, and cultural ideas of mutual respect, inclusion, diversity, and understanding? Or do they simply provide a veneer of equity and social co-learning, while still falling subject to "the functionality of the environment for its subjects" (Ostrow, 2000, p. 312)? Furthermore, the examined exchanges should direct us toward deeper sociological and pedagogical questions in contemporary school contexts, such as: "what does it mean to speak as a racialized subject" (Alim, 2016, p. 1) in present-day school settings? And what is the role of DLI programs as children enter "already pronounced regimes of Blackness" (Ibrahim, 2003, p. 54)? These questions must make us pause as we reconsider the "rich promise of two-way immersion" (Lindholm-Leary, 2004/2005), the broader social context of the nation, and the beginning of the processes of identification. These children's responses to social constructions and perceptions unveil the intricacies of their interactions, and it is only when the genesis of those actions and interactions is understood that a meaningful examination can begin. With this in mind, I will turn in my next chapter to an analysis of how young children in the Bears class enacted and negotiated the tenuous intersections of race, ethnicity, social class position, and language in an educational environment that seemed to be framed by preexisting distinctions (Bourdieu, 1984).

# CHAPTER 5: *BILINGUAL WAYS WITH WORDS*: IDENTITIES, STRATEGIES, NEGOTIATIONS, AND PROCESSES OF SOCIALIZATION IN THE BEARS CLASS

**" Bless me, what do they teach them at these schools"**

— *C.S. Lewis, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

**"What a curious power words have"**

*–Tadeusz Borowski, This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen*

The Bears class revealed a small microcosm of social relations which mirrored, in some ways, the larger society made of a "sum of connections and relationships" (Marx, 1971, p. 77). In this social world, children's personal and interpersonal relations compelled them to seek connections and perform certain behaviors associated with their own ideas about the social sphere they inhabited. In so doing, children developed specific ways to use their languages depending on the communicative situation, what I have identified as their *bilingual ways with words*. Their actions ranged from enacting different identities to developing grouping strategies and creating strategic alliances. They exercised linguistic power and accommodated others within their bilingual social world, drawing information from their surrounding environment to take an active part in their own socialization (Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001). The strategies these children employed, and the ways they enacted them, reveal intersecting dynamics of power and collective ideologies and help bring to light how social constructions impact children's trajectories in distinct ways.

In this chapter, I examine some of the strategies children in the Bears class used when enacting and negotiating intersecting social constructions such as race, ethnicity, social class, and bilingualism in the studied DLI setting. First, I explain the ways in which these children are

actively engaged in sociocultural processes of language use and socialization, and how their bilingual understanding and strategic language use manifested in different ways, demonstrating their *bilingual ways with words* in the studied setting. Next, I explore how the children in the Bears class take up or reject distinct identities using language to (re) shape socially-constructed ideas in this bilingual context. Finally, I document how children's judgement of their bilingual social world is reflected in their choice of friends/partners, the alliances they create, and the linguistic strategies they adopted (Bourdieu, 1984; Chaparro, 2017; Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001).

### ***Bilingual Ways with Words***

Generally, language socialization has been concerned with the study of the manner in which children are socialized in order to become capable members of their cultures through language learning and, consequently, how this learning of language is inseparable from the process of socialization into a distinct culture (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986; Chaparro, 2017). Schieffelin & Ochs (1984) explained this process as follows:

1. The process of acquiring language is deeply affected by the process of becoming a competent member of society.
2. The process of becoming a competent member of society is realized to a large extent through language, by acquiring knowledge of its functions, social distribution and interpretations in and across socially defined situations. (pg. 277)

In the Bears class, the students were learning to become competent members of their bilingual community, which implied learning two languages and understanding how to use them and in what situations. This bilingual learning and understanding, and how it is enacted, is what I have

termed *bilingual ways with words*. By this I mean the ways in which emergent bilinguals learn to use their entire linguistic repertoires and employ them strategically depending on the communicative situation. In the Bears class, sometimes these *bilingual ways with words* were used to enact and negotiate particular identities, as well as to create strategic alliances in response to conditional association and selective grouping strategies among classmates. Other times, they manifested as linguistic accommodation and language brokering. And even at times they were used to gain power and control of the communicative situation.

These children's *bilingual ways with words* were enacted through languaging, "the process of making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience through language" (Swain, 2006, p. 98), and refined through formal teaching in the classrooms and the informal interactions they had with adults and with each other (Chaparro, 2017). All of these experiences were part of their processes of socialization, which, as mentioned before, cannot be separated from language (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1984). These processes of language socialization are not unbiased, and when it comes to a bilingual class, they are deeply impacted by value-laden social constructions regarding language, race, ethnicity, and social class.

**The Spanish and English Classrooms: Contextual Details**

Before delving into the examination of the specific exchanges of the students, it is important to provide some background context of the different learning spaces (English & Spanish classrooms) in which the Bears class children were interacting. These spaces are significant because they impact children's interactions, and at the same time are impacted by children's interactions. As mentioned previously, the students in the Bears class received 50% of their instruction in English and 50% in Spanish. Each language instruction was provided using separate classrooms and teachers. During my observations, I noticed that from the beginning of

the year, the interactions between children and teachers in the English and Spanish classes looked very different from each other. In the Spanish class, children seemed quiet, they worked on repeating the words the Spanish teacher asked them to, and quite often some of the White, middle-class students would interrupt the teacher to ask over and over again: *"What does that mean?"* (field notes, 10/10/2017). In the English class, however, the same children behaved very differently. They participated more, seemed more relaxed, and even were more playful with each other. I recorded this in my field notes:

> *It's so interesting to see students who are normally quiet in the Spanish classroom, speaking in the English space and somehow "coming alive" in class. Lydia is participating animatedly and seems to have been having fun. She is normally very quiet in the Spanish classroom. In addition, everyone seems to be paying attention to what the teacher says. In the Spanish class, students seem mostly distracted or quiet as the teacher provides the instruction.* (field notes, 10/31/2017)

The difference in the behavior of the students in the English and Spanish classes can be easily explained by the affordances and constraints that the two languages and settings provided. In the Spanish class, only a few students at the beginning of the year could understand what the teacher was saying, and this issue was further compounded by the fact that the Spanish-dominant models that the program called for (students who could use their dominant language skills to support their peers learning the new language) were, as the Spanish teacher said: *"maybe four or five [...] if I am being generous"* (personal communication, October 12, 2017). Since the guidelines of the DLI program model called for approximately 50% of the student population to be dominant speakers of a language other than English, in a class of 17 children, at least eight students should have been dominant Spanish speakers in the Bears class. This clearly altered the

interactional dynamics during the Spanish lessons. This aspect was one of the main concerns of the Spanish teacher, who felt at times that she could not provide the linguistic support students needed. She mentioned this in one of our conversations:

> *"el problema es que no tengo los modelos! Como les voy a ayudar a todos si no tengo los modelos que me apoyen con el language, por eso es que no hablan, no tienen el lenguaje"* (10/16/17)
>
> ***"the problem is that I don't have the models! How am I going to help everybody if I don't have the models to support me with the language, that's why they don't speak, they don't have the language"*** (10/16/17)

Conversely, in the English class, I observed how the use of a language that everyone could access and understand impacted students' interactions and behaviors. In that setting, the English teacher not only had the support of the 50% of the student population that according to the program model had to be dominant English speakers (and in actuality was more), but she could also count on the emerging English skills of the rest of the students, an aspect that contributed to the highly interactional learning environment in her classroom.

The striking finding from my observations and analyses was not that these children were dealing with very different conditions in the English and Spanish learning environments, but their acute analysis of their social and linguistic surroundings and the strategies they employed when negotiating their positions in them. In this next section, I examine in detail how children in the Bears class displayed their *bilingual ways with words* using language to enact and negotiate their identities and social relations. In addition, I will delve into the collective strategies (selective grouping, conditional association and strategic alliances) they employed as they attended to the intergroup and intragroup dynamics.

## *Bilingual Ways with Words*: The Primacy of Language in Identity Enactment & Negotiation

### Classroom Arrangement

From the beginning of the year, the students in the Bears class started to form groups and to gravitate towards specific peers. Inside the classrooms (English and Spanish), the teachers had organized them by tables making sure to "mix" them (Spanish dominant & English dominant speakers) in order to provide opportunities for them to learn from and support each other (Ms. Gabby, Ms. Rosie, personal communication, October 10, 2017). This intentional classroom arrangement was built on the underlying theory of DLI programs and the research literature, which explicitly encourages this type of organization for all students to have opportunities to be knowledgeable language experts.

After language, however, came another set of criteria for arranging the classroom: race and ethnicity. For example, when the Spanish teacher organized the groups for the small tables, most of the groups had one Latin@ student, one or two mixed-race students, one or two White students, and two tables had one Black student each.[18] She wanted children to be able to interact with different students and not only with the ones that were already their friends (Ms. Gabby, personal communication, October 04, 2017). Setting language as the main criterion to organize students in their small groups, and race and ethnicity as another basis, brought interesting social elements to the interactions of these children. These elements were particularly salient in the way these students enacted and negotiated tenuous social constructions such as race, ethnicity, social class position, and language.

[18] Taking into account that there were more dominant English speakers than dominant Spanish speakers in the Bears class, the Spanish teacher always placed at least one Latin@ student at each table.

In the DLI program at OES, it seemed that difference was the norm. As mentioned before, these children were of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, and their social class[19] background was also diverse. Of the 18 children who made up the Bears class, three of them were Latin@ from a working class background (Isabel, Nelly, Iker); three were Latin@ from a middle-class background (Mario, Alberto, Suri); three were mixed-race from a working-class background (Lina, Joseph, Lydia); one was mixed-race from a middle-class background (Cindy); four were White from a middle-class background (Tyler, Kasey, Emma, Ellie); two were White from an upper middle-class background (Jacob, Kevin); one was African (West Africa), from a middle-class background (Gwen); and one was African-American from a working class background (Jabbar).

In terms of their linguistic practices, Spanish was the dominant language of three of these children (Isabel, Iker and Mario). Four of them spoke English as their dominant language but could understand and speak some Spanish (Nelly, Alberto, Sury & Cindy), and the rest of them used English as their dominant language. I have summarized this information in Table 4 (below) using different colors to note the diverse social constructions that intersected in the lives of the children in the Bears class.

*Table 4.*
**Racial, Ethnic, Social Class, and Linguistic Background of the Bears Class Children**

| Name | Social Class Background | Racial/Ethnic Background | Dominant Language |
|---|---|---|---|
| Isabel | Working class | Latin@ | Spanish (understands and speaks some English) |
| Nelly | Working class | Latin@ | English (understands and speaks some Spanish) |
| Iker | Working class | Latin@ | Spanish |

[19] Social class was established by considering the zip code of the students' homes and occupation of the parents as explained in the methods section.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | (understands and speaks English) |
| Mario | Middle-class | Latin@ | Spanish (understands and speaks English) |
| Alberto | Middle-class | Latin@ | English (understands and speaks some Spanish) |
| Suri | Middle-class | Latin@ | English (understands and speaks some Spanish) |
| Lina | Working class | Mixed-race (Latin@ & African-American) | English |
| Joseph | Working class | Mixed-race (Latin@ & White) | English |
| Lydia | Working class | Mixed-race (Latin@ & White) | English |
| Cindy | Middle-class | Mixed-race (Latin@ & White) | English (understands and speaks some Spanish) |
| Tyler | Middle-class | White | English |
| Kasey | Middle-class | White | English |
| Emma | Middle-class | White | English |
| Ellie | Middle-class | White | English |
| Jacob | Upper middle-class | White | English |
| Kevin | Upper middle-class | White | English |
| Gwen | Middle-class | Black (West Africa) | English |
| Jabbar | Working class | Black (African-American) | English |

This combination of social and linguistic components defied commonly-regarded assumptions about DLI programs being made up of working-class Latin@ children and middle-class White children (Varghese & Park, 2010). This DLI program also confirmed that in dual language classrooms "not all children are members of only one linguistic, racial, or cultural group. Not all middle-class children are of European-American background and many English dominant children are of Latino background" (Varghese & Park, 2010, p. 19). Figure 2 below

shows a visual representation of the different social constructions intersecting in the lives of the children in the Bears class.

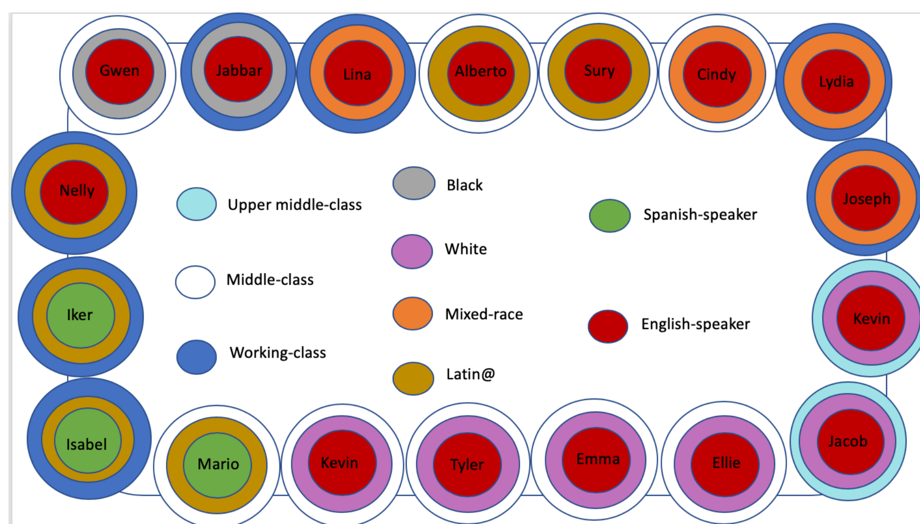


***Figure 3.*** Visual Representation of Social Constructions in the Lives of Children in the Bears Class

Despite this array of personal dispositions, skin and hair colors and textures, backgrounds, etc., the teachers were surprised that from the beginning of the school year some Latin@ and mixed-race students preferred to talk to the White students who sat at different tables rather than talk to the Latin@ children at their own table (Teacher interviews, 10/10/ 2017).

From a developmental perspective, this behavior could point to young children evaluating Whites more positively than Blacks (see for example the historical Clark and Clark doll study, 1939), since most of the Latin@ children who were dominant Spanish speakers in the Bears class had a darker skin color. However, after looking more deeply at the intersectional social constructions present in these students' lives and examining their behavior, I noticed how socially-constructed ideas of race, ethnicity, and language converged and impacted these children's interactions. The Latin@ and mixed-race children who were exhibiting the above-explained behavior used English as their dominant language, not Spanish; and the Latin@ children who were sitting at their tables spoke Spanish as their dominant language.

For this reason, preference to talk to White children over Latin@ children actually indicated two important things. First, it showed how in this setting, race and ethnicity were used as a proxy for language. In the Bears class, Nelly, Sury, Joseph, Lydia, and Lina were socially constructed as Latin@ and thus, dominant Spanish speakers. The teacher, who had worked on the classroom arrangement, expected them to communicate in Spanish and interact well with other students who "looked like them" (Teacher interview, 10/10/ 2017). It seemed that some essential characterization and affinity was expected between people of the same race or ethnic background in this class. Second, the students' behavior pointed to the active engagement of these children in their socialization process. These young learners demonstrated with their behavior that rather than being passive receivers of the identities imposed on them, they actively rejected them. Their agency was evidenced in the way they chose to use the linguistic tools they possessed to negotiate their relationships in this context. Rather than conform to the linguistic arrangement of the classroom, these students veered towards the familiar: other English speakers. This I confirmed when I asked the students why they liked talking to some children at other tables and not to the ones at their own tables. The answers they provided were all focused on language: *"because they're my friends and I can speak with them," "because I don't know how to speak Spanish," because I can only speak a little Spanish"* (field notes, 10/17/ 2017). The choices these children made, however, lead to a key question: since language was the impetus for the choices they made when interacting with children at other tables, why didn't they veer toward other students of color, who were also English dominant speakers?

I conjecture that their choice unveils how racial perceptions play a role in the negotiation of race and language as social concepts. Dyson (2013) reminds us of how children's participation in local contexts such as classrooms also reflects their responses to the meaning, intentions, and

values of other social worlds. In Chapter 4, I showed that the children in the Bears class were perceiving racial and linguistic messages from the surrounding environment, adults, and other children at OES. I also described how a dark skin color (African-American, Indian, Latin@) was associated with particular behaviors (and punishments) in the OES context, while white skin was correlated with power and acceptance. These messages, I maintain, played a significant role in the kinds of social interactions students in the Bears class wanted. The White children in the Bears class never got in trouble and spoke the language everyone understood. Thus, Nelly, Sury, Joseph, Lydia, and Lina's speaking in English to White children at other tables may not have been solely based on language, but on linguistic and racial elements in tandem with their perceptions of social messages at OES.

**Identity Embodiment Through Language Use**

In addition to the specific ways in which children in the Bears class navigated the classroom arrangement and its ensuing social dynamics, the analysis of the data also showed how these children chose at particular times in this context to embody specific identities (e.g., English language speakers) to enact and negotiate different social and linguistic boundaries within this DLI setting. The idea of identity is central when exploring social constructions because it reveals how identity permeates the actions of individuals and reflects their social and linguistic perceptions. Gee's (2011) notion of identity— "different ways of being in the world at different times and places for different purposes" (p. 3) is particularly helpful when examining these children's actions. His conceptualization of identity, as intricately connected to language, sheds light on how for some of the children in the Bears class, "language allow[ed] [them] to be things" (Gee, 2011, p. 3) and to take on distinct socially-situated identities. An examination of identities at this point is pivotal because it shows that these children may have understood that

their ability to communicate and relate to others rested on the identities that they were able to claim and speak from. This aspect was particularly salient in their interviews when I asked them what language they preferred or what language they used when they talked to their friends. Sury, Joseph, Lydia, and Lina mentioned that they liked English better than Spanish and they all provided explanations for their preferences, as the following excerpts show:

**I**: Interviewer; **Ly**: Lydia; **L**: Lina; **J**: Joseph; **S**: Sury

**I**: *English? […] why do you like English?*
**Ly**: *They speak normal*

**L**: *English*
**I**: *Why do you like English better?*
**L**: *Because it learns us how we talk and the words, it goes good, we grow our brains*

**I**: *Why do you like English better than Spanish?*
**J**: *Because I don't know how to speak Spanish*

**I**: *What do you speak, English or Spanish, when you talk to your friends?*
**S**: *English*
**I**: *English, all the time?*
**S**: *…Yes*

The idea of identity, which centers significantly on their social identifications in specific contexts and through engaging in different actions (Gee, 2011), is distinct in the answers provided by these students. Their replies (I have underlined some of the reasons they provided) demonstrate the complexity of their perceptions and the processes of negotiation in which they engage in this dual language space. For Lydia and Lina, speaking English is associated with being "normal," learning how to talk— "grow our brains"— and doing it "good," as Lina said it. These characterizations of the English language seem to be connected to the idea of acceptance and belonging—what is "normal"— in the OES space (see Chapter 4 for more). Joseph and Sury seemed to perceive their use of the English language as a social tool to be able to communicate (*"I don't know how to speak Spanish")*, identify, and interact with others (Sury speaks English

with her friends).

The exploration of the previous data demonstrates the complexity of children's interactions in the bilingual world they inhabited. Being part of a DLI program that created and sustained particular social and linguistic boundaries spurred students in the Bears class to develop strategies, *bilingual ways with words,* to enact and negotiate different identities.

**Language Accommodation and Identity Negotiation**

Another manifestation of these children's *bilingual ways with words* was noticeable in how the Spanish-dominant speakers (emergent bilingual children) at the beginning of the academic year strategically used their language skills to accommodate their peers. The theory of communication accommodation (Giles, Coupland & Coupland, 1991) sheds light on the human tendency to adjust communicative behavior during interactions. These accommodations are thought to be used to reduce social differences between interactants and to get a positive appraisal during interactions (Giles et al., 1991). In the Bears class, as the data below shows, students used linguistic accommodation to enact and negotiate different identities in the classroom. Initially, I noticed this when I conducted the individual interviews, but as I specifically focused on this phenomenon during my observations and examination of the video recorded lessons, I confirmed the linguistic agility of these students when enacting and negotiating different roles in the classroom. Here are some excerpts from the students' interviews:

**I: Interviewer M: Mario**

**I**: *And when you play with them [friends], do you play [using] English or in Spanish?*
**M**: *English*
**I**: *Why don't you speak with them in Spanish?*
**M**: *Because <u>I want them to understand me</u>*
**I**: *So […] if you speak in Spanish, they won't understand you?*
**M**: *(moves his head from side to said to indicate a negative answer)*

**I**: *No? ok*

**I: Interviewer  A: Alberto**

**I**: *And what language would you speak at your birthday party?*
**A**: *English*
**I**: *Because*
**A**: *they are my friends*
**I**: *And you speak better with them in English or in Spanish*
**A**: *English […] they don't understand any Spanish*

**I: Interviewer  N: Nelly**

**I**: *What language do you speak when you are playing with Ellie and Kasey?*
**N**: *English*
**I**: *Why don't you speak to them in Spanish?*
**N**: *Because they don't know Spanish*

**I: Interviewer  C: Cindy**

**I**: *What language do you speak?*
**C**: *English and Spanish*
**I**: *Oh, you speak two languages?*
**C**: *Yeah, you know why?*
**I**: *Why?*
**C**: *Because I'm American and Republic*
**I**: *You're American and?*
**C**: *Republic*
**I**: *Oh wow…and when do you speak English?*
**C**: *Oh, only, well, I speak English to the people that don't know Spanish*
[…]
**I**: *At your birthday party, would you speak English or Spanish?*
**C**: *English*
**I**: *Why would you speak English?*
**C**: *Because those are people that speak English*

The interview responses from these children demonstrate their awareness regarding their bilingual skills and what they can do with them. Their answers show that, as social actors, they had understood the affordances and constrains of the communicative situation, and based on them, they had chosen a plan of action to carry out (Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001; Vygostky,

1980). Mario, Alberto, and Nelly's responses, for example, specify the purpose of their use of English rather than Spanish when they play with their friends; they want to be able to communicate with their friends: "*I want them to understand me;" "they don't know any Spanish;" they don't understand any Spanish."* They have realized that they won't be able to communicate, and therefore play with their friends, if they talk to them in Spanish. Alberto in particular seems to be connecting his language choice to how he feels about other students, *"they are my friends."* The linguistic choices made by these children unveil how they are adjusting their communicative behavior during interactions. They perceive that these accommodations allow them to reduce social differences (ethnic and linguistic) between themselves and their friends, and to get a positive outcome during interactions (Giles et al., 1991).

The responses from Cindy reveal her perception of an intricate relationship between language and ethnicity. For her, speaking two languages is connected to who she is: "*I'm American and Republic."* Here, the word "Republic" refers to her identity as someone from the Dominican Republic. Cindy's mother is from the Dominican Republic and her father is American. Cindy's replies demonstrated that she was aware of the different linguistic contexts that she was navigating and how, through the use of her bilingual skills, she was able to communicate with different people:

**I**: *[…]and when do you speak English?*
**C**: *Oh, only, well, <u>I speak English to the people that don't know Spanish</u>*
[…]
**I**: *At your birthday party, would you speak English or Spanish?*
**C**: *English*
**I**: *Why would you speak English?*
**C**: *Because <u>those are people that speak English</u>*

Here it is important to mention that these students, Mario, Alberto, Cindy, and Nelly are four of the Spanish dominant models in the Bears class. Nevertheless, what we can see is that instead of

choosing to accept the identity that has been imposed on them (Latin@, Spanish-speaker), they rejected it and chose to enact the identity that they perceived as higher status—the one that provided more benefits and power and offered the identity position they wanted— “bilingual-speakers” (Gee, 2011).

The context here also plays a significant role, because as Giles et al., (1991) explained, the environment in which the interactions take place also impact the communication behavior. In the previous chapter, I analyzed how OES was constructed as an English-speaking environment. The messages that were conveyed in regard to the use of a language system other than English, outside of the Spanish classroom, were that any type of communication that was not in English was identified as a “deviant” linguistic practice (Rosa & Flores, 2017). My argument here is that having perceived the social messages from the environment, Mario, Alberto, Cindy, and Nelly chose to negotiate their relationships with other students using the linguistic resources at their disposal but privileging one communicative system over the other (Gee, 2011). Based on these data, I contend that these young children initially observed the world around them, and in time, they took on specific language behaviors and used them actively according to each situation they encountered. For these children, the performance of certain identities involved an ever-evolving understanding of who they were in the bilingual environment of the Bears class, how they wanted to be perceived in the monolingual wider environment of OES, and what identity they chose to enact in order to accrue social benefits.

**Language Brokering and Identity Positioning**

The term 'language brokering' was first coined by anthropologists in order to "describe the activities of individuals who connect local and national worlds through 'cultural brokering.' They suggest that the 'broker' makes independent decisions in negotiating action" (Hall and Sham, 2007, p. 4). In the case of children of immigrants, the term "language brokers" refers to children "who interpret and translate between culturally and linguistically different people and mediate interactions in a variety of situations including those found at home and school" (Tse, 1996a, p. 226). Orellana (2009) has produced some remarkable work focusing on children who, in interpreting and translating, play fundamental roles in constructing versions of the new world they inhabit for their parents.

However, even though the phenomenon of language brokering has received significant attention in the literature (e.g., Dorner, Orellano, & Li-Grining, 2007; Morales & Hanson, 2005; Hall and Sham, 2007; Orellana, 2009), the study of language brokering and its connotations in classroom settings has been overlooked (Lee, Hill-Bonnet & Riley, 2011). The research available indicates that language brokering can function as an organizational tool in dual immersion classroom interactions to position students in ways that may support or constrain learning opportunities (Lee, Hill-Bonnet & Riley, 2011). In the particular case of the Bears class, language brokering became a resource employed by students to exercise power and gain control of some of the classroom interactions. This phenomenon however, developed in an uncommon way in this class as children demonstrated their *bilingual ways with words* when negotiating the intersections of race, ethnicity, social class position, and language.

Having two groups of different language speakers, and one group in particular (dominant Spanish speakers) who could communicate using both languages, one may think that the

bilingual students would take advantage of their skills and become the language brokers in the classroom. Nonetheless, this was not the case in the Bears class. What actually happened was that, once the dominant English speakers started to "pick up" some of the Spanish language around them, and began to better understand the Spanish instruction, they became the language brokers in the Bears class. What's more, the students who were exhibiting this behavior (language brokering) were not all of the dominant English speakers, but the ones who had been identified as having an upper-middle class and middle-class upbringing.

After several passes at data analysis, I noticed that language brokering in the Bears class was being undertaken by these students as a way to gain the floor in the Spanish class, where they had remained quiet throughout the first few months, and as a way to gain power to control the classroom interactions. I documented this in my field notes:

> *Jacob is always talkative and takes the lead- he looks around at his classmates and translates some of the words the Spanish teacher is saying […] he keeps telling other students about the words that he has translated. Ellie seems to also be sort of a leader in some situations. Today she was sitting at the captain table even though she's not a captain. The teacher told her to sit on the rug, but she ignored the teacher and remained sitting at the table, from there she was talking to some students about what the teacher was saying. Kasey translates for the children around her. She raises her hand first when the teacher asks a question, she speaks even when she may not know the answer* (field notes, 11/20/1018)

I also observed this in the interactions captured in several video recordings of classroom lessons:

1. *In the Spanish class the teacher is telling students about cutting apples, Jacob kept repeating in English "to cut." He was correcting other students around him and telling them in English some of the words the teacher was saying* (video recording, 11/28/1018).

2. *Ellie is at a table working on the alphabet letters with Isabel and Kasey, the Spanish teacher said that it was time to clean up and get ready for recess. Isabel repeats in Spanish: 'hay que recoger' and Ellie corrects her, no that's not how you say it 'recoger' (she uses an anglicized pronunciation) Isabel looks at her and remains quiet* (video recording, 12/05/2017).

Through translation and language brokering, these White students gained the floor and the attention of the teacher and the students around them. This not only gave them a higher status and power in the Bears class, but also denied the legitimacy of the language skills of dominant Spanish speakers, as is noticeable in the second video segment above. In this interaction, Ellie's erroneous correction of Isabel's Spanish pronunciation (Isabel is a dominant Spanish speaker) shows how an active and very personal conceptualization of who Ellie thinks she is in the classroom (confident Spanish learner) leads her to assume a powerful identity that dismisses and delegitimizes Isabel's linguistic skills, expertise, experience, and identity (Gee, 2011). In the Spanish class, Ellie was positioned as a learner of the language, however, through her agency, she was able to take on a more prominent role: the role of the language broker. In this situation, she used language brokering as a positioning move to take up the identity of someone able to make "independent decisions in negotiating action" (Hall and Sham, 2007, p. 4). Furthermore, the data shows that these children understood language learning as situated in the sociocultural milieu and, using the linguistic resources they had at their disposal, they worked on acquiring

and constructing different forms of language learning and use through specific interactions (Chaparro, 2017; Lantolf, 2011; Vygotsky, 1978).

Though I lack data regarding the socialization processes of these children at home, based on the research of scholars such as Anyon (1980), Brice Heath (1983), and Lareau (2003) among others, I argue that their social rearing determined how these children negotiated their positions in the Bears class using language brokering. Their upper-middle-class and middle-class upbringing provided them with the linguistic skills and confidence to take on the role of language brokers. The literature shows that linguistic styles differ by class: upper- middle-class children employ more words when speaking (Brice Heath 1983; Hart and Risley 1995; Farkas and Berton 2004); are asked to engage in complex conversations and to produce elaborate answers (Hart and Risley 1995; Lareau 2003); interrupt their interlocutors regularly (Lareau 2003); and use details when providing explanations (Brice Heath, 1983).

Children perform class through their different linguistic styles (Streib, 2011), and in the Bears class they did so through strategic language brokering. This in turn helped these upper-middle class and middle-class students to regain the language control of the learning setting. This finding turns the existing conceptualizations of the role of language brokering on their head. Customarily, language brokering has been portrayed in the literature as a skill that empowers native Spanish speakers (see for example, Orellana, 2009). In this study, however, the data shows that this practice has been co-opted by White, upper-middle class and middle-class children to disempower dominant Spanish speakers. In this process, they set themselves up as leaders, students who had the capacity to understand what the teacher was saying and let other children know about it. As research has shown (Orellana, Dorner & Pulido, 2003), brokering can create very positive feelings, and these children seemed to feel proud and confident about their

Spanish language skills (field notes, 12/05/2017). These positioning moves evidence how language and its ensuing power was contested and strategically negotiated in the Bears class.

Even before they were confident enough to act as language brokers, White upper-middle class and middle-class children would continuously interrupt the Spanish teacher to ask for a translation, *"but what does that mean in English?"* (field notes, 10/04/2017), something children from a working-class background never did. These upper-middle class and middle-class White children understood classroom and school dynamics and had a sense of agency within them. Laureau (2003) explains, following Bourdieu's rationale, that "individuals from different social locations are socialized differently. This socialization provides children with a sense of what is comfortable or natural (what Bourdieu terms *habitus*)" (p. 275). Furthermore, "these background experiences also impact the resources individuals have at their disposal (capital) as they encounter various institutional arrangements (fields) in the social world" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p. 170). The clear distinctions between the linguistic behavior of upper-middle class, middle-class, and working-class children in the Bears class reflect how their background experiences and processes of socialization may have shaped the way they employed their linguistic resources and navigated their bilingual world in this DLI setting.

## ***Bilingual Ways with Words:*** **Collective Strategies & Strategic Associations**

### Selective Grouping

During my observations in the Bears classrooms I noticed that teachers organized students in racially and linguistically varied groups (Black, Latin@, White, Spanish-dominant, English-dominant); but when the students chose their own groups, the arrangements were more homogenous, especially among White students. I call this phenomenon "selective grouping." For example, the English teacher had assigned each student a space on the carpet in her classroom to

make sure that talkative students were not sitting together, and quiet students had partners who could talk to them (Ms. Rosie, personal communication, October 4, 2017). This arrangement also created a good mix of students who had opportunities to interact with each other while sitting at the carpet. One may think that once the students had time and opportunities to get to know each other better, an organic intermingling of students of different backgrounds would start to happen. However, as soon as the students had the opportunity to choose their own groups, partners, or who to sit by, invariably White students always looked for White partners, leaving Latin@, Black, and some mixed-race students to partner with each other. I documented this phenomenon in my field notes when I witnessed some of the formal and informal exchanges between these children:

> *In the classroom students have conversations about skin colors and hair textures. It seems that for them it is "normal" to talk about how different they are from each other. Both teachers emphasized this point in some of topics that they taught (i.e., families-how different all families were). I noticed that . . . when they [White students] are given the chance to pick, they always choose a White partner. Except Tyler who always picks Joseph (mixed-race-Latin@ & White) and vice versa. They were friends before entering kindergarten, and Joseph despite being mixed-race speaks English as his dominant language* (field notes 11/14/2017).

Teachers confirmed my observations that it was almost always the White students who rejected or avoided students of color when choosing their partners (Teacher interviews, November 2017). Ms. Rosie, the substitute English teacher, explained:

> *Something I noticed a little bit is that in the Bears, is that, that our white students aren't necessarily venturing out to hang out with our, uhm, brown students. I can see that they*

> *are not quite there yet, which is interesting […] So it's, it is, it's curious and the thing is that I think that we have to have that kind of a mixture and learn how to work together better as a community* (Interview, 11/18/2017).

White children, when given the opportunity, would mostly choose other White students as their partners, and would not "venture out" to "hang out" with brown students, as Ms. Rosie expressed it. Aside from the interesting choice of words employed by Ms. Rosie to typify the actions of White students (or lack thereof), I found that, when assigned, White students worked most of the time harmoniously with students of color (field notes, 11/14/2017). They normally took the lead on the activities, but they worked well within their assigned groups. It seemed that to some extent these White children were developing some form of "comfortable multiculturalism." By this I mean that they seemed comfortable in the classroom interacting with different groups of children when they had to, yet when given the opportunity, they always looked for students who looked and sounded like them.

According to research in early childhood development, children as young as age two can start defining themselves using labels (i.e., age, gender, race) in a manner that points to the emergence of understanding of ethnic and racial differences (Cross & Cross, 2008; Clark & Clark, 1939; Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001) and racial ideas (Van Ausdale & Feagin, 1996, 2001). Furthermore, taking into consideration that developmental psychologists have found that by age five, children can see themselves as members of racial and ethnic groups, it is not surprising that, at the age of five, children in the Bears class had developed an awareness about their differences and were gravitating towards specific peers. As explained above, some of these children did know each other before entering kindergarten, as was the case with Tyler and

Joseph. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that this particular behavior was coming from only one group who initially did not know each other well: White students.

**Conditional Association**

The informal intergroup dynamics between White students and students of color in the Bears class relates to another strategy that demonstrates how White students perceived their black and brown peers: conditional association—a restricted acceptance of their peers of color to the point that when asked about it, they would name some students of color as their friends; when they were assigned to work with them, they did it with no problem; however, when it was their choice, they chose to associate with White students. Before describing how conditional association works in the Bears class, I want to ground this concept within existing literature on race and place. Specifically, this strategy helped White students successfully regulate their interactions with students of color in a classroom that is mostly a "white space" (Anderson 2015).

According to Anderson (2015), despite the major racial incorporation process that has taken place in the U.S. after the Civil Rights movement during which "large numbers of black people have made their way from urban ghettos into many settings previously occupied only by whites […,] [t]he wider society is still replete with overwhelmingly white neighborhoods, restaurants, schools, universities, workplaces, churches and other associations" (p. 10). This situation reinforces a "normative sensibility in settings in which black people are typically absent, not expected, or marginalized when present" (p. 10). These "white spaces" represent a perceptual category used by black people when referring to those spaces they did not historically inhabit, which they now approach with care (Anderson, 2015). The concept of the white space is particularly helpful when analyzing the interactional dynamics between White students and

students of color in the Bears class because it points to those broader racial perceptions that impact how children enacted and negotiated their practices in this setting.

Looking at the wider context in which the students in the Bears class were interacting, it is evident that they were in a white space. The Midwestern state in which the Springville School District (SSD) was located is 90% White (demographic statistics, 2018). Over 70% of the student population at SSD was White (SSD website, 2018); and even though OES was the institution with the highest minority enrollment in the district in 2018 (45%), this demographic change had been happening mostly in the last 10 years. OES is the quintessential example of a white space that has been subject to change because of the changes in the population. This situation has impacted not only how the place has been occupied and by whom, but also the social dynamics between different groups of people (Anderson, 2015).

The Spanish teacher confirmed this when in one of her conversations she mentioned: *"OES is not a welcoming school for minorities. It's an unwelcoming environment"* (03/02/2018). She was referring specifically to how children of color were treated differently by some teachers and school personnel, but her comments indicated how children themselves —White students— being surrounded by the messages received from adults and the broader environment were negotiating this white space. In this regard, Anderson (2015) notes that "while White people usually avoid black space, black people are required to navigate the white space as a condition of their existence […] their status almost always provisional and subject to negotiation" (p. 11). One of the instances where I noticed this was when Jabbar (Black, African-American) came to join the group that Emma, Ellie, and Kate (all White students) had formed to work on a Math problem. As soon as Jabbar approached the group, Ellie told him "don't take our space," and she motioned him away from them; Jabbar then joined a group of mixed-race and Latin@ children

(field notes, 04/03/2018). On a different occasion, Gwen (Black, African) was sitting at the carpet near Emma (White), and when the English teacher told the children to talk to a student near them about a question she had asked, Gwen immediately tried to move next to Emma to talk to her. When Emma saw Gwen moving towards her, she put her hand out and said to Gwen, “no, you stay there!” Gwen looked down and moved back. Emma joined Jacob (White) and started talking to him (field notes, 03/06/2018).

On the one hand, the behavior of the children of color in the Bears class exhibited a disposition (ready to work/play with different partners in formal and informal situations) that revealed how they had learned to navigate white spaces as a “condition of their existence” (Anderson, 2015). They were living in a white district, surrounded mostly by white people all of the time, and it seemed that they had learned to negotiate their status in different places and in different ways (as shown in the data above). On the other hand, the behavior of the White students (always choosing to work/play with other White students) reflected an unwillingness to fully accept children of color as belonging in the white OES space. This was apparent in their informal grouping patterns, and confirms, as Anderson (2015) states, that “the black presence in the white space is tenuous at best” (p. 17). As I explained in Chapter 4, there were messages that students were receiving in the OES context in regard to who belonged and who didn’t in this learning setting. Looking at the informal behaviors of White students in the Bears class, I noticed how their perceptions were informing the negotiation of their interactions. Thus, I observed how Gwen, Jabbar, Isabel, Lydia, and Iker constantly found themselves without partners and negotiating their place in the Bears class white space.

To demonstrate how conditional association plays out and connects to Anderson’s white space, I examine more specifically Gwen’s own interactions with her White classmates. Gwen’s

"habitus" –the cognitive system of structures, beliefs, dispositions and understandings of the world, which are embedded within an individual (Bourdieu 1977) —helped her to be identified as a good student, and, one may argue, could thus be more accepted, in theory, by the White students. Just one of two Black students, Gwen was from West Africa with a middle-class background. She knew how to follow school routines, and in general, she was regarded as a "nice girl" by most of her peers and teachers (Interviews, fall, 2017). Gwen always raised her hand to ask questions (video-recordings & fieldnotes, 2017- 2018), and was always quiet when the teacher was speaking (fieldnotes & video-recordings, 2017-2018). She also showed kindness to everyone, even when some children did not want to play with her (field notes, 2017).

Even though I have no data regarding Gwen's socialization process at home, I argue, based on the work of scholars such as Brice Heath (1983), Bourdieu (1984) and Laureau (2003), that her middle-class upbringing enabled her to enact a social identity that helped her to navigate her school circumstances. She was in the Bears class what Bourdieu (1984) would call "a fish in the water." Her habitus helped her to recognize her environment as familiar and because of this, she knew how to move smoothly in it. Yet, Gwen's White classmates continued to keep her at a distance. In class Gwen was often sitting by herself with no one to talk to, even though during the individual interviews when I asked students about their friends, her name came up several times as documented in my field notes:

> *Gwen is sitting by herself-no one talks to her. She is almost always at the back and by herself. What is interesting is that even though in theory she has many friends (judging by the students' responses in their interviews), she is alone most of the time* (field notes, 11/30/2017).

The analysis of the data led me to conclude that White students in the Bears class had developed a conditioned acceptance of their peers of color. This was manifested in their naming of students of color as their friends (as in the case with Gwen) and their willingness to work with them when assigned; however, when it was their choice, they still ratified who they saw as belonging in the white space: White students. By keeping their distance from the students that they had identified as the “Other” (for more on this see Chapter 4) every time they had a choice, they revealed the beginning of their identification process. This could be seen as the onset of a racism without racists (Bonilla-Silva, 2013), or the initial stages of those “sincere fictions” (Feagin & Vera, 1995) of the “white self—the ways in which whites see themselves positively, often at deep cognitive and emotional levels” (Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001, p. 33). My findings confirmed what Van Ausdale & Feagin (2001) found in their research, “that young white children early on develop not only negative images of the racial others but also positive images of themselves as whites” (p. 34).

In the case of DLI programs, despite the widely-heard optimistic messages about these spaces as settings where children from different backgrounds learn from and appreciate each other, the reality I witnessed was different. The Bears class was often divided by race and ethnicity, and socially-constructed perceptions and dispositions still determined individuals’ places in this context. From these data it is perceptible that the identities individuals may assume, reject, challenge or oppose, as Hawkins (2004) explains, are the result of a “complex integration of diverse sociocultural experiences, the sociocultural experiences of others in the interaction, the structure and flow of language, participation and negotiation in the interaction, and the larger cultural and institutional settings within which the interactions take place” (p. 18). Through the enactment of a distinct identity (or identities), speakers use language to make or build things in

the world (Gee, 2011), and it is precisely in this building where socially constructed notions such as race, ethnicity, language and social class intersect.

**Strategic Alliances**

According to Van Ausdale & Feagin (2001), children, as “relatively new members of social institutions, are engaged in a highly interactive, socially regulating process as they monitor and shape their own behavior and that of other children and adults” (p. 33). This was clearly observable in the children who were part of the Bears class. After a few months in school, children of color in this setting seemed to have picked up on the informal grouping behaviors of White students and they started forming strategic alliances themselves when given opportunities. This helped them to negotiate a more favorable status within the class. These children were definitely not passive receivers of messages about their identities. Their negotiating skills were often displaying agency focused on trying to connect with other peers in order to create networks of support. Jabbar’s case was one of the most interesting ones in the Bears class because it shows how within the larger socio-cultural field of this context, he was able to cope with intersecting social constructions such as race, ethnicity, and language by enacting new meanings and negotiations (Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001).

Before explaining how Jabbar and other students created strategic alliances within the Bears class context, it is important to provide some context regarding Jabbar’s late arrival to the Bears class. As mentioned before, Jabbar joined the class well into the school year; when he joined the Bears class in November, he didn’t know any of the children. The reason why Jabbar joined the class that late was connected to the broader social and academic context in which the DLI program at OES was functioning. At OES the DLI program was perceived by some of the mainstream teachers as a “privileged” academic arrangement. Some of the mainstream

kindergarten teachers were complaining that the DLI classes didn't have any students with behavior problems and only the "best" students had been chosen to be in the program, leaving the other kindergarten classes to deal with the students who had behavioral and learning difficulties. They also complained about the fact that the DLI classes had less students than the other two kindergarten classes: 17 students in the DLI program versus 19 to 21students in the mainstream kindergarten classes (Ms. Gabby, personal communication, November 14, 2017).

Being faced with this situation and the sour environment at OES, the point person for the DLI program at SSD, the administration at OES, and the teachers involved had a meeting to talk about the complaints of the mainstream teachers and the difficulties they were experiencing with some children. After that meeting, a decision was made to move Jabbar to the Bears class, and two other students to the Lions (the other bilingual class) (field notes, 11/14/2017). According to the Spanish teacher, Jabbar was moved because he was on the waiting list to be part of the DLI program as a dominant English-speaker, but he was placed in the mainstream kindergarten classroom because the administration decided to wait to see if any more Spanish dominant speakers would sign up for the program; when they didn't get any more Spanish dominant speakers they capped the number of students at 17 per DLI class, thus Jabbar remained in the mainstream kindergarten class. Nevertheless, after that meeting in November, Jabbar was chosen to be moved to the DLI program (Ms. Gabby, personal communication, November 14, 2017).

There are several interesting dynamics at play in this incident; however, since the focus of this section is the students and their negotiation strategies, I will only focus on the aspects that are directly related to children and their position within the OES setting. The first aspect that I find unsettling from this episode is the fact that the entire situation was based on the idea that there were some "problem children" that nobody wanted in their classrooms. Both the Spanish

and English teachers were aware of this particular perspective from some teachers at OES; in one informal conversation they mentioned:

> **Spanish Teacher:** *[…] It's very uncomfortable how they attack the [DLI] program, and it's all about we don't receive children with special needs*
>
> **English Teacher:** *[…] And it's all about the teachers and not the children*
>
> **Spanish Teacher:** *[…] OES is not a welcoming school when it comes to minorities. It's an unwelcoming environment and it's the teachers. They need to be able to have those difficult conversations […]* (03/ 02/2018).

These comments point back to my findings in Chapter 4 regarding the deficient way students of color (Black, Latin@ and Indian) were positioned and constructed within the OES context.

The second aspect that I want to explore is the fact that throughout the above-described situation, the well-being of the mainstream teachers (who were White) was the main subject of consideration. Concerns such as the emotional, social and academic impact that decisions like moving students from an English-speaking class to a DLI program almost at the end of the first school semester could have had on the children seemed to have been relegated to a second plane. The Spanish teacher pointed to this when she said: *"this is where I think about who the program is serving, why did they move him [Jabbar]now after such a long period of time when so much time has passed? Who benefits from this program?"* (personal communication, November 14, 2017). The Spanish teacher was referring to the goals of the DLI program, the reason why it was created at OES, the minority Spanish-speaking population it was intended to serve, and the impact that such a decision was going to have on Jabbar. In this situation the interests of a particular group still trumped the needs of the students of color.

Against the backdrop of teachers' contentions and without taking into consideration Jabbar's wishes, he was moved to the Bears class in November. Unlike Gwen (the other black student in the class), Jabbar had a different socialization process. He came from a working-class background and his demeanor was more reserved. He simply raised his voice to answer teachers' question, was sometimes engaged in conversation with children, but expressed his frustration with the children who rejected him by calling them names (e.g., "ugly") (Teachers' interviews, fieldnotes, 2017). For the most part, he remained lonely and isolated during the initial months of his time with the Bears, as I mentioned in the previous chapter. Jabbar could not understand why he had been moved to a new classroom, or why he was placed in a Spanish class where he couldn't understand anything (Jabbar, personal communication, November 29, 2017). In time, he tried to make some friends, but he was almost always rejected by some of the students he initially approached (field notes, 01/30/2018). He seemed to be having a hard time in his new classroom and was aware of the feelings of some children towards him. In his interview he made clear that he knew some children didn't like him.

**I: Interviewer** **J: Jabbar**

***I:*** *So…Why are these not your friends (pointing at the pictures of classmates that he had pointed at earlier)?*
***J:*** *Hmmmmmm…. they don't like me*
***I:*** *They don't like you? Why do you say that, did they tell you?*
***J:*** *Yeah, they all tell me they don't like me*
***I:*** *Cindy told you she doesn't like you*
***J:*** *(nods his head)*
***I:*** *Yeah?*
***J:*** *(nods his head)*
***I:*** *and Jacob?*
***J:*** *No*
***I:*** *And Emma?*
***J:*** *(nods his head)*
***I:*** *She told you she doesn't like you; do you know why?*
***J:*** *Gwen told me that too*
***I:*** *Gwen told you she doesn't like you*

***J:*** *Yeah*
***I:*** *Did you do something to her? Or she just said that?*
***J:*** *She just said that*
***I:*** *Yeah…So you wanted to play with her, and she said she doesn't like you or you were just sitting by her and she said, no thank you*
***J:*** *She's at play, I tried to play with her, and she said she doesn't like me*
***I:*** *Oh! that was only Gwen or was Gwen and Emma?*
***J:*** *(nods his head)*
***I:*** *Oh, ok*

In Chapter 4, I analyzed how Jabbar had been perceived and constructed as a "trouble-maker" in the Bears class, even though his behavior was no different than the behavior of other White students in the classroom. Now, after examining in more detail the circumstances surrounding his relocation to the Bears class, and the perceptions of some teachers at OES, the argument I made in my previous chapter regarding children's perceptions and responses towards Jabbar has been confirmed. The saddest part of this situation is that Jabbar had no idea why the children didn't like him. Regarding this, Van Ausdale & Feagin (2001) state that Black children (in the case of the Bears class, children of color) have to "constantly struggle to develop and maintain a healthy sense of themselves against the larger society that tells them in a legion of ways that they are inferior" (p. 35); and this is particularly true in the case of Jabbar. He constantly struggled to fit into the Bears class and to make some friends. In the end, however, his agency and the creation of strategic alliances with other students of color helped him to succeed.

**Alliances Among Children of Color**

After a few months in the Bears class and trying unsuccessfully to be friends with some of the White students in the class, I noticed that Jabbar started to regularly approach other students of color in class and talked to them. The first student he approached was Lydia. Lydia (mixed-race: Latin@ & White) was also one of the quiet students in the Bears class. Jabbar and Lydia were both classified as dominant English speakers, so his decision to approach her first

may have included the factor that language was not a barrier for their communication. One morning, as Jabbar and Lydia were sitting on the carpet during the Spanish class, he approached her and started to talk to her. Lydia simply looked at him but didn't respond. After a few minutes of attempting to talk to her without receiving any response other than her full attention, Jabbar asked Lydia if she wanted to be his friend; to this Lydia then replied with a smile: *"Do you want me to be your friend?"* And Jabbar assented by moving his head, then Lydia replied: "*OK"* (field notes, 12/05/2017). From that moment Jabbar always sought out Lydia when he could choose a partner to work or play with.

The brilliance of the strategic alliances that Jabbar was seeking to make within the Bears class centered on the fact that once he became friends with one student, (Lydia in this case), he started to tap into her network of friends. In this way, he started talking to and becoming friends with Isabel and Iker (Latin@ students) who were Lydia's friends but with whom he didn't interact previously (field notes, 12/12/2017). Jabbar's initial strategy was taken up by other students of color, who started to ask each other if they wanted to be friends, something I did not notice with the White students. When observing the intragroup dynamics within the Bears class, I noticed how children were teaching each other how to navigate intersecting social constructions in the Bears class. Lydia, Isabel, and Gwen, for example, told one another who they should be friends with:

> **Lydia**: (telling Gwen) *You should be friends with Isabel, she is my friend and she is nice*
>
> **Gwen**: *OK, I will ask her if she wants to be my friend*
>
> (Gwen goes to look for Isabel and after a few minutes she comes back to Lydia with Isabel, they are holding hands)
>
> **Gwen***: Lydia, Isabel is my new friend*

**Isabel**: *Yes, Gwen is my friend* (field notes, 01/23/2018)

I also noticed how they were giving each other advice on who not to get in contact with, as in the case of Emma (White), who after Jabbar tried to connect with her a few times and got rejected every single time, was described as ugly by Jabbar. He came to Lydia and told her: *"Emma is ugly, you should not try be friends with her."* Lydia laughed and told Isabel: *"Jabbar said Emma's ugly, she was not nice to him, we shouldn't be friends with her"* (field notes, 01/25/2018).

I argue that the strategic alliances that children of color were forming amongst each other served as nets of support against the ostracizing behavior performed by some White students or the difficulties that they encountered in the OES white space (Anderson, 2015). For instance, one morning at the carpet when the teacher asked students to choose a partner to talk to, Gwen was left alone because none of the White students sitting by her chose her as a partner. When Lydia saw this, she moved from her place on the other side of the carpet, came to Gwen, and said, *"talk to me;"* when Gwen saw Lydia sitting by her, she smiled and started talking to her (field notes, 03/14/2018). On a different occasion, Isabel had been called to the board to participate in a game, but, as an emergent bilingual, Isabel was not very confident in her English-speaking skills, so she was embarrassed and quiet when standing up in front of the class. Immediately Jabbar encouraged her: *"Isabel, you can do it!"* Then Lydia stood up and offered to do the game with Isabel to help her not to be embarrassed (field notes, 02/06/2018). These examples demonstrate how the strategic alliances these children had formed helped them to negotiate the tenuous intersections of social constructions such as race and language in this setting.

In addition to social reputation, language skills played a key role in helping students strategically build relationships. For example, Isabel and Iker were Latin@ children, who were

classified as dominant Spanish speakers. They clearly preferred to use Spanish when communicating, but when Iker or Isabel were playing with Jabbar, Lydia or Gwen, they always spoke in English. At the beginning, I was surprised because I had never heard Isabel speaking in English before, so when Lydia told me about their friendship, knowing that Lydia didn't speak much Spanish, I immediately asked her what language they spoke together. Lydia replied: "*Isabel always speaks in English with me, she is my friend"* (personal communication, December 05, 2017). Later, I observed the two of them playing together and talking in English to each other. Isabel and Iker had learned that in order to be able to negotiate their relationships in the Bears class, they had to use their communicative repertoire strategically. They continued to talk to each other in Spanish when they were by themselves but used the English language when interacting with dominant-English speakers (field notes, fall, 2017). The interactions I witnessed between these students reminded me of what Prout and James (1997) stated regarding childhood. For these researchers, childhood is "an actively negotiated set of relationships" and is "constructed and reconstructed both for children and by children" (p. 7).

## Conclusion

The children in the Bears class observed, tested, tried, and implemented different strategies to negotiate their surroundings. In some ways, they imitated the messages they perceived from their various contexts and made them their own by enacting them and developing specific meanings associated with them. Through their interactions, they were learning to take on different identities and ways of being for different purposes (Gee, 2011). Their strategies reflect how they were not only learning two languages, but also the nuances of languaging and ways of communicating, which I have termed *bilingual ways with words*.

The examination of these young children's communicative complexity helps us to better analyze the onset of identification processes and how these impact social formations, ideas, and hierarchies. When studying the strategies implemented by these children as they made use of their communicative repertoires, it is important to note how the linguistic power dynamics are distributed, or as Rymes (2010) states, "who accommodates to whom" (p. 532). Researchers such as Volk and Angelova (2007) have documented how in their classroom context they found more instances of the dominant Spanish speakers (bilingual children) accommodating to their dominant English-speaking classmates. They associated this finding with the fact that English, as the dominant language, and English speakers as dominant, wielded more power in the classroom. The same researchers, however, also mentioned that children in their study "actively appropriated aspects of these [language] ideologies and brought them to their choices and negotiations with peers in complex ways" (p. 195).

In my own research, I would like to take this finding further. I argue that while it is true that power relations in the classroom are influenced by the social relations surrounding them, to see the linguistic accommodation of dominant Spanish-speaking children toward their dominant English-speaking counterparts as a one-way relation of dominance would be to disregard the agency and social acumen of these linguistically-minoritized children. I contend that their linguistic behavior, rather than displaying a passive acceptance of social dynamics, evidences a fluid understanding of their bilingualism and an adept assessment of their circumstances and possibilities. Children, as social actors, as Miller, Galanter, and Pribram (1960) assert, develop plans of action for behavior by drawing from a set of possibilities, all produced from everyday living experiences. The behavior of the children in the Bears class points to the significance of language and other mediating tools (Vygostky, 1980). Most importantly, it highlights the notion

that "human engagement in the world is mediated by symbolic and physical tools used in sociocultural activity" (Park, 2011, p. 393; Lantolf, 2000).

These findings challenge us, as social researchers, to re-think the way we consider power at work and children's ways of displaying it. The nuanced analysis of these children's interactions impels us to stretch our considerations of domination and subordination. In our current moment when the dominant society still privileges active, assertive individuals who carry their privilege on their bodies, some of these children of color devised skillful strategies to navigate the intersections of social constructions. It behooves us to better understand their actions and behaviors in order to challenge impractical ideas of identity prescription and focus on more accurate notions of identity enactment associated with dual language immersion contexts, and the agency of the social actors involved in it.

# CHAPTER 6: IDEOLOGIES, TEACHERS, AND THE ECOLOGY OF THE BEARS CLASS

**“Odd things, they say-even their looks-will let the secret out. Keep your eyes open.”**

— *C.S. Lewis, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

**“All have their worth and each contributes to the worth of the others.”**

— *J.R.R. Tolkien, The Silmarillion*

The Bears class did not exist in a vacuum. It was part of the larger context of OES. Thus, in order to develop a nuanced analysis of the interconnected perceptions, responses, and negotiation strategies taken up, adopted, or dismissed by the children in the Bears class, it is important to consider the wider social context in which this class operated. The Bears class was part of a DLI program that was conceived within a specific social setting and set of circumstances (for more on this see Chapter 3). These aspects are all part and parcel of what shaped the nature of the dual language learning experience for this class. Using an ecological analogy (Hawkins, 2004), which views classrooms with respect for the full synergistic roles of their multiple components, I will analyze in this section some of the significant elements that constituted the learning context and impacted the experiences of the students in the class.

In this chapter I will examine first the monoglossic perspective and monolingual ideologies implicitly present in the structure of DLI programs, as evidenced in the systems and interactions the Bears class was part of. Second, I will analyze the role of the English and Spanish teachers in the Bears class as well as their professional backgrounds and perspectives. In addition, I will explore how their actions reflected dissimilar socially constructed ideas in regard to bilingualism and language use, and the impact of those actions in the studied setting. Finally, I

will employ the metaphor of the Bears class as ecology to delve more deeply into the interconnections between different individuals, the impact of their actions, and the contextual elements that constituted the learning experiences of the children.

## The program: Insidious Monoglossic Perspectives and Monolingual Ideologies

As mentioned in Chapter 2, DLI programs have been identified by a significant body of research as the best way to provide “minority students with equitable education, as well as developing bilingualism in language majority students” (Mora et al., 2001, p. 4; see also: Alanís, 2000; Carter & Chatfield, 1986; Christian, 1996; Collier, 1995; Collier & Thomas, 2004; Lindholm-Leary, 2001, 2004/2005; Thomas & Collier, 1997a; 1997b, 2002; Skutnabb-Kangas & Cummins, 1988). However, still present in these programs is a subtle, yet significant monoglossic perspective of bilingualism and bilingual development. In order to better understand how these monolingual perspectives, operate, it is critical to delve into the linguistic conceptualizations underlying DLI settings to be able to examine how, despite the stated intentions of these programs to promote multilingualism, they still perpetuate monolingual ideologies.

Lindholm-Leary (2004/2005) explains that dual language programs include four important features: 1) Instruction and classroom interactions take place in English and another language, with the non-English language used at least for 50% of the instruction; 2) emergent bilinguals with two different home languages are together in an integrated setting during most of the content instruction; 3) both groups of emergent bilinguals carry out work in both languages in an equitable proportions; 4) the day contains instruction periods in which emergent bilinguals and teachers use only one language.

One of the main ideologies undergirding the structure of DLI programs, however, is the idea that languages are separate structures (English and another language). The simple fact that instruction in these programs is separated by languages (even individual school subjects are taught in different languages), and the student population is equally identified by their "dominant" language, reveals an implicit monoglossic perspective derived from the consideration that languages possess their own exclusive systems (Canagarajah, 2013, p. 1). In order to better explain what I mean by a monoglossic ideology, I will use Flores & Schissel's (2014) historical explanation:

> Monoglossic language ideologies emerged alongside the rise of nation-states in Europe. Within this context, European nationalist grammarians began to see heterogeneity in language practices as an impediment to the creation of national subjects (Gal, 2006). It was, therefore, deemed necessary to create a codified, standardized language to cleanse the language of perceived impurities. Bonfiglio (2010) argues that the codification of a particular grammar and pronunciation produced the bourgeoisie as speakers of a more correct and perfect language than the lower classes. The idealized language practices of the bourgeoisie were codified and named "a language" that represented "a people" with rights to "a land." (p. 456)

These ideas of language purity and separation dictated linguistic understandings for many years. Under this conceptualization of language, which was originally created with the aim to secure political power (Makoni and Pennycook, 2007), language practices are connected to "invented" and "fixed" single views that do not reflect accurately how people use language (Makoni and Pennycook, 2007; Garcia, 2009). Based on these detached notions, bilinguals were seen as two monolinguals in one (Grosjean, 1989). The argument backing this practice was the early belief

that emergent bilinguals should learn and develop the additional language without the interference of the first language (Cummins, 2007).

Even though in recent years anachronous ideas of bilingualism, such as the ones mentioned above, have been challenged by "views of heteroglossic linguistic practices and beliefs, or the realization of multiple co-existing norms" (Garcia, 2009), these outdated ideas are still present in DLI classrooms today. Garcia (2009a) asserts that "bilingual education programs have also fallen prey to a monoglossic ideology that treats each of the students' languages as separate and whole and views the languages as bounded autonomous systems" (as cited in Garcia & Kleifgen, 2010). This language separation is what Creese & Blackledge (2008) have dubbed "separate bilingualism" and Cummins (2007) has called "the two solitudes." Based on this perspective, researchers such as Garcia & Kleifgen (2010) claim that "most educational programs for emergent bilinguals are based on the fact that English only should be used—that English is best taught monolingually" (p. 57). These elements were clearly present in the DLI program at OES in the language allocation and distribution in this DLI setting— English and Spanish were separated by teacher, classroom, and school subjects.

This programmatic separation resulted in explicit physical boundaries for the Bears class. During the first semester of the school year, the classrooms where children took classes were identified, by both teachers and students, as the "English" and the "Spanish" classroom (field notes, 10/11/2017). This clear spatial and linguistic distinction evidenced views of "separate bilingualism" (Creeese & Blackledge, 2008), and conceptions of languages as independent systems (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2010). These ideas were further reinforced by the actions and behavior of the English and Spanish teachers (a subject I shall return to later in this chapter). In the Spanish classroom, even though the Spanish teacher was bilingual, she insisted on speaking

only in Spanish to the children and maintaining a Spanish only environment in her classroom. Her rationale was that in an English-dominant context like the one at OES, she wanted to protect the space and time allocated to the use of the Spanish language (personal communication, October 11, 2017). This logic made sense in theory; however, later in this chapter, I will show how her well-intended linguistic boundaries reinforced ideas of linguistic isolation of the Spanish language in the OES context.

In the English classroom, during the first school semester, the Bears class was taught by a monolingual English teacher, who was replacing the permanent English teacher while she was on maternity leave until late November. This substitute teacher, Ms. Rosie, made evident to the children that she could not understand Spanish, therefore all communication in her classroom had to be conducted in English (field notes, 10/31/2017). The language separation ideas of both teachers were noticeable in both classrooms, pointing to monolingual understandings of language acquisition and bilingualism in general.

**The Discrepancy Between Program Structures & Linguistic Practices**

The arrangements in the DLI program that the Bears class was part of lent themselves to what Chaparro (2017) identifies as a "regimenting of languages and speakers, because of the way it classifies children as either English-speakers or Spanish-speakers" (p. 220). When analyzing the discrepancies between DLI program structures and the fluid, dynamic, bilingual practices of some of the children in the Bears class (see Chapter 5 for more on this), it is evident that the DLI program model was in conflict with their practices.

In the case of the Bears class, some of the children who were constructed as Spanish dominant speakers within the structural constraints of the DLI program had in reality been exposed to both English and Spanish languages. Latin@ children sometimes come from bilingual

homes. Yet in this program, they were construed from a unidimensional ethnic and linguistic perspective: Latin@ = Spanish-speaker. In their households these children had had interactions with older siblings (e.g., Nelly mentioned in her interview that she spoke English with her sister), relatives, and sometimes one parent who only spoke English (as in the case of Joseph, Lydia, Cindy, and Lina). Some of the children in the Bears class had experiences in pre-school or daycare which were in English (Sury). These children also had access to media and technology (e.g., T.V. shows, movies, games, music, etc.) around them in English. However, because of the monoglossic perspectives underlining the structures of their DLI program (a language = a people), children who had developed a dynamic bilingualism and engaged in bilingual practices were still sorted into linguistically constraining, socially-constructed language categories (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007).

The remaining questions, after analyzing how programmatic ideologies and socially-constructed notions of language impacted the bilingual learning experience of the children in the Bears class, are: how can the most progressive and academically favorable bilingual program—DLI—be still tacitly guided by monolingual biases? Why does diglossic functional separation (Baker, 2003) continue to guide teaching and learning in bilingual spaces? The examination of these questions took me back to the data and specifically to one of the questions that the Spanish teacher used to raise every time she seemed frustrated by the structural constraints of the DLI program at OES: *"who are we serving?"* (field notes 10/04/2017). Looking at the group of majority and minority language speakers in the Bears class, and after examining the differences is their linguistic practices[20], I conjecture that monoglossic ideologies may still be guiding the teaching and learning in DLI settings because these programs seem to have been conceived

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[20] The group identified as dominant-Spanish speakers used both English and Spanish in their interactions, while the group identified as dominant-English speakers mainly communicated in English.

having two groups of monolinguals in mind (English-speakers and speakers of another language).

As I reviewed the data from the first interviews I conducted with the students, I noticed that all of the children in the Bears class who had been classified as "English-speakers" were indeed closer to the monolingual end of the spectrum. The only exception was Gwen, who spoke German at home. The remaining six children all mentioned in their first interview that they only spoke English. Parenthetically, all these children were White and from an upper-middle class and middle-class background. Table 5 summarizes these children's answers:

***Table 5.***
Dominant English Speakers Language Classification and Practices

| Name | "Why do you like English better than Spanish?" | Classified as | Language spoken |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Kasey** | ***Because I don't really know any Spanish*** | Dominant English-speaker | English |
| **Jacob** | ***Because I can understand it*** | Dominant English-speaker | English |
| **Emma** | ***I don't speak Spanish*** | Dominant English-speaker | English |
| **Kevin** | ***because you can know what, what they are saying*** | Dominant English-speaker | English |
| **Tyler** | ***I don't speak Spanish*** | Dominant English-speaker | English |
| **Ellie** | ***I speak English and my whole family speaks in English*** | Dominant English-speaker | English |

Thus, the core issue with the current structure of DLI programs is that besides its outdated conception of bilingualism—two monolinguals in one (Grosjean, 1989)—these regimented systems are taking into account only the monolingual characteristics of one group of speakers. What is more interesting in this analysis is that this group of speakers are the majority language speakers, and the students with more economic and social capital in this class (Bourdieu, 1984). All of these interconnections point to dissimilar power dynamics that researchers such as

Cervantes-Soon (2014), Flores (2016), Palmer (2009; 2010), and Valdes (1997), among others, have identified in DLI settings. Having two dissimilar groups of students with very singular linguistic characteristics creates a complicated learning environment, as researchers such as Valdes (1997) warned. However, I argue that the main matter is not the language practices of the students, but the monoglossic ideology at the center of DLI programs that reifies structures of social power and inequity. As I have shown in my previous two chapters, DLI spaces, like the context of the Bears class, are environments characterized by the "heteroglossic linguistic practices" of children and "multiple co-existing norms" (Garcia, 2009).

Using the current structures of DLI programs, which establish visible monolingual boundaries and practices, to fit the diverging social and linguistic realities of students in modern school settings is tantamount to using shock treatment to treat all mental illnesses. This is simply not appropriate nor effective. The Spanish teacher used to comment on this situation often:

> *I don't have a DLI program because I don't have the models. I don't have the student population that DLI programs require. I find myself teaching the basics of the Spanish language because the children don't understand me, even the students who are supposed to speak Spanish, they don't speak enough Spanish. I don't have a curriculum that I can use because, again, these children are not your 'normal' DLI student population, so I have to create everything from scratch to fit the language needs of my students. What is it that they say? We're flying the plane as we're building it […] Sometimes I feel like I am in a program teaching Spanish as a foreign language and not in a DLI program* (personal communication, October 10, 2017).

The comments of the Spanish teacher reflect her frustration with the mismatch between the program model and the language needs of the students in the Bears class. They also point to the

need to consider educational approaches from the perspective of the school community and not vice versa. In other words, instead of "forcing" a student population to fit the requirements of the program, programs should be devised to meet the needs of dissimilar school populations. This teacher's remarks also point to entrenched monoglossic perspectives that conceive a *"'normal' DLI student population"* as the students who speak one language and can serve as models for their peers. Emergent bilinguals, who are developing their skills in more than one language at the time they enter these programs, do not seem to be the student population "required" for this educational approach.

This does not mean that we should eliminate DLI programs because of the underlying monolingual structures that they maintain or the mismatch between these programs and some of the populations they intend to serve. This would certainly be a negative outcome, taking into account that these programs have been identified as beneficial for the education of emergent bilinguals (Howard, Sugarman & Christian, 2003; Lindholm-Leary, 2005; Mora, Wink & Wink, 2001). The point that I am trying to make is that when it comes to socially-constructed notions such as language and bilingualism there is a lot more complexity than what meets the eye. Dated ideas of one language, one people have been found wanting when examined at the crux of racial, economic, and ethnic considerations. By pointing to the intricacies of linguistic and social phenomena that these programs seem to ignore, I aim to bring into sharper focus the fact that monoglossic approaches to language education no longer suffice to account for the intersectional realities that converge in DLI spaces.

Ironically, the group of minority speakers that DLI programs were created for are the ones who display a linguistic agility that these programs don't seem to be prepared for. In this regard Ofelia Garcia (2007) expressed, "as the children's linguistic heterogeneity is brought

closer together […] the distance between the invented languages that schools have chosen to teach and assess in and the children's practices only grows larger" (p. xiv). The fluid practices of some children in the Bears class reflected an in-flux communicative reality that has rendered DLI bounded approaches insufficient when dealing with the contemporary multilingual existence of school settings. In my previous two chapters, I have shown how the children in the Bears class rejected, took up, and negotiated socially-constructed ideas such as race, ethnicity, and bilingualism by using their agency and entire communicative repertoires to re-shape their social worlds. A better alternative to the current monoglossic ideologies underlying DLI program models would take into account the complexity of children's language practices and restructure this educational approach from a dynamic bilingualism perspective (Garcia, 2009). As Garcia (2007) expressed, "we must rethink what the social, political and economic consequences would be if we no longer posited the existence of separate languages" because "the invention of languages has implications that are situated in very material language effects" (p. xi). Some of those effects, and the considerations connected to them, will be the center of my analysis in this next section.

**The Teachers: Ms. Gabby, Ms. Rosie, Ms. Nancy**

After examining the insidious monoglossic perspectives and monolingual conceptualizations present in DLI programs, in this section I will turn to the analysis of teachers' backgrounds, their perspectives, and how their actions impacted the Bears class. The previous exploration of the programmatic ideologies of the DLI program provided a relevant framework to better understand how teachers, as some of the social actors in the Bears class, were impacted by the structural constraints of the program, but at the same time shaped some of the interactions in this learning environment. For each teacher, I will look at how their background and

professional circumstances in the Bears class influenced their decisions, making connections between the teachers' behaviors, the different dynamics and students' behavior in the DLI classrooms, and discernible linguistic outcomes.

**The Spanish Teacher: Ms. Gabby, The Protector of The Spanish Language**

Ms. Gabby was a bilingual educator (Spanish/English) with more than 20 years of teaching experience. Originally from Puerto Rico, Ms. Gabby placed a great significance on the role of language in her career as a teacher. In her first interview she explained:

> *[ser bilingüe] ese era como mi "niche," eso es una destreza que yo tengo que y en mi…en mi trabajo anterior no usaba el español para nada, y pues yo soy Puerto Riqueña, eso es mi, yo soy mas Puerto Riqueña que americana y eso esta bien de mi y la idea de poder trabajar en una situación bilingüe [estaba bien].* (Interview, 11/18/2017)
> ***[being bilingual] that was like my "niche," that is a skill that I have, that, and in my …in my previous job I did not use Spanish at all, and well, I am Puerto Rican, that is my, I am more Puerto Rican than American and that is something good about me and the idea of being able to work in a bilingual situation [was good].*** (11/18/2017)

From her interview, it is noticeable how Ms. Gabby connects one of her languages (Spanish) to her identity as Puerto Rican. At the same time, however, she recognizes that she is both Puerto Rican and American, and that that is inextricably connected to her bilingualism; she sees it as a particular skill, her "niche." Prior to being the Spanish teacher in the DLI program at OES, Ms. Gabby was a mainstream kindergarten teacher at OES. She had been working at this institution for the last 12 years of her teaching career. Thus, once the district administration decided to start a DLI program at OES, it made sense to ask her to be the Spanish teacher in the program (Ms. Gabby, personal communication, October 04, 2017).

Ms. Gaby was excited about the possibility of being the Spanish teacher in the new DLI program, but at the same time, she felt some apprehension regarding the conditions in which the program was going to operate. She mentioned:

> *When they offered me the job I asked, how many Latino students do we have in the program? And they said: 'you're going to tell us that your decision will depend on how many Latino students we have?' That told me that they didn't understand the program. I don't have the models; I feel that they lied to me.* (personal communication, October 04, 2017)

Ms. Gaby's comments point back to the mismatch between the program model (DLI) and the student population at OES I discussed earlier. This teacher, being a seasoned bilingual educator, knew that one of the components of a successful DLI program is to have the needed student population—approximately 50% speakers of English and 50% speakers of a language other than English— (Lindholm-Leary, 2005; Howard, Sugarman & Christian, 2003). This is the reason why her first question was about the number of Latin@ children in the program. She knew that a DLI program without the required student population was off to a rocky start. Her comments also hint at monoglossic ideologies connected to one people, one language. Even though Ms. Gabby was a bilingual educator, she still seemed to consider that having Latin@ children in the DLI program equated to having dominant Spanish speakers in the program. She later realized that was not the case (Ms. Gabby, personal communication, December 11, 2017).

Despite the less than ideal circumstances surrounding the opening of the DLI program at OES (for more on this see Chapter 3), Ms. Gabby accepted the job. She mentioned that felt she had to, due to the district's pressing situation. Thus, when Ms. Gabby realized that only three students were Spanish-dominant speakers in the Bears class, she felt concerned. She was not

only worried about the language development of the students classified as dominant English speakers, who had no prior knowledge of the Spanish language, but also about the few dominant-Spanish speakers who were going to receive basic instruction in the language they already knew. In this regard she mentioned: *"I am concerned for the students who speak Spanish…I'm just wondering what I can do for the Spanish speakers, so that they won't get bored"* (Ms. Gabby, personal communication, October 11, 2017).

Ms. Gabby's concern was similar to what other scholars have found in DLI settings regarding the lack of an equitable linguistic approach to meet the needs of two different groups of emergent bilinguals (Valdes, 1997; Garcia, 2009; de Jong & Howard, 2009). For example, Lindholm-Leary (2001), investigating teacher talk in a third and fourth grade TWI classroom, found that instruction in the minority language (Spanish) was typified by simple verb forms and basic utterance complexity in those settings. These findings agree with de Jong & Howard's (2009) affirmations in relation to the teachers' own (minority) language use probably being "accommodated to such an extent that the overall input to the class [fails] to stretch the linguistic or cognitive capabilities of the native speakers of the minority language" (p. 89). Lamentably, it seems that a similar situation was occurring in the Bears class. The Spanish teacher had to accommodate or simplify the instruction in Spanish in order to address the linguistic needs of the majority of the student population. Yet, at the same time, she unwillingly had to ignore the needs of the group of emergent bilinguals DLI programs were created for—minority language speakers (Ms. Gabby, personal communication, December 11, 2017). Due to the linguistic imbalance of the students in the Bears class, almost the entire first semester of the Spanish classes was spent teaching children some basic knowledge of the Spanish language. Ms. Gabby felt torn because she couldn't ensure that the learners from both language groups would benefit from social and

academic interaction (Lucero, 2015; Soltero, 2004), and she couldn't provide them with structured and unstructured opportunities to speak both languages using each other as linguistic resources (Angelova et al., 2006; Christian, 1994; Lucero, 2015; Lindholm-Leary, 2004/2005) (Ms. Gabby, personal communication, October 11, 2017). This situation set the stage for a school year in which the DLI program was heavily skewed towards English language development and the Spanish language was portrayed as a foreign language in the Bears class.

Within dual language settings, language separation and allocation are significant aspects connected to curriculum and instructional practices, and this held true in the Bears class. In the literature, a few reasons are cited for keeping languages separated in these learning spaces: 1) to ensure that both languages are utilized equally; 2) to help children to develop two distinct language systems and means to communicate avoiding translation and duplication in the learning process; 3) to make sure that emergent bilinguals do not favor the use of the majority language over the minority and to support the development of positive attitudes toward the minority language (Baker, 2001, Cloud et., al, 2000; Garcia, 2009; Morris, 2010). In addition, Jacobson & Faltis (1990) explain that "by strictly separating the languages, the teacher avoids, it is argued, cross-contamination, thus making it easier for the child to acquire a new linguistic system as he/she internalizes a given lesson" (p. 4).

As explained at the beginning of this chapter, language distribution, language use, and language allocation in dual language settings are connected to notions of language constructions, language status, and power (Garcia, 2009; Palmer, 2009; McCollum, 1999; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007; Flores, 2013), and this was apparent in the Bears class. Thus, as the Spanish teacher was faced with a significant linguistic imbalance in the student population, she decided to implement a Spanish ONLY rule in her classroom. Her reasons were to make sure that

emergent bilinguals did not favor the use of the majority language over the minority and to protect the space and time that she had to help these children to develop their Spanish language skills. She explained:

> *"They don't hear that much Spanish here at school, and I'm not even sure if they hear that much Spanish at home, so I have to make the most of the time they have with me. As soon as they enter my classroom, I want them to hear the language as much as they can. That's why I don't want anybody to speak English here. They speak English all the time outside this classroom."* (personal communication, October 04, 2017)

Ms. Gabby's remarks allude to outdated ideas of languages considered as autonomous systems (Canagarajah, 2013). She was so adamant about her Spanish only rule in the classroom that when I conducted the interviews with the children, she told me that if I was going to conduct the interviews in English, I needed to do it outside the classroom because children could only speak Spanish in her classroom (field notes, 10/24/2017). Her actions and words showed that for her, the two languages these children were learning could be separated to the point that when children entered the Spanish classroom, they were expected to "silence" the English language and communicate only using the Spanish language. Furthermore, her comments revealed that to some extent, she was perceiving emergent bilinguals in her classroom as two monolinguals in one.

That said, Ms. Gabby's concerns about the space and time allocated to the minority language in the English-speaking context of OES were not unfounded (for more on this see Chapter 4). As many scholars have shown, English as the language of power in the US has a very strong influence in the language practices of emergent bilinguals and on the power relationships that become evident in various instructional settings (de Jong, 1996, de Jong & Howard, 2009; Freeman, 1998; Torres-Guzman, 2002; Valdes, 1997). In the Bears class this was also the case.

Even though Ms. Gabby insisted on children speaking only Spanish in her classroom, children still chose to communicate mainly in English. It was the language that they all had in common, and, for most of them, the language they had used at home to communicate. In addition, English was the language of power and acceptance in the broader school context at OES and in the community outside of the school (as documented in Chapters 4 & 5).

The children's linguistic choices revealed how their bilingualism could not be understood as two separate systems in one bilingual brain that these students could switch on/off at the door when entering the Spanish or English classrooms. The children in the Bears class employed their entire linguistic repertoires when it came to their interactions. This was something that came naturally to them and was noticeable in their linguistic exchanges. As the school year advanced, children who at the beginning of the year communicated only in English started to communicate using both languages fluidly, what Garcia (2009) has termed *translanguaging*, in circumstances where they had a choice of language (field notes, 10/24/2017). Again, this points to Garcia's (2009) ideas about bilingualism being not "*linear* but *dynamic*" (p. 42, emphasis in original). The interactions of the children in the Bears class displayed a fluid use of linguistic features in different situations. For instance, when Sury was trying to explain to her friends why they should not pick the fruits from a tree before they were fully ripe, she said: *"you don't* <u>*hala*</u> *the fruit because then you ouch! (made a facial expression denoting pain) the* <u>*mano*</u> *of the tree."* (field notes, 10/24/2017). In this interaction, Sury not only used translanguaging to communicate using linguistic features from both English and Spanish (I have underlined the Spanish words), but she also used non-verbal cues, such as facial expressions, and onomatopoeic sounds (*ouch!*) to convey her message. She used her entire linguistic repertoire to successfully communicate her ideas. However, because the Spanish teacher was so concerned about her role in the DLI

program and the socially-constructed idea of the Spanish language as a separate system, she continued to create linguistic boundaries in her classroom.

Unfortunately, Ms. Gabby's well-intentioned language boundaries and unceasing work inside and outside of the classroom[21] to increase the visibility of the Spanish language at OES resulted in the linguistic isolation of the Spanish language and not the linguistic inclusion she had intended. Monolingual teachers and other school personnel started to abstain from going into her classroom because as soon as they entered it, she would welcome them with a *"Aqui se habla solo Español"* ***"Here we speak only Spanish."*** Some of these adults showed their frustration and left the room; others tried to use any little Spanish knowledge they had to communicate (field notes, 10/04/2017). In time, I noticed that adults and children alike started to refer to her classroom as the "Spanish classroom," marking that space as a separate one. In the same way, monoglossic understandings of bilingualism started to develop in the Bears class to the point that children began to police each other's language use. In this class, it became normal to hear children saying to each other *"speak in Spanish, this is the Spanish classroom."* They even said similar things to some adults— *"here we only speak Spanish,"* when Ms. Gabby was not in the room. When I asked Mario about the language that he wanted to be interviewed in, he quickly said: *"Spanish, because this is the Spanish classroom"* (field notes, 11/28/2017).

Ms. Gabby's linguistic protectionist approach communicated to these children a message of language separation and separated bilingualism (Creese & Blackledge, 2008). This was further compounded by the attitude of the substitute English teacher (Ms. Rosie) towards the Spanish language— *"I don't understand Spanish, don't speak to me in Spanish"* (field notes, 11/28/2017), and the messages they perceived outside of the classroom (for more on the

[21] Every time she was with the students, she purposefully chose to speak only in Spanish.

messages students perceived see Chapter 4). In addition, during almost the entire first semester of the school year, Ms. Gabby and Ms. Rosie did not find the time to sit together to plan their classes, something that has been put forward in the literature as a requirement of a successful DLI program (Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers, 2007; Marzano, 2003; Montecel & Cortez, 2002; Gandara, 1995; Slavin & Calderon, 2001). Their communication was limited to the immediate needs of the students, and both teachers, for different reasons[22], only focused on addressing their teaching from a monolingual, separatist perspective (field notes, 12/19/2017).

**The Substitute English Teacher: Ms. Rosie, The English Language Interventionist**

Ms. Rosie was a monolingual, White, reading specialist from the Midwest. At OES, she worked as the math specialist for the school and provided intervention in reading and math. When Ms. Rosie heard that the district was going to open its first DLI program at OES, she reached out to the administration of the school and asked if she could be considered for the position of the English teacher. She later found out that all of the positions in the program had already been filled. However, when the principal found out that Ms. Nancy's (the English teacher for the DLI program) maternity leave was going to extend into the school year, Ms. Rosie was offered the opportunity to do a leave of absence from her job (reading specialist), and cover while Ms. Nancy was gone (Ms. Rosie, personal communication, November 18, 2017). The rationale for this offer, Ms. Rosie explained, was to have someone from the school to help support the DLI program, and in that way the training that she was going to receive stayed within the district rather than hiring someone from outside of the district. She mentioned that it made

[22] Ms. Gabby was overwhelmed trying to create a curriculum to support the language needs of her students. Ms. Rosie was only temporarily replacing the English teacher, so she was still attending to her previous role as the reading specialist in the school.

more sense for the administration to invest in someone who was going to stay with them rather than spending financial resources in the training of someone who was not going to stay long term (personal communication, November 18, 2017).

Ms. Rosie's excitement about being a classroom teacher and especially being part of the DLI program was visible. She would come to me at different times during the day and make comments such as: *"These kids are amazing!" "These children are hilarious and so smart," "I am so glad I get to be their teacher and to see how they develop," "This is such a fun and awesome job*!" (field notes, October 2017). When asked about the DLI program during her interview, she hinted at the adverse feelings some teachers were having towards the DLI program at OES and the complaints they had regarding the discrepancies between the student population in the DLI and mainstream kindergarten classrooms (for more on this see Chapter 5). Regarding this, she explained:

> *Well, it's interesting 'cause I feel that I should be advocating for it [DLI] more, but we have such a negative thing going on in our building right now, that it's hard to be as excited about it as I am, so I am trying not to overshow it when I am outside the classroom because people are struggling with behaviors and things; and we have behaviors but I feel like we have so much movement and so many awesome pieces that it takes away our behaviors […] because we have so much oral language embedded, we have decreased the behaviors* (Interview, 11/15/2017).

Ms. Rosie's comments point to the larger OES environment in which the DLI program was operating and the negative perceptions other teachers had about it (a subject I attended to in Chapter 5). This situation, as she mentioned, prevented her from advocating more for the program. Instead of trying to explain to other teachers the struggles that they also had with some

children's negative behaviors in the DLI program, Ms. Rosie downplayed her role in the program and focused on the good aspects of her job: "*we have so much movement and so many awesome pieces that it takes away our behaviors."* Her comments made me wonder about her ideas regarding education and what was happening in the other kindergarten classrooms. If anything, one may think that the movement between two classrooms and the many pieces associated with the DLI program may have added some difficulties to the school routines; but she maintained that the centrality of oral language in this program had a positive effect on children's behavior. Despite her enthusiasm about the program and the development of children's skills that she was able to witness in the Bears class, Ms. Rosie's understanding of language development and bilingualism was clearly connected to monoglossic ideologies. The fact that she continually reminded the children about the language separation between the English and Spanish classrooms and asked children to communicate only in English attested to that (field notes, 11/15/2017).

In addition, Ms. Rosie's background as a reading specialist and interventionist also impacted the way she viewed children's language use and development in the Bears class. She said so herself when she mentioned:

> *The struggle I'm constantly having is that my background comes from intervention, so I know that kids start struggling as early as entering kindergarten, so having such a small literacy block uhm...gives me panic because I don't know how to reach the need of every single kid in here in 40 minutes, and all you need is one behavior to decrease that to 35 to 30. Since the 3rd week of September, I have not had a day that I haven't assessed whether it is assessing in Math or assessing in Literacy [...] to try and make sure that I am always right where they need me to be, so that way I don't have to worry about holes,*

> *that's like the worst fear I have, it's sending a child from kindergarten with holes already started* (Interview, 11/15/2017).

Aside from the disconcerting resemblance between Ms. Rosie's educational ideas—kindergarten children having knowledge holes— and the banking model of education described by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1968), Ms. Rosie's comments reveal how her background causes her to focus on the struggles (interventions) rather than the unique development of kindergarten emergent bilinguals—a deficit view rather than an asset-based one. This perception is fundamental because a significant body of research has found that successful DLI programs require teachers who are able to adjust their philosophy, beliefs, and classroom practices to fully support the dual language program (Alanis & Rodriguez, 2008; Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers, 2007; Mora et. al, 2001). In addition, they must be prepared with high levels of knowledge about not only subject matter, but also curriculum, theories underlying bilingual education, second language acquisition, and issues connected to bilingualism (Alanis & Rodriguez, 2008; Fillmore & Snow, 2002; Howard, Sugarman & Christian, 2003; Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers, 2007; Lindholm-Leary, 2004/2005; Lucero, 2015). In the case of Ms. Rosie, her lack of understanding of the biliteracy process instilled in her a *panic* that she tried to counteract through assessments and a steady focus on math and literacy learning in her classroom, *in English.*

From the beginning of the year, Ms. Rosie made sure to communicate to the children in the Bears class that *"in Ms. Gabby's classroom you speak in Spanish, but this is the English classroom, here we speak in English so that we can understand each other"* (field notes, 10/25/2017). During her interview, every time she referred to language, she was referring to the English language; and during my observations, I noticed that her focus was on helping children

to develop their English language skills, rather than developing their bilingualism. Every time children mentioned something connected to the Spanish language, she would reply, *"Yes, but this is the English classroom"* and would return the focus to the English language (field notes, 10/31/2017). Her dismissive attitude towards the natural bilingual and metalinguistic connections that children were making reinforced the idea of a "separate bilingualism" (Creese & Blackledge, 2008) that children were already perceiving in the Spanish classroom. I noticed this one day as I entered the English classroom after finishing my observations in the Spanish classroom; I asked Lina a question in Spanish:

> **Giselle**: *¿Que clase tienen en la tarde? ¿Música? (**What class do you have in the afternoon? Music?**)*
>
> **Lina**: *No, you don't speak Spanish here! You speak Spanish over there (pointed to the Spanish classroom next door) This is the English classroom, here you speak in English* (field notes,11/14/2017)

During the first semester of the school year, I witnessed how children, like Lina, had developed a very clear understanding of the languages they were learning and the spaces in which these languages were to be used. Their "separate bilingualism" seemed to be connected to particular people and places. Thus, when I asked them in the first interview about their language use at school, they mentioned Ms. Gabby and the Spanish classroom as the people and place where they spoke in Spanish; and Ms. Rosie, her classroom, and the rest of the school as the people and places where they spoke in English (Interviews, Fall, 2017).

**The Head English Teacher: Ms. Nancy, The Dynamic Bilingual**

Ms. Nancy was a bilingual, White, kindergarten teacher from the Midwest, who had worked at OES for 12 years. She had always been drawn to languages and teaching young

children. Ms. Nancy studied abroad in Germany and her second major was German. She also taught kindergarten children overseas, and because of her background, she had always had one of the ESL clusters at OES. Having a teaching background in ESL (although no formal training), she said, made her an ideal candidate to be the English teacher in the DLI program. Further, Ms. Nancy had some knowledge of Spanish as well. Five years prior to teaching in the DLI program, she started taking classes through Springville's technical college, which she felt helped her when teaching in the DLI program (Interview, 03/23/2018).

As mentioned previously, Ms. Nancy was on maternity leave until late November. This meant that she missed the setting up of her classroom and almost a semester of the school year. As soon as she returned, though, Ms. Nancy was hard at work. She spent a few days shadowing Ms. Rosie to get familiar with the routines the children were following and to ensure that the children in the Bears class had a smooth transition from Ms. Rosie to her. Something that was noticeable as soon as Ms. Nancy started to lead her class was her "dynamic bilingualism" (Garcia, 2009) perspective in regard to the language practices of the children. Even though Ms. Nancy was the English teacher, she would speak to the children in Spanish every time she had an opportunity and encouraged students to use their entire linguistic repertoires when communicating. She explained:

> *I've always thought of knowing two languages as an asset [...] that's why I was so excited to be part of our two-way immersion program [...] I'd say during lessons, if you don't know it in Spanish you can use your English, if you don't know it in English you can use your Spanish because nosotros somos bilingües (we are bilinguals)* (Interview, 03/23/2018).

Ms. Nancy's words evidenced an understanding of bilingualism from a heteroglossic perspective. For her it was inconceivable to consider the languages the children were learning as two separate systems; rather, she considered them as one rich repertoire comprised of different linguistic features. Thus, when she first began to interact with the children, she started to notice the strict language separation existent in the DLI program and how children in the Bears class had taken it up. She was surprised to see how students, in particular, had internalized these ideas and adjusted their language practices according to them. She expressed:

> *I feel like right when I returned, uhmmm… there's a pretty clear division between uhmm…using English or using Spanish. Uhmm… Students had said like, no this is the English room, and I think my eyes about popped out of my head when I heard that because it was so confusing to me, because again, like being bilingual is an asset, it's not, you don't have two different brains, like it is all in one brain and to me you should be able to use whatever you have to use* (Interview, 03/23/2018).

Though Ms. Nancy was the latest member of the DLI program, and she was still trying to adjust to the routines of the Bears class, the dynamic perspective that she brought and implemented from the first week she was leading the English class started to have an impact on the children. Students in the Bears class, who during the first part of the year had been instructed to keep the languages they were learning strictly separated, saw a different linguistic behavior in Ms. Nancy. The impact of that behavior was noticeable in the interactions she was having with them:

> *When I first came back and I wasn't aware of like, I wasn't aware that the classroom had been set up as this is the English classroom, so I was, I started speaking a little bit of Spanish to a student, and her eyes got so big, Isabel's eyes, her eyes got so big, and she*

> *looked at me and she goes 'ohhhh…you speak Spanish!!!' and I was like, I looked at her and I was like, am I not supposed to do that in here? and she's like 'ohhhh' and she shook her head, just like, and it was, it was so, it was like taboo.* (Interview, 03/23/2018)

At the beginning of her time with the Bears class, Ms. Nancy was certainly unaware of the linguistic boundaries that had been set up by teachers and enacted by children in this class. Being an experienced and knowledgeable bilingual educator, she had simply assumed that the DLI program at OES was going to be implemented following a bilingual perspective and the latest research on bilingual education, not from monoglossic understandings of bilingualism (Interview, 03/23/2018). Ms. Nancy quickly found out that there was a forbidden connotation ("*taboo"*) associated with language use in different settings.

For Isabel, the Spanish-dominant student Ms. Nancy interacted with in the above-described incident and the one who remained very quiet during the English lessons in the first semester, hearing the incoming English teacher speaking Spanish was a shock ("*her eyes got so big")*. This was because Ms. Nancy was "breaking" the monolingual rules of the classroom as set by the substitute teacher. Isabel's English skills were limited at the beginning of the year and this impacted her participation in the English class (field notes, fall semester, 2017). Thus, for her, the fact that the new English teacher was "breaking the rules" opened up some possibilities that she had never had before. The structural and linguistic boundaries of the program and the messages of linguistic separation that she was receiving from her teachers had negatively impacted Isabel's opportunities in the English classroom (field notes, video-recordings, fall, 2017). Again, ironically, Isabel was one of the linguistically-minoritized students that the DLI program at OES had been created for.

Once Ms. Nancy realized what was happening in her classroom in terms of linguistic interactions, she intentionally started to bring the Spanish language into her lessons (field notes, 12/12/2017). She purposefully told the children about her own Spanish learning and encouraged them to use their bilingual skills in her classroom. In other words, Ms. Nancy embodied the idea of translanguaging (Garcia, 2009). By this I mean that her linguistic attitude, disposition, and demeanor reflected a "pedagogical habitus" (Bourdieu, 1984; Feldman & Fataar, 2017; Feldman, 2016) based on a dynamic bilingualism that embraced the different linguistic practices and realities it encountered. Some days, Ms. Nancy would point confidently to the similarities and differences between the numbers in English and Spanish using both her English and Spanish skills (field notes, 02/06/2018). Other days, she would ask the children how to say a word in Spanish (field notes, 02/20/2018). On other occasions, she would read a word problem in English and encourage the children to provide their answers in the language they felt most comfortable in (field notes, 03/06/2018).

Garcia & Lin (2017) explain that translanguaging refers to "both the complex and fluid language practices of bilinguals, as well as the pedagogical approaches that leverage those practices" (p. 1). In her daily interaction with the children, Ms. Nancy was using fluid language practices (as well as encouraging her students to do the same) and leveraging those practices through various pedagogical approaches. This new approach, however, was met with some resistance from the children, who had up to this point practiced separate bilingualism. Even so, Ms. Nancy was determined to help her students to see their bilingualism from a more dynamic perspective and in this way disrupt ideas of language status in the Bears class. She explained:

> *I'll start saying something and they'll say, at first they were like, 'Oh that's Spanish!' and I'll say yes, it is, I am trying to practice and learn Spanish, I'd like to be, you know,*

*bilingüe [bilingual] too…I do think, I do think they know the difference, but I don't think anymore that one [language] is more powerful than the other, I don't know, I hope not.* (Interview, 03/23/2018).

Ms. Nancy used her own bilingual learning process to connect with the children in her class and to communicate specific messages to them. Instead of the English learning focus that was prevalent in the classroom before, she switched to a bilingual focus and encouraged students to think in those terms. She was very deliberate about it: *"I am constantly trying to think of how we can do things with both languages and not trying to pick one or the other […] I think in kindergarten we need to make it really explicit to them"* (Interview, 03/23/2018). And even though it took some time, the linguistic ecology of the Bears class started to shift because of Ms. Nancy's dynamic bilingualism. This is one of the elements I will attend to in the next section, as I use the metaphor of an ecological system to examine the different interactions and relations in the Bears class.

## The Bears Class as Ecology

The concept of ecology has been used by numerous scholars over the years to examine the relationships and interactions among different components in educational settings (e.g., Blocher, 1974; Bronfenbrenner, 1976; Doyle, 1977; Hamilton, 1983; Hawkins, 2004; Tudor, 2001; van Lier, 1996, 1997, 2004). Using ecological terms, it is possible to conceive educational environments as "constituting systems akin to biological ecosystems" (Guerrettaz & Johnston, 2013, p. 782). Thus, using the metaphor of an ecological system, in this final section I will focus on examining the learning environment created and maintained by different social actors in the Bears class. Additionally, I will analyze how the relationships among the various components

present in this learning environment constituted and delineated the nature of the learning experience.

Each member of the Bears class brought with them specific social, emotional, academic, and linguistic practices and notions that added different layers of complexity to the ecology of the Bears class. For instance, Ms. Gabby, the Spanish teacher, brought with her (among other things) a zeal for the Spanish language, a deep desire to support her students in their language journey, and a strong teaching background. Ms. Rosie, the substitute English teacher, infused the Bears class' learning experience with a sharp focus on the development of English language skills, a steady concentration on assessment, and a monolingual perspective on bilingualism. Ms. Nancy brought with her current conceptualizations of bilingualism, a heteroglossic perspective of the language practices of emergent bilinguals, and a commitment to support Spanish language teaching in order to elevate its status and support bilingual learning.

The students, who spent most of their days moving between the English and Spanish classrooms and interacting at different times in the school year with these three educators, also brought with them a wide spectrum of racial, ethnic, economic and linguistic backgrounds and experiences. The diverging socialization processes of teachers and students, their beliefs, practices, academic and pedagogical dispositions, and so on, shaped the ecology of the Bears class in singular ways. Sometimes, the different components of this system would push against the broader structure of the DLI program model. Other times, various members would use the set framework to advance specific language understandings and behaviors.

For example, in Ms. Gabby's classroom, her concern about the students' lack of Spanish skills (including students who had been identified as Spanish dominant speakers), the status of the Spanish language, and its limited use in the OES context, compelled her to delineate hard

boundaries around language use (Spanish only) for the children in her classroom. The effect of this regulation was a strict language separation that instilled in students monoglossic ideas of separate bilingualism (Creese & Blackledge, 2008), and the linguistic isolation of the language. However, Ms. Gaby did not accomplish this all by herself. The broader English-speaking context at OES played a significant role in how children perceived what was happening inside and outside of the Spanish classroom. The absence of Spanish use outside of the Spanish classroom during school events and in the daily interactions at OES further reinforced the confinement of the language.

In addition, the monolingual perspective on bilingualism that Ms. Rosie espoused and clearly communicated to the students from the beginning of the school year also sedimented monoglossic understandings of bilingualism. The most interesting part in the analysis of the Bears class as ecology is how Ms. Gaby and Ms. Rosie unintentionally, and for very different reasons, became two sides of the same "separate bilingualism coin." On one side was Ms. Gabby's zeal and protectionist approach to the minoritized language. On the other side was Ms. Rosie's misguided understanding of dual language development and her role in the DLI program. This symbiotic and unplanned relationship worked seamlessly to establish separate bilingualism as the learning rule in the Bears class. This was an aspect that the teachers were not aware of, as noted by Ms. Rosie herself in her interview: *"[...] because I'm not in the Spanish side, I wonder what's happening, how different is one side to the other, I wouldn't want kids to become fragmented"* (Interview, 11/15/2017). But fragmentation was precisely what the language development of the children in the Bears class was undergoing during the first semester of the school year.

**Re-shaping The Ecology of The Class Through Ms. Nancy**

The beauty of examining educational environments from an ecological perspective is that we can notice how different elements impact the always in-flux nature of relationships in these environments. In the case of the Bears class, the arrival of Ms. Nancy to the ecological system of the class had a significant effect; not only on the students, but also on the teaching practices of Ms. Gabby, and the children's perceptions of bilingualism.

From the first week of class, Ms. Nancy used her language skills flexibly. At the beginning, she did it because it felt natural to her, but once she realized how the classrooms had been set up as separate language environments, she did it purposefully, aiming to break away from inaccurate monolingual frames of reference (Ms. Nancy, personal communication, December 19, 2017). In line with her teaching philosophy, she focused on the active construction of opportunities for learning (Tuyay, Jennings, & Dixon, 1995). From this mindset, she encouraged students to use their entire linguistic repertoires (Garcia, 2009; Flores, 2013), demonstrating to them how hybridity may be used as a resource for building collaboration and to promote literacy learning. She used language as a "central mediating tool in fostering productive joint activity" (Gutierrez, Baquedano-Lopez, Alvarez & Chiu, 1999, p. 88) (field notes, December 2017). At the beginning, as mentioned previously, she encountered some resistance from the students who viewed her practices as "inappropriate." However, as occurs in any ecological system, every new organism (member, in this case) creates interactions that shift relationships and create new forms of balance.

In the Bears class, Ms. Nancy's dynamic understandings of bilingualism encouraged the children to break the linguistic boundaries previously created. They started to use their entire linguistic repertoires, first in the English classroom, and later outside of it. I started to witness

children telling one another, *"It's ok to speak Spanish in Ms. Nancy's classroom"* (field notes, 01/24/2018); they also started to translanguage in the hallways as they got ready for recess, and during their unstructured play time (field notes, 02/06/2018). The effect of Ms. Nancy's ideas, as a new "organism" entering the Bears class environment, also impacted Ms. Gabby's teaching practices. Once Ms. Nancy came to her and offered her support to elevate the status of the Spanish language and to help children to develop a dynamic understanding of bilingualism, Ms. Gabby started to soften the linguistic boundaries she had created in her classroom (field notes, January 2018).

Ms. Nancy and Ms. Gabby started working together to plan their lessons, (something that didn't happen with Ms. Rosie), and to encourage the children to see themselves as bilinguals[23]. During the second part of the school year, the Bears class as an ecological system was markedly different than what I witnessed in the first semester. Monoglossic ideas of bilingualism were replaced by dynamic understandings of language development. Ms. Nancy noted this change in her interview:

> *I think it's different now since, since I've, I don't know, I hear that is different since I have come back, […] but it took that long, like every single day hearing that I'm using Spanish, we count in Spanish, we try to say, our, you know, sentences in Spanish, I am trying to bring as much as I can and it has taken this long even with that [but] it's really wonderful to see transferring between two languages,[…] it's just so exciting when you see they're doing this over here, oh, now I see them doing that over here! […] Ms. Gabby would say, oh I saw so and so doing this today and I'll say oh my gosh! that's so great*

[23] Ms. Gabby even wrote a song about being bilingual -yo soy bilingue, si señor! (I am bilingual, yes sir!) - that children sang often.

> *because we just taught that, like, we were just doing that, so it's pretty neat to go back and forth like that.* (Interview, 03/23/2018)

These noticeable changes in bilingual conceptualizations and behaviors encouraged Ms. Nancy and Ms. Gabby to push back against the monolithic structures of the DLI program model. For instance, in order to combat the linguistic isolation and demarcation of the Spanish language, the teachers decided to stop calling their classrooms, the "English" and "Spanish" classrooms, and they started to identify them using numbers. Ms. Nancy's explanation regarding this decision is worth quoting at length here:

> *At first we had gotten training that said,[…] basically like your language in your room is like sacred and untouchable […] and the only time they come together is when you do quote unquote the bridge, which is usually at the end of a unit and you come and bring like an anchor chart or something like that and you point out, you translate or not translate, but you put both Spanish and English labels often and then kids notice linguistic differences, differences in spelling or similarities in spelling, different aspects of the language, but that's it, that was the only time in that training that they crossed over and for us that felt really wrong […] because again, you don't have two brains, you, I don't think you can be bullied into using a language, I think you use anything you have, […] so we kind of kicked that to the side and decided to instead of having an English room and a Spanish room to have room 17 and room 19 […] Maybe the difference is more for the teachers […] I try as much as I can to bring in what I know they have learned in Spanish, and I try to honor different things that they bring up [… ]particularly metalinguistic connections that they are making […] if we call it the English room that would be shut down."* (Interview, 03/23/2018)

Ms. Nancy's comments unveil the teachers' awareness of the changes that needed to be made to impact the ecological system of the Bears class at large. The teachers knew that in order to push against monolingual ideologies embedded within the program model it was necessary to communicate different messages. Thus, they started with the adults ("*maybe the difference is more for the teachers")* knowing that the boundaries that were set up by the teachers could also be removed by them. The change in the names of the classrooms also encouraged the normalization of the use of the Spanish language in different settings without having a particular location connected to it. By the end of the school year, the Bears class had embraced a dynamic understanding of bilingualism that was perceptible not only in the language practices of the children inside and outside of the classroom, but also in how they saw themselves in relation to the languages they were learning. In the final interview I conducted with the children in the Bears class, all 18 children expressed that they could communicate in English and Spanish and made clear remarks on their bilingualism (Interviews, spring, 2018). This was a significant change from the first interviews in which less than half of the class (5 children) mentioned that they could communicate in both English and Spanish (Interviews, fall, 2017). A closer examination of the interrelations and connections developed within and outside of the Bears class reminds us that nothing is simple. The ecological system of this class points to the warp and weft that are part of the weaving that forges the learning experience.

**The Role of the Physical Environment**

Another important part of the Bears class learning experience was the larger physical environment at OES. Even though it seemed to have been intended to reflect the diversity of the school community, this environment revealed superficial notions of heterogeneity. The walls by the stairs leading to the lower floor were painted with a beautiful mural that depicted children of

different ethnic and racial groups (brown, black and white children) playing together and enjoying nature. Sprinkled in different places around the first floor were words in Spanish that may have been intended to make Spanish-speaking families feel welcomed; paradoxically, this environmental print was never pointed out to the children in the Bears class, who were part of one of the programs intended to support linguistically and culturally diverse children. In the lower floor of the school, all the signs were in English, and by the time students reached the gymnasium, all vestiges of multiculturalism had vanished. If the bilingual signage on some of the walls of the school was intended to support the use of the Spanish language in different places, the words stuck on the walls needed to have become alive in the daily interactions between school personnel, families, and children at all times, and not only when the "Spanish classroom" was involved. As Gee (2011) expresses, "*language has meaning only in and through social practice,* practices which often leave us morally complicit with harm and injustice unless we attempt to transform them" (emphasis in original, p. 12). The physical environment at OES reminded me of the argument many scholars have put forth regarding the need to attend to the racial and linguistic diversity of the learners, rather than simply paying "lip service" to multiculturalism (Banks & Banks, 1995; May, 1994; Sleeter & Grant, 1993).

The broader context at OES set the scene for a learning ecology that both impacted and was impacted by different "organisms" and their ways of moving and reacting to different conditions. For instance, Ms. Gabby was not someone who was unaware of contemporary ideas connected to dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging. On the contrary, her own bilingualism and vast teaching experience had provided her with a deep understanding of the bilingual learning process. She knew that separate bilingualism was not an accurate depiction of the learning process of the children in the Bears class (Ms. Gabby, personal communication,

December 11, 2017). However, when faced with less than ideal conditions to teach the Spanish language and feeling constrained by the structure of a program that required separate time and subjects for the teaching of different languages, Ms. Gabby opted for what made more sense to her under the prevailing conditions.

Ms. Rosie had her students' interests at heart when she focused on helping the children to develop their language and literacy skills in English only. She didn't want the students to be negatively impacted (or as she put it- "have holes") by the set structures of the DLI program. The other teachers and administrative staff at OES, who demonstrated apprehension towards the DLI program, seem to have felt that they didn't know enough about the program and sensed some disconnection from it (personal communication, March 12, 2018). All of these relational connotations demonstrate how this class as an ecological system was impacted and shaped by internal and external currents during the academic year. Furthermore, these interactions demonstrate how ecologies and the ideologies they enact are shaped by people's beliefs, but also pragmatic considerations, such as the physical learning environment, having to find a substitute English teacher, and not having a bilingual substitute available.

The Bears class adjusted and re-adjusted its balance over time. Relationships were built and remade; children constructed and deconstructed messages depending on different circumstances, and the intersections of socially constructed ideas such as language and bilingualism were created and negotiated anew through languaging. In the end, the Bears class seemed to have found a reasonable equilibrium that took into consideration the affordances and constraints of its surroundings within their ever-developing ecological space.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have examined the monoglossic perspective and monolingual ideologies implicitly present in the structure of DLI programs such as the one the Bears class was part of. I also analyzed the role of the English and Spanish teachers in the Bears class, and how their backgrounds, perspectives, and actions reflected dissimilar socially constructed ideas in regard to language use and bilingualism. Lastly, I used the metaphor of the Bears class as ecology to delve deeper into the interconnections between the different individuals, the impact of their actions, and the contextual elements that constituted the learning experience of the children in this class.

My analysis unveils the need to re-examine deep-seated ideas such as language separation and language allocation in DLI programs. These are fundamental considerations because they guide instruction in DLI settings at the macro and micro level, and their effect shapes the nature of the learning experience in bilingual settings. This exploration also points to the significance of understanding our school communities, the student population, and their needs in order to better provide educational approaches that can effectively support them. DLI program models are one of the most effective educational approaches to educate majority and minority language speakers in one setting. However, the impending question is: Are they providing the most adequate structures to account for the linguistic practices and educational needs of contemporary minoritized emergent bilinguals? Ms. Nancy expressed this concern during her interview:

> *This thought has been bouncing around in my head or just rolling around in there, who is our program for? So, I think that's my biggest challenge right now, is that we don't have the population, it doesn't feel like to me […] it feels more like an enrichment program, that we're trying to teach our students Spanish instead of support their Spanish, […] I*

*don't know how to say that the right way […] I think the biggest goal of DLI is to make sure that students who primarily speak Spanish do as well because historically they have been seen as like quote unquote lower students or not knowing as much[…]but I feel like our students are uhm… they're all at least exposed to English and most of them feel most comfortable in English, […] so my question is, who's our program really for?"*
(Interview, 03/23/2018)

Ms. Nancy's final question should compel us to continue looking critically at the educational possibilities at hand and to re-imagine their adequacy when addressing equity. Through the analysis I have undertaken in this chapter, I have shown that the structure of DLI models, such as the one that the Bears class followed, must be revised if we truly want it to be the most adequate approach for the education of emergent bilinguals in very dissimilar contexts in the U.S.

Finally, I want to call attention to the significance of the interconnections in educational spaces. The Bears class represented a very unique micro-cosmos of relationships infused with social constructions that impacted the actions and ideas of different actors. Thus, if we are to better understand the amalgamation of social and linguistic components that are part the DLI learning experience, our research must be nuanced and detailed when exploring the movement of teachers, students, and the role of contextual factors in the big educational scheme. The use of the analogy of the Bears class as ecology helped me to better understand what was happening within OES and how dissimilar individuals and elements impacted the nature of the bilingual learning experience. From teachers' perspectives to children's perceptions, the physical environment, and hiring practices at OES, the entire setting reflected socially-constructed ideologies that shaped and impacted people's interactions. This is significant for researchers and educators because unless we start seeing educational environments as whole systems, we will

continue to provide unidimensional solutions that fail to account for the demands of multidimensional learning settings and individuals.

# CHAPTER 7- CONCLUSION: THE CACOPHONY OF BILINGUAL VOICES

**"The single most important fact of research is where it *leads*, not where it starts"**

*-Basil Bernstein*

More than sixty years after *Brown v. Board of Education* and forty-five years after landmark cases impacting language instruction in public schools, such as *Lau v. Nichols*, it seems that American schools are still trying to figure out how to best educate linguistically and culturally diverse children. There have been advances in terms of school desegregation, but at the same time, new ways of (re) segregating and classifying children have emerged in school settings (for more on this see Anyon, 1997; Kozol, 1991, 2005; Noguera, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999, etc.). These structures of separation are often based on social constructions such as race, ethnicity, social class, and language, all conceptualizations created by members of society to fix distinct meanings on individuals and their practices in order to justify actions toward them.

In the case of DLI programs, these social notions take on a more pronounced role because these learning environments were created to support intercultural connections, bilingualism, biliteracy, and mutual respect for diversity. Thus, listening to the individuals who are the constituents at the center of these programs allows us not only to corroborate that these programs are accomplishing what they set out to do, but also to ensure that they are not becoming new avenues for educational injustice and social domination. This is what this study set out to do.

The purpose of this year-long ethnographic case study was to better understand how emergent bilinguals in dual language classrooms perceived, enacted, and negotiated the tenuous intersections of race, ethnicity, social class position, and language. In addition, it examined in detail how the perceptions and the interactions of kindergarten children and their teachers jointly

constructed consequential notions of (raced and classed) language ideologies and practices. In this concluding chapter, I start by revisiting my research questions and summing up the answers I gleaned from my findings. Next, I summarize the contributions that this research makes to the fields of bilingual education, teacher education, and to educational policies. Then, I move into a delineation of some of the implications of this study for teaching practice and school communities. After this, I delve into the limitations of the study and end with some concluding remarks.

The two overarching research questions that guided this research inquiry were:

1. How do kindergarten emergent bilinguals in a dual language immersion class perceive and respond to socially-constructed notions such as race, ethnicity, social class position, and bilingualism?
2. How do kindergarten emergent bilinguals in a dual language immersion class enact and negotiate the intersections of race, ethnicity, social class position, and language?

In regard to the first question, the data suggest that kindergarten emergent bilinguals in a dual language immersion class perceived socially-constructed notions such as race, ethnicity, social class position, and bilingualism through different messages that they received inside and outside their classrooms. These messages came from different sources including adults, their surrounding environment, and other children. In addition, my analysis has shown that these children are not simply passive receptors of messages and ideologies, but they are actively responding to their perceptions through their engagement in sociocultural processes, forming their own judgments, and participating in the creation of systems of classification.

Concerning the second research question, the data shows that kindergarten emergent bilinguals in dual language immersion programs enact and negotiate the intersections of race,

ethnicity, social class position, and language through the implementation of various strategies such as selective grouping, conditional association, strategic alliances, language brokering and language accommodation. These strategies unveiled how these children were not only learning two languages, but also particular ways of communicating through languaging, what I have termed in this study *bilingual ways with words*. Through their ways of acting and communicating, the students in the focal class made strategic positioning moves to negotiate their identities and the intersections of socially-constructed ideas such as race, ethnicity, social class and bilingualism.

## Research Contributions

### Bilingual Education

This inquiry contributes to bilingual educational research in three significant ways. First, even though there is an abundance of empirical research on DLI contexts, there has been none that recruited the perspectives of young emergent bilingual students and their teachers to explore how these students perceived their languages and language use, and how they were positioned by issues of race and class. This study enlisted and valorized students' voices and perspectives by bringing them to the forefront. The present research inquiry opened a space where children could provide their own explanations, allowing us to see through their eyes the complex reality of their bilingual learning experience. These voices, I argue, are important to consider in advancing a more representative understanding of the bilingual experience in schools.

Second, while intersectionality is gaining momentum in educational studies, it remains under-theorized and under-utilized in research in bilingual education and language studies more generally. To the emerging work on raciolinguistics in bilingual settings, this study added a focus on class as a major intersectional factor. The analysis of race alongside language and social class

provided a multidimensional perspective that pointed to the complexities that converge in DLI settings, and the kaleidoscopic realities of children that often times are perceived from monolithic social and linguistic frames of reference.

Third, this study provides critical pedagogical and sociological perspectives to better understand the nature of schooling in DLI contexts, the contextual factors that are part of it, and the ever-changing flow and conceptualizations of relations and boundaries generated through interactions in these learning environments. By better understanding emergent bilinguals' practices, how they enact and negotiate social constructions, and the role of the different elements and actors in DLI contexts, teachers and school communities will be able to adequately support emergent bilinguals in general, and specifically linguistically diverse minorities in American schools.

**Teacher Education**

Bringing to the front children's voices within a DLI context may enable teacher educators, pre-service, and in-service teachers alike to examine the ways in which they regard emergent bilinguals in contemporary classrooms, as well as how their pedagogical actions either counteract or reproduce outdated ideas of bilingualism and language use in school contexts. Furthermore, the new insights into the world of DLI classrooms from the children's perspective offer support to pre- and in-service teachers as they work to identify (and hopefully to counteract) racialized and classed perceptions within students' interactions and among other members of the school community.

**Education Policy**

The detailed analysis of children's social and linguistic practices undertaken in this study contributes to an updated understanding of their linguistic needs which should be reflected in the

enactment of adequate bilingual and educational policies. For instance, policies at the state level, such as Wisconsin's bilingual statute which specifies "trigger" numbers, requiring school districts to provide bilingual services in schools that serve at least twenty students who speak the same non-English language in grades 4-12, or at least ten students in grades K-3 (115.97.2-4), must take into account the bi/multilingual reality of emergent bilinguals' lives. Similarly, the districts that seek to comply with those policies must consider the idiosyncratic way in which the policies should be implemented in their particular communities. The findings from this study can aid in the creation and implementation of policies that reflect a more complex record of language demographics, and an interconnected understanding of the kind of students that we have in our modern-day schools.

## Implications for Teaching Practice and School Communities

The findings from this research provide a more accurate picture of the complex environments of DLI settings and the individuals who are part of them. Below, I have summarized some of the implications for educators and school communities as they continue to implement DLI programs in different settings.

1. Teachers must become diligent observers of the practices and interactions taking place in their classrooms in order to be able to tailor their instruction according to students' needs.
2. Educators must be attuned to the different social realities of their students and how those realities intersect in DLI contexts. This should be done in order to disrupt socially-constructed ideas in regard to hierarchies, power, and systems classification in these settings.

3. DLI programs have the potential to become educational environments with great leverage to counteract negative depictions of students of color in U.S. society. However, this can only be done through a concerted effort that must include all members of the school community, not only the personnel directly involved with the DLI programs.
4. School districts must devise more nuanced ways to understand and support children's language practices. Classifying students as English or Spanish "dominant" speakers simply by considering whether a language other than English is spoken at home is no longer sufficient to account for students' bilingual practices. Such a simplistic conceptualization constrains teachers' perceptions of students' abilities and establishes inaccurate frames of reference for language use.
5. Educational stakeholders such as district administrators, community members, elected officials (e.g., school board members) must rethink their ideas in regard to bilingualism, language use, and language support in modern school settings. Addressing a dynamic need, such as bilingualism, from a monoglossic perspective (learning languages separately) is no longer effective in present-day multilingual schools. New understandings will help to allocate funding in more appropriate ways taking into account students' genuine needs.
6. The structure of DLI programs must be re-examined and reorganized according to more realistic ways in which children use language in their everyday interactions. The current programmatic structure of these programs reflects monolingual perspectives that differ greatly from the bilingual reality of language use by multilingual individuals.

7. Meaningful participation of and leadership by historically marginalized communities must be part and parcel of DLI programs in order to ensure that these programs do not become co-opted by individuals they were not created to serve.

**Limitations of the Study**

In this research, I explored the perceptions, responses, and interactions of children and teachers in one kindergarten DLI class, in a DLI program, in a Midwestern school district. Some educational researchers may point to the fact that I am presenting the findings of a single case study as a limitation of my research inquiry. However, this approach enabled me to better understand the nuances of the interactions that occurred in the studied setting. I am aware that the Bears class cannot be taken to be representative in any way of all the kindergarten emergent bilingual classes in American schools. The United States is a very diverse country and the educational contexts and experiences of kindergarten emergent bilinguals in DLI programs may be divergent in other locations. Thus, I do not attempt to generalize the findings from this study beyond the specific population and setting where the study was conducted to other "racial, social, ethnic, geographical, age, and personality groups" (Creswell, 2012, p. 306). Nonetheless, there is a depth of richness that has been attained by looking at a single case in great detail.

Furthermore, the findings from my study make it clear that further research needs to be conducted in other contexts and over time to examine how teaching and learning is taking place in DLI programs, and how the intersection of social constructions in these settings may impact emergent bilinguals' perceptions of themselves and their language practices.

A limitation of this study is that I confined my research inquiry to inside the school, and thus I do not have data on the students' language use and social interactions outside of the school, nor family perspectives. These aspects were beyond the scope of my present

investigation; however, they call for further research that can provide a broader examination of all the elements and social actors that influence children's lives, language practices, social interactions, and educational trajectories.

Finally, another important limitation to consider is that the pan-ethnic category of Latin@s involves different ascriptions that might not be representative of all the dissimilar groups associated with this category. Additionally, it is important to keep in mind the seemingly conceptual and categorical confusion around the use of the term *Latino* in school settings, which in some cases is used as a racialized term and other times seems to allude mainly to culture (Lewis, 2003, Olsen, 1997). Further research might inquire into the implications of the use of ambiguous pan-ethnic categories for Latin@ students which are imbued with particular attributions and disregard national identity distinctions.

## Concluding Remarks

Over 30 years ago Shirley Brice Heath in her seminal study *Ways with Words* (1983) investigated children's literacy practices when they came to school and what educators knew and did about oral and written language in their classrooms. The findings from her study opened our eyes to the intersectionality of language learning and social class, and in particular, to the cross-cultural "variations of language socialization" (p. 3). They also pointed to "the effects of preschool home and community environments on the learning of those language structures and uses which were needed in classrooms" (p. 4). Her findings were important for Black and White children who were unsuccessful in school, and for communities who were struggling to negotiate diverging social dynamics.

Having had an educational trajectory impacted by Brice Heath's findings, I wanted to use her ideas and findings to design and implement a research study that could shed light on how

bilingual children used language when they came to school, how they negotiated their learning surroundings and their identities, and how different actors shaped and impacted their learning experience. Knowing that "the human mind wants to make every distinction, a distinction of value" (Lewis, 2017, p. 12-13), I sought to understand how individuals at a very early age were perceiving social constructions and how those perceptions impacted their lives in a DLI context. I knew my research enterprise was not a simple one, and that is why I pursued complex explanations of social facts. At the end of my study, even though I feel satisfied with the findings, I still know that this imbricated narrative only tells a part of a story of how bilingual children in a kindergarten DLI class perceive and respond to socially-constructed ideas, and use their *bilingual ways with words* to navigate their intricate bilingual worlds. Thus, this is a good point to stop my research for now, knowing that I will continue to follow this lead into that window that looks inside another window and into an even smaller window…

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**Appendix A: Semi-Structured Teacher Interview Protocols**

*Teacher Interview #1*

1. Tell me about how you became a bilingual teacher.
2. How long have you been teaching?
3. How long have you been teaching at this school?
4. Why did you choose to become a DLI classroom teacher?
5. If you were to describe what a Dual Language Immersion (DLI) classroom is like to someone, what would you say?
6. What are the goals?
7. How do students spend their time in the classroom?
8. How do teachers spend their time in the classroom?
9. What is DLI like for these students?
10. When you think about DLI, is there an image or idea that comes to mind? What about that image or idea is significant to you?
11. What role do you think language plays in the education of children?
12. What do you want kids to feel in your classroom in terms of language use and bilingualism?
13. Tell me about your classroom this year.
14. Tell me about the students in your classroom this year.
15. How would you describe the relationships you have with your students this year?
16. What factors, if any, make it easier to have a positive relationship with a student?
17. What factors, if any, act as barriers to a positive relationship with a student?
18. How would you describe the relationships between students at this time of the year?

*Teacher Interview #2*

1. What is it like to be one of the DLI teachers in this school?
2. What do you like about the DLI program model?
3. What don't you like about the DLI program model?
4. Tell me about classroom dynamics in your classroom.
5. Describe the kind of behavior you encounter in your classroom.
6. Is there a particular kind of behavior (linguistic or social) you expect of the students in your DLI classroom?
7. What do you consider in/appropriate behavior in your DLI classroom?
8. How do you respond to inappropriate behavior?
9. What factors, if any, make it easier to respond to inappropriate behavior?
10. What factors, if any, make it more difficult to respond to inappropriate behavior?
11. If you were giving advice to a new DLI teacher about classroom dynamics and relationships, what would you say?
12. Are there any particular interactions between teachers and students that have caught your attention? If so, what are they?
13. Are there any particular interactions between students that have caught your attention? If so, what are they?

*Teacher Interview #3*

1. Can you tell me about a student or students in this class who have had an impact on who you are, or on your approach, as a DLI teacher?
    a) Why does/do that/those student (s) come to mind?
    b) What was it like teaching him/her (them)?
    c) Can you tell me a story that sticks in your mind?
2. Can you tell me about a student (s) in this class who have been especially challenging for you as a DLI teacher?
    a) Why does/do that/those student (s) come to mind?
    b) What was it like teaching him/her (them)?
    c) Can you tell me a story that sticks in your mind?
3. Can you tell me about students' interactions in your classroom this year?
4. Can you tell me a story about an interaction between students that sticks in your mind?
    a) What were you thinking at the time?
    b) Did you intervene in the situation? If so, how?
    c) Is that how you typically respond? How else have you responded in similar situations?

**Appendix B: Semi-Structured Student Interview Protocols**

*Student Interview #1*

*Focus*: The goal of this interview is to learn about the students' backgrounds and how they feel about school, their teacher, DLI classroom, and classmates.

| **Introduction:**<br>I want to know a bit more about you and school and I have cards that tell about these things. I'll read a card first and then give it to you. If the card tells about something that is true for you then you can put it in the YES box (it will be a green box- I will move head to signal affirmative answer). If you do not agree with the card, you can throw it in the NO box (it will be a red box- I will move head to signal negative answer). You can also tell me more about it if you want (I will ask some follow up questions and use sociograms depending on the answers).<br>Let's practice:<br>Do you like ice cream? If the child responds affirmatively, I would say: Great! You like ice cream and I will put the card in the YES box.<br>Do you like it when you lose your toy? No? (the child places item in the NO box) and I will reinforce response.<br>I will read some questions and I want you to tell me if this happens with you and your teacher or classmates. If this does happen with you, please place the card in the YES box. If this does not happen to you, please place the card in the NO box. |
|---|

| # | ITEM | YES Box | Some-times | NO Box |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Do you like School? Follow up: What do/don't you like about school? | | | |
| 2 | Do you like your teacher? Follow up: What do/don't you like about I? | | | |
| 3 | Do you like your classmates? Follow up: What do/don't you like about them? | | | |
| 4 | Is school fun? Follow up: Why is it fun? | | | |
| 5 | Do you understand when people talk to you in English? | | | |
| 6 | Do you understand when people talk to you in Spanish? | | | |
| 7 | Do you speak English at home? Follow up: Who do you speak English with? | | | |
| 8 | Do you speak Spanish at home? Follow up: Who do you speak Spanish with? | | | |
| 9 | Do you work with different groups of children in your class? Follow up: Who do you like to work with? | | | |
| 10 | Do you have many friends? Follow up: Who are your friends? | | | |

| # | ITEM | YES Box | Some-times | NO Box |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | | | |

**Following administration of the Yes Box/No Box Protocol, I will ask the following open-ended questions:**

1. Can you draw me a picture that tells a story of a time at home? Ask the child to explain the picture.

2. Can you draw me a picture that tells a story of a time a school? Ask the child to explain the picture.

*Student Interview #2:*

*Focus*: The goals of this interview are to understand the participants' perspective on classroom relationships and in/appropriate behavior (linguistic and social), and to understand their experiences in the DL classroom.

| # | ITEM | YES Box | Some-times | NO Box |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Do you like school? Follow up: What do/don't you like about school? | | | |
| 2 | Do you like your teacher? Follow up: What do/don't you like about I? | | | |
| 3 | Do you like your classmates? Follow up: What do/don't you like about them? | | | |
| 4 | Do you like when people talk to you in English/Spanish? | | | |
| 5 | Do you like when you speak in English/Spanish? Follow up: Why/Why not? | | | |
| 6 | Do you speak English/Spanish at school all the time? Follow up: When do you speak English/Spanish? | | | |
| 7 | Do you speak English/Spanish at home? Follow up: Who do you speak Spanish with? | | | |

| # | ITEM | YES Box | Some-times | NO Box |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 8 | Do you work with different groups of children in your class? Follow up: Who do you like to work with? | | | |
| 9 | Who are your friends? Follow up: What do you do with your friends? | | | |

**Following administration of the Yes Box/No Box Protocol, I will ask the following open-ended questions:**

1. Can you draw me a picture that tells a story of a time when you had fun at school? Ask the child to explain the picture.

2. Can you draw me a picture that tells a story of a time when you did not have fun at school? Ask the child to explain the picture.

*Student Interview #3:*

*Focus*: The goal of this interview is to elicit narratives about the students' experiences in their DLI classroom in order to better understand how they perceive the social and linguistic dynamics at play in the classroom and how they make sense of different interactions in this context.

Using sociograms and students' pictures, I will ask the following questions:

1. Do you like your classroom? Why?
2. Who are your friends in the classroom?
3. What do you do with them?
4. Who do you like to work with? Why?
5. Do you speak to him/her in English or Spanish? Why?
6. Who don't you like to work with? Why?
7. Do you speak to him/her in English or Spanish? Why?
8. If you had a birthday party who would you invite? Why?
9. If you had a birthday party who would you not invite? Why?
10. What language/s do you speak at school? With who?

**Appendix C: Observation Strategy**

I will take field notes on:

- Dominant Spanish & Dominant English emergent bilinguals' intra-group interactions (verbal language, other modes of meaning-making—language used with other "stuff"— (Gee, 2011)), their inter-group interactions, and the interactions with the teachers in structured and un-structured events.

❖ Purpose: I will be looking at what students do with their talk (regarding race, ethnicity, and social class position). How do they interact with each other? What are the different linguistic resources employed by English & Spanish dominant emergent bilinguals?

- With other English & Spanish dominant emergent bilinguals: Is there a difference in the way they talk and interact amongst themselves? (Lewis, 2003).
- With English & Spanish dominant emergent bilinguals: Are these interactions different in any way from the interactions they have with dominant emergent bilinguals from a different language group? If so, how? Do race and ethnicity seem to be a factor in these interactions? If so, how? Does social class position seem to play a role in these interactions? If so, how? How are these children enacting their identities, and have different aspects of their selves imposed on them, in these interactions (Palmer, 2009)?
- With the teachers (Spanish & English): Is there a difference in the way these students interact with the teachers? Do race and ethnicity seem to be a factor in these interactions? If so, how? Does social class position seem to play a role in these interactions? If so, how? What are students and the teachers doing with their talk (regarding race, ethnicity and social class position)?

- Dominant Spanish and dominant English emergent bilinguals' language choice.

❖ Purpose: I will be looking at the situations (events) in which emergent bilinguals use English, Spanish or both languages in this setting. Is there a status difference between these two languages in this classroom? If so, in what situations and which interactions? How do these students use different languages to accomplish different purposes? Are languages seen as separate codes in this setting? How are these separations manifested? Are there any instances of translanguaging (Garcia, 2009)? Are there any social class, racial or ethnic connotations connected to specific languages?

**Observational Matrix**

| Time | Events | Communication & Dialogue | Notes/Reactions |
|---|---|---|---|
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**Appendix D: Observation Template**

Classroom & School Events

| Time | Context/Space | Who is involved? | Event | Language (s) & other modes of meaning-making | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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