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# Dual Language K-2 Latina Teachers: Juxtaposing Linguistic Identities and Pedagogical Practices on the U.S.-Mexico frontera

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DUAL LANGUAGE K-2 LATINA TEACHERS: JUXTAPOSING LINGUISTIC  
IDENTITIES AND PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES ON THE U.S.-MEXICO  
*FRONTERA*

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## **Dedication**

Dedico este trabajo a mis muy queridos padres el Lic. Salvador Aranda y la Sra. Sofia Cabrera de Aranda, por darme la vida, llenarla de amor y por enseñarme a disfrutarla mientras lucho por mis sueños. Chava, Dulce y Saúl, gracias por ser mis hermanos, compañeros y amigos.

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IDENTITIES AND PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES ON THE U.S.-MEXICO  
*FRONTERA*

by

BRENDA ORIANA FUENTES, MEd

DISSERTATION

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## **Abstract**

This ethnographic study explored the linguistic identities and pedagogical practices of Latina bilingual-certified K-2 teachers in a dual language (DL) program in the U.S.-Mexico border area. Drawing on sociocultural theory, methods of data collection and analysis focused on linking DL Latina teachers' identity formation with both their conceptions of teaching and their actual pedagogical practices related to language use. The findings from this study painted a portrait of how DL teachers' languages, literacies, and identities intertwined to shape their pedagogical practice. The linguistic backgrounds of DL teachers on the border were shaped by country of origin and languages, schooling experiences, and transnationalism. The language practices of the teachers included the maintenance of Spanish, the push for English-only and linguistic motherwork (Ek et al., 2013). Their ideologies about Spanish, English, and the non-standard varieties of Spanish and English were present in their language dynamics. In conjunction with teacher interviews, classroom observations revealed that pedagogical practices were influenced by the linguistic identities of the teachers. The teachers' beliefs about language learning were exemplified by the language they preferred to teach. Teachers' linguistic repertoires were partly positioned within the continua of biliteracy (Hornberger, 1989; 2003), and their Funds of Knowledge (Moll & González, 2005). Additionally, teachers' language use during instruction exemplified their translanguaging practices (García, 2009). The implications of this research for pre-service and in-service DL teachers include the necessity for opportunities to explore identity formation, develop academic Spanish skills, and knowledge about bilingual education models. Research is needed to study teachers from their point of view and within their own teaching contexts (Guardia-Jackson, 2009), including more ethnographies of bilingual-certified teachers from marginalized populations.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 PROBLEM AND CONTEXT: BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND LATINOS IN THE U.S.**

Education plays a vital role in every society because it enables people to construct knowledge, to communicate and understand each other and to better themselves as they contribute positively to their communities. Historically, educational institutions have been set up to benefit only a few groups (Cole, 2010) and this happens in many parts of the world including the United States; underserved student populations include Latinos (e.g. Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans) whose school performance is continuously poor, based on students' test scores (Bartolomé, 1994; Nieto, 2003). Latinas/os make up the largest minority public school population (K-12) and Spanish is the most commonly spoken language in the U.S. other than English (Prieto, 2009). Of all of the Latina/o subgroups, individuals of Mexican origin are the most numerous, making up 56% of all Latinos nationally and up to 80% of Latinos in the southwest (Guzman, 2001). The Pew Research Center (2013) analyzed Census Bureau data, which uses "Hispanic" and "Latino" interchangeably, and showed that a record number of 33.7 million Hispanics of Mexican origin resided in the United States in 2012. This estimation includes 11.4 million immigrants born in Mexico and 22.3 million born in the U.S. who self-identified as Hispanics of Mexican origin.

Rong and Preissle (2009) explain that educating Latina/o children is a pressing issue because the Latina/o population in the U.S. is expanding rapidly; as the K-12 student population increases, the challenges of offering quality education increase as well. The authors state that a third of children entering kindergarten in the nation's public schools come from Latino households and because of these demographic changes, U.S. schools must respond promptly to Latina/o children's schooling access, their educational attainment, and their specific needs. Olsen (1997) argues that the undereducation of Latina/o youth begins early. By the time they enter kindergarten, Latinas/os are already significantly behind their non-Hispanic peers in reading and

math readiness. According to the author, for about half of Latina/o youth in the U.S., English represents a chronic barrier to achievement in K-12 schools.

Gándara and Contreras (2009) document that Latinos have suffered inequities in schooling, for example, inadequate and overcrowded facilities, underprepared teachers, inappropriate curriculum and textbooks, and segregated schools; however, the civil rights focus in education for Latinos has been primarily the issue of language. García and Kleifgen (2010) convey that since 80% of emergent bilinguals are Latinos, the meeting point of language use and educational opportunities should be addressed. The authors define emergent bilinguals as children who are able to continue to function in their home language as well as in English. Furthermore, in order to offer equitable curricular opportunities to bilinguals, they recommend there should be a fundamental change in the ways in which students' languages other than English are viewed, particularly Spanish. García (2005) suggests a highly optimistic scenario for bilingual students and U.S. society in general, where English-speaking majorities become more familiar with the linguistic and cultural diversity around them and resources inherent in that diversity. Research (García, 2009; Hornberger, 2004; Pérez, 2004) emphasizes that language has the power to influence and transform the very culture it is a product of. These scholars argue that the power of language to transform society is what some find threatening and why language instruction, as in bilingual education, emerges as a controversial issue of national concern. My study focuses on Mexican-origin bilingual-certified teachers who work in a Spanish-English DL program to serve emergent bilingual Latina/o children in a public borderland school district.

## **1.2 SIGNIFICANCE**

Schools around the country are increasingly implementing dual language education and by focusing on the in-service teachers' identities and their practice. This study can inform other DL teachers by emphasizing how teachers are prepared to teach bilingual students and what the teaching practice looks like in DL classrooms, how language is based on ideologies, proficiency, and resources. The focus is on DL education because it is a program in which the long-term

goals are for students to develop bilingualism, biliteracy, and cross-cultural interactions. In DL instruction, the content is delivered through both languages in contrast to transitional bilingual education which is widely implemented in the state of Texas where some instruction is provided in the native language during the early years with the goal of developing English proficiency only. Regarding the teachers, given that Latinas are a minoritized group which makes up a small percentage of the teaching force in the U.S., few studies have focused on the identities and literacy practices of Latina teachers in general. Some studies have focused on the identities of pre-service bilingual teachers (Brochin, 2010; Varghese, 2000), while other studies examine novice bilingual teachers (Guerrero, 2003; Hernández, 2010; Prieto, 2009; Weisman, 2001). In the area of research on dual language, Pérez (2004) and Freeman (1998) conducted notable research in DL schools; however, their focus was the whole school, not the teachers in particular. Lucero (2010) and DePalma (2010) conducted studies with kindergarten and first grade DL teachers, but they were not focused on Latinas specifically and the context for the dual language studies was not the border region.

This study has the potential to fill a gap in the literature by portraying the identities and pedagogical practices of in-service Latina practitioners who teach DL programs in the U.S.-Mexico border region. There is a need to carefully examine how linguistic repertoires and language learning experiences influence and support the pedagogical practice, specifically language use during literacy instruction, of DL Latina educators serving Spanish-English bilingual communities. The findings from this study can inform pre-service and in-service DL teachers by providing information from a practitioner's perspective. Furthermore, Latinas are a minoritized group which makes up a small percentage of the teaching force in the U.S.; findings can inform teacher preparation programs that prepare educators to become bilingual certified by showing the significance of how linguistic profiles influence the teaching practice of Latinas especially in borderland contexts. This dissertation study seeks to make a contribution to the field of bilingual education by expanding our understanding of DL teachers.

### **1.2.1 Bilingual Certified Teachers and U.S. Schooling**

Bilingual certified teachers are simultaneously fortunate and challenged to work with students who come from diverse backgrounds. Teachers' experiences both shape and are shaped by processes of instruction and interaction that evolve within bilingual and second language education; teachers' social location, including gender, class, race, ethnicity, and other social distinctions shape their frameworks of interpretation (Morgan, 2004; Vargas & DePyssler, 1998). Teachers' lived experiences and their process of identity formation as bilingual professionals is important and worthy of study, in order to better understand the ways they teach and interact with students. Teachers bring their experiences, identities, values, beliefs, attitudes, biases, wishes, dreams, and hopes when they enter their classrooms and having a clearer understanding of their lives can make them more effective with their students (Nieto, 2003). Language choice, usage, and teaching involve complex issues of political power, cultural identity, and social status. Bilingual education is not just a useful pedagogical tool that addresses the learning needs of diverse students but also a sociopolitical tool (Pérez, 2004). Understanding teachers' ideologies of language is significant because these ideas are not only about language; language ideology relates communicative action to political economic considerations of power and social inequality (Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994) and teachers must be aware of how these factors language and power play out in their own teaching and learning. The teacher plays the most important and instrumental role in whether children learn in any school setting (Pérez, 2004). González (2005) suggests that language is the heart, literally and metaphorically, of who we are, how we present ourselves, and how others see us; access to more than one linguistic system helps people explore the inner self and its relationship to the outside world.

García (2009) urges that it is teachers who implement the bilingual education policies imposed from above or constructed by communities or educators, but most of the time, teachers create, contest, change, and transform policies, as they enact their pedagogy. Bilingual communities and teacher education programs should pay attention to the voices of Mexican-origin bilingual teachers. Currently, the American educational system represents a diverse

student body and promoting bilingualism for students is one way of embracing English while not denigrating other languages; such an approach may result in a more egalitarian, multicultural, and multilingual society (García, 2005). For this reason, studies like this one represent a venue for dual language teachers to reflect on the multiplicity of their identities and provide information to educational researchers, teacher educators, and administrators to illustrate important connections between literacy and identity including their motivations to teach and their linguistic backgrounds, demonstrating how rich personal histories influence their teaching practice.

### **1.3 PURPOSE**

The life histories, linguistic identities, and biliteracy practices of Latina DL female teachers need to be highlighted in order to understand their conceptions and practices of teaching based on their experiences. The DL teachers I studied are U.S.-based and taught in the context of public education at the elementary level. The findings paint a much needed portrait of how bilingual teachers develop their multiple identities and ideologies and enact them through their pedagogical practices. By conducting an ethnographic study, which includes life history interviews, observations, and artifact analysis, there is potential to explore how bilingual teachers develop self-knowledge and views about learning and teaching.

Ethnography is an approach commonly used in language and literacy studies (Heath & Street, 2008), and this study will explore how teachers' linguistic identities reflect in their instruction and interaction with students, families, and community. Human beings are complex and their lives are ever changing; therefore, we must remember that each individual has her or his own social history and an individual world perspective (Fontana & Frey, 2003). The general educational concern that is addressed in this study is regarding DL teachers' linguistic and social identities in relation to their pedagogical practices. In this introduction, the need for the study has been established; next I will present the research questions; the context of the U.S.-Mexico border, dual language education, and the theoretical framework which provides the lenses that



will be used to interpret existing literature and future data collected about Latina bilingual teachers.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Adopting a sociocultural approach to understand the formation of identities, literacy practices (NLG, 1996; Street, 1984), and biliteracy (Hornberger, 2004), this study seeks to examine the social identities of Latina bilingual-certified teachers and their pedagogical practices in an elementary dual language program along the U.S.-Mexico border. Drawing from feminist border theory (Anzaldúa, 1987) and anthropological theories of identity (Holland, Lachiotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998; Wenger, 1998) the focus is to explore how female bilingual-certified educators experience the relationship between their identities and agency as bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural professionals teaching in the border context. The following overarching research question is addressed: What are the linguistic identities and pedagogical practices of female Latina K-2 dual language teachers along the U.S.-Mexico *frontera*? The subquestions include:

##### **Linguistic Identities**

- (1) What are the linguistic backgrounds of Dual Language (DL) teachers on the border?
- (2) How do DL teachers use their bilingualism/biliteracy in the elementary classroom?
- (3) What is the preferred language of instruction for Latina DL teachers?

##### **Pedagogical Practice**

- (4) Why do DL teachers prefer to teach in Spanish, English or both?
- (5) What are the teacher-student language interactions during instruction in a DL setting?
- (6) What are the DL teachers' perspectives regarding how their bilingualism/biliteracy influence their teaching practice?

#### **1.5 U.S.-MEXICO BORDER CONTEXT**

Mexicans are by far the largest Hispanic-origin population in the U.S., accounting for nearly two-thirds (64%) of the U.S. Hispanic population in 2012 (Pew Research Center, 2013). The borderlands are a unique context for the formation and practice of bilingual teachers'

identities. The U.S.-Mexico border is a zone which is both divided and united, and the people who live on each side share many life experiences regarding schooling, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds. Within the context of the borderlands, the concept of culture becomes contested and multiple and cultural practices such as ideas about language are fluid and constantly reinvented; there is complexity and contradiction at the center of the borderland experience due to its hybridity; thus, residents construct multiple identities and ideologies (Anzaldúa, 1987; González, 2005).

One of the distinguishing characteristics of borderland scholarship is that it developed its contextualization by looking at the U.S.-Mexico border in its literal and symbolic meaning (Delgado Bernal, Elenes, Godinez, & Villenas, (2006) The border in its literal meaning refers to the historical and contemporary context in which Mexican American communities have been formed in the US. Similarly, in the border community of El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, some common border-crossing transfronterizo practices include visiting relatives, staying on the weekends or having children stay with relatives during summer breaks, buying candies and piñatas for birthday parties, or receiving different kinds of medical care. I situate my study in this U.S.-Mexico border context while zooming in to focus in one school which implements dual language. Given the increasing presence of Chicano and Mexicano youth in public K-12 schools, viewing Mexican-origin Latina teachers as *pensadoras* allows for new interpretations where culture is valued and explored as the formation of identities (Delgado Bernal et al., 2006). These processes, intertwined in the personal and professional lived experiences of bilingual educators, need to be explored focusing on the U.S.-Mexico border area.

## **1.6 DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAMS IN THE U.S.**

There is a recent trend in U.S. bilingual education to encourage dual language education which appears to break from the monolingual norm, pushing teachers to follow an agenda which promotes bilingualism and biliteracy (Palmer & Martínez, 2013). Dual language programs integrate native English speakers and speakers of another language, providing instruction in both

languages for all students; two-way immersion programs promote bilingualism and biliteracy, grade-level academic achievement, and positive cross-cultural attitudes and behaviors in all students (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2013; Lucero, 2010). Collier and Thomas (2009) describe that in dual language programs, teachers support their students socioculturally through a bilingual/bicultural curriculum, providing a context for students to develop cognitively, linguistically, and academically through both languages for at least six elementary school years. Freeman (1998) states that ideally, dual language programs in the United States elevate the status of minority languages and speakers of those languages at school because these programs expect additive bilingualism for language minority and language majority students in the communities in which they live; dual language programs can be understood as contesting the legitimacy of monolingualism in English as the norm in mainstream U.S. schools.

Profiles of different successful two-way immersion programs show this program model as feasible under a variety of local conditions; there is evidence that dual language programs are effective overall, where children do learn English and another language, usually Spanish, while achieving academically (Lindholm-Leary, 2001, 2005; Christian et al., 1997). Few current studies consider the teacher's role in DL programs; however, one study stands out for focusing on the practitioners. Lucero (2010) conducted a qualitative study with a team of first grade dual language teachers in three classrooms, examining oral academic language development, and she found that teachers' instruction plays an important role in the language outcomes of the children. DePalma's (2010) ethnographic study of a two-way immersion kindergarten classroom examined language learning and classroom design; the research focused on the teachers' accomplishments and challenges, children's linguistic interactions, and the ways that teaching helped or hindered language use and development. My study builds on these two studies because I will focus on lower grade DL practitioners. I wish to explore the pedagogical practices of practitioners from kindergarten through second grade and situating my study on the U.S.-Mexico border area adds a different perspective as well.

## **1.7 RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY**

As a bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural Latina of Mexican origin, my background growing up on the U.S.-Mexico border and my passion for teaching have provided me with the rich opportunity of making the field of bilingual education my professional background. Going through the process of attending a teacher preparation program and teaching in this hybrid border context has shaped my research interests. Becoming certified to teach prekindergarten through fourth grade as a bilingual generalist, and more importantly, the experience of being a first grade teacher in a dual language (DL) program, have sparked my interest in examining this program model of bilingual education in the U.S. I have reflected on my own experiences as a former dual language teacher and this is part of my motivation to conduct this research. In my study, I'm adopting a sociocultural perspective where the construct of literacy is viewed as a social practice which incorporates the global, social, cultural, and political contexts, thus, includes literacy events and ideologies associated with the use of literacy in society (Heath & Street, 2008; Hornberger, 2004; Street, 1993).

## **1.8 CONCLUSION**

The structure of my dissertation is as follows: Chapter 1 provides the rationale and the need for the study, considering actual educational concerns and the research gap or lacuna to be addressed in the literature of bilingual education. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the theoretical framework and discusses studies which are relevant to my field of study and research interest, this is important to situate my study in the literature and contribute something new to existing scholarly work. Chapter 3 explains why I chose ethnography as the research design in this study there is also an explanation of how data was collected and analyzed. Chapters 4 and 5 explain the findings; chapter 4 will focus mostly on the linguistic identities of the DL teachers while chapter 5 will be devoted to explaining how the biliteracy practices of the practitioners were reflected in their pedagogical practice. Chapter 6 describes the implications of this study for

dual language teachers, especially practitioners in bilingual border contexts, and I will conclude by making recommendations about what future research can be derived from my work.

## **Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review**

A sociocultural perspective will be used to jointly theorize the identities and pedagogical practices of Latina dual language teachers in the U.S.-Mexico border region. The following frameworks will be drawn on to discuss dual language teachers' literacy and biliteracy practices: New Literacy Studies (NLG, 1996; Street, 1984; Street, 1993), the continua of biliteracy (Hornberger, 2004), and FOK (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992; 2005), specifically Funds of Linguistic Knowledge (Smith, 2002), and language ideologies. The concept of linguistic ideology has emerged as a way to link linguistic practices to broader sociopolitical systems (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994). For these scholars, attitudes, values, and beliefs about language are always ideological and enmeshed in social systems of subordination of groups, relating to ethnicity, class, and gender. These frameworks allow me to explain the multiple identities and practice of borderland Latina DL teachers in the K-2 grades. Next, I present the research questions explored in this study to then I elaborate on the theories which will serve as a backdrop to analyze data collected. The main research question is: What are the linguistic identities and pedagogical practices of Latina K-2 dual language teachers on the U.S-Mexico *frontera*?

### **Linguistic Identities**

- (1) What are the linguistic backgrounds of Dual Language (DL) teachers on the border?
- (2) How do DL teachers use their bilingualism/biliteracy in the elementary classroom?
- (3) What is the preferred language of instruction for Latina DL teachers?

### **Pedagogical Practice**

- (4) Why do DL teachers prefer to teach in Spanish, English or both?
- (5) What are the teacher-student language interactions during instruction in a DL setting?
- (6) What are the DL teachers' perspectives regarding how their bilingualism/biliteracy influence their teaching practice?

## **2.1 SOCIOCULTURAL VIEWS OF LITERACY AND BILITERACY**

New Literacy Studies (NLS) provide a framework which is central to understanding the literacy practices of people; in this case, my focus is on dual language teachers (DL). NLS proposes that literacy and its functions depend on the social context and cultural meanings that users give to them. The concept of literacy practices (Street, 1993), includes literacy events and also the ideologies associated with the use of literacy. The ideological model of literacy (Street, 1984) proposed by scholars in NLS (Barton & Hamilton, 2000; Street, 1984) situates literacy within its context of use, in its sociocultural context. NLS offers a dynamic perspective of cultural practices, as well as the idea that there are competing discourses and types of knowledge that may be used in a particular context; some literacies are more dominant and influential than others (Barton & Hamilton, 2000).

Language and literacy practices can be explored in depth through ethnographic studies. The New London Group (1996), renowned scholars and theorists who are experts in diverse literacy areas, express that the mission of education is to allow people to participate fully in public, community, and economic life. Their approach aims to understand and teach literacy beyond the traditional and limited view of literacy pertaining to school-based reading and writing only. The goal of broadening the possibility of literacy is to address the educational needs of culturally and linguistically diverse societies and to also recognize various forms of literacy. The NLG encourages both literacy educators and students to be participants of social change; the authors see teachers as designers of learning processes and environments while the learners are designers of social futures. In situated practice, a community of learners is immersed in meaningful practices and they play different roles based on their backgrounds and experiences, in this setting, there are novice and experts who exchange learning experiences (NLG, 1996; Wenger, 1998).

For ethnographers who study language, culture, and learning, institutions of formal education are important sites for carrying out ethnographic research on language and literacy. With a focus on literacy, King (1994) examined the relationship between language, literacy, and

education in Mexico and she found that people's identities were embedded in their ability to maintain their essential cultural practices. Barton and Hamilton (2000) define literacy practices as "the general cultural ways of utilizing written language which people draw upon in their lives. In the simplest sense, literacy practices are what people do with literacy" (p. 8). From this perspective, using reading and writing are linked to cultural and power structures in society. Literacy entails more than the ability to read and write since literacy practices are influenced by social, cultural, historical, political, and economic factors, therefore, literacy learning is based on complex social interactions (García, Bartlett, & Kleifgen, 2006; Heath & Street, 2008). NLS scholars refer to the general cultural ways of using literacy and this definition of literacy seems to have been mostly applied to theorizing monolinguals' ways of getting meaning out of literacy; however, this conception of literacy regarding bilinguals needs to be addressed or elaborated on and applying this concept to bilingual teachers might be one possibility. Some scholars (e.g. Hornberger, 2004) have theorized biliteracy and its relationship to bilingual teachers.

Hornberger and Link (2012) discuss that an orientation to translanguageing and transnational literacies in classrooms with students from diverse cultures and linguistic backgrounds can provide practitioners with a fuller understanding of the resources students bring to school and help identify ways in which to draw on these resources for successful educational experiences. Ofelia García (2009) explains that translanguageing is a term borrowed from Cen Williams (1994) who used it to name pedagogical practice which switched the language mode in Welsh-English bilingual classrooms at the high school level, for example, when reading or listening was done in one language and speaking or writing activities were done in other language. For Baker (2006) translanguageing has four potential advantages: promoting a fuller understanding of subject matter; developing academic language skills in both languages; facilitating home-school cooperation; and integrating fluent English speakers and English learners. Translanguageing takes place across teachers and students for the following purposes: to mediate understanding by using translation; to construct meaning where children use other



language for understanding; to include or to exclude other children; and show knowledge such as new words (García, Makar, Starcevic, and Terry, 2011).

García (2009) proposes that “In the globalized context of the twenty-first century... those who are learning a second language should be considered emergent bilinguals so that teachers can understand that it will be impossible for their students to leave their home language practices behind” (p. 60). It’s important to consider that bilingual families and communities translanguage in order to construct meaning, thus, bilingual communities translanguage extensively. The social development of bilingual children also relies on their ability to communicate in more local and situated circumstances. Children need to be able to communicate with their parents, their caregivers, their extended families wherever they may be, their friends, and their communities.

Regarding assessment, García (2009) brings forth that students in bilingual education take assessments which often ignore their bilingualism and assess their abilities as if they were monolinguals in English; In the U.S., the Spanish of students in bilingual education programs is assessed only in a few cases, and the performance of students has no real consequence. Furthermore, bilingual students should be given the opportunity to show their proficiency in both languages, both academically and socially and the best way to assess bilingual students is for teachers to observe and listen to their students. García (2009) argues that despite curricular arrangements that separate languages, the most prevalent bilingual practice in the bilingual education classroom is that of translanguageing. Students appropriate the use of language, and although teachers may plan when and how languages are to be used, children themselves use their entire linguistic repertoires flexibly. For example, when children with different linguistic profiles are involved in group work, children violate the language use norms of the classroom, using language flexibly to support their understanding and build linguistic knowledge.

Research (García, Makar, Starcevic, and Terry, 2011) was conducted in a Spanish-English dual language class of kindergarteners in New York showed that when children from different language groups were integrated, for example, during playtime, despite the language separation, children translanguage constantly to co-construct meaning, to include others, and to

mediate understanding. This translanguaging is responsible for children's bilingual acquisition since it is a powerful mechanism to construct understanding, to include others, and to mediate understanding across language groups. In *Translanguaging: A CUNY-NYSIEB guide for educators* (Celtic and Seltzer, 2012), Ofelia García theorizes translanguaging for educators by discussing that translanguaging refers to the *language practices* of bilingual people, and it serves the following purposes: challenges monolingual assumptions and instead treats bilingual discourse as the norm; refers to pedagogical practices that use bilingualism as resource; goes beyond traditional notions of bilingualism and second language teaching and learning; and describes the practices of all students and educators who use bilingualism as a resource.

Considering bilingualism and biliteracy as a resource, the continua model of biliteracy offers a lens through which to see teaching in bilingual settings. The model uses intersecting continua to represent the multiple, complex, and fluid interrelationships between bilingualism and literacy; The continua model posits that what (content) bilinguals read and write is as important as how (development), where and when (context), or by what means (media) they do so (Hornberger and Link, 2012). The continua of biliteracy (Hornberger, 2004) framework situates teaching by considering the following contexts of biliteracy: global, social, cultural, and political. The continua include the context, content, development, and media of biliteracy; movement exists along each continua. The continua mode depicts the development of biliteracy along intersecting first-second language, receptive-productive, and oral-written language skills. The author explains that in educational practice, there tends to be an implied privilege over one end of the continua, for example, written development over oral development.

Teachers' knowledge of and level of comfort with the vernacular of both languages, as well as knowledge of the standards and literary forms of both languages, will contribute to learning success (Hornberger, 2003). This idea of having knowledge of vernacular Spanish and occasionally using it during instruction was evident with some of the participating teachers (Miranda, Cassandra, Felicity, and Marisol). Whether teachers deliver instruction in English or Spanish, teachers' positive attitude towards students' use of Spanish not only legitimizes the

linguistic resources students brings from home, but it also allows for their development across school-based activities, both academic and social (Hornberger and Link, 2012).

Hornberger (2003) found that Normalistas aspiring to be bilingual educators were more likely to ethnically identify as Mexicano or with the country of origin rather than as U.S. Mexicans or Mexican Americans; the familiarity with structures and scripts as well as with vernacular and literary forms and written discourse depend on experience with schooling in Mexico and the U.S. Marisol and Felicity were the only two teachers who had previous schooling experiences in Mexico and they were the ones who consistently spoke Spanish to their students during instruction. Marisol was a normalista with ten years of teaching experience in Mexico, and she taught the Spanish component of the dual language program.

An approach that legitimizes resources is Funds of Knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992; González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) which values the pedagogies of the home which are historically and culturally developed. This knowledge from Mexican households is acquired through lived experiences and encompasses rich cultural and linguistic capital. FOK is meant to inform teachers on how to better understand their students and families. A FOK viewpoint can provide insight into the cultural resources that Mexican-origin teachers develop in their households in the borderland region. Furthermore, as practitioners, integrating children's FOK into the school setting is an approach that opens up teaching opportunities by creating meaningful and authentic learning situations for the students.

González, Moll, and Amanti (2005) suggest that families' knowledge and life experiences furnish the basis for the cultural system from which Mexican-origin children emerge. Using such knowledge within the curriculum can help build constructive relationships between teachers, students, and parents. Moreover, building on students' existing knowledge, in part acquired from their household on both sides of the border, is a way of recognizing the value of cultural identity. One interesting finding was that during instruction, a couple of teachers (Felicity; Marissa) made connections to Mexico and in several occasions the students were the ones making connections to Mexico, prompted by a teachers' question. González et al (2005)

found that becoming aware of the cultural resources that exist within U.S.-Mexican community enables educators to become more creative in their teaching and to build on that knowledge.

Hornberger (2003) highlights that bilingual teachers are products of their own cultural upbringing, schooling, and professional preparation: thus, the moment-to-moment decisions they make about language used emerges from these sociocultural contexts. The notion of context permits examining language use in context and recognizes multiple identities available for participants. García (2009) emphasizes that bilingual educators must recognize the value of translanguage practices. It's common for bilingual teachers to hide their natural translanguage practices because they have been taught to believe that only monolingual ways of speaking are valuable and bilingual students who translanguage often suffer linguistic shame because they have also developed ideologies that value only monolingualism.

Flores and her colleagues (2011) recommend that beyond knowledge and pedagogy, teacher candidates must develop biliteracy skills in order to teach across languages. Although teachers in dual language settings reconstruct two geographical spaces that have linguistic boundaries, the children themselves create their third spaces with translanguage; Translanguage practices negotiate and build more dynamic bilingual identities (García et al., 2011). For voice and agency to be available for teachers and students, they must contest the traditional power weighting of the continua; There are ways in which school practices (e.g., translanguage) surrounding literacy and bilingualism have paid attention to the traditionally less powerful ends of the continua of biliteracy (Hornberger, 2003). Dynamic bilingualism and biliteracy allows the simultaneous coexistence of different languages in communications, accepts translanguage, and supports the development of multiple linguistic identities (Flores, Hernandez-Sheets, and Riojas-Clark, 2011; García, 2009; Hornberger, 2003). In this section I focused on how the seven teachers in this study conceptualized and implemented their pedagogy of teaching literacy. I also examined the intersections of each theoretical framework, in addition to prior research.

On the subject of biliteracy, some ideas proposed by the continua of biliteracy model (Hornberger, 2004) support that multiple languages and literacies, cultural practices, and worldviews are resources in which individuals (e. g., teachers) and groups draw on as they take on different identities in diverse areas of their lives. The continua of biliteracy framework serves to situate research and teaching by considering the following contexts of biliteracy: global, social, cultural, and political. The continua include the context, content, development, and media of biliteracy; a continuous movement exists along each continua. The continua mode depicts the development of biliteracy along intersecting first-second language, receptive-productive, and oral-written language skills. The author explains that in educational practice, there tends to be an implied privilege over one end of the continua, for example, written development over oral development. Hornberger (2004) views bilingual educators as simultaneously taking the roles of researchers, teachers, and language planners; hence, she proposes they need to have “opportunities to reflect critically on the *contexts* and *content* of their teaching; and to uncover the communicative repertoires that students bring to schools and that can serve as resources for their language and literacy *development*” (p. 168).

## **2.2 IDENTITY FORMATION**

Transitioning from sociocultural views of literacy, next I will discuss theories which draw anthropological perspectives to explain identity formation. Feminists have broadened the question of reproduction to include structures of gender and racial inequality, exploring the agency of women and racial minorities. Anzaldúa (1987) as a Chicana feminist defines identity as a narrative connected to positionality, since identities are the stories people tell about themselves. She writes about the *mestiza* consciousness which results from living in the U. S.-Mexico borderlands, the “third country” which forms the border culture. Based on her personal experience, the author argues that Borderlands are vague and undetermined, in a constant state of transition; therefore, women who live in the borderlands are characterized by the ability to juggle

cultures by developing a plural personality and strong self-knowledge. This perspective about identity can help shed light on the lived experiences of Mexican-origin Latina teachers in the borderland context who experience teaching, in Anzaldúa's words, amid a "cross-pollination of races, ideologies, and cultures". The participating teachers live and work in a borderland context where there is a mixture of people from diverse ethnic backgrounds, there are constant everyday situations where Spanish and English are in contact, and people develop ideologies about languages spoken and its speakers. A lot of people living on the border develop various levels of biculturalism due to dynamics of having access to and experiencing both Mexican and American cultures.

Scholars have highlighted the importance of apprenticeship in acquiring new social identities and literacies (Bartlett, 2005; Gee, 1996; Wenger, 1998). Identity is an outcome of participation where learning involves interaction, relationships, and contexts (Holland et al., 1998; Wenger, 1998; Moje, Luke, Davies, & Street, 2009). Wenger (1998) explains that participation is an essential component of situated learning where learners become part of a Community of Practice which embodies certain beliefs, skills, and behaviors to be acquired. Communities of Practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly; DL teachers can be one such group. Wenger (1998) argues that learning is embedded within activity, thus, self-development occurs in and through activities; such interaction happens in cultural contexts. Knowledge needs to be presented in authentic contexts. The author explains that as the novice (newcomer) moves from the margin of a community to its center, he or she becomes more engaged within the culture and eventually assumes the role of an expert (oldtimer). These concepts of participation as a central theme in communities of practice and the notions of newcomer and oldtimer are relevant to discuss DL Latinas and their teaching profession. In my study, the participating teachers have varying degrees of teaching experience, ranging from two years to twenty-five years, the number of years in the DL classroom may categorize a novice teacher as a newcomer while more experienced teachers can be viewed as oldtimers.

Other scholars also highlight the importance of participation in identity formation. Concerning identity and agency, Holland, et al. (1998), define figured worlds as identities which are formed in the process of participation in which some activities or outcomes are valued over others. Cultural artifacts may take the form of objects (e. g. poker chips), symbols, or narratives (e. g. life stories) with the purpose of providing access to figured worlds. Regarding DL teachers, cultural artifacts such as their life stories can grant them access to the figured world of teaching. The process of self-understanding leads to the development of identities; identities are the social products of social practices. The term identity is defined as enduring and culturally derived “imaginings of self in worlds of action” which are produced in practice. Holland and her colleagues’ concept of identity focuses on the development of identities and agency specific to practices and activities situated in historically contingent, socially enacted, culturally constructed “worlds”. Cultural resources, including the figured worlds that give meaning to people’s interaction, change historically in ways that are marked by the political struggles and social valuation of their users. Cultural resources are marked by social position but people can exert some control by rearranging their cultural forms (Holland et al., 1998).

Identities in practice form when people use objectifications of social identities such as images, narratives, labels, or memories to manage feelings, thoughts, and behaviors (Bartlett & Holland, 2002; Gutierrez and Rogoff, 2003; Holland et al., 1998). Regarding social identity, Norton (1995) proposes that power relations play a crucial role in social interactions between language learners and target language speakers. This scholar views social identity as multiple and explains that a notion of investment rather than motivation is more appropriate to explain the connection between language learners and a target language. Moje, Luke, Davies, and Street (2009) review literacy-and-identity studies and claim that researchers must pay attention to language and discourses in order to examine the relationship between literacy and identity given that identities are represented in and through language. The authors offer four views of identity: as narrative, as position, as difference, and as sense of self. Identity as narrative is a reflection of an individual’s own story; identity as position looks at the process and ethnography is especially

adept at helping us understand processes of building identities; identity as differences focuses on national origin, race, ethnicity, and culture; identity as sense of self considers the self-concept and self-efficacy of an individual. Identity includes both how people identify themselves and how they are identified by others, identities are continually constructed (Bartlett, 2005; Moje et al. 2009).

Literacy identities are shaped by social structures and cultural worlds (Bartlett & Holland, 2002; Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007). Lewis et al. (2007) view learning as shaped by identity, power, and agency; the agency of individuals is consistently taking place between the interaction of institutional and personal influences. Since the authors view individuals' histories as situated culturally, historically, and institutionally, they propose a critical sociocultural perspective to examine the relationship between the following dynamics: social and individual, global and local, institutional and everyday. Bartlett & Holland, (2002) expand the concept of figured worlds to the notion that cultural models expand the understanding of social practices. Social actors learn to refigure meanings of specific practices to be able to reposition themselves by relying on the use of cultural artifacts. For example, artifacts in the figured world of literacy might include blackboard and textbooks in the classroom, and reading assessment scales. Bartlett (2005) conveys that people employ cultural resources such as cultural artifacts to develop new identities and literacies. Identities can counteract powerful social positioning through the use of powerful cultural resources. Over time and in communities of practice (Wenger, 1998), actors acquire new figured identities. In discussing the relationship between literacies, identities, and social change, Bartlett & Holland, (2002) argue that critical literacy pedagogy will promote the necessary social awareness and critique to change social inequities.

### **2.3 CRITICAL VIEWS OF CULTURAL RESOURCES**

In this section, I draw upon scholarly works which provide an assets perspective of cultural resources; these frameworks situate teachers as knowledgeable beings with agency, which can be enacted through teaching. A Funds of Knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, &



González, 1992; González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) approach values the pedagogies of the home which are historically and culturally developed; knowledge and skills from Mexican households are acquired through lived experiences and encompass rich cultural and linguistic capital. The Funds of knowledge (FOK) framework and approach were established in the late 1980s and early 1990s through work in educational settings in Tucson, Arizona. The researchers sought to identify practices that could counteract the negative impact of cultural deficit views and to better inform the instructional practices of diverse students, they also used an inquiry process with teachers that would enable them to learn more about their students' home lives to better connect school knowledge with learning beyond school (Rodriguez, 2013). FOK is meant to inform teachers on how to better understand their students and families, by recognizing knowledge generated through the social and labor history of household life, including social networks. FOK represent households' cultural resources, an essential tool kit needed to mediate well-being. A FOK viewpoint can provide insight into the cultural resources that Latina teachers obtain and develop in their Mexican households in the borderland region. Furthermore, as practitioners, integrating children's FOK into the school setting would be an approach that could open up teaching opportunities by create meaningful and authentic learning situations for the students.

Another valuable concept to draw from, in order to explain the complexity of borderland resources and contexts is Yosso's (2005) notion of Community Cultural Wealth. The author defines culture as the behaviors and values that are learned, shared, and exhibited by a group. Basing her work on Critical Race Theory, she identifies capital in the following forms of cultural and social assets: inspirational, social, navigational, linguistic, resistant, and familial. The author proposes the framework of community cultural wealth to highlight the knowledge, skills, abilities, and networks possessed and used by people of color (e.g., Latina teachers). The concept of community cultural wealth is rather inclusive and thus appropriate to be used as a theoretical lens to explore the dynamics of individuals who grow up, learn, and teach in a borderland context. Since the theoretical framework has been explained, next I present a collection of

scholarly works which address bilingual Latina teachers' identities, their conceptions of teaching, and pedagogical practices.

Latino families sometimes have mixed migration status. Immigrants often move to a country to seek permanent residence and, as a consequence, approximately 93% of children of immigrants are born in the United States (Arzubiaga et al., 2009). Families are constantly evolving, children are central to family relocation, and child raising shapes families' journeys; a common factor among families who decide to move to a new country is the welfare of their children and children's well-being affect how immigrant parents live in the United States (Levitt & Schiller, 2007; Orellana, 2001). One of the major concerns for parents is the educational opportunities their children may have access to. According to Trueba (2004), on border areas (like El Paso region), the maintenance of language and cultural traditions occurs with visits of relatives living in the United States with their relatives living in Mexico and by attending events (e. g., baptisms, first communions, weddings) that bring together entire families on both sides of the border.

Research suggests the largest percentage of Latinos living in the United States is immigrants or children of immigrants (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Young children of immigrant parents grow up in a new culture as they become part of the U.S. public educational system. Orellana (2001) emphasizes that immigrant children are assets to their families, schools, and communities since they connect homes and schools while helping their families to negotiate the cultural and institutional environment of the United States. Núñez and Klamlinger (2010) explain that borderland residents represent a combination of U.S. born and naturalized citizens, legal residents, and visiting relatives. Unauthorized immigrants, legal residents, and U.S. citizens are viewed and treated differently by state institutions and their representatives. For example, residents who are unauthorized to live and work in the U.S. are less likely to get involved in community-building practices for fear of being deported. Family dynamics are influenced by educational levels, languages spoken at home, economic status, work experience, social networks, and citizenship status.

## **2.4 DL TEACHERS' IDENTITIES, CONCEPTIONS OF TEACHING, AND PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES**

### **2.4.1 DL Teachers' Self-knowledge**

Few studies have looked at the identities and literacy practices of dual language teachers. For example, Brochin (2010), Guerrero (2003) and Varghese (2000) have considered pre-service Latina bilingual teachers. Research has also been conducted with novice bilingual teachers (Hernández, 2010; Prieto, 2009; Weisman, 2001). Regarding dual language literature, prominent research has mainly focused on the distribution of languages of instruction (English-Spanish) and the implementation of the program (Christian, Montone, Lindholm, & Carranza, 1997; Freeman, 1998; Lindholm, 2001, 2005; Pérez, 2004). These notable longitudinal studies have targeted dual language schools, where the focus has been on the whole school, not the teachers in particular. Some very recent research includes the work of Lucero (2010) and DePalma (2010). These scholars conducted their studies with kindergarten and first grade DL teachers, therefore, this work is closely related to my study since I worked with DL teachers in the lower grades (K-2), however, a significant difference lies in the fact that these studies did not focus specifically on Latinas, and the context was not the U.S.-Mexico border region. The research gap that I would like to contribute to addresses how identities (linguistic repertoires, teaching experiences) influence and support the pedagogical practice of DL Latina educators serving bilingual border communities. My study expands the knowledge base on DL teachers by exploring the linguistic identities and pedagogical practices of in-service Latina practitioners who teach in dual language programs which reflect the U.S.-Mexico border context.

Prieto (2009) draws on Chicana feminist thought, Anzaldúa's mestiza consciousness, to understand how ten pre-service Latina teachers as mestizas navigated their lived and educational experiences. She followed four of them into the classroom to examine their professional practice as novice teachers; data were collected through biographical dialogues, oral history interviews, and ethnographic classroom observations. The author argues that teacher education programs

must include safe and critical spaces for reflection and dialogue where *maestras* learn from one another's lived and educational experiences. Brochin's (2010) qualitative case study in South Texas used literacy research methods to focus on the ways prospective bilingual teachers' identities are constructed through oral and written texts while attending a teacher preparation program. Among other frameworks, Brochin (2010) uses Yosso's community cultural wealth framework to analyze how a teacher preparation program in South Texas contributes to the identity formation of pre-service *maestras*. The findings revealed that educating *maestras* includes four main categories: critical self-reflection, practices that view communities as sites for learning, community building with peers, and advocacy of bilingual education within the broader historical context of education. The author recommends that teacher preparation programs should provide opportunities for pre-service teachers to draw on their formal and informal literacy practices.

Regarding literacy and identity work, Gee (1989; 2008) describes cultural models as ways of knowing which are learned from interaction, texts, media, and culture. Cultural models are everyday theories, stories, images, or metaphors that people use to simplify reality in order to understand it and deal with it. Varghese (2000) explored the professional identities of a group of bilingual (Spanish-English) Latino teachers-in-the-making in an urban public school district in Philadelphia; the author used cultural models as a tool to examine and understand the beliefs, motivations, and practices of teachers which depended on their personal and professional histories. The author argues that becoming a bilingual educator is a process of negotiating professional identities and she found that given the controversial nature of bilingual education, some teachers acted as advocates while others just focused on their classroom practice, yet, others left the profession; these teachers had different views about dual language models.

For González (2005), issues of language and identity formation are relevant both in households and classrooms; therefore, she analyzed the discourses of Mexican-origin women and children in the borderlands and she explained that issues of language are further complicated by hegemonic structures since language is closely tied to heritage and identity. González theorized

the everyday linguistic and cultural practices of women and children to illustrate the dynamics of structure and agency.

Cultural artifacts are viewed as tools in identity formation which shape individual and community learning (Holland et al., 1998). Bartlett's (2005; 2007) ethnographic research in Brazil showed how people used cultural resources to contest social positioning in the process of learning and using literacy. Her study of emergent adult literacy students in Brazil provided interview data which portrayed how agency was performed by relying on the use of cultural artifacts. The author narrated the story of a woman in an adult literacy program in Brazil whom successfully faced the challenge of having to sign her name during the process of obtaining a voter registration card, this scenario served as a backdrop to make a point about how an individuals' agency can be derived from literacy practices. The author suggested there is a need to examine how students and teachers use cultural artifacts and figured worlds to construct, use, and teach legitimate literacies. My proposed study will examine how DL Latina teachers use cultural artifacts and figured worlds in forming and enacting their social and linguistic identities in their pedagogical practice.

Jimenez (2000) also drew on sociocultural perspectives of literacy and identity in his examination of bilingual students' understanding of how their identities influenced their language and literacy development. Approximately 85 students whose ages ranged from 9 to 12 years old and their four teachers participated in the research project. Data sources included classroom observations and interviews with the students and teachers. The results indicated that the children and some of the teachers were influenced by their experiences which could be described as cultural borderlands; their identities were connected to their status as bicultural, bilingual, and biliterate persons. The bilingual students in Jimenez' study (2000) mentioned their bilingualism, their Mexican heritage, and their own individuality as components of their literate identities; literacy learning was appealing if it supported their Latina/o identity and fostered the Spanish language. The findings indicated that students' academic achievement improved due to the many meaningful connections they made across two languages, Spanish and English.

Cummins (2001) establishes a central role for teacher identity in bilingual education; he argues that cognitive development and academic achievement are inseparable from teacher-student identity negotiation. The negotiation of identities is a potential tool for the empowerment of bilingual teachers and their students. Furthermore, the choices of instructional approaches and the structure of the bilingual program models provide particular identity options for the students; teaching, learning, and identity negotiation are heavily influenced by power relations. This notion of teacher-student identity negotiation is critical to my proposed study since I explored what pedagogical practices were preferred and applied regarding language use and ideology within a particular bilingual education program model, dual language.

#### **2.4.2 DL Teachers' Identities**

In an article on power and agency in education, Rodriguez (2013) explained that “Racial/ethnic, cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic differences that continue to exist between student populations and teachers in many educational settings produce an imperative to create teaching-and-learning environments that are characterized by mutual understanding among students and educators”. Lapayese (2007) argues that although teachers of color represent a small percentage of the teaching population, their perspectives and insights are critical to understand the education of students of color. Teachers can serve as role models who show that it is necessary to respect diversity and to be open to learn more about different peoples and perspectives because we may find out that we are not that different from each other after all. Student ethnicity is a factor that may influence a teacher’s perceptions and interactions with students, and Saft & Pianta (2001) propose that teacher’s perceptions of students from similar ethnic backgrounds tend to be more positive because they have many things in common, including knowledge about cultural and family background, similar means of communication, comparable interpretation of behaviors demonstrated, and familiar role models. Furthermore, Saft & Pianta (2001) found that when a child and teacher’s ethnicity were the same, the teacher was likely to rate the child more positively and by contrast, when there were difficulties in a

teacher-child relationship, ethnic differences and specific teacher expectations magnified these problems.

Race and ethnicity affect the power, control, and position that individuals possess within a society; the concept of ethnicity is usually applied to groups working to maintain their cultural and political identity and to ensure protection, advancement, and access to resources for their members in a national system (Helmberger, 2006; LeCompte & Schensul, 2010). Cruz-Janzen (2001) writes about self-identity, which is significant for both teachers and students regardless of ethnic background. She began by exploring her personal childhood collection, which had impacted her identity and reviewed historical accounts while analyzing Latino popular culture through sayings, songs, legends, children's stories, games and media. For example, in the media, stereotypes of Mexican immigrants are overwhelmingly negative; within this context, the teacher has a unique opportunity to guide students to a rich appreciation of immigration generally and help future citizens in our democracy make well-informed, objective, and morally sound decisions (Vargas & DePyssler, 1998). Spring (2008) writes about diverse cultural frames of reference and she discusses what schooling means for diverse ethnic groups: for Mexican Americans, public schools are both a source of hope and a means for eradicating their cultures and language; the author explains that after the immigration of Mexican farm workers in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, one of the major goals of school systems was to deny an education to the children of Mexican workers.

Language plays a significant role in society because it becomes the tool that allows people to communicate their thoughts, ideas, and to participate fully in diverse settings, particularly the educational setting. Varghese (2000) and Varghese & Stritikus (2005) explored what it meant to be a bilingual teacher; and they found that teachers-in-the-making had a critical approach to bilingual education and programs. The prospective teachers' professional identities reflected their local settings and their personal histories; furthermore, teachers' practices were influenced by their personal and professional experiences, and by institutional support.

One of the factors that may explain the longevity of those who continue to teach is rooted in their personal histories; this is often their source of endurance (Nieto, 2003). Gomez, Rodriguez & Agosto's study (2008) of two prospective elementary Latina/o teachers drew on life history methods to investigate the family, school, university, and teacher education experiences of the candidates. The teacher candidates attended a teacher preparation program in a large, Midwestern university in the U.S. and they had a strong desire to connect with both their students and their families. Findings indicated that practicing and prospective Latina/o educators bring many strengths to the school setting; for example, Latina/o teachers welcome parents and families to school and capitalize on their own cultural and Spanish language knowledge to build personal relationships with students and their families as well, and they are concerned about linking students' lives outside of school with their classroom experiences. Gomez, Rodriguez & Agosto (2008) found that prospective teachers of color, based on their own lived experiences, may be more aware of unfair schooling practices experienced by families of low income and people of color, may be more likely to be socially conscientious and to take responsibility for transforming schools and society.

Gomez (2010) investigated the lives of three prospective Latina teachers at a university in the Midwest U.S. where the majority of the student population is white and from a middle class background. The author found that when future Latina teachers reflected on personal and professional experiences, a mother was an influential figure in developing self-identity. When the future teachers were sharing their life experiences they would integrate their mothers' experiences with their own and they viewed their mothers as nurturing, supportive and strong women. Bustamante Jones, Young, & Rodriguez, (1999) explored the identities of Mexican American and Euro-American pre-service bilingual teachers through their reference group orientation and affiliative identity. Reference group orientation was contextualized within ethnicity and culture, referring to cultural values, customs, and traditions while affiliative identity referred to the understanding of sociopolitical issues relevant to a certain group. A strong Mexican orientation and identity was found in the Mexican Americans; this group seemed



compelled to maintain language and culture, portraying a sense of collective identity which influenced career decisions. In the study, Mexican Americans wished to use the process of schooling to maintain strong positive cultural and linguistic ties to their students' Mexican heritage, while Euro-Americans expressed individualistic reasons for going into bilingual education.

Riojas Clark and Flores (2001) conducted a study with Latina students, mostly Mexican American, in a bilingual teacher preparation program in South Texas to explore teachers' views of self and ethnic identity. The findings showed that there was a strong association between ethnic identity and self-concept; individuals self-identified as Mexican, mexicano, Mexican American, and Chicano, and the data reflected a range from Mexican to American preference, within a continuum from Mexican to U.S. identities. The authors recommended that teachers must be aware of the ways language, culture, and ethnicity mediate the social construction of identity. In order to assist their students to develop a sense of identity, bilingual teachers must first know themselves. The authors also argued that Latino pre-service teachers must have a well-defined identity to be able to encourage students to develop a positive self-concept.

Two studies in California showed how teacher candidates saw themselves as role models who needed to share more than just skin color or a surname with their students; they needed to reflect awareness of their own bicultural identities; in these studies, Mexican American pre-service teachers saw themselves as role models responsible for maintaining the culture (Fitts, Winstead, Weisman, Flores, & Valenciana, 2008; Bustamante Jones et al., 1999). The studies conducted by Fitts et al. (2008) and Bustamante Jones et al. (1999) showed how bilingual-bicultural teachers have social and cultural capital that can be used to create culturally responsive learning environments. The researchers described Latina pre-service teachers as exceptional because they had survived an oppressive system where they learned to thrive; many had experienced subtractive schooling environments that neglected their linguistic, socio-historical, and cultural resources. Prospective Latina teachers from different family structures and socioeconomic backgrounds expressed negative experiences about their early schooling and in

the university as students in the teacher education programs. Latinas felt there was a disconnect between them being women of color, and having had struggles throughout their lives compared to their peers and professors who mostly came from a more advantaged white, middle class background (Fitts et al., 2008; Gomez, 2010).

Fitts and colleagues (2008) adopted the concept of Funds of Knowledge (FOK) to indicate the social networks and cultural practices that help pre-service teachers help one another and their students to develop positive academic identities by relying on the social and cultural resources found within the community. In communities where there is a richness of cultural and linguistic resources, students are constantly learning in their households and from their surroundings, and the teachers play an essential role in linking those FOK (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) to the classroom setting. Teachers can discover their own FOK and those of their students' families through family histories and by talking to parents and grandparents. Recent studies (Hernandez, 2010; Prieto, 2009) have adopted a FOK perspective to investigate the maestras' transition from pre-service to novice teachers. Such research draws on notions of cultural resources such as FOK to understand how and why Latinas decide to become Spanish-English bilingual education teachers and the conditions they face.

Weisman's (2001) conducted a study in Southern California with four bilingual Latina teachers to examine their bicultural identities and their attitudes towards Spanish and English, the teaching experience ranged from 1 to 4 years and it took place in a transitional bilingual program. Weisman found that the teachers with strong connections to their primary culture affirmed their students' linguistic and cultural identities and demonstrated a critical consciousness of the ways in which power structures can dismiss the needs of Latino students. The author suggests that teachers need to have a critical view of the role of language in the construction of identity and they need to understand their own bicultural identity to be more effective in creating educational contexts that support the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of their students. Bilingual teachers' motives for teaching may be rooted in their multiple identities but also in their desire to improve the educational system.

### **2.4.3 DL Teachers as Agents of Change**

Fitts et al. (2008) studied the development of a bicultural voice in Latina/o preservice teachers. The authors put forward that it is essential to provide prospective teachers with opportunities to analyze social, economic, and cultural relations in society in order to develop their identities as social justice educators. The teacher candidates read research, wrote in their journals, saw news media, talked to practicing teachers, and discussed legislation; data suggested that such teachers were starting to recognize that as bicultural teachers they take leadership roles as change agents in their communities. Bilingual teachers in leadership roles at schools play a key role in preparing students for social change because they can teach about democracy, portray positive views about bilingualism, and work closely with diverse families. For this endeavor to take place, bilingual educators, based on their lived experiences, must be the medium that bridges classroom pedagogy into something fruitful that is reflected in society. Bilingual and bicultural classroom teachers can connect with the next generations to teach children about social justice.

Regarding the educational journeys of pre-service bilingual teachers, Guerrero (2003) argues that discouraging the development of academic Spanish may be a way to ensure that bilingual education is not effective on any large scale. The author studied the process of acquiring and using academic Spanish among four novice Latina bilingual teachers in the Southwest; he examined their stories to understand the opportunities they had during their lifetime to acquire academic Spanish. Spanish was present in each household prior to schooling; there were opportunities to acquire Spanish within the family context and community; however, the value of English eventually displaced the value of Spanish within the households. His findings reflect that membership in the bilingual education teacher community entails the ability to communicate in academic Spanish and use the language for various educational purposes. U.S.-born Latina bilingual teachers who were educated exclusively in the U. S. expressed apprehension regarding the delivery of instruction in Spanish.

Language is inextricably tied to issues of culture and identity (Bartlett, López, Mein, & Valdiviezo, 2011). Both a professional and personal identity develop as discourses and systems of power that assign social values to all activities that take place within institutions, academic disciplines, and society at large (Morgan, 2004). There is a continuous reorganization of self and collective understanding that takes place within bilingual classrooms; teachers may share a similar cultural history and yet have different understandings of language and culture which shape their identities and practices as teachers (Morgan, 2004; Norton, 1997).

Norton & Toohey (2001) advocate that learners must set up counter-discourses in which their identities can be respected and their resources valued and they need to reposition themselves as multilingual resources. In their research regarding language learning, Norton & Toohey studied two women who were examined individually but also in their learning communities. The authors argue for the importance of examining the ways in which learners exercise their agency in forming and reforming their identities in diverse contexts. Similarly, Pavlenko (2003) investigated the ways in which pre-service and in-service ESL teachers imagine their linguistic and professional memberships through linguistic autobiographies which is a data collection method shown to be fruitful in teacher education research. The analysis revealed patterns of reflexive positioning about people's cultural beliefs and allows us to see which identities are available for appropriation to individuals in a particular time and place. In the study, there was a predominance of female teachers which mirrors the demographics of the classroom and indicates women's sensitivity to public issues. In Pavlenko's (2003) study, the teachers reimagined themselves as multicompetent and bilingual which allowed them to view themselves positively and to transmit these views to others. Bilingual teachers can take advantage of the genuine interest students have for contributing positively to society and embark on the exciting journey of teaching and learning with a diverse student population.

Viewing identity as multiple, fluid, and always in the process of formation, Flores et al. (2011) argued that teachers' identities include their pedagogies and philosophies. According to Flores et al. (2011), ethnic and cultural identities are shaped by the socialization processes

experienced at home and in the community, and the shaping of personal and professional identity is linked to cultural, schooling, and teaching experiences. Furthermore, bilingual education candidate ideology shapes classroom practices as well as student expectations. The authors examined bilingual education teacher candidates by using a self-identity questionnaire and language history maps and essays in Spanish. A portion of the findings reflected the following major motives for pursuing bilingual teaching: giving back to the community, having had positive teacher role models, a desire to make a difference, and family support of career choice. Flores et al. (2011) suggest that *aspirantes* must be prepared to teach in two languages and be aware of the sociopolitical contexts of bilingual learners by understanding immigration, family and community resources, the dynamism of culture, and legislative changes.

Lapayese (2007) investigated the life experiences of people of color, in this case Latina bilingual teachers, to validate and acknowledge the individuality of those stories through methods like counterstories, narratives, testimonies, and oral history. Each teacher was interviewed three times; the first interview looked into how the teachers understood connections among class, race, and language while the second and third interviews were directly developed from observations in the classroom related to the topic of bilingualism, race, and class. Lapayese (2007) established that bilingual educators mediated language at their school sites and equipped students with skills, competencies, abilities, knowledge, attitudes, and personal qualities; while teachers relied on their students' primary language in their teaching; they viewed bilingualism as a predictor of social mobility.

## **2.5 BORDER PEDAGOGIES**

### **2.5.1 Bilingualism in the Borderlands**

Border pedagogy is a practice that enables classroom teachers and students to view education as a political, social, and cultural enterprise (Giroux, 2005). For the author, the concept of borders provides a referent for understanding the mingling or clashing of multiple cultures, languages, literacies, histories, sexualities, and identities. Giroux (2005) discusses three

components of border pedagogy: 1) students and educators understand the boundaries of their knowledge and they can move across cultural borders 2) students learn to cross borders and to redefine them 3) students must create a new lens to examine the language and institutions of power and how they impact social relations. Romo, (2005) studied the Tijuana-San Diego border region and argues that border pedagogy engages students in different cultural codes, experiences, and languages that help them construct their own narratives and histories and improve democracy. Jiménez and colleagues (2009) use the term transnational literacies to refer to the written language practices of people who are involved in activities that span national boundaries. Scholars have theorized the literacy practices of bilingual border-crossing students, focusing on the U.S.-Mexico border region. Some of the authors who have engaged in this kind of research include Relaño Pastor (2007) who helped pioneer the work on *transfronterizos* in the border region of San Diego and Tijuana to examine the dynamics of students who constantly travel across the border. Furthermore, focusing on the dynamics of El Paso-Juarez border-crossing, De la Piedra & Araujo, (2012) have explored *transfronterizo* literacies, or the literacy practices that youth learn across the border and outside of school context, yet use for academic purposes.

The U.S.-Mexico border region, *la frontera*; is a unique context since El Paso is interdependent with Ciudad Juarez with more than 24 million people crossing the border every year into El Paso for school, work, shopping (Staudt, 2008). The geopolitical border between Mexico and the United States represents the blending of languages, cultures, communities, and countries. Romo & Chavez (2006) carried out a study with pre-service teachers who had gained a border pedagogy knowledge base, therefore, they began to consider curriculum in sociopolitical terms and to see complexities of identity, including class, national origin, language, race, and culture in a border region. When border pedagogy educators reflected on their experiences and knowledge base, they appeared to develop dispositions that support a strong sense of personal identity as teachers, learners, family members, and community members. Pre-service teachers realized their own identities as members of a team or learning community and as border

pedagogy educators, and their goals were to adapt the curriculum to students, use nonstandard resources to teaching and learning, and apply life experiences to classroom learning (Romo & Chavez, 2006).

Garza (2007) writes about her experiences as an educator and professor due to her participation in Border Pedagogy events. The Border Pedagogy Biliteracy Institute (Cline and Necochea, 2002) explores education within the U.S.-Mexico region, focusing on the San Diego-Tijuana border area; this project provides a platform for round table conversations regarding the experiences of bi-national, bicultural, and bilingual teachers from both sides of the border. Garza's (2007) students as pre-service Latino students understood that their life experience, including knowledge of the Latino culture and Spanish proficiency in the border region was a valuable resource, an advantage for teaching in local schools. For students of color, particularly Latino students, the Border Pedagogy events valued, extended, and applied their knowledge.

Reyes and Garza (2005) found that teachers on both sides of the U.S.-Mexican border had mutual concerns because they understood that they lived and taught in a unique region. Both groups of teachers had similar goals but implemented different methods. The teachers from Tijuana felt that Mexico's curriculum needed to integrate social values and multilingual skills. The San Diego teachers' concerns included heritage development, cultural literacy, and language proficiency. As educators tried to understand language issues, societal expectations, and the impact of biculturalism, their dispositions had a profound effect on students, their families, communities, and schools (Reyes and Garza, 2005). Cline and Necochea (2006) conducted research with forty teachers to investigate the teacher dispositions necessary to effectively educate students in borderland communities due to the changing demographics in schools. The teachers became co researchers in developing the process that was used to create theory. The findings pinpointed five main characteristics which are necessary to become an effective teacher in borderland schools: open-mindedness and flexibility, passion for borderland education, ongoing professional development, being culturally sensitive, and having a pluralistic language

orientation. These findings can inform teacher preparation programs to design courses where teacher candidates obtain the skills needed to teach in the borderlands.

With a focus on bilingual educators, Necochea and Cline (2008) write about The Border Pedagogy Café which brings together educators from both sides of the Tijuana-San Diego border to engage them in conversations about ideas that might result in border pedagogical practices and theories. With this initiative, the authors have created a safe zone where the identities, histories, cultures, and experiences from many educators come together resulting in some type of *caldo*, with a mixture of ingredients which make it rich in flavor and aroma. Flores et al. (2011) found that successful practices for bilingual teachers included: using the native language and culture of the students, setting clear goals for lessons, communicating directions clearly, pacing instruction, monitoring student progress, and providing immediate feedback; Some areas that positively affected a teacher's ability to teach bilingual students were experience, traveling abroad, learning a second language, and professional development.

### **2.5.2 Transnational and *transfronterizo* literacies**

Relaño Pastor (2007) analyzes how *transfronterizo* students who cross the Tijuana-San Diego border to attend schools in San Diego construct their identities in everyday interactions with Mexican and Anglo students. The fluidity of languages and cultural milieus in which students are involved every day highlight the influence of border crossing experiences in the construction of identity. The author discusses how *Tijuanense* border-crossing identity escapes exclusive allegiance with either a Mexican or Mexican American identity. Moreover, distance from Anglo social groups is based on language while resistance to be ascribed a specific Mexican identity has to do with Spanish and English proficiency, social class, citizenship, and national origin. *Transfronterizos* find ways to destabilize the power of the border when they resist the questioning of their linguistic and national identity and they empower themselves with the accumulated cultural capital they accumulate across Mexico and the United States, bilingual



skills allow students to navigate smoothly between both countries (Araujo & de la Piedra, 2012; Relaño Pastor, 2007; Smith & Murillo, 2012).

Ochoa, Gonzalez, & Valdez-Gardea (2008) conducted case studies of women living on the U.S.-Mexico border to examine the border spaces, the “in-between” spaces between global and cultural narratives that mediate education. Women in the study were caught in a contact zone, geographically, politically, economically, and metaphorically; such conditions contribute to the subordination and undereducation of women. O’Leary et al. (2008) argue that borderland communities are complex and pedagogically, educators can create contact zones students can be invited to a world with concrete motivating activities which are connected to the social context. The borderlands provide a setting for the negotiation of cultural differences.

Kazanjian (2011) argues that border pedagogy is a useful tool to help students understand their bicultural histories and experiences. The culture of the border reflects ethnic, political, social, and cultural collisions between two nations. Educators should assert that cultural and identity differences are part of learning in border pedagogy. The process of border crossing is an act of cultural understanding and intellectual growth. One develops a new and identity just by living in a political and cultural hotspot. The borderlands provide a setting for the negotiation of cultures where educators should emphasize that cultural and identity differences are part of learning in border pedagogy (Kazanjian 2011; O’Leary et al., 2008).

After studying students who move across borders, De la Piedra & Araujo (2012) and Jiménez, Smith & Teague (2009) explain that children in upper elementary levels and high school adolescents who are English language learners in the U.S. have a wide repertoire of literacy practices (e. g., transnational, *transfronterizo*, digital) on which they rely on to adapt to new learning environments while at the same time strengthening ties with their countries of origin. Jiménez et al. (2009) believe that “embracing and implementing transnational and community literacies is one way for teachers to begin to build productive relationships with students who are English-language learners” (pg. 16). The term transnational literacies is used to refer to the

written language practices of people who are involved in activities that span national boundaries (De la Piedra & Araujo; Jiménez et al. 2009).

*Transfronterizo* literacies (De la Piedra & Araujo) are the literacy practices that youth learn across the border and outside of school context yet are used for academic purposes in the context of U.S. schooling in a dual language program in the border city of El Paso. The inclusion of transnational and community literacies in schools makes it possible for teachers to better understand their students and build on students' prior, moreover, this approach can help students from all backgrounds learn about their communities and ELLs can become more engaged in language, literacy, and content area learning (De la Piedra & Araujo, 2012; Jiménez et al., 2009).

Teachers can explore with their students diverse forms of literacy and incorporate transnational and community literacies in the classroom by creating thematic units and exploring their students' communities with the purpose of supplementing traditional, school-based literacies (Jiménez et al., 2009). Instruction that acknowledges and meaningfully incorporates transnational, transfronterizo and digital literacies (De la Piedra & Araujo; Jiménez et al. 2009) is a beneficial pedagogical approach because it can help teachers better understand all students, specifically English Language Learners' identity, and create positive rapport between teachers and students and among peers whom may come from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Smith & Murillo (2012) examined the financial and religious literacies practiced in bilingual households along the Texas-Mexico border; they refer to transfronterizo literacies as hybrid forms and cross-border practices of reading and writing. The authors analyzed language, literacy, and education in border colonias and some findings indicated that children learn through Spanish and biliteracy is a form of human capital; Biliteracy is the practice of producing and interpreting texts in Spanish and English, a key construct for understanding human capital and education at the border. The qualitative study was conducted in border colonias in southeast and west Texas, in El Paso and the Rio Grande Valley. Colonia residents actively engaged in numeracy and literacy practices, therefore, creating highly bilingual and biliterate environments.

Conceiving of the U.S.-Mexico borderland region as fertile ground for border pedagogies, now we move on to consider how teachers get trained to teach in English-Spanish dual language programs which are suitable for border contexts.

## **2.6 DUAL LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

### **2.6.1 Teacher Preparation for Bilingual-certified Teachers**

In *Teacher preparation for bilingual student populations: Educar para transformar* Flores, Hernandez Sheets and Riojas Clark, (2011) seek to facilitate *aspirantes'* (teacher candidates) learning in bilingual teacher preparation programs. The authors provide a framework influenced by Freire's (1986) critical view of teaching and learning to encourage teacher educators to develop coursework, field experiences, and pedagogy that authentically prepares *aspirantes* who come from diverse ethnic, linguistic, socioeconomic, and cultural backgrounds to promote the academic achievement of bilingual learners. Bilingual education teacher candidates must understand the power relations that exist between schooling and *educación* and they must have cultural competency, positive teaching efficacy, epistemological knowledge, and bilingual/bicultural transformative pedagogical skills.

Bilingual teachers must engage in a journey of critical reflection, some suggestions include: providing candidates with tools for identity exploration, challenging *aspirantes'* thinking and beliefs through self-exploration, expanding *aspirantes'* multiple identities, engaging them in self-reflections through discussions, and using life histories (Flores et al., 2011). Approaches to diversify the teaching force include recruiting, preparing, and retaining prospective teachers of color, for that reason, higher education institutions must reexamine their methods for training minority teacher candidates; universities must acknowledge that the preparation of teachers requires retrospection (Flores, Clark, Claeys, & Villareal, 2007; Villegas & Davis, 2007).

Nieto (2003) and Villegas & Davis (2007) suggest that teacher education programs need to focus on changing teachers' attitudes toward children from linguistically and culturally diverse

backgrounds through meaningful experience with such children; elementary school pre-service candidates should have the opportunity to observe and practice teaching. To ensure that teachers' biases do not negatively affect students' academic work, ongoing professional development is needed and it is essential that teachers learn how to interact fairly and consistently with all students; the environment for children at school should consider their social experiences and school policies should enable teachers to create nurturing classroom environments conducive to academic learning (Gallant & Moore, 2008; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988).

When the teachers have access to quality comprehensive teacher preparation programs and the instructional resources that provide them with a repertoire of pedagogical tools and innovations, they will be in a position to better serve bilingual children and support bilingual education. Once the educational system truly takes into consideration the real needs of its communities including students, teachers and families, this would strengthen how children are being educated. An environment conducive to learning would be having elementary schools full of teachers well prepared who support bilingual education. In this scenario, the most benefited group would be the student population because they would increase their self-esteem by embracing their cultural heritage; language would be learned and appreciated at home, at school, and in their community at large.

Teacher preparation programs are designed to provide the tools that allow pre-service teachers to become educators, that is, to be able to plan, carry out, and evaluate instructional activities. The process of learning to teach involves learning strategies which allow students to build knowledge at every different level of their educational journey. Teacher preparation programs have the responsibility to create the learning opportunities for bilingual teacher candidates from different ethnic, linguistic, and economic groups to learn to teach by offering and requiring relevant coursework and field experiences that develop pedagogy skills.

### **2.6.2 Dual Language Programs**

Dual language is a strong form of bilingual education which has emerged in the United States evolving from one Florida school implementing the program in the 1960's to a movement that currently has educational and political support (Baker, 2006; Collier & Thomas, 2005). Two-way bilingual education is a way of providing an enriching experience to students who receive instruction and develop two languages. Children who participate in this maintenance program have the goal of developing proficiency in their native language while learning a second language; both languages hold a prestigious status. The objectives of implementing the program are to produce bilingual, biliterate and multicultural children, who develop critical-thinking skills and demonstrate high academic achievement (Baker, 2006; Ramos, 2007; Alanis & Rodriguez, 2008; Palmer, 2007). Smith, Arnot-Hopffer, Carmichael, et al (2002) conducted a study in a bilingual magnet school in Arizona, where educators embraced dual language education because they deemed it suitable for meeting the cognitive and linguistic needs of a diverse student population. Fostering bilingualism and biliteracy development in students allows them to have a strong foundation for academic growth.

One very specific set of skills is required of bilingual teachers who implement dual language programs. Collier and Thomas (2005) elucidate that dual language programs call for teachers who are highly bilingual and bicultural as well. In addition, since one of the goals of dual immersion programs is for students to show high academic achievement, having highly qualified teachers is a must because they serve as role models of bilingualism. Teachers need to have the time to plan individually and in groups in order to exchange ideas and cooperate in the planning of imaginative and effective lessons to implement with the students; sharing resources and teaming up emerge from the planning process which makes use of the talents each teacher brings to school (Collier and Thomas, 2005).

Effective bilingual teachers are able to provide students with learning activities which are creative and meant to develop skills in two languages. High quality materials must be available in both languages being taught so students can perceive both languages as having an

advantageous status. In dual language programs, languages are separated for instruction and if materials are available in English and Spanish it is important to become aware of the quality of the translations, to expose students to quality children's literature in the two languages. Adelman Reyes (2007) emphasizes that the separation of languages for instructional purposes in a two-way bilingual immersion classroom not only promotes competence in two languages but also signals the appropriate language for classroom talk. In a dual language setting, children are not reprimanded for using a different language than the one the teacher is using, although teachers always responded to them in the appropriate language for the classroom (Adelman Reyes, 2007; Volk & Angelova, 2007). Encouraging the children to speak Spanish is complicated because some children internalize negative attitude towards Spanish and towards bilingualism, regardless of their teacher's efforts (Adelman Reyes, 2007). Encouraging school visits and presentations by bilingual elders, parents and family members of newly immigrated students, creates Spanish language learning opportunities for all students (Smith et al., 2002).

Montague (2005) states that throughout South Texas and much of the southwest, the two languages of instruction in dual language programs are English and Spanish. Some of the schools from the local educational system serve the needs of a bilingual population by implementing bilingual programs such as dual language which reflects the importance of being proficient in both English and Spanish. Dual language schools aspire to have a balanced combination of children from two different language backgrounds (Baker, 2006). Reyes (2006) expresses "...if children continue to have access to and opportunities to function in both languages and writing systems, they will be more likely to maintain and continue to develop their bilingualism and biliteracy..." (p. 289). Effective pedagogy to develop biliteracy in bilingual students requires culturally sensitive instructional strategies which consist of: language inputs, instructional inputs, literacy outputs, academic literacy, and affective support (Flores et al., 2011). Teachers, administrators, and parents can create this essential support system and provide such desirable opportunities. Bilinguals have the potential to transfer reading skills across languages, however, the two languages must be written in the same system. For example, alphabetic languages

include English and Spanish and research indicates that skills are transferable in these two languages (Bialystok, Luk, & Kwan, 2005; Culatta, Reese, & Setzer, 2006).

### **2.6.3 Dual Language Pedagogies**

Dual language programs were created to provide cultural enrichment and literacy instruction to English-speaking and Spanish-speaking children and to provide an environment where children can transfer language skills across Spanish and English (Culatta, Reese, & Setzer, 2006). When children are allowed to participate in hands-on activities and cooperate in groups the setting is non-threatening and they are naturally inclined to take risks in the second language, occasionally without even noticing. In other instances, students try to use their second language to communicate with the members of their small groups. In one study, some students who were proficient in English and Spanish would take the role of translators or language brokers (Baker, 2006) when they were interacting in cooperative groups or in the whole group setting as well. In a dual immersion program the teacher must offer the children the opportunity to develop strong academic oriented identities (Palmer, 2007).

The program provides an environment that allows students to acquire a second language and learn about another culture without giving up their individual identities. Alanis & Rodriguez, (2008) view bilingualism as cognitively and socially beneficial both for students learning English and for those who are English dominant. Immersion education supports the idea that the earlier the language is taught the better; therefore the optimal grades to enter the program are kindergarten or first grade (Baker, 2006; Collier & Thomas, 2005). It is imperative for any bilingual program to integrate children and to assist them to develop tools to tackle inequities (Palmer, 2007). Parents who enroll their children in the dual language program make a long term commitment to provide enough time for children to develop language skills in two languages.

Two-way immersion programs in the United States combine elements from the Canadian immersion and maintenance bilingual education (Peregoy & Boyle, 2008). The characteristics of dual language education are several: it's an enrichment program, there should be a separation of

the two languages, and the focus of the academic curriculum consists of lessons which are meaningful, complex and age-appropriate (Collier & Thomas, 2005). Biliteracy development is given significant consideration in dual language instruction. When students have plenty opportunities to engage with literature and write for authentic purposes, they gradually become biliterate starting in the early grades.

Two-way programs separate the use of the two languages; in this case both English and Spanish develop. Palmer (2007) states that dual immersion programs typically divide their days or weeks between the two languages of instruction, expecting all students to interact in only one language at a time. A pairing of teachers facilitates the separation of languages. For the dual language sections, usually one teacher instructs in Spanish and another one in English instruction, they both provide instruction to the same group of students. Instruction in a dual language school will try to maintain boundaries between the languages and it is essential to plan a careful distribution of time to develop bilingualism and biliteracy (Baker, 2006). This notion of language separation in dual language programs has been challenged recently by García's (2011) research on translanguageing or micro-alternation of languages; the author suggests that bilingual educators must learn to build on translanguageing to meaningfully educate and draw on the entire linguistic repertoire of all students. Dual language teachers support their groups socioculturally through a bilingual/bicultural curriculum, providing a context for students to develop cognitively, linguistically, and academically through both languages for at least six elementary school years (Collier & Thomas, 2009).

In this section, the focus was on a specific bilingual model, Spanish-English dual language programs, where the goals include for students to gradually become bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural. Next, the conclusion articulates why teachers can draw on their literacy practices, cultural resources and lived experiences to create a myriad of identity kits as bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural beings who teach in DL settings in the U.S.-Mexico frontera.

Adopting a sociocultural lens to examine the identity formation and pedagogical practices of DL Latina bilingual teachers, this proposed study draws from diverse bodies of literature,



including theories of literacy (NLG, 1996; Street, 1984) and biliteracy (Hornberger, 2004), and to explore teachers' bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism in the context of the U.S.-Mexico border region. Bilingual Latina teachers draw on their multiple identities to perform their roles as teachers in their communities. Their dynamic bilingual repertoires come from their household's resources, schooling experiences, border communities, and their genuine personal interest in maintaining and passing on their language and culture to children who are their students. Teachers are viewed as cultural workers who make the world a better place and by daring to teach with competence, loyalty, clarity, and perseverance (Freire, 1998).

DL teachers become part of the educational system in the U.S. with rich linguistic repertoires and a wealth of literacy practices based on their cultural traditions. Exploring the wealth of knowledge found in the language backgrounds, literacy practices, and cultural resources of DL teachers is necessary to understand their pedagogical practices. It is significant to reiterate that language use and literacy development is not limited to what happens in classrooms, because this is the traditional view of literacy; instead literacy goes beyond to include the ways in which people use reading and writing in a sociocultural context (Bartlett et al., 2011; Rockhill, 1993). Teachers' complex histories need to be explored, especially when embedded in a bilingual teaching context in a border region which includes Spanish and English.

For many teachers, social justice is the motivating factor underlying their choice to teach; a growing awareness of the unequal treatment received by their students' families and communities explains the commitment of teachers (Nieto, 2003). This literature review addressed bilingual educators' social and linguistic identities, literacy practices, and border pedagogies while considering the historical and cultural legacies of bilingual communities. Gutierrez and Rogoff (2003) argue that people's linguistic and cultural-historical repertoires develop as they engage in activities where they observe and participate in cultural practices. King (1994) argues that language is at the core of cultural practices; language as the practice of a particular group is an intrinsic part of identity.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

This chapter explains the research design which was fundamental to the study since this is the plan I followed in order to answer my overarching research question: What are the identities and pedagogical practices of female Latina K-2 dual language teachers along the U.S.-Mexico *frontera*? Qualitative methods were the best approach to gather rich data in order to find answers to my research question. In order to research literacy as social practice, many have advocated an ethnographic perspective (Heath & Street, 2008). Conducting an ethnographic study that draws on narrative methods allowed me to gain an insider perspective of how teachers' viewed themselves and how they engaged in teaching and learning. In this chapter I elaborate on data collection procedures and provide details about data analysis as well. In this section I also describe the participants and the setting where the study was conducted. Additionally, my subjectivity as a researcher is discussed. Finally, the limitations and ethical issues related to the study are also addressed.

### **3.1 THE PURPOSE OF ETHNOGRAPHY FOR LITERACY RESEARCH**

The research design of my study is ethnography; this tradition is appropriate to examine how identity and language practices are intertwined. In this study I focus on exploring the linguistic identities of Mexican-origin Latina DL teachers and how these linguistic profiles influence language use during pedagogical practice. Ethnographic work (Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanic, 2000; Heath, 1983; Street & Hornberger, 2007) focuses on the everyday meanings and uses of literacy in specific cultural contexts. Heath and Street (2008) conceive of ethnography as a recursive process of gathering data from observations based on the researchers' hunches and curiosity and then connecting data to existing theories and concepts from the literature. Researchers are encouraged to enter the field open to learning and with reflexivity, keeping in mind the limitations one brings as the main research tool, including age, gender, size, phenotype, cultural identities and life experiences.

According to ethnographers (Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto, & Shuart-Faris, 2005; Heath & Street, 2008) in language and literacy studies, ethnography engages the researcher in a recursive process of observing, participating, listening, asking, and reflecting; the authors point out that in sites of formal schooling, ethnographers most often choose classrooms as their focus. In classroom settings, the instruction by a teacher comes primarily through oral language use with use of artifacts, such as textbooks, worksheets, whiteboards, and tests.

Denzin & Lincoln (2005) explain that work in ethnography has the purpose of doing an analysis of collective social action which means to analyze “how society members accomplish joint activity through language and other practical activities as well as how they align their activities through shared cultural resources” (p. 822). Furthermore, in regards to analysis and representation, researchers must endorse critical reflection of how social worlds are reconstructed paying attention to culture, action, text production and reception.

Heath and Street (2008) write “Only by knowing as much as possible ahead of time and then walking as softly and unobtrusively as possible can ethnographers come to understand the dynamism and inertia at work simultaneously in a social system” (p. 66). Furthermore, these scholars define reflexivity as a process by which ethnographers reveal their self-perceptions, methodological setbacks, and mental states; reflexivity allows ethnographers to see their research within historical and structural constraints that result from asymmetrical power distributions.

### **3.2 RESEARCHER ROLES IN ETHNOGRAPHY**

Eisenhart (2001) writes in *Educational Ethnography Past, Present, and Future: Ideas to Think With* that researchers need to be clear about their agendas and commitments while acknowledging teachers’, students’, and parents’ thoughts and feelings in order to have an impact on schools and education. Jacobs-Huey (2002) discusses positionality, voice, and accountability among “native” anthropologists; these anthropologists and social scientists conduct fieldwork in their own communities. Even when working with their own communities they deconstruct their identities due to the insider/outsider roles they take on as they conduct

research, insiders as community members and outsiders as researchers. Native scholars negotiate and experience different positionalities based on their ethnic, linguistic, and educational backgrounds, and reflexivity allows these researchers to be sensitive to socially constructed knowledge.

Villenas (1996), author of *The Colonizer/Colonized Chicana Ethnographer: Identity, Marginalization, and Co-optation in the Field*, is a “native” ethnographer who theorizes about her multiple identities as a researcher. She writes about her positionality as both insider and outsider; one role is that of a researcher, a highly educated privileged woman who is trained to write about Latino communities. On the other hand, as a Chicana she is part of the Latino community which is not the dominant culture. While conducting life history research with Latina immigrant mothers, this researcher had to reflect on her own lived experiences as a Chicana daughter, mother, wife, and student while deconstructing the community’s discourses.

### **3.3 LIFE HISTORIES/NARRATIVE ANALYSIS**

Dyson and Genishi (2005) articulate that in language and literacy studies in the interpretive tradition, researchers are interested in how teaching and learning happen through social participation. Moreover, many contextual actors matter in language use, among them the purpose for communicating, the language being used, and the demographic qualities of participants including age, gender, culture, and social class. Narrative analysis will be embedded in my approach since I am very interested in highlighting the life histories of my participants and how their stories shape language use in the classroom during instruction. Merriam (2002) and Dhunpath (2000) describe narrative research as a form of qualitative research, as it encompasses first-person accounts of experience told in story form.

According to Cresswell, (2007) narrative research includes an interpretation of life history and cultural issues may be intertwined in the study as well, since data collection consists of conversations or stories: the reconstruction of life experiences. Events are always presented in their context, which refers to the physical, sociocultural, and interpersonal environment and thus

includes significant other such as parents, mentors, colleagues, and peers because the context shapes an educator's practice (Dhunpath, 2000). In addition, the researcher reflects on his or her own experiences and acknowledges that the study was his or her interpretation of the meaning of the informant's life. Overall, constructing a study out of stories and epiphanies of special events, situating them within a broader context, and bringing out the presence of the author in the study reveal central elements of narrative research (Cresswell, 2007).

By participating in qualitative interviews where participants shared their life stories and "epiphanies" (Cresswell, 2007), practitioners can reflect on their experiences on the process of being dual language teachers. In-depth interviews can be effective and useful, especially when they develop and build on trust, because they can be a source of deep information from the informant such as the individual's lived experiences, values and decisions, occupational ideology, cultural knowledge, and perspectives; the interviewer is an interpreter of what is heard in the research context and in some sense the informant could be seen as a kind of teacher while the interviewer would be the student interested in learning (Fontana & Frey, 2003; Johnson, 2006).

Fennell (2008) defines life history research as conducting studies on social issues by focusing on life histories to link peoples' experiences to the historical context. The author used life history research methodology in a qualitative study which integrated in-depth semi-structured interviews and full days of observations, field notes, and review of relevant documents such as school newsletters and memos. Gouthro (2004) and Dhunpath (2000) used life history methodology, which entails detailed interviews, to research teacher biographies because doing work in the field of narrative research makes contributions to educational research. Focusing on the significance of the individual experience, Dhunpath states "The critical focus for Life History work is to locate the teacher's own life history alongside a broader contextual analysis" (p. 549). The life history approach is an authentic way of understanding a person's motives and practices since a person can tell their story from their unique perspective (Gouthro, 2004). My study will draw on life history by interviewing DL teachers about the conditions and contexts where they

became bilingual and biliterate and by exploring their path into teacher education and how that preparation led to their current teaching experience which is heavily influenced by their linguistic histories.

### **3.4 RESEARCH SETTING AND PARTICIPANTS**

#### **3.4.1 Community/School District**

This study took place among grade K-2 dual language teachers in a public school district in the county of El Paso, Texas where I had previously worked as DL teacher during four years; however, the participants are not former colleagues of mine. This local school district is small, consisting of five elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school; some of these schools are located in semi-rural areas. The teachers in this study work in the smallest elementary K-5 school, La Escuelita (all names are pseudonyms), where there is one strand of the dual language program model. This school district is located in a *colonia*, which implies its location on the outskirts of town, with a high level of poverty, and a high presence of immigrants, although the majority of the children are U.S. citizens. The U.S. Census Bureau (2013) provides the following demographic data about *Desierto Esperanza* (pseudonym), the small city in Texas where I conducted my research: the population is 6,321 persons, 90.8% of these persons are of Latina/o origin; Furthermore, 80% of the population speaks a language other than English at home, mostly Spanish. The persons who are living below the poverty level comprise 24% of the community.

The border or *la frontera* (Staudt, 2008) between the United States and Mexico extends from nearly 2,000 miles, or 3,200 kilometers. On the U.S. side, Texas shares the largest stretch for that border, with 868 miles between El Paso and Brownsville, the Rio Grande-Río Bravo marking the boundary between the two countries (Ward, 1999). *Colonias* are communities located in the southwestern states along the U.S.-Mexico border where poverty, marginalization, and underdevelopment are present. *Colonia* residents face the need for public health care

facilities, social and physical infrastructure, and employment opportunities. Border *colonias* are unplanned communities along the U.S.-Mexico border, are among the fastest growing and poorest communities in the U.S. (Martínez, 2010; Núñez-Mchiri 2012). *Colonias* have both rural and urban characteristics, depending on their history, size, population, location, and community development trajectories; some *colonias* date back to the 1800s when the border was under negotiation (Núñez, 2006). There are between 1,400-2,400 *colonia* communities in Texas (Guisti, 2010).

*Colonias* represent an example of inequality in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands. The social and geographical distance of *colonias* contributes to the marginalization of *colonia* families and households; *Colonias* provide temporary and permanent housing for residents and transnational sojourners crossing the U.S.-Mexico (Núñez & Klamming, 2010; Núñez-Mchiri, 2012). The majority of households in *colonias* are of Mexican ancestry and homes in *colonias* are built according to a family's needs and economic possibilities; therefore, standardized floor plans are rarely followed. Housing ranges from mobile homes, locally known as *trailas*, site-built homes, and manufactured homes (Núñez-Mchiri 2012).

Núñez and Klamming (2010) discuss how *colonias* are low-income communities where rapid urbanization results in settlements which display both rural and urban characteristics, there is a presence of immigrants and citizens, while authorized and unauthorized development takes place. *Colonias* house thousands of working-class residents; people who live in *colonias* play the following roles: laborers, U.S. war veterans, entrepreneurs, senior citizens, school children, clients, patients, and consumers (Núñez-Mchiri, 2009). The Mexican border region has a more educated work force than the interior of Mexico. In Texas, while high school completion and educational attainment rates are much higher than in Mexico, they are also much lower than the

U.S. average (Ward, 1999). Border *colonias* are unplanned and underdeveloped transnational communities on the U.S.-Mexico border. In Texas, *colonias* are home to a growing number of Spanish-speaking and bilingual children and families of Mexican origin. These communities are ethnically and linguistically homogenous, and economically marginalized. Border *colonias* are understudied communities, which can be optimal sites for conducting literacy research (Smith & Valenzuela, 2012). Research in *colonias* can help us understand how literacy is understood and practiced by those who have been educated in two distinct education systems (Smith, Murillo, & Jiménez, 2009).

Table 3.1 Desierto Esperanza Demographics

<b>Community Demographic Info (US Census Bureau, 2010)</b>	<b>Carrizo</b>	<b>Texas</b>	<b>USA</b>
Hispanic/Latino	90.8%	38.1%	16.7%
Language other than English spoken at home	80%	34.4%	20.3%
Persons below poverty level	24%	17%	14.3%

There is no school bus service available at La Escuelita, except for one bus which only transports children with physical disabilities. It is a walking distance campus, meaning that the distance between the school and students' households is not further than two miles away. There are some portables next to the school where free GED classes have been offered to the parents of the students for the past seven years, since the current principal became an administrator at that campus; in total, about 85 parents have successfully taken these GED classes. In addition, one community outreach initiative from the local university is the Mother-Daughter program. This program seeks to mentor young female students from this school district. The process for parents to become volunteers of the district includes a background check, which can be potentially complicated in the case parents do not have their legal documentation to reside in the U.S.; additionally, a Tuberculosis (TB) test is required and there is a cost to be covered. Regarding volunteers, I only observed one during the length of my study, a middle-aged Anglo woman who volunteered for many hours. She got recognized at the Christmas luncheon because that fall



semester she had helped to decorate the cafeteria stage for the Christmas program and she put up the Christmas tree, in addition to having volunteered with different teachers.

Table 3.2 School District Student Demographics

School District Student Population 2012-2013 (2012-2013 TEA School District Summary)	Percentage
Hispanic/Latino ethnicity	94%
Enrolled in Bilingual education	22%
Enrolled in ESL	7.5%
At-risk	59%
Economically disadvantaged	74%
English language learner (ELL)	27%
Immigrant	2%
Migrant	5%

Table 3.3 School District Teacher Demographics

School District Teacher Ethnicity 2012-2013 (2012-2013 TEA School District Summary)	Percentage
Hispanic/Latino	73%
Asian	1%
Black/African American	1%
White	24%
Other	1%

The student population at the school district level was 94% Latina/o, while La Escuelita had an even higher Latina/o population of 99%; District wide, economically disadvantaged students comprised 74% while all the students attending La Escuelita qualified to receive free meals at school during breakfast and lunch. The teachers' ethnicity amongst the school district represented a majority of Latinas/os (73%) while 24% of the teachers were White, these demographics were representative of La Escuelita faculty as well.

### 3.5 LA ESCUELITA

At the time of the study, the student population at La Escuelita consisted of 430 students, and all students qualified for free lunch. There was an anti-bullying program which was in the

third year of implementation in this school district; it was called No Place for Hate and students completed three anti-bullying projects throughout the year. There was also a book of the month initiative led by the counselor; selected books were focused on reinforcing anti-bullying attitudes and behaviors. Everybody in the school read the same book and students wrote a reflection piece, and some of the best ones were selected by the principal to be displayed at the main entrance hallway; entries were displayed in both English and Spanish, although the books were always written in English. Journal writing was also encouraged schoolwide by having students constantly write and illustrate journal entries which were randomly picked up once a month by the principal. All the teachers from the campus got together at the library every to rate these journals based on a rubric and provide feedback.

The teachers were expected to visit the library with their classes at least once every two weeks, and the students were to use computer-based literacy program or some kind of relevant research, especially upper grades. I-Station was a computer-based reading program available in both English and Spanish that was implemented schoolwide, and throughout the district as well. This was part of the Student Success Initiative and the district paid for the lower grades to have access to this reading program, while the state paid for students in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades to access the I-Station program. Pre-K students were to use I-Station once a week, while grades K-2 were to use it every day, and upper grades 3-5 twice a week. Some schoolwide meeting focused on monitoring the use and results of I-Station software. Another activity that happened at the district level was a STAAR rally which sought to motivate students about the STAAR test; the students got ice cream and participated in fun outside activities with their teachers. During Teacher Appreciation Week in May, teachers got small favors throughout the week and a buffet luncheon to conclude the week. The school also hosted a parent night dinner once a year.

La Escuelita had a university of the month initiative to encourage college and career awareness. Field trips were organized once per semester and they needed to be justified as career awareness activities or access to fine arts events. For example, on one of the field trips I took with the first grade classes, we visited Krispy Kreme Donuts and Peter Piper Pizza, while some

students from upper grade levels had gotten the opportunity to attend a symphony event. Since most field trips required paying for the entrance to places and events and given that the school is located within a low SES community, fundraising events were organized at the school to avoid asking parents to cover any field trip expenses. The school sponsored two festivals during the school year, a fall festival and a spring festival. Popcorn was also sold frequently on Fridays and these funds were used to purchase student incentives such as attendance and end-of-year awards. Next I share some of the things I observed during the Fall festival fundraising event at La Escuelita.

The fall festival was open to the community and a lot of people showed up; students had a half day of classes. When I arrived, the visitor parking was full, there were about 40 cars parked and then outside on the street I saw about another 40 cars, most license plates from Texas, and a few from New Mexico or Mexico. There were no visitor parking spaces available so I parked in the staff parking. When I first arrived at the school some parents were arriving as well, when parents are around I hear a lot of English and Spanish mixed together, but many parents speak Spanish. Most parents seem to be young Mexican Americans and some grandparents showed up as well. I went to the front office to sign in as usual and I approached the receptionist in Spanish today...I usually approach Rosa the receptionist in English and today that I spoke Spanish, although she is bilingual, she still replied in English. Then I said hi to Estrella, the attendance clerk, and we chatted for a bit. When the principal had introduced me to her, it was in Spanish and we've used that language since then. I signed in, but didn't have to leave my ID as usual. I went ahead and bought tickets. I walked into the cafeteria and heard loud music and saw many kids walking/running around, some kids were with their relatives, others by themselves... People had to pay with tickets (25 cents each) to participate in the activities. This festival has the purpose of raising funds for field trips per grade level. Candy and snacks and books were being sold by the reading specialists and each grade level had a different activity: face painting for Kinder; pumpkin decorating booth for 1<sup>st</sup> grade; cake walk for

2<sup>nd</sup> grade; a *brinca brinca*, and popcorn for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, selling colorful *cascarones* for 4<sup>th</sup> grade; and a haunted house for 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

Once inside the cafeteria, I spent most of the time painting my big pumpkin with the first grade teachers. I even got help from a first grade student to paint my big pumpkin and I drew a happy face on it; I also bought some candy as well. When I was at the pumpkin booth, I asked “¿los niños trajeron las calabazas?” and of the teachers replied “sí, para esto sí cooperan [los papás] si pides un pastel, una calabaza, pero hay uno que todavía no tiene útiles”

...When the festival was over I helped a student carry her big pumpkin, then I went to Cassandra’s [one of the participant teachers] classroom and helped to wash all the paint brushes and paint containers. Once the students went back to their classrooms, they had sack lunches; it was a ham and cheese sandwich, an orange, and milk. It seemed like most of the students didn’t like the sandwich, but they took it home. On my way out, I saw a second grade teacher and asked how the cake walk went and she told me it went well because 30 cakes had been donated, so a total of \$300 were made by the second grade teachers.

(Fieldnotes, Thursday, October 11, 2013 Fall Festival)

Regarding the growth of the student population at La Escuelita, every year about 50 pre-k students are enrolled, while about 60 students in 5<sup>th</sup> grade finish elementary school and move on to middle school, so the enrollment numbers are pretty steady. Once in a while, if deemed necessary based on student enrollment, teachers loop with their students, and it’s usually strong teachers who loop. For example, one of the study participants, Felicity, taught a self-contained kindergarten section in the year prior to the study and she looped during the study year to be the same students’ first grade TWSC teacher. The awards La Escuelita had recently received included NCEA in 2010 and 2011; and based on TEA standards, it was Recognized in 2010 and 2011, and Acceptable in 2012. In 2012, it was selected amongst five schools and it received national recognition by receiving a High Flying School award from NCLB in 2012.

### **3.6 RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS: THE TEACHERS**

The purposeful sample included seven participants who were selected because they were Mexican-origin Latinas, female, Spanish-English speakers, DL educators at the early elementary levels (K-2) in a small school district in the El Paso region. For each grade level, two teachers were partnered, meaning one teacher provided instruction in Spanish while another one taught in English, and one participating 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher provided instruction in both languages, since she looped with her former students. Due to increased amounts of kindergarten students the year of the study, 2013-2014, after the first six weeks of school, there was a need to open a self-contained kindergarten section; this new teacher was not included the study as I had already built rapport and began data collection with the other teachers. The grade level distribution is as follows: three kindergarten teachers, two first grade teachers, and two second grade teachers. The age of participants ranged approximately from 30-60 years, but the majority of them were in their late 30s. The teaching experience of the participants ranged from three to twenty-five years.

Out of the seven K-2 participating teachers, three had been hired by the current principal, two had been transferred from another campus, and two were already working at La Escuelita when the current principal took over the leadership of the school six years prior to the study. The teachers who teach in the DL program get a stipend for being certified as bilingual teachers; this stipend is added to the annual teacher salary and distributed as such. When new teachers are hired, whether they will be teaching in a DL setting or the regular mainstream curriculum, they all get the same training, which includes orientation about the school district, mentoring strategies. The ELPS (English Language Proficiency Standards) are also addressed and strategies for working with ELLs. Title III focuses mainly on training for new teachers. Professional development includes attending occasional conferences; while some training sessions are mandatory, teachers may request the staff development they want to attend according to their needs. The resources available to teachers included textbook sets and classroom libraries which were mostly sponsored by the funds earned from the book fair sales. Teachers are formally evaluated during 45 minutes by the principal or assistant principal in addition to a few short

walkthroughs that last between 5-7 minutes, where the administrators check to see if the DL partner teachers are teaching the same theme and concepts to figure out if they plan together; the teachers get a copy of what was observed in their classrooms. Formal evaluations were discussed between the teachers and administration, while walkthroughs were not.

### **3.7 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **3.7.1 Access to the Research Site**

From early on in my doctoral studies, I had decided I would conduct my dissertation research in the public school district which had given me the opportunity to do my student teaching and later become a 1<sup>st</sup> grade dual language teacher earlier in my career. This teaching assignment was a very good fit because I was interested in emergent bilingualism and biliteracy. My teaching experience in a dual language program during four years provided me with the opportunity to teach a self-contained section and I also taught the English component of the program. When the time came to decide on a research site, choosing the school took some reflection because I considered three options: going back to the school where I had done my student-teaching, going back to the school where I had taught, or choosing a different school within the same school district. I selected the third choice because I saw that it was the smallest elementary school in the school district located in a colonia, and this context would make the study even more interesting and meaningful. I found out the principal at this site (La Escuelita) was someone I had worked with ten years ago as a teacher. At the time I was a teacher, the principal was a lead teacher which meant she trained teachers throughout the district; for example, she had trained my grade level in Writer's Workshop.

In the spring semester of 2013 I requested a meeting with the potential participants and introduced myself as a former DL teacher and novice researcher. I began the process of building rapport by explaining that I had the intention of conducting my dissertation research at their school in the near future. According to Dyson and Genishi (2005), the work of "casing the joint" or gaining initial insights into the social organization of a research site happens in early visits to

sites themselves. I was visiting the K-2 DL classrooms regularly and informally observing and participating to give the teachers and myself the opportunity of getting to know each other and ultimately build trust, which was essential if I was to conduct my dissertation study at La Escuelita. During the spring semester of 2013 I kept a journal of my observations and highlights of informal conversations. Table 3.4 Data Management Process shows the sequence of the data management process, from gaining access to the research site to writing findings and implications.

Table 3.4 Data Management Process

Semester	Data collection/analysis overview
Spring 2013	Developed chapters 1, 2, and 3; Gained access to research site
Summer 2013	IRB request/approval from UTEP and participating school district
Fall 2013	Systematic classroom observations/conducted interviews with teachers/collected artifacts; transcribed interviews
Spring 2014	Data analysis and member checks; wrote findings about linguistic profiles and identities drawing mostly from interviews
Fall 2014	Data analysis and member checks; wrote findings about language use during pedagogical practice drawing mostly from observations
Spring 2015	Wrote conclusions and implications chapter; completed revisions

### 3.7.2 Interviews

In this study I used ethnographic methods in order to develop a clearer understanding of the linguistic identities and teaching experiences of DL educators in a borderland community where Spanish and English are spoken. The data collection methods for this study consisted of conducting in-depth interviews, doing observations, writing up fieldnotes, and collecting artifacts. One strong component of my research methodology was conducting interviews and I had spent the spring semester of 2013 getting to know the teachers partly because I was laying the foundation for having interviews that would provide rich data, and I felt this could only happen if the teachers had known me for a while and confianza had been developed to certain degree; I spent about 30 hours in the process gaining access to the research site. During the fall of 2013 at the beginning of the school year, and when I was ready to start collecting data

officially, I found out there had been some changes at La Escuelita and one teacher with whom I had already established rapport was moved to teach a monolingual section; as a result I met the second grade DL teacher who taught the Spanish component the same semester that I interviewed her and observed her classroom; not surprisingly, Marisol signed the IRB agreement as everybody else, except she decided not to be recorded when interviewed. However, since I waited about eight weeks before I began the interviews, this time provided me with opportunities to visit her classroom, talk to her, and establish rapport. By the time I began interviewing the teachers in October 2013, Marisol had changed her mind and kindly accepted for me to be recorded. Next, I present the fieldnotes I wrote the day I interviewed the only teacher who had not agreed to be recorded.

I went after school at 3pm to interview Marisol, the TWB 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher for the first time and when I got there all the teachers and the principal were at the library. Sure enough, I went to Marisol's classroom and it was locked. I took advantage of the empty hallways without teachers or students and took a lot of pictures from the work displayed out on the hallway, specifically focusing on the classes I'm observing. On my way out, I got really lucky because I ran into the principal when she was stepping out of the library. We said hi and I told her I was there to do an interview, but didn't expect to see all teachers busy in a meeting. The principal called Marisol and told her that if she wanted to do the interview instead of rating journals it was fine. I asked Marisol in Spanish if she was willing to have the interview that day or if I should come back, she kindly accepted to chat with me. We had the first interview in Spanish and although back in September, this teacher did not agree to be recorded, today after I explained that I record the interviews to be able to analyze them, she changed her mind and agreed to be recorded...

(Filednotes, Friday, November 1, 2013)

In regards to making arrangements to meet with the teachers to interview them I was very flexible in understanding their availability, worked around their schedules, and rescheduled as necessary. When we met for the interviews I asked about their day first and asked if it was okay



for me to record before I conducted each interview; all interviews were recorded. I welcomed any information they wanted to share during the interviews. In order for my participants to trust me enough to tell me the story of their lives, we needed to develop some kind of relationship, almost a friendship, so we could connect and have genuine dialogues. This kind of relationship was built by visiting the teachers in their classrooms, by talking informally to them, by helping them in their classrooms or with specific students, and by talking to them about my experience as a former teacher. It was very important to be respectful of what they did in their classroom, and to make them feel comfortable when I was there, by showing them that was there to learn and not to judge if they were doing something right or wrong. The individual interviewing allowed the practitioners to express their views in their own words.

Following Seidman's (2006) three-interview series as a guide, interview one was focused on the life history to establish the context of the participants' experience; interview two focused on the details of the teaching experience to allow participants to reconstruct the details of their experience within the context in which it occurs; interview three was about the reflection on the meaning of their teaching experience. The opening questions for each of the three interviews I conducted with each teacher are as follows: 1) Would you begin by telling me about your yourself in regards to where you were born, where you grew up, where you went to elementary school, middle school, and high school, and what languages you grew up with? 2) What kinds of things are DL teachers expected to be able to do? Would you describe the professional and personal expectations that are placed upon DL teachers by their employers and the community? 3) Please discuss your professional code of ethics and give examples of how you apply it in your career as a DL teacher. More specifically, the previously mentioned broad guiding questions were broken down to several questions which were explored during recorded and informal interviews. The first interview focused on establishing the context of the participants' linguistic backgrounds and teacher preparation; interview two focused on the details of the teaching experience to allow participants to describe the details of their experience as teachers within the

DL program model in which they work; the third interview was about the reflection on the meaning of being a DL teacher on the border region and highlights of their teaching experience.

The teachers selected the location where the interviews were to be conducted. I would give teachers a window of two weeks to schedule their interviews and they would agree on a date and time; however, several interviews were rescheduled. For example, if their children got sick, if they were absent, an unexpected meeting came up, or if they simply forgot, then we would reschedule the interviews. Every time I interviewed a teacher I wanted to share something to show that I appreciated their time and I would provide incentives in the form of teacher supplies. The interviews were recorded with the informants' consent for analysis purposes. Only one interview was done in a local coffee shop and the other 20 interviews were done in the participating teachers' classrooms; they found this option more convenient since they were already at school. Mostly interviews took place after school between 3pm to 4pm, when the students were gone, and occasionally I interviewed them during their planning period or "prep time." The teachers' planning periods were scheduled as follows: Kinder 8:45-9:30 am; 1<sup>st</sup> grade 10:00-10:45 am; and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade 1:15-2:00 pm. I conducted three in-depth semi-structured interviews with each teacher, resulting in a total of 21 interviews. I had originally planned to conduct interviews that lasted about two hours each; however, due to teachers' time constraints and availability due to professional and personal responsibilities, each interview averaged the duration of one hour and was substantiated with many informal interviews and conversations during my observations. The longest interviews lasted about one hour and a half while the shortest interviews lasted about 30 minutes since they were done during the teachers' "prep time" which is only 45 minutes long minus the time it took for the teachers to walk and pick up their students to the blackboard for P.E. As insiders, DL teachers expressed how their identities, including linguistic resources, were embedded in their pedagogical practice as educators serving a bilingual (Spanish-English) border community. Table 3.5 Teacher Interviews Fall 2013 represents when the interviews were conducted and in what language. The teachers decided what language they wanted to be interviewed in; however, for the third interview I did request to have

it in the language they didn't teach in or their less dominant language. Out of 21 interviews, 13 were conducted in English, seven in Spanish, and one was bilingual since I mostly asked in Spanish and the teacher preferred to answer some things in English and some in Spanish.

Table 3.5 Teacher Interviews Fall 2013

<b>Participating teacher</b>	<b>Interview date</b>	<b>Language</b>
	<i>1<sup>st</sup> interview</i>	
Andrea	11/6/13	Sp
Diana	10/29/13	Eng
Miranda	10/28/13	Eng
Cassandra	10/17/13	Eng
Felicity	10/23/13	Eng
Marisol	11/1/13	Sp
Marissa	10/24/13	Eng
	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> interview</i>	
Andrea	11/19/13	Eng
Diana	11/11/13	Eng
Miranda	12/9/13	Sp
Cassandra	11/22/13	Eng
Felicity	11/13/13	Eng
Marisol	11/20/13	Sp
Marissa	11/15/13	Eng
	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> interview</i>	
Andrea	12/12/13	Eng
Diana	12/18/13	Sp
Miranda	12/9/13	Eng

Cassandra	12/12/13	Bilingual
Felicity	12/11/13	Sp
Marisol	12/16/13	Eng
Marissa	12/13/13	Sp
<b>Total interviews</b>	<b>21</b>	

I transcribed the twenty-one interviews using software (Gear Player), and I translated interview and observational data from Spanish to English as needed. The electronic files containing transcribed life history interview and classroom observation data, along with interview audio files, were password protected.

### 3.7.3 Member Checking

Regarding the reporting of the results, I did member checks with the teachers as I wrote the two chapters which reported findings. The original plan was to share the transcriptions of the interviews with teachers; instead the focus was on looking at the parts of the interviews that contained data that was unique to a teacher, something that needed elaboration or clarification, or data that might have been sensitive in some way and that would eventually become published in a scholarly venue. When questions arose about my interpretation of what the participants said during the interviews, some dialogue took place to make sure I understood the message they were trying to convey. Merriam (2002) recommends that researchers allow participants to provide any clarification they deem necessary; doing member checks on the data is one valid and dependable way of engaging the informants so they can see what their interviews look like in writing, in other words, they can review the information they provided and reflect on their responses and even have the opportunity to make changes if needed

### 3.7.4 Participant Observation

*Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* written by Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) provides a detailed explanation of what an ethnographic researcher needs to know and what steps to follow once immersed in the field. As part of the ethnographic fieldwork, a researcher needs to develop

a system to record extensive observations and describe lived experiences while doing fieldwork. When describing places or events, the researcher's perceptions and their interpretation come into place and when writing fieldnotes, the researcher is going through the process of writing inscriptions of social life and social discourse. In Geertz' (1973) terms, the ethnographer inscribes social discourse because he or she writes it down. Doing ethnography means establishing rapport, selecting informants, transcribing texts, taking genealogies, mapping fields, keeping a diary. Emerson et al. (1995) agree that ethnographic fieldnotes and anthropological writings are interpretations of the researcher. Regarding participating, observing, and jotting notes, Emerson et al. emphasize that depending on the event that is taking place it may be appropriate or not to be openly taking notes about such event. In some instances it is better for the researcher to take mental notes of as many details as possible and take notes after the fact to avoid making the participants feel uncomfortable. In some instances writing down abbreviated words, short phrases or shorthand might be helpful for the researcher who can go back later to fill in the gaps to write full field notes. Sometimes taking notes is not a viable option because the researcher takes on a role of participant in activities happening in the setting; in this case, there will be no time to be writing fieldnotes.

When writing full fieldnotes, a time consuming process, researchers make many decisions regarding what to include and for what reasons. At this point, ethnographers write fieldnotes using thick description to be able to later read them as constructions because in many ways they create rather than simply record reality (Emerson et al., 1995). Emerson et al. address key issues the ethnographers should consider when collecting data through fieldnotes and when going back to such data to begin the analysis process by first coding themes, concepts, or ideas to later reflect on the meaning given to such words and action by the participants in a given context or community. Writing up fieldnotes (Emerson et al., 1995) is key when participating, observing, and jotting notes, "Field researchers note concrete details of everyday life which *show* rather than tell about people's behavior" (p. 32).

I visited the research site La Escuelita during 15 weeks during the fall of 2013. Given that I was observing seven different classrooms, on average I visited each classroom once a week throughout the semester. The length of my stays varied depending on the school's or teachers' activities, but for the most part my visits lasted between 3-4 hours divided in a couple of classrooms; this time was dedicated to participant observation, informal interviewing, and artifact collection, which included worksheets, flyers, homework, school newsletters, local newspapers, and photographs. Table 3.6 shows the number of classroom observations conducted in the fall 2013 semester.

Table 3.6 Classroom Observations Fall 2013

TEACHER/GRADE	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	INDIVIDUAL OBSERVATIONS
Andrea K	4	4	3	4	15
Diana K	4	3	3	4	14
Miranda 1 <sup>st</sup>	3	4	3	4	14
Cassandra 1 <sup>st</sup>	4	4	3	5	16
Felicity 1 <sup>st</sup>	3	4	3	5	15
Marisol 2 <sup>nd</sup>	3	3	3	5	14
Marissa 2 <sup>nd</sup>	3	3	3	3	12
TOTAL (all teachers)	24	25	21	30	100

I wrote extensive ethnographic fieldnotes after each visit to the research site using a two column format which included a description of what happened and my interpretation of it. In some classrooms, especially in the kindergarten classrooms, I took brief notes which I elaborated on as soon as I left the classroom. As part of my fieldwork I recorded the teachers' name, the date, and the time when I began observing. I also wrote down the subject area and lesson being taught, and I noted if the students were interacting as a whole group, in small group activity, in pairs or individually. I wrote down the time when the lesson or activity was over. Within the school setting I also conducted and wrote fieldnotes about events where the parents were involved, for example the fall festival, Thanksgiving lunch with the students, and a Christmas

program. Some other events I observed or participated in were: attending a presentation (Kids Excel) about motivating students to attend college, talking to the principal and other administrators, volunteering to help the teachers get their classrooms ready at the beginning of the school year, and attending the Christmas luncheon for faculty and staff. Overall, participant observation data was collected during approximately 170 hours. Table 3.4 Data Collection Sources, shows details about the time allocated to data collection purposes throughout the duration of the study.

Table 3.7 Data Collection Sources

<b>Data Collection Source</b>	<b>Approx. Hours</b>
Gaining access/building rapport	30
Classroom Observations K-2 classrooms	70
School-related event observations	35
Individual interviews	25
Member checks	10
Total	170

Given the nature of my ethnographic study, I was a participant-observer and the main “tool” in the data collection process. Since the quality of my data depended on the level of trust or *confianza* developed by the participating teachers, I decided to spend a semester gaining access and building rapport by visiting and volunteering in the K-2 DL classrooms. Since I had seven participating teachers across three grade levels, doing classroom observations was the component that I devoted the most time to. Throughout the duration of the study, I also spent time attending various school-related events at La Escuelita and I did member checks during the spring of 2014, after I had conducted and transcribed all the interviews.

### 3.7.5 Document Collection

Heath and Street (2008) explain that in institutions of formal education, ethnographers remove artifacts with permission; such artifacts include brochures, newsletters, flyers, and documents such as enrollment forms, schedules, advertisements for school events, and so on.

Locals may give little value these items, but they are valuable in ethnographic work. Furthermore, every fieldworker has the obligation to respect and not disrupt, dislodge, or disturb the environment any more than necessary. Regarding artifact collection, LeCompte and Schensul (2010) make clear that ethnographers, with permission, may gather documents, books, diaries, records, artistic products, photographs, videotapes, and maps in order to locate documents as sources of potential data. Moreover, these printed materials can be sorted and coded to develop analytic categories reflecting the theoretical framework and research questions. To facilitate document collection, I provided a folder to each participating teacher and I requested for them to include any documents they were willing to share with me, for example the instructional materials provided to the students, general information sent out to parents, and homework assignments. A couple of the teachers used the folder regularly to save me quite a bit of materials, and others saved me a few things every now and then when they remembered to; some teachers didn't save things for me in the folder at all. Either way, whenever I observed a lesson I requested a copy of the material being used, or I took pictures, and if necessary I took notes about the details of the materials. Table 3.8 shows a compilation of the documents I collected from each teacher.

Table 3.8 K-2 Classroom Document Collection

Teacher	Grade	L A Sp	Math Sp	Sci Sp	SS Sp	LA Eng	Math Eng	Sci Eng	SS Eng
Andrea	K	3	–	–	–	–	4	1	–
Diana	K	1	–	–	–	–	3	–	1
Miranda	1st	8	1	5	1	4	8	1	2
Cassandra	1st	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	2
Felicity	1st	10	–	–	–	11	7	4	3
Marisol	2nd	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–



Marissa	2nd	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	–
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The documents I collected were instructional materials for all the core subject areas and some materials were in English and other in Spanish. The category with the highest number of handouts was Language Arts in Spanish, these materials included: examen de ortografía, cuentos con preguntas de comprensión, práctica de ortografía, práctica de fonética, evaluación de la unidad. For the rest of the subject areas including math, science, and social studies, there were more printed materials available and used in English.

### 3.7.6 Data Analysis

Denzin & Lincoln (2005) state that ethnographic analysis reconstructs a given social world or some key features of it, “The process of analysis stretches far beyond the mere manipulation of data and even of the work of grounded theorizing, thick description, and the like” (p. 834). Moreover, the conventions of language can be analyzed in relation to issues of identity and artifacts are aspects that can be analyzed in ethnography. Dyson and Genishi (2005) describe data analysis as the process in which one transforms data including field notes, interviews, and artifacts into findings. I began such process by doing a close reading of transcribed interviews. Next I wrote reflective memos about the six subquestions being explored in this study; this was to bring a “stream of consciousness,” to allow me to remember vividly what I had observed and what it meant. I did some preliminary coding of all data, I focused on the interviews first and then the fieldnotes from the classroom observations. I thought about how the literature related my data.

I reread the data and did an initial open coding. At this point I decided to have two data chapters; based on the themes that were emerging it seemed that data could be explained better if some examples addressed the linguistic backgrounds and identities of the teachers, while other examples and observations served as a foundation to explain how teachers’ language repertoires were embedded in their language use during instruction. Next, I developed analytic codes to group pieces of data into categories of relevant information for address the overarching research

question guiding the study. I did a round of focused coding on linguistic identities and then followed the same process, but looking at the pedagogical practice of the teachers. Dyson and Genishi (2005) explain that when many examples are analyzed, common threads or themes are found, meaning some of the categories and subcategories frequently recur. Themes were identified by using a manual color-coding process of data. Data were analyzed in light of the research questions and theoretical framework guiding this study. Table 3.9 shows the themes identified by using a manual color-coding process of data. Data were analyzed in light of the research questions and theoretical framework guiding this study.

Table 3.9 Codes Used for Data Analysis

Code	Meaning	Color
	<i><b>Focused</b></i>	
LI 1	Linguistic background	Pink
LI2	Bilingualism/biliteracy	Pink
LI3	Bi-literacy practices	Pink
PP1	Prefers to teach Eng/Sp	Yellow
PP2	Teacher-student language interaction	Yellow
PP3	Perspective about their bilingualism in teaching	Yellow
	<i><b>Emergent</b></i>	
COMM	Community/parents	Aqua
ACC	Accountability (paperwork/documentation)	Green
ADM	Administration (principal/district)	Gray

### 3.8 ETHICAL ISSUES

When planning to conduct a study there are many ethical considerations to keep in mind throughout the entire process, when writing the research proposal, when asking for consent, when collecting and analyzing data and when reporting the findings to an audience. Participants were contacted in person since I introduced myself about seven months before I actually conducted the study. Given the nature of the study, it was essential to build rapport with the teachers before seeking IRB approval and officially collecting data. After informally interacting with the teachers, and once I received IRB approval, they were invited to participate in the study.

Potential participants were informed about all the details of the study by following the informed consent as I asked for voluntarily participation. The participants seemed to understand the details of the study, its purpose and they were interested in being part of it. I told the teachers that it was their choice to participate voluntarily, and that they had the right to withdraw from the study if they wished to do so without any kind of consequence or penalty.

I told the participants that even if they provided consent to be recorded during the interviews and later on they change their mind about something they had said, part of it could be deleted or all of it if they wished. One thing that is essential to understand as researchers is that when people talk about their lives, they are opening up and this makes them vulnerable so they need to know that even if it is already recorded, it is their information and they can decide how to proceed with it. One way to reassure the participating teachers of how much I valued their participation was to reiterate that their data remained confidential, they chose their pseudonyms, and I did member checks. Sometimes I did not take notes while I observed, especially if I saw the teacher seemed to be having a difficult day which mostly happened in the kindergarten classrooms. When this was the case, I would just help and take mental notes; I would write up maybe just like keywords that would help me write my full fieldnotes as soon as I left the classroom.

When a couple of teachers preferred not to answer an interview question, or wanted to answer a specific question at a later time, or had a shorter amount of time for the interview, I didn't pressure them. When teachers had to reschedule their interviews or didn't show up for some reason, I would just reschedule by working around their availability. Before every interview I asked if they agreed to be recorded and the teachers chose what language they wanted to be interviewed in. Regarding reciprocity, the teachers knew I visited their classroom to observe, but also participated in the classroom, mostly by helping out students as needed. When I visited, some of the teachers went to make copies or to use the restroom and I would monitor a classroom activity for a few minutes. Sometimes I helped out by monitoring the students when the teacher tested their students' literacy skills and reading fluency, either by testing them or by

doing running records. A couple of teachers usually asked me to work with individual students or a small group that needed extra help.

Many times I went out to lunch duty with the teachers to help with monitoring the playground. On many occasions, I tied shoelaces, sharpened pencils, and helped with the preparation of material, like cutting construction paper and such. I helped the teachers to set up their classrooms before the school year began, and I took small gifts such as teaching supplies to every interview and sometimes throughout my visits, I also took small favors to the students occasionally, like pencils, stickers, candy, and erasers. Sometimes I helped to calm an upset student, especially if they were crying like at the beginning of the year or they if had gotten in trouble. I joined the teachers on two field trips as a chaperone and took pictures of some special presentations. I joined the teachers outside the classroom within the school on several occasions, like graduation, cooking class, Excel Kids presentation, fall festival, and two field trips. I also joined the teachers for the Christmas program and luncheon. Throughout my observations, I would have conversations with the teachers and sometimes I would share details about my own teaching experience or something they were interested in knowing about me, that way it didn't feel like I was there just to obtain information without giving any information about myself. Data collection consisted of ethnographic methods which included life history interviews with each participating teacher, and classroom observations in all seven K-2 DL classrooms. These observations were documented by writing extensive field notes, including thick description. Document and artifact collection included printed materials and photographs of instructional materials and texts created by the teachers, along with printed materials created and distributed by the school.

## Chapter 4: Linguistic Identities of Latina K-2 DL Teachers

Situated in sociocultural theory, my study explored the identities, ideologies, and practices of bilingual Latina EXP teachers working with young Mexican American EXP children. We can learn from their individual and collective stories with the ultimate goal of identifying strengths that can better inform bilingual teacher preparation and practice. Specifically, in this chapter, I focus on the sociopolitical context of bilingualism, by paying particular attention to the linguistic histories of seven Mexican-origin dual language teachers' multiple identities which are analyzed by drawing from theories of Linguistic Funds of Knowledge and language ideologies.

Language is the heart, literally and metaphorically, of who we are, how we present ourselves, and how others see us (González, 2005). In this chapter, I present key findings regarding how the intertwining of language and identity comes through in these narratives; I develop three main sections. The first is the linguistic background of DL teachers on the border which is shaped by country of origin and languages, schooling experiences, and transnationalism. The second part describes the language practices of the families of the teachers, namely their intergenerational influences, discussing the maintenance of Spanish, the push for English-only and "linguistic motherwork." The third component explores the beliefs the teachers hold about language, bringing forth ideologies about Spanish, ideologies about English, and language dynamics with colleagues and students' parents at La Escuelita. The data presented in this chapter are helpful to expand our vision about how teachers construct different identities for themselves when they use language in different contexts.

Anzaldúa (1987) as a Chicana feminist defines identity as a narrative connected to positionality, since identities are the stories people tell about themselves. She writes about the *mestiza* consciousness which results from living in the U. S.-Mexico borderlands, the "third country" which forms the border culture. Based on her personal experience, the author argues

that Borderlands are vague and undetermined, in a constant state of transition; therefore, people who live in the borderlands are characterized by the ability to juggle cultures by developing a plural personality and strong self-knowledge. This perspective about multiple identities situated in a borderland context is helpful to explain the identity formation of the participating teachers, because based on interview and observational data; I argue their identities were fluid and in constant negotiation depending on how they decided to use their languages, for what purposes and in what given context.

#### **4.1 LINGUISTIC BACKGROUNDS**

##### **4.1.1 Teachers' identities: country of origin and language**

The national origin of the seven teachers was almost equally divided between Mexico and the US. Four teachers were born in the U.S., three in El Paso and one in California, while three of them were born in Mexico, two teachers in the border town of Ciudad Juárez and one in Acapulco, México. When the teachers talked about their country of origin and the languages they grew up with, they also self-identified as Mexican or Mexican-American. Three teachers, Miranda, Felicity, and Marisol, described themselves as Mexicans, two of them having been raised and schooled entirely in Mexico and one schooled in the US who communicated in Spanish at home. The four teachers who self-identified as Mexican-Americans, Andrea, Diana, Cassandra, and Marissa had Mexican parents and had been schooled in the US; for two of them, the language of communication at home was Spanish and for the other two it was English.

Andrea, who taught the Spanish component of the DL program and spoke Spanish fluently, attributed this ability to the fact that she came from a Mexican family where communication had always taken place in Spanish, both as a young child growing up in Juárez and when she moved to El Paso. Like in Andrea's case and in my own experience, it is common in the U.S.-Mexico border context for Mexican mothers (Mexican nationals) to make arrangements to give birth on the U.S. side of the border, thus securing American citizenship for

their children while in many instances still living on the Mexican side of the border. For these reasons, schooling experiences many times include a repertoire of exposure to both the Mexican and American educational systems. Ong (1999) conducted ethnography of transnational practices in Asia and found that networks are key in shaping cultural practices and the formation of identity. Furthermore, the author argues that a flexible citizenship allows affluent migrants to seek different locations for economic gains and there is a dynamic movement of capital. Andrea talked about her experience with flexible citizenship.

Me siento Mexicana, no, [reconsiderando] Mexicana-Americana. No sé porque no me gusta el término Chicana. Crecí y nací aquí en los Estados Unidos pero vengo de una familia Mexicana. Mis raíces son mexicanas, mi cultura es mexicana. Estoy muy orgullosa de ser mexicana pero a la vez soy Americana, yo aquí nací. Aquí en El Paso especialmente ves las dos culturas (Andrea, Interview, 11/6/13).

Andrea first self-identified as Mexican and right away changed her mind to describe herself as Mexican American. Her understanding of the term is that she was born and raised in the US but she comes from a Mexican family. One clear example of this dual frame of reference due to her upbringing on the border is exemplified when the negotiation of language for the first interview took place between both of us border bilinguals. When I asked in Spanish what language she preferred to be interviewed in, she responded “En español porque a veces se me va la onda en inglés, bueno en español también,” then she said that either language was fine. The interview was conducted in Spanish.

Sharing Andrea’s perspective, Diana self-identified as Mexican-American because of her heritage: she had Mexican parents and grandparents. She taught the English portion of the DL program and was born and raised in El Paso.

I was born and raised in El Paso. Both of my parents were born in Mexico and after they got married they came here, so I guess I’m first generation. I guess technically I would describe myself as Mexican-American because I’m first generation. It doesn’t insult me if people call me Latina or Hispanic. I don’t know, it has a certain connotation that for me

Latina feels like... maybe somebody that doesn't wanna be called Mexican for some reason. I think I'm just more related to Mexican-American because my parents are from there [Mexico], you know? But maybe if they'd been born here or if I was a further generation maybe I'd be like, well, I don't have any ties to Mexico. It doesn't insult me if I'm called Mexican-American or Hispanic, but I don't know what Hispanic means, is it from Spain? (Diana, Interview, 10/29/13).

Diana grew up and went to school in El Paso since her parents migrated to the U.S. from Mexico. First-generation immigrants are more likely to use Spanish as their primary language, as are their children (Murillo, Villenas, Galván et al., 2010). The way Diana framed her experience as being first generation is very interesting because she seemed doubtful when she used the words *I guess*. My interpretation is that usually, the first family members who migrate to another country are the ones who would be first generation, in this case Diana's parents since they have a migration history. I believe Diana understood she is second generation when she explained that her rationale for considering herself Mexican American derives from her parents being Mexican. In addition to understanding why some people may describe themselves as Mexican Americans, she also problematized the terms "Latina" and "Hispanic." In comparison to the other participants, Diana was the youngest teacher and the only one who externalized this critical notion that some people might prefer to be identified as Latina rather than a Mexican, although she said that it did not insult her to be labeled Latina. She further questioned the controversial government-issued term Hispanic by asking if it denotes some linkage to Spain.

Marissa, a veteran teacher in her 50's who taught the English component of the program, considered herself Mexican American: American because she was born in the US, just like her parents, with her Mexican heritage coming from her grandparents. She gave details about how the labels to indicate membership within an ethnic group have changed throughout time, and she gave examples of having to use such labels for bureaucratic purposes in educational institutions.



Growing up, all labels have changed. I remember when I was growing up and we would take a test “oh you’re Mexican-American” and I’d say “But we were born here” and they’d tell us “Oh, because your parents and your grandparents came from Mexico.” I remember when we were growing up I think until middle school, “Oh, you’re Hispanics. You’re Hispanics.” Then when we got to high school, “Oh, no, you’re Latinos. You’re Latinos.” “Oh, ok” But I always say Mexican-American. Even when you signed papers, “Hispanic, Hispanic,” and I remember one time, it didn’t say Hispanic, it didn’t say Latino, it didn’t say Mexican-American. I can’t remember what it said; I even asked “What do I mark off?” It was a paper that we had to fill out, and I was even questioning “What are we?” But I would say Mexican-American. [Mexican because of] my grandparents, that’s the only reason. (Marissa, Interview, 10/25/13).

In comparison to the rest of the participating teachers, Marissa was the only one who had been born, raised, and schooled entirely in English in El Paso and whose parents were US born. Given this background, Marissa constructed her identity as American and felt the only tie she had to Mexico was her grandparents. These findings capture how ethnicity labels have changed throughout time; for example, Marissa explained how in her experience, there was a time when Hispanic was the preferred term. Years later, Latino became the preferred term. The information she shared coincided with the various labels that have been adopted by the U.S. Census Bureau. Due to the changing labels which denote ethnicity, Marissa questioned, “What are we?”

Similar to Marissa, Cassandra was schooled entirely in English, which is her predominant language and language of preference. Cassandra was a teacher who taught the English component of the program for three years. She shared how she found out that her country of origin was Mexico when she was already a teenager. She grew up in El Paso, and starting in first grade, she was schooled in English. During her childhood years, she would not travel to Juárez even though two of her older siblings lived there. This teacher shared how confused and upset she was at her parents when she found out she was a Mexican national although all her memories were in the U.S.

I grew up here [in El Paso], but I was born in Juárez. I didn't know that 'till I was a teenager. I didn't know that I was born in Juárez. I asked my parents, why do I have a passport? I never even knew about it, I was like thirteen the first time I went over there. That's when I learned I was from over there 'cuz to me, it's like everything I remember is here, I studied school here. I thought I was born here. I do have a brother and a sister over there [in Juárez]. (Cassandra, Interview, 10/17/13).

Cassandra's migration from Mexico to the U.S. happened very early in her life; thus, all her schooling experiences took place in the U.S. Her mom decided for her to be placed in English only instruction in El Paso when previously the household's language in Juárez had been Spanish. She came from a large family of eight siblings, and for various reasons, some of the siblings stayed in Mexico. Cassandra was confused as she negotiated her ethnic identity when she found out she was a Mexican national since she was raised and schooled in the US side of the border. About having a passport, Cassandra mentioned "I didn't know I had a passport, I don't remember ever taking a picture for a passport." Cassandra's account of her experience shows how migration can reshape children's lives. Some potential stressors related to migration include loss of close relationships, obtaining legal documentation, learning the English language, and negotiating their ethnic identity (Garza, Reyes, & Trueba, 2004; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez Orozco, 2001).

In contrast to the four teachers who self-identified as Mexican-Americans, Miranda was one of three teachers who identified as a Mexican. She was a teacher who taught the Spanish component of the program and felt very strong in her Spanish language skills.

I was born in California but I was practically raised here in El Paso and we came here since I was like 5 years old so I was raised in El Paso and basically the main language in my home is Spanish. I consider myself Mexican... my nationality, well, I'm Mexican from my family, I mean I was born here in the United States. I've always had that problem...I feel like Latina and Chicano, I don't know, I'm not very familiar with it I guess and it just reminds me of LA [laughs]. (Miranda, Interview, 10/28/13).

Although Miranda was born in California, her family moved to El Paso when she was a young child. She grew up in a predominantly Spanish-speaking household which she credited for being highly proficient in Spanish. She identified as a U.S. born Mexican and did not identify as a Latina or Chicana because she felt these are problematic terms, especially Chicana. The term “Chicano” reminds her of Los Angeles, meaning the Chicano activism which had a strong presence in California, the place where she was born. Miranda’s description of Mexican resonates with literature where González, Moll & Amanti (2005) use the term Mexican to describe both those born in Mexico and those of Mexican parentage born in the United States; they state that Mexican is the generally preferred term used by the U.S.-born population.

Marisol, the teacher who taught the Spanish section of the program, self-identified as Hispanic but mostly Mexican, emphasizing Mexico as the place where she was born, raised, and formally educated. She mentioned that she was born and raised in Ciudad Juárez and her roots, education, family, and customs come from Mexico even though she is now a naturalized US citizen. This teacher lived in Juárez most of her life and immigrated to El Paso as an adult.

Marisol: Yo soy de origen mexicano, nací y me crié en Ciudad Juárez, toda mi educación la tuve en Juárez. Yo creo que soy hispana, mexicana, porque soy naturalizada pero mis raíces y toda mi educación pues están en México, mi familia, mis costumbres son mexicanas. (Marisol, Interview, 11/1/13).

Marisol made reference to her upbringing in Mexico, where she was born, raised, and schooled. She described herself as Hispanic and Mexican because she was a naturalized U.S. citizen of Mexican origin. From all the participants, this is the teacher who lived in Mexico for the longest amount of time, well into her adulthood, since she was a teacher for ten years in the Mexican public school system. She explained that her family is Mexican and at home with her husband and children, communication took place in Spanish. Marisol’s description of the value she saw in maintaining her Mexican heritage, including knowledge of the Spanish language, parallels the idea that groups that form around identities are often demarcated as either

immigrant or native born immigrants and continue to speak Spanish among themselves and form their own networks (González, 2005).

Similar to Marisol, Felicity also shared a Mexican background, since them both moved to the US as adults. Felicity was the only participating teacher who taught a self-contained section of the DL program, meaning she was responsible for teaching both languages, some days in Spanish and some days in English since she did not have a partner teacher.

I was born and raised in Mexico, Acapulco, full blood Mexican! I do find that people that are second generation and I am not generalizing, it is just what I see, sometimes they don't like people from Mexico. It is a different culture, [Mexican Americans] they're not American and they're not Mexican, it is a mixture, that's what I perceive. (Felicity, Interview, 10/23/13).

Felicity's description of herself as a "full-blood Mexican" gives insight into how she had very strong ties to her Mexican identity, derived from her upbringing in central Mexico until adulthood. She believed in the separation and purism of languages and nationality. In one of our conversations she shared that she found difficult to understand how some people self-identify as Mexican Americans, joking around, she said "do they cut themselves in half?" This comment is meaningful because it reflects Felicity's positioning of Mexican Americans as something she can't conceive of, my interpretation is that Felicity identifies and prefers people to identify themselves either as Mexicans or Americans, but not Mexican Americans. Moreover, Mexican Americans, especially in borderland areas, tend to communicate by using a mixture of both English and Spanish commonly and this is a practice Felicity doesn't necessarily agree with. Felicity has lived and taught in bilingual classrooms in four different places throughout Texas, including Laredo, Dallas, Brownsville, and El Paso. She shared that when she moved to Brownsville she did not feel accepted, "they didn't accept me because I was Mexican. [Mexican American] It's almost like another race." Felicity's background as a Mexican national from central Mexico, having been educated in private schools and with no experience of living on a U.S.-Mexico border while growing up, shaped her beliefs about how language should be used

properly. She received bilingual instruction from a young age, and from my experience I have noticed that in Mexico like in many other places, there is this idea that a perfect bilingual is someone who is proficient enough in both languages in order not to mix them. This practice of strict language separation is completely opposite to what happens in many regions, especially borderland areas, including Brownsville, where Felicity had this experience of feeling like she was not being liked or did not fit in because she was too Mexican or because she spoke standard academic Spanish. Felicity's account of her experience is one example of how immigrants reprimand Chicanos or Mexican-Americans for speaking broken Spanish and for having a hybrid identity, while Chicanos form a hybrid identity, language, and culture drawing from both the United States and Mexico (González, 2005; Murillo, Villenas, Galván et al., 2010). Language use is one way to portray a multiplicity of identities since using a range of speech styles and behaviors can be used to gain entry into different groups; sometimes individuals bring into play their linguistic resources by failing to do what is expected of them linguistically (Edwards, 2009; Heller, 2011).

#### **4.1.2 Teachers' schooling experiences influence their linguistic profiles**

Historically, nation-states have based their language education policy on ideologies that link identity and language. In the US, it is Latino children who are most in need of bilingual education programs, and the growth of immigration, especially of Spanish speakers, has unleashed a reaction against bilingual education (García, 2009). Currently, in the U.S., "bilingual education" often refers to transitional programs, which emphasize using limited Spanish instruction as a means to learn English. Analysis of census data showed that most Latinos have lost fluency in Spanish by the third generation (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). Three of the seven participating teachers, Andrea, Diana, and Miranda, were enrolled in transitional bilingual education programs in the U.S. during elementary school. There were two US based teachers, Cassandra and Marissa, who did not receive any type of bilingual education instruction. Felicity and Marisol received their elementary and secondary education entirely in Spanish in Mexico.

García (2009) explains that in transitional bilingual education the child's heritage language is used in the early grades and only until the child is fluent in the majority or colonial language and Diana explained she was placed in this kind of bilingual education program because it was the only one available. Diana's mother's requested bilingual education, but this was only available up to third grade and that was all the access Diana had to formal instruction of academic Spanish. After third grade, she had to transition to English-only instruction. Regarding college, she mentioned how she found difficult the one Spanish class she had to take in college as part of her teacher preparation for bilingual education.

I stayed in the bilingual program from kinder to third, in fourth grade I was transitioned into the English so I feel like my bilingual education in Spanish is pretty much at a third grade level academically. I can write better in English, I can express myself better in English. At UTEP I remember taking a Spanish class but I don't think it was specific to education, it was Spanish, it was part of the degree requirement, the class itself was for anybody and I remember it was really hard with the acentos y las palabras agudas. (Diana, Interview, 10/19/13).

Diana is one of the teachers who had limited access to Spanish presumably because of the transitional bilingual education program she attended. Now as a teacher, she was more comfortable teaching the English component of the program because she felt stronger in this language. Based on my observations and the interview I conducted with Diana, she's very proficient in speaking Spanish because that was the language of communication growing up at home. However, Diana feels that her academic Spanish is limited and she would not be able to teach upper grade levels where the level of difficulty in the Spanish increases. She has taught third grade, second grade and kindergarten and she shared that in third grade she found some of the Spanish vocabulary challenging in some content areas.

Some bilingual teachers in my study felt that they did not have the ability to write for academic purposes in Spanish. Similar to Diana, Andrea did not feel proficient in academic Spanish, as she explained she would not be able to write for academic purposes at the university

level. One possible reason for her limited proficiency could be that she was enrolled in a transitional bilingual education program only up to second grade. I think Andrea felt insecurity about spelling some words in Spanish because she only had some instruction in Spanish up to second grade. She went ahead and told me about not having had formal instruction of academic Spanish, perhaps because she thought that if she misspelled a word I would bring it up during my observations.

En kínder, primero y segundo estuve en clases de [educación] bilingüe... Sí perdí el español académicamente, aunque soy maestra de español, ya escribir así a un nivel universitario no, no puedo. Es muy difícil la ortografía, o sea nunca me enseñaron bien los acentos. (Andrea, Interview, 11/6/13).

Her struggle with academic Spanish was visible on a couple of occasions. One time that I was observing her practice, she was teaching the numbers in Spanish and when she was writing the numbers on the chalkboard for students to copy, she asked me “¿seis lleva acento? yo no sé nada de acentos.” This time I told her “sí, seis lleva acento en la í” and she replied “yo pensaba que no.” Unless she asked me about the spelling of a word in Spanish, I wouldn’t intervene with her lesson. For example, on another occasion, during a math lesson, she was teaching four different kinds of lines to the students, and on the board there were four lines drawn and labeled in Spanish and the word “linea” in Spanish was misspelled several times (sin acento). Nonetheless, very frequently, during calendar ma both the teacher and the children were exposed to a poster which had different types of lines labeled in standard Spanish. Andrea saw the word línea written on the poster constantly, but would still write linea when she wrote it on the board during instruction.

Andrea’s example of limited access to opportunities to develop academic Spanish is closely related to Guerrero’s (2003) study about the process of acquiring and using academic Spanish among four novice Latina bilingual teachers in the Southwest; he examined their stories to understand the opportunities they had during their lifetime to acquire academic Spanish. The author argued that discouraging the development of academic Spanish may be a way to ensure

that bilingual education is not effective on any large scale; the U.S.-born Latina bilingual teachers in his study who were educated exclusively in the U. S. expressed apprehension regarding the delivery of instruction in Spanish. Andrea explained to me that she did not feel academically proficient to write in Spanish because she never learned it formally in school. Although she was very proficient and comfortable speaking Spanish and teaching the Spanish component of the program, the previous examples of her self-doubting how to spell simple words such as “six” and “line” in Spanish while teaching show how she feels regarding her ability to write in Spanish.

Of all seven teachers, only Miranda held a master’s degree. She felt very confident about teaching in Spanish because he had a good command of academic Spanish, which she credited to communicated in Spanish at home growing up. She also mentioned that she had written a thesis in English related to bilingual education that was about second language acquisition. Miranda attended public elementary schools where she received bilingual instruction and during her middle and high school years, she attended a private school where all the instruction was delivered in English. Miranda discussed her education background and stated she received bilingual education through a transitional program during elementary school. After that, her schooling was completed in English since she attended a private parochial school during her middle and high school years and there was no bilingual program available at that school. Miranda had limited access to bilingual programs and she relied on her family members as knowledgeable users of Spanish. These findings capture that in transitional bilingual education, the language of lower prestige is often used according to the practices of the more powerful language; in most Spanish-English transitional bilingual classrooms in the United States, Spanish literacy is only a springboard to English literacy (García, 2009). Miranda’s case was similar to Andrea’s, both these teachers reported their Spanish literacy skills continued to develop due to their household environment, but not due to their schooling experiences since both of them only had access to transitional bilingual education during their early elementary grades. Both Andrea and Miranda shared that growing up the only language of communication within the household



was Spanish and English at school. Miranda's confidence in her Spanish proficiency came from interacting with her immediate and extended family in this language. As an adult, she has communicated in Spanish with her husband and children. Miranda expressed strong feelings about maintaining her Spanish, in contrast to Cassandra, her partner teacher who taught the English component of the DL program.

As young children, many students interact in a home language, usually Spanish, prior to entering school. However, schooling experiences, particularly the language of instruction is significant because it tends to shape language use and preference. In comparison to the rest of the participants, Cassandra was the only teacher whose early literacy was developed at home in Spanish and once she began her schooling trajectory, everything transitioned to English.

I remember I started first grade because they didn't put me in kinder or anything like that, so I started first grade and all I spoke was Spanish and when they took me to the classroom, I remember all I heard was English. They told me I had to try to understand and I couldn't speak a word of English of course, but the kids would still play with me, they were the ones that taught me [English]. I don't know if there was bilingual [education] or not back then. This is in nineteen eighty-one, yeah, because I was born in seventy-five. I guess it [English] wasn't too hard because I learned it right away. (Cassandra, Interview, 10/17/13).

Cassandra described her experience upon entering school mainly focusing on the dynamics of language. Prior to schooling, her early literacy experiences were entirely in Spanish and then there was an abrupt shift to being immersed in English-only instruction. One relevant aspect is that Cassandra mentioned that her peers, the other first graders, were the ones who taught her English. This highlights the importance of meaningful interactions when learning a language. In her case, as a young child, communicating in order to play was a necessity and learning took place informally. Regarding learning English in the formal classroom setting Cassandra added that English was probably not too difficult because she learned it quickly. Regarding access to bilingual education, she was unaware if bilingual programs existed when she

attended school in the eighties. Bilingual programs existed but they were mostly transitional in nature, which is the type of instruction three of the participants (Andrea, Diana, Miranda) received. In 1981, the first constitutional amendment was introduced to make English the official language of the U.S. and this could be said to have been the beginning of a restriction of languages other than English; since 1981, several states have passed Official English or English-only laws (García, 2009).

In the 1960s there was minimum support for bilingual education programs. For example, the goal of the 1968 Bilingual Education Act was for children to acquire English quickly. Children who attended school in the 1960s and 1970s were extremely encouraged to speak English and many time punished or ridiculed for speaking Spanish. Marissa, the veteran teacher who had been in the classroom the longest, mentioned relevant aspects of language-related schooling experiences ranging from pre-kindergarten all the way through college.

Pre-k was all English classes and growing up, the teachers would tell us “you cannot speak Spanish.” I do remember them warning us, “don’t speak Spanish, don’t speak Spanish” so we never talked Spanish. At that time we didn’t even really have Hispanic teachers, they were monolingual teachers, Anglos. Until we got into second grade, we had a Hispanic teacher, [but] everything was English. I learned Spanish in college and that was by watching *las novelas*, and they told us to read the little comic books in Spanish. I did it through the *novelas*. I had to do it in college, I tell you we through all the years, we never had Spanish, never. That’s how I started learning my Spanish. I started listening and watching *novelas* in college because I didn’t have the academic Spanish. (Marissa, Interview, 10/25/13).

Marissa’s entire schooling was heavily influenced by a push for English. She made the point that growing up she was schooled in English with mostly Anglo teachers where she was not allowed to speak Spanish. Even when she had a Hispanic teacher, all instruction was delivered in English. This teacher was schooled at a time where speaking Spanish was prohibited openly throughout her schooling and her parents also favored an English-only policy at home

due to the negative experiences they had encountered as Spanish speakers. Marissa's example of language use at school and at home is closely related to González's (2005) explanation that there is a strong influence of English-only campaigns, overtly privileging English over Spanish.

Years later, when Marissa attended college, she had to learn some Spanish because she was in a bilingual education teacher preparation program. Marissa framed her experience of learning Spanish as mainly accomplished by watching telenovelas, based on a recommendation from some of her professors. One significant source of Spanish-language input in the households is *telenovelas* which are an essential element in the receptive language of US-Mexican households. Hundreds of Spanish-language newspapers, programs, and *telenovelas* can still be enjoyed through the extensive provision of Spanish-language media (González, 2005; Murillo, Villenas, Galván et al., 2010).

In one of our conversations Marissa told me she didn't remember the name of the novelas exactly, but she described the storyline of the two novelas she would watch, and I was able to tell her the name of the Mexican soap operas she was describing. She used to watch "a story about two twin sisters where one stole the other's identity"; this novela was *La Usurpadora*, which was originally broadcast in 1998 on Televisa. This drama was based on the stories of two twin sisters played by Venezuelan actress Gabriela Spanic, who happens to have a twin sister in real life. The soap opera was about two sisters who were separated at birth and their lives and personalities were completely opposite. The villain was selfish, ambitious, and wealthy and the other sister was kind, hard working, and poor. Marissa also mentioned another novela as "a story about a girl who lived in a shack close to the sea"; this novela was *Marimar*, which was broadcast in 1994 on Televisa; the main character was played by popular Mexican singer Thalía. The soap opera was a story about a young, innocent, poor girl who lived with her grandparents in a hut by the ocean and she fell in love with a young man from a wealthy family, and as the plot developed it turned out her own father was wealthy. Marissa relied on watching novelas to help her develop proficiency in Spanish since she had very limited access to knowledgeable Spanish users, unlike Felicity, who had ample resources at home and school to become bilingual and biliterate.

Felicity attributed her proficiency in Spanish and English as something directly related to her schooling experiences, which consisted of private schooling in Mexico. This is an example of how privileged classes are the ones who are most likely to have the economic resources to enroll their children in private school throughout their educational careers, like in the case of Felicity who attended these kinds of schools during her elementary and secondary education. LIT

I went to a private school [in Mexico], and they started teaching you English little by little but it's very broken English, you know, growing up the teacher would be like "tabol" for table and that kind of stuff. (Felicity, Interview, 10/23/13).

Felicity was schooled in central Mexico, where she had access to learning English from a young age, although she explained that it was "broken" English because it was sometimes mispronounced by the teachers. Additionally, she also explained there was an emphasis on writing because she would learn vocabulary and spelling words in both English and Spanish. Felicity's access to several years of private schooling in Mexico which emphasized bilingualism resonates with the idea that class privilege is tied to social and cultural capital (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). Felicity had the means to attend private schools in Mexico which included English classes in their curricula. These English skills she acquired during her schooling partly helped her to get a college scholarship in the U.S. It can be assumed she had the academic and language skills to successfully complete college level coursework in the U.S. due to social and capital social she accumulated growing up.

The fact that Felicity attended a private school in central Mexico from a very early age demonstrates that her family had the means to provide this kind of privileged education, which is available to upper middle class families. When Felicity explained how some teachers in Mexico would speak "broken English", she was probably comparing her Mexican teachers to U.S. based teachers, either the ones she had during her one-year stay in California or when she attended college in the U.S. Even if Felicity didn't have access to learning English from native English speaking teachers during her early schooling experiences, it can be argued she did indeed gain enough English proficiency to be able to successfully navigate an English-only environment in

the U.S. during one year of high school and later in college. In the first interview, Felicity expressed that she was able to understand most of the speech and content in her high school level classes and she was able to communicate with peers in English. Felicity went back to Mexico and attended high school two years, where she continued to take some English classes. Then she got offered a college scholarship in the U.S. where she took all coursework in English.

#### **4.1.3 Transnational language practices**

Immigration has been characterized by transnationalism; that is the ability to go back and forth to the country of origin, aided by improved transportation and technology (Castles, 2000). In Jimenez's (2000) study about how identity influences language and literacy development, the results indicated transnational students and teachers were influenced by their experiences which could be described as cultural borderlands; their identities were connected to their status as bicultural, bilingual, and biliterate persons. Two of the teachers in this study, like some of their students, were part of *cross-border families* themselves: Marisol and Andrea. Marisol was part of a cross-border family as an adult; she would cross from Juárez to El Paso to attend English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at a community college.

Andrea was the only teacher who experienced crossing the bridge from Juárez to El Paso to come to school as a child. Andrea talked about her early schooling experiences as being characterized by a transnational dynamic where she lived on the Mexican side of the border and came across the U.S. to attend a public school during kindergarten, first, and second grade. In the public school context she was exposed to a transitional bilingual program for three years before being transferred to mainstream English only instruction at her mom's request. Andrea could have been in the program just one more year since the program was available only up to third grade; however, her mom considered that she was receiving instruction in Spanish only and was not learning English.

Yo crecí en El Paso. Viví en Ciudad Juárez ocho años pero siempre estuve en la escuela aquí en El Paso. Lo que fue kínder, primero y segundo estuve en clases de bilingüe hasta

que mi mamá en tercero me cambió a clases monolingües, de inglés (Andrea, Interview, 11/6/13).

Andrea was born in El Paso and lived in Juárez during her early childhood years; nonetheless, her schooling experiences always took place in the setting of U.S. public schools. From an early age, Andrea understood that it was important for her to learn English because this perspective was passed on from her mom and being schooled in the U.S. was prized even if it meant waking up very early and making the line on the bridge to go back and forth every weekday. Relaño Pastor (2007) analyzed how *transfronterizos*' fluidity of languages in which they were involved every day highlighted the influence of border crossing experiences in the construction of identity. De la Piedra & Araujo (2012) and Jiménez, Smith & Teague (2009) explained that *transfronterizos* adapted to new learning environments in the U.S. while at the same time strengthened ties with their countries of origin. In the borderlands, this dynamic of living in Mexico and getting an education in the U.S., whether at public or private schools, is a common practice. Now as a bilingual teacher Andrea believed in bilingual education and taught mostly in Spanish but she also shared that following thought with me, "siendo realistas, en la universidad todo es en inglés" and this statement made it clear that she understood how English and Spanish hold a different status; she was aware that in the U.S., English is the language required to be successful in higher education.

Just like Andrea, Marisol experienced transnationalism as well. Marisol explained how she lived transnationalism as an adult in two different roles, as a student and employee. She described there was a period of time when she was living in Juárez and traveling daily to El Paso to take English classes as an adult at a community college. She also described that some time passed by and then she relocated in El Paso once she was married, and this is where her children grew up.

Me vine al Community College a adquirir el inglés como segundo idioma, o sea que el inglés yo lo adquirí ya grande a mis... veintitantos años. Nada más venía a eso, ¡hacer la línea todos los días! Cuando ya me casé, me vine a vivir aquí a Estados Unidos, tuve mi

familia, tuve mis hijos, los crié. Por un tiempo estuve viviendo aquí y yendo a trabajar allá [en Juárez, pero después] renuncié al trabajo de maestra (Marisol, Interview, 11/1/13).

Marisol studied in Mexico well into adulthood and while she was living in Juárez, she became a teacher (normalista) by attending three intensive summer sessions in Torreón, Mexico, her mother's hometown. She would travel back and forth from El Paso to Juárez to keep her job as a teacher at a public elementary school but once her children started going to school, she decided to quit teaching in Mexico. She explained that for a while she kept traveling to Juárez to maintain her job as an elementary teacher in Mexico. After a while, it became difficult to go back and forth every day mainly because her children started going to school and at that point she decided to become a substitute teacher and then pursued her U.S. teacher certification. Marisol's linguistic practices changed and spread through social networks, principally on the basis of transnational patterns of migration (Risager, 2006). Marisol's linguistic practices changed because she communicated in Spanish with her networks in Juárez, especially her colleagues while as a long-term substitute at Escuela Internacional she had to communicate with in both English and Spanish as needed. Her transnationalism was evident when she lived in the U.S., but decided to and was able to travel to Mexico to continue working as a Mexico-based teacher for a while.

Just like Marisol, Felicity was exposed to schooling experiences shaped by transnationalism as well. First, the teacher explained how schooling is structured differently in Mexico than it is in the U.S., making reference to middle school years and high school. Since she was schooled in a private school context which encouraged bilingualism, she had some proficiency in English but had never been exposed to an authentic context where she could practice English for an extended period of time. Right after she completed middle school, she traveled to the US as an exchange student for a year, where she was schooled in an English-only environment. After this English-immersion experience, she went back to Acapulco, Mexico and

completed three years of high school. Once she graduated from high school, she moved to Arkansas upon acceptance of a university scholarship which she received for playing tennis.

Elementary in Mexico goes through 6th grade and then for junior high it's actually first, second and third, they don't go 7, 8, 9. After 9th grade in Mexico that's when I went to California, but it wasn't the first year of high school, it was the second year of high school. I was there for a year, mainstream, regular, immersed, I was like everyone else, treated the same, and I was expected to do everything. I did not understand a whole lot, but in the [host] family some of the kids spoke a little Spanish, but the goal was no Spanish. It was completely submersion, however you wanna put it, sink-or-swim. The only time that I got to speak Spanish was once a week when my parents would call, later I started dreaming in English, you know what I mean? and then I started telling my mom, "hey mom, can I tell you this?" because I was starting to forget my words in Spanish. I have never been able to do math in English, since I learned it in Spanish, if you tell me 4 times 8, I gotta think in Spanish. I remember coming back in the airplane and I saw one of my friends from Mexico and I could not talk to her because I could not think in Spanish anymore and I remember her thinking, you know, snob, ok whatever, you go to the States and now you forget your Spanish, but guess what? it does happen, like they say "if you don't use it, you lose it" so I came back, I did high school [in Acapulco] and then I was lucky to get a scholarship for playing tennis at a university [in the US] (Felicity, Interview, 10/23/13).

Felicity first explained how school is structured differently in Mexico and the US given she had been able to experience both school systems. When she talked about having a host family in Los Angeles during her one-year stay back in high school, she said her parents knew this family already and they felt comfortable enough for her to stay with them. Felicity explained the only Spanish she would speak during her California stay was with her parents once a week when they talked on the phone, but she also mentioned there was a point where she was talking, at least partially, in English to her bilingual mom. She also shared "I started dreaming in English,



you know what I mean?” I perceive this as a way of expressing that she was already dreaming in English because she was constantly thinking and communicating in an English environment. Finally, Felicity mentioned she “was lucky to get a scholarship for playing tennis at a university” Rather than luck, Felicity had accumulated cultural capital and resources which had positioned her to learn this sport by attending tennis classes while growing up combined with maintain good academic achievement. Additionally, she spoke English and was in a position to move to the U.S. to go to college where this sport was valued enough to offer a scholarship for it, at a private university she would probably find peers with a similar background as hers. Transnationalism, technology, and the media have changed much of the context for current Latinos, permitting economic and social exchange between the homeland and the U.S. Immigrants, international students, business workers, and even tourists contribute to making bilingualism important in the twenty-first century (García, 2009; Murillo, Villenas, Galván et al., 2010).

## **4.2 FAMILY INTERGENERATIONAL INFLUENCES ON LANGUAGE: PAST AND FUTURE**

### **4.2.1 Maintaining Spanish at home**

Many Latino/as come from families where Spanish is the primary language and the prevalence of Spanish in the home and community is likely to persist (Murillo, Villenas, Galván et al., 2010). Linguistic motherwork, conceptualized as the practices that Latina mothers engage in to maintain and develop their children’s heritage language and literacy by Ek, Sanchez, and Quijada Cerecer (2013) is explored in this section. Linguistic motherwork was exemplified by some of the participating teachers, whether they have enrolled their children in a bilingual program or they maintain Spanish at home by speaking it to their children or a combination of both formal bilingual instruction and communicating with their children in Spanish at home.

Diana’s current linguistic motherwork is rooted in the experience she had growing up, where she was able to rely on her parents as language resources. Diana talked about her parents’ Mexican heritage, while at the same time inferring their proficiency in Spanish. She emphasized how her parents strongly encouraged her to maintain her Spanish when she was growing up. Her

parents “forced” her to speak Spanish at home by openly asking to switch to Spanish when she would start speaking English at home with her sister.

Both of my parents were born in Mexico and then when they got married they came here and it was really important for them that I maintained the Spanish, so at home it’s always been enforced. You know like my sister and I would start to speak English, my mom would be like, ok, speak Spanish. My parents always forced us to speak Spanish at home, now I understand because I’m doing the same with my kids. (Diana, Interview, 10/29/13).

Diana also shared that frequently she would go visit her grandparents in Juárez, and her parents would ask her and her sister to keep all conversations in Spanish so grandparents or other family members would not feel left out of the conversations. Diana’s parents were probably encouraging her to use Spanish around her grandparents not only to not be rude to elders, but more importantly, so she would be able to communicate and have meaningful conversations with her grandparents. It’s also very interesting that now as a mom, Diana linked this childhood experience to what she is doing now with her own children; she’s also encouraging her children’s proficiency in Spanish by using this language at home. One of the reasons for doing this is for her children to be able to communicate with their grandparents. Diana’s decision to speak Spanish at home reflects that Latino/as have a deep commitment to language maintenance, exemplified in the number that report preferring to speak Spanish at home, even when they are fluent in English (Murillo, Villenas, Galván et al., 2010).

As shown in the previous example, grandmothers also framed the linguistic practices of the participants to some degree as expressed by Andrea, Diana, and Marissa. In many instances children spend a significant amount of time interacting with grandparents, thus, serving as further resources to help maintain a heritage language. One drawback is that usually grandparents tend to interact or take care of their grandchildren only or mostly in the early years, prior to formal schooling. Marissa talked about her Mexican grandmothers who were monolingual Spanish speakers and with whom she spent weekends.

Any Spanish we learned was because when we went to stay with our grandmas, [it was] all Spanish. When we [my sister and I] went to our grandparents, they were the ones that were speaking to us in Spanish because they wouldn't speak English. When we were speaking, we didn't know the proper words, like "socks" we would say "sacatines". So we could communicate with our grandma, we started mixing [languages]. (Marissa, Interview, 10/25/13).

Marissa explained the language dynamics that took place while growing up as monolingual English speaker. In order to communicate with her grandmothers, Marissa started mixing languages, English and Spanish and she used hand gestures. She explained that as she grew up, communication with her Spanish speaking grandmothers was very limited, "I would hardly talk to them," she said, because of this language barrier that developed. Field (2011) argues that from the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Americanization and cultural assimilation have been focal points of education, and proficiency in English has been a large part of the debate on national identity. Lack of English skills has even been viewed as disloyal to the U.S. and its ideals.

In contrast to Marissa, Miranda was brought up in a Spanish-dominant household, which she credited for her proficiency in Spanish. For many families, it is common to communicate in the heritage language, usually Spanish at home and to use English for school purposes. This was Miranda's experience growing up and she expressed strong beliefs about communicating in Spanish at home and having English as the language of school for her children.

Basically the main language in my home is Spanish, in my home it was always Spanish and in school it was just English. With my children we do the same thing, it's Spanish in my house and English at school so my children are bilingual, they speak both languages (Miranda, Interview, 10/28/13).

Miranda mentioned that in her household, communication took place in Spanish and she linked this practice to how she grew up in a household where Spanish was spoken and her schooling took place in English. Miranda explained that with her children at home, she does the

“same thing,” that is, raising bilingual children where they can speak Spanish at home and use English for academic purposes. She explained to me that since her children attend a private parochial school, there is no bilingual program available. However, she felt confident they can become proficient in Spanish if they use it to communicate at home. She knew that with this dynamic her children were becoming bilingual because they were able to speak both languages proficiently, although they were not becoming biliterate. This scenario resembles González’s (2005) findings about how the dimensions of Spanish were far different from the dimensions of English. Spanish was the language of family, of food, of music, of ritual –in short, of identity. It was the language of endearments to children and the language of church. English was for the doctor’s office, the teacher, the newspaper, and television.

Andrea’s understanding of her ability to speak Spanish was very similar to Miranda’s. They both relied on the linguistic resources of the household, although Miranda spent her first years of life in California while Andrea lived in Juárez. Andrea expressed that her early literacy skills in Spanish were developed by being raised in a Spanish dominant household; she shared “En mi casa era todo español. Mi abuelita me cuidaba, entonces de hecho, ella me enseñó a leer y escribir el español antes de que entrara a kínder” (Andrea, Interview, 11/6/13).

Andrea was able to learn to read and write in Spanish because of the time she spent with her maternal grandmother who was a monolingual Spanish speaker. During these early childhood years, Andrea was being taken care of by her grandmother in Juárez, Mexico where they lived at that time. This short quote is meaningful because it captured how a child is exposed to language and literacy within the family unit first. For this reason, a child with a dual lexicon may pronounce and use both systems, but the emotional load may vary differentially (González, 2005). All seven participants expressed the language of their grandparents was Spanish, all their grandparents were monolingual Spanish speakers because of their Mexican heritage.

#### 4.2.2 The push and pull of English-only

Out of the seven participants, Marissa and Cassandra were strongly influenced by their experiences growing up where there was a push for English proficiency. One of these teachers, Marissa, who was planning to retire soon, explained how the time when she was growing up was not conducive to speaking Spanish either at home, much less learn it or use it within the school environment. At home her parents spoke to her in English only since she could remember and they made it clear that she was supposed to only learn English at school; therefore, she was placed in English-only instruction. The other teacher, Cassandra, also experienced schooling in English-only environments, where she had to sink-or-swim. She shared that “it was harsh” because she could not understand anything at first since she had been exposed to Spanish only at home. Once Cassandra began school, some Spanish was spoken at home, however, since a very young age; she preferred to communicate just in English because that was the privileged language at school. The experiences of Marissa and Cassandra illustrate García’s (2009) point regarding how languages which symbolized national identity (e.g., English) were standardized, codified, and used in schools, to the exclusion of others; languages which did not coincide with the one elevated to privileged status (e.g., Spanish) became cause of concern.

Just like Marissa, Cassandra experienced a strong push for English at different levels. Cassandra identified as an English speaker both at home and school. For Cassandra one relevant aspect of learning English at an early age was her pronunciation.

I never had an accent, but at the time I finished school, my mom would get mad at me because I didn’t speak Spanish, because [English] that’s all I heard in school. Everybody was speaking Spanish to me, I was the only one speaking English at home, everybody else was always [speaking] Spanish. Even to this day, they all speak to me in Spanish, I answer in Spanish sometimes, but I tell them I’m more comfortable in English. It was harsh the way they did it to me. It was a big culture shock because first at home all Spanish and then everything English. In high school, I remember I had friends that were ESL and I didn’t understand why and then I figured out *pos* I guess ‘cuz they needed to

learn English. I took French in high school, I didn't take Spanish. (Cassandra, Interview, 10/17/13).

Cassandra emphasized that she never had an accent which I interpret as meaning that she is an English speaker who sounds like a monolingual native English speaker compared to a Spanish-speaker who learns English as a second language. Very importantly, she talked about her schooling experience and the "culture shock" she experienced coming from a Spanish-speaking household, and being placed in English-only instruction. As a result of English-only instruction Cassandra became more proficient and "comfortable" with English and she is a receptive bilingual (Murillo et al., 2010). She explained that she did not know what English-as-a-second-language (ESL) classes were and as a high school student, she did not take Spanish as a foreign language, instead she took French. She probably took French not only because of its availability but also because being a European language it held a higher status than Spanish and she was aware of it.

There were other instances where participants externalized situations where they experienced English as having a higher status in comparison to Spanish. For example, Felicity, the teacher who had lived and taught in different parts of Texas talked about ideologies where English was favored and perceived as having a higher status.

Part of our lives we lived in Dallas, and we lived in an area where there were not a lot of Hispanics, our immediate neighbors and friends were Anglo. [My son] knew little words in Spanish but he would get mad when I would talk to him in Spanish, when we moved to Laredo, he met other kids that spoke Spanish and he was like oh well, then it's ok. [Later when we moved] I did want to put them [my children] in the bilingual program in Brownsville but they [the school counselor] told me "pay attention to what you are doing because if you put them in the bilingual program they're gonna have to get testing, there are certain tests that they're gonna have to be taking all the time in Spanish". Now I look back, and I wish I hadn't listened. I mean they can talk [Spanish], but they wouldn't be able to elaborate on things. (Felicity, Interview, 10/23/13).

As shown in the previous quote, the perspectives of preferring English were expressed from various viewpoints. For example, Felicity's toddler who was starting to learn a language was obviously aware that English was favored in his immediate environment, this was evident since "he would mad" when Felicity would speak to him in Spanish. The other viewpoint which clearly favors English over Spanish comes from a school counselor who discouraged Felicity from choosing bilingual education for her children. Yet another perspective which also favors English was s that of Felicity as a parent since she chose English-only instruction for her children. Felicity's decision to place her children in monolingual instruction because of misinformation is an example of how parents and teachers face controversial debates surrounding the education of English Language Learners or the inclusion of students' native languages in the curriculum even when they are concerned with maintaining students' native language and culture (Murillo et al., 2010).

In order to understand some of the ideologies of language it is important to contextualize place and time. For example, going back in time to 1960, in Texas, the high school dropout rate for Chicanos was 89% (García, 2009). Marissa grew up during a time where Spanish was openly oppressed in schools, and these ideas were enforced by her parents. This teacher mentioned that her parents, especially her dad, strongly encouraged their children to speak English because of negative schooling experiences he had gone through including having lost scholarship opportunities for attending college because he wasn't Anglo. The term Anglo is used to refer to white Americans of European descent (Murillo et al., 2010). In one of our interviews, Marissa said "Our parents, both [spoke] English to us. The parents back then, it was like 'You will learn English' that's the only language that you're going to learn, you will speak English, you will practice English"

Marissa's father positioned his children as monolingual English speakers because that made them more Anglicized or at least he thought they would not be discriminated against on the basis of being perceived as Mexican and Spanish speakers. This push for English was characteristic of the 1960s and 1970s and these ideas clearly reflect linguistic hegemony. Many

Latino parents who feared for the educational success of their children stopped speaking Spanish in their children's presence, and many of these children grew up either not having language skills in Spanish or with receptive bilingualism (González, 2005) –that is, the ability to understand but not speak Spanish.

It is common for ideas and language practices to be passed on in the family from generation to generation. Marissa herself was raised as a monolingual English speaker but criticized her husband for being Mexican and a native Spanish speaker who preferred to use English only to address their children. She mentioned how her children had to take Spanish as a foreign language in high school and brought forth the point that her parents communicated in English only, not only with their children but also with their grandchildren.

Even my husband, he's something else because he lived in Juárez before he came to the U.S., now it's all English. He does speak Spanish but with the boys, it's all English. Now we tell our kids "You're Hispanic" and they ask "Why am I Hispanic?" I say "Well, that's the title they're giving us." I say "Because you were born here, to me you're American. You can't say Anglo because we are not white." When they got to high school, they had to take Spanish as a foreign language so that's where they learned Spanish. Even my parents spoke to them in English, they didn't talk to them in Spanish, so my children had a hard time with Spanish.

Marissa's views of nationality and ethnic labels are exemplified as follows: she saw her children as American because they were born in the US and very interestingly she also mentioned, they "can't say Anglo" because they are not white Americans. It seems that she inferred and disagreed with the idea that in many cases, American automatically means Anglo. Furthermore, regarding ethnicity she said "Hispanic" is "the title they're giving us" presumably referring to government institutions such as the Census Bureau. Marissa's upbringing is a clear example of how children may be discouraged from attaining high levels of proficiency by the subtractive practices and policies of the U.S. educational system as a result of the national push



for *Americanization* of all students to demonstrate loyalty to the U.S. by abandoning their native languages and adopting an English-only view (Field, 2011).

#### **4.2.3 Linguistic motherwork: bilingual children**

Overall, five of the seven participants have school-age children. From the five that have school-age children, Diana, Cassandra and Marisol have their children enrolled in dual language programs at local public schools because they want their children to be bilingual and biliterate. Two of the teachers happen to have their children in the same dual language program at a local school because this program, according to them, is known for being very well established and effective. The third teacher has her children attending a school in the district she works for, where they have a DL strand. Three teachers have chosen a dual language bilingual program for their children since they did not have the opportunity to develop both languages academically and socially when growing up; one was in a transitional program, another one was schooled entirely in English and the other one was schooled in Spanish in Mexico.

Diana's desire for her children to become bilingual and biliterate paralleled her decision to enroll them in a well established bilingual education program. She had chosen a dual language program for her children to allow them to have the proficiency in academic Spanish she lacked, partly due to her schooling experience in a transitional bilingual program where she received some instruction in Spanish only up to third grade.

Diana: I want them [my children] to be able to write, read, and understand Spanish. I wouldn't be able to write an essay in Spanish, I don't think I would have the academic language, that's why for me it was very important to have them in Escuela Internacional. I was very interested in the dual program because of my experience, I transitioned [to English] and I didn't have any more Spanish. With my kids I speak both English and Spanish. With my parents or my in-laws; they just speak Spanish with them. (Diana, Interview, 10/29/13).

Diana talked about her efforts to encourage her children's bilingualism by exposing them to bilingual education and also by exposing them to a bilingual household environment; these are examples of linguistic motherwork (Ek et al., 2013). She explained that she really liked the structure of the dual language program at her children's school and even though this school was not close to where she lived or worked, she believed these efforts of driving back and forth were worth it because of the academic growth she had seen in both of her children. Additionally, she addressed how Spanish was useful for her children to communicate with their grandparents who are Spanish-dominant. Similar to Smith's (2001) findings, by selecting the dual language program for their children, teachers demonstrate their belief in bilingual instruction and can speak about the benefits of bilingual education.

Like Diana, Cassandra encouraged the bilingualism of her children by enrolling them in a bilingual education program. Cassandra expressed that, unlike her husband, she supported her children being in a bilingual education program even though communication at home took place in English. Specifically, two of her children attended a dual language program in the school district where she taught, although not at the campus where she worked.

Like my husband doesn't like that they're in dual, but I'm for it, I'm ok...so they won't lose their Spanish. 'Cuz like our house, all we speak is English. When they go to grandmas' next door, everything is in Spanish; it's my mom, so I don't want them to lose that. I want them to learn at least a little bit. *Al rato* he [my baby boy] is in pre-k...he's gonna be doing the dual [language] too (Cassandra, Interview, 10/17/13).

One of Cassandra's motivations for enrolling her children in a bilingual program was for them to be able to develop some proficiency in Spanish, mainly to communicate with their maternal grandmother where "everything is in Spanish." It was also interesting that this teacher was already planning for her baby boy to experience the dual language program. This teacher has three older children who have attended schools at the district where she worked. Her oldest son was already attending college and did not receive any bilingual instruction; however, her two other children were in a dual language program. Although her youngest son is almost one year

old, she was already thinking that it will be beneficial for him to receive bilingual instruction as well. Cassandra mentioned that she was happy with the way they implement the program at the school where her children attend, “over there, they do it right” she said. In my perspective, this teacher was very willing to have her youngest son in dual language because she had the opportunity to see the academic progress of her two other children and also because she had this child once she was a bilingual teacher compared to her other children.

Smith (2001) found that, contrary to the claims that bilingual teachers do not choose Spanish language schooling for their children, 60% of the teachers with school-age children sent them to the bilingual program at the magnet school where they taught. In a similar vein, in my study, of the participating teachers with school-age children, 60% have their children enrolled in a dual language program; one at the school district where she teaches at and the other two take their children to another school district, to a school well known for their dual language program.

In contrast to Cassandra, Marisol was concerned with using Spanish as the language to conduct business at home, she mentioned how a few years ago when she had recently moved from Juárez to El Paso she was worried about becoming part of a school where a lot of families (Hispanic and otherwise) favor English as their household language. She strongly encouraged the bilingualism of her children and felt the dual language program they were enrolled in allowed them to develop proficiency in both English and Spanish. She explained the process of getting her children in Escuela Internacional because it was a lottery and she had to be in a waiting list for it. Escuela Internacional is a local school which is well known for having a strong bilingual program, specifically, they implement the dual language program integrating English and Spanish, and students are also introduced to a third language. Students are selected by a lottery process, and if one sibling is accepted, the rest of the siblings are automatically accepted as well.

En la casa hablamos español con mis hijos, están ahí en Escuela Internacional. En la casa nosotros no hablamos inglés como idioma para comunicarnos. Mi hija empezó el primer año porque cuando fue la lotería pues no quedó, entonces estuvo en lista de espera, ya el niño automáticamente entró, el sí ha estado ahí desde kínder. A mí al principio se me

hacía muy difícil porque en Escuela Internacional hay mucha población que habla inglés y muchos hispanos que también hablan en casa mucho inglés, entonces mis hijos llegaron y puro español, nada más el inglés que había aprendido mi hija en kínder y en pre kínder. Y en la casa no le podía ayudar mucho porque todos hablamos español, no es una comunicación en inglés... de hecho en ese tiempo vivíamos con mi mamá, somos vecinas, entonces convivíamos todo en español (Marisol, Interview, 11/1/13).

When Marisol got married she moved from Juárez to El Paso partly because she wanted her children to be raised and schooled in the U.S. When her children were born, they were raised in Spanish. Once the children started attending school, they were enrolled in the bilingual program with the goal they would develop both languages. Spanish was the only language used at home, partly to counterbalance the stronger push for English at school, since Marisol noticed most of the school population communicated in English. These choices of speaking Spanish at home and planning for her children's academic English and Spanish to be developed illustrate Marisol's linguistic motherwork (Ek et al., 2013) and Cook-Gumperz's (2006) idea that minority groups consciously choose to use stigmatized language forms as symbols of resistance to the dominant system. Encouraging the usage of Spanish at home was connected to Marisol's Mexican heritage because this was the language she conducted business in well into adulthood. Spanish was the language she had spoken with her children before they attended school and she wanted them to maintain this language by using it within the intimacy of the household environment but also by having the ability to use it for academic purposes. For Marisol, Spanish was symbolic of emotion and identity and this resonates with González's (2005) idea that different languages do create different worlds.

In contrast to the bilingual schooling of Marisol's children, Miranda talked about the schooling experience of her children which was taking place in English at a private parochial school. Instruction was provided in English and Spanish was taught as a foreign language. This teacher, Miranda attended a private school during her middle and high school years.

Mis hijos están en escuela privada, ahí es puro inglés, y ahí pagan para que les enseñen español porque los papás ven la importancia de tener los dos idiomas. Cuando los papás tienen más, no tanto el nivel económico, sino el nivel académico, se ve la importancia de varios idiomas, no nomás dos (Miranda, Interview, 10/28/13).

Miranda brought forth the point that parents who have a higher level of formal education -not necessarily a higher socioeconomic status- understand the importance of knowing two or more languages. The fact that Miranda mentioned the educational background and socioeconomic status of the parents is very significant because her views about bilingualism derive from these dynamics which prevail in private schooling. A perspective of valuing bilingualism or multilingualism is commonly attributed to people who have higher levels of formal education and who have the social and economic resources to develop language proficiency in one or more languages. This finding resonates with Smith's (2002) explanation that "Spanish language resources were more likely to be tapped from elite bilinguals, including professors and students from local universities, and other professionals with high levels of formal education" (p. 177).

Like Miranda, Felicity also expressed an interest in raising bilingual children. Felicity shared that her children had some level of Spanish proficiency although not as much as she wished. She explained how she had planned for her children to become bilingual by exposing them to both English and Spanish at home -which was the advice a pediatrician had given her at some point. The language separation plan was for her to speak Spanish to the children and her husband would speak English; however, she told me that since her relationship with her husband had always taken place in English it felt unnatural and difficult to communicate with her husband in English and with her children in Spanish.

[My children] do speak Spanish, not as much as I would like for them to speak. I talk to them in Spanish... the pediatrician had told me you need to talk to them in Spanish only and your husband needs to talk to them in English only, but to me it didn't feel natural. My husband is Anglo but he speaks Spanish and Portuguese, but our relationship has

always been in English so it felt awkward. They [my children] can communicate with you [in Spanish] and the accent is probably not as bad as an Anglo. (Felicity, Interview, 10/23/13).

In Felicity's household there was a stronger presence of English and it can be concluded that as a result her children can communicate in Spanish socially to some degree, but not academically. Felicity described her children's pronunciation or "accent" when speaking Spanish "not as bad as an Anglo," because she explained that her children can roll their r's. She was inferring that native Spanish speakers roll their r's, which is true; nonetheless, there are many more characteristics of speaking Spanish proficiently. For example, knowing what register to use depending on the context, having an ample vocabulary, and being able to carry a conversation, just to name a few characteristics. According to Risager (2006), the individual develops his or her linguistic resources throughout life, and both the first language and possible later additional languages are constantly being developed if they are not forgotten or repressed.

#### **4.3 LATINA DL TEACHERS' BELIEFS ABOUT LANGUAGE**

Beliefs about language among the seven teachers were shaped by the languages they grew up with and the places they were raised in, thus, immigration status. In most cases, the teachers viewed Spanish and English positively, while Spanglish was seen as an improper form of language use. In Ofelia García (2009) explains that bilingualism is strongly linked to social and political constructions and cannot be analyzed without reference to social order and bilingual educators must clearly understand the sociopolitical context that creates bilingualism. Language ideologies focus on the sociohistorical, sociopolitical, and socioeconomic conditions. For the last half a century a monolingual ideology has driven U.S. language policies towards the 30 million Spanish-speaking Latinos in this country (Murillo, Villenas, Galván et al., 2010). The concept of linguistic ideology has emerged as a way to link linguistic practices to broader sociopolitical systems (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994). For these scholars, attitudes, values, and beliefs about language are always ideological and enmeshed in social

systems of subordination of groups, relating to ethnicity, class, and gender; the social context can prevent individuals from accessing certain linguistic resources or adopting new identities. In most cases, the teachers viewed Spanish and English positively, while Spanglish was seen as an improper form of language use. In order to fully understand the teachers' views of language development and socialization it is important to look at their linguistic biography and at the circumstances under which they acquired various languages (Murillo, Villenas, Galván et al., 2010; Risager, 2006).

#### **4.3.1 Language ideologies about Spanish**

From the four teachers (Felicity, Miranda, Dianna, Cassandra) who shared their ideologies about Spanish, three viewed it as a valuable asset because it has helped them in their professional life, for example, to communicate with the parents and to teach their students the academic language; these three teachers grew up in Spanish speaking households in comparison to one teacher who would communicate in English at home. In the next excerpt, Felicity (who teaches both the English and Spanish of the DL program) talked about how valuable Spanish was for her, since it allowed her to communicate with the parents of her students. Felicity argued: “El idioma [español] en sí me ayuda increíblemente. Yo no me podría comunicar con los papás aunque tuviera un grupo totalmente inglés, hay muchos papás que no hablan inglés” (Interview, 10/23/13).

Although Felicity brought forth that many parents were not proficient in English, she relied on her linguistic background to use her Spanish in the professional arena. She shared that her proficiency in Spanish has helped to secure previous employment both in education as a bilingual teacher and in business which was her professional background before she became a teacher. For example, she explained that since her bachelor's degree was in business, when she was a manager at a retail store for women's clothes in Arkansas, she would be the only one able to communicate to her customers in Spanish, and they would feel comfortable talking to her and they would buy more merchandise. Additionally, she explained that once she actually got hired

as a bilingual teacher because she mentioned that she had been born and raised in Mexico and that she was a native Spanish speaker. She knew this because once she got hired, some teachers from the search committee told her that they thought she was Anglo because of her last name and probably because her skin, eyes, and hair are light-colored, and she speaks English very well. For Felicity, being bilingual, and highly proficient in Spanish has provided her access to many professional opportunities in the different places she has lived in throughout the US. She valued bilingualism and completely disagreed with the use of Spanglish.

Like Felicity, Miranda felt that bilingualism should allow speakers to use one language or another, not mix them both, like in the case of Spanglish. Although she completely disagreed with the practice of mixing English and Spanish when speaking, there were many occasions when she would code switch while teaching. She viewed Spanish as a professional resource she used to teach and to communicate with colleagues and parents.

I feel really well prepared so I don't feel like I'm cheating them [the students] and I give them a good level of Spanish, for them to learn it correctly and then that way they could take it with them even if they transfer into English eventually. To me it's very important the way they speak it [Spanish] and the way they write it so I do make a lot of emphasis on that. (Miranda, Interview, 10/28/13).

Miranda stated how confident she felt in teaching her students, exposing them to a good level of Spanish, thus, "not cheating them." She also mentioned that she wanted her students to learn as much Spanish as possible in the early years since they might transfer to English instruction eventually, which in most cases happens at the upper elementary levels in transitional bilingual programs and after the elementary years in most local dual language programs. Miranda taught the Spanish component of the program and communicated in Spanish with most of her colleagues and her students' parents. This finding captures Guerrero's (2003) idea that membership in the bilingual education teacher community entails the ability to communicate in academic Spanish and use the language for various educational purposes.



Although Diana taught in English and felt that her academic Spanish was at a third grade level, she viewed Spanish as a resource to make connections between the teacher, students, and parents. She understood there were different varieties of a language including standard and nonstandard. For her, it was important to provide access to the academic language to her students but without denigrating the nonstandard language variations that some students learn at home.

Cuando empecé mi internship en verdad empecé a ver qué es lo que es ser una maestra bilingüe, especialmente en esta comunidad. Tuve una maestra [que] era la parte de español, y ella los corregía [a los niños], por ejemplo, les decía los hoyitos del papel, no, son las perforaciones. O sea que les decía las palabras correctas no las palabras regionales, yo notaba que hacía eso, y si es cierto porque no me gustaría a mí que una maestra enseñara el lenguaje incorrecto. Esa misma maestra mencionó, les tenemos que enseñar la manera correcta pero no podemos hacerle el ridículo a palabras que usan en la casa. Por ejemplo, que me dicen “yo vivo en una traila,” no se dice traila, es casa móvil, pero como oyen que sus papás dicen eso, que no les debemos decir eso está incorrecto. Eso fue algo que se me pegó mucho cuando dijo es que aquí [en la comunidad] los adultos así hablan, para ellos no es incorrecto, no debemos de hacerles el ridículo. Debemos decir, se puede decir así, pero así también, para que sepan la palabra correcta y cada vez que los niños dicen algo así me acuerdo de esa maestra [cuando] les respondo. (Diana, Interview, 10/29/13).

Diana’s excerpt was very significant because it shaped the way she viewed the linguistic practices of her students and their parents. She described a learning experience from her teacher preparation, specifically during her internship, which she did in the same local school district where she was teaching. Based on what she learned from her mentor teacher regarding local language practices, this teacher discussed how she was careful when correcting students’ Spanish; she favored an approach where the words that were used at home were not dismissed; however, she emphasized the standard words of the Spanish language. The mentor teacher who Diana talked about in the above section illustrates Field’s (2011) point about how Spanish

speakers help to replenish the supply of native speakers as models for native Spanish pronunciation and vocabulary. Moreover, the author expressed that a majority of U.S.-born Latinos speak English natively and Spanish in varying degrees, from full to zero proficiency. Four of the participating teachers, Andrea, Diana, Miranda, and Marissa are examples of U.S. born Latinas with varying degrees of proficiency in Spanish.

U.S.-based Latinos who migrate at an early age also develop varying degrees of proficiency in their heritage language, in the case of these teachers, Spanish. Given the wide spectrum of language proficiency among the teachers, they also held various perspectives about language. For example, Cassandra held some contradictory views about language. On one hand, she viewed proper Spanish, the kind of academic language learned by being schooled in Mexico as an asset, when referring to her older siblings. Nonetheless, she also disagreed that people who come with academic Spanish from Mexico to attend college in the US should be taught in Spanish, which is seldom the case. While Cassandra acknowledged that Spanglish is not proper, she agreed this is the kind of language she learned while growing up.

[Mis] hermanos, ellos me hablan en español, les contesto en inglés. Sí, porque también se rien de mí, me dicen “Eres maestra bilingüe pero tu español está muy feo” pero porque ellos saben español, proper Spanish? Sí, porque ellos fueron a la escuela en México pero yo no. I don’t know proper Spanish and my mom hates that. (Cassandra, Interview, 10/17/13).

The previous quote was meaningful because Cassandra explained the dynamics of being a receptive bilingual, meaning she was able to understand a lot more Spanish than what she could articulate. Cassandra was the youngest child of a large family of eight siblings and she was the only one who was entirely schooled in the U.S. in English. She expressed how she got criticized for not speaking standard, “proper Spanish” compared to her siblings who had schooling experiences in Mexico and were able to communicate in standard Spanish. It was significant that she concluded by stating that her mom “hates” that she does not know standard Spanish. Cassandra explained to me that her mom and siblings would talk to her in Spanish and

she would respond in English. During my observations in her classroom, she preferred to address me in English even if I approached her in Spanish. Cassandra's preference to communicate with me in English is closely related to González's (2005) findings that many second and third-generation borderland women experience "linguistic insecurity" in Spanish because of the erasure of native language skills in the schools and they are reluctant to engage foreign-born Spanish speakers in conversations because they may feel the Spanish they speak is substandard.

As shown in the previous example, Cassandra expressed beliefs about Spanish mostly addressing her family. Additionally, she also discussed her beliefs about users of Spanish outside of her family nucleus. Her beliefs about the Spanish language and its users were expressed while she made reference to the time she was enrolled in a teacher preparation program recently, about three years ago.

I saw that when I was at UTEP I didn't think it was fair that just because they came from Mexico they had to have all their classes in Spanish...when I had to take them in English. Why can't they take it in English? And they're still getting the same thing I'm getting. (Cassandra, Interview, 10/17/13).

Cassandra explained that at that time she went to college, students who came from Mexico completed all their coursework in Spanish at the local university. She questioned why the classes were tailored for native Spanish speakers when she had to complete her coursework in English. Moreover, she finished the statement by expressing it was unfair for them to get 'the same thing' she was getting, meaning the teaching degree in bilingual education she obtained. Cassandra probably had this perception because she might have had classmates in some classes who were native Spanish speakers, and they commonly addressed each other in Spanish. Perhaps in a few of the courses, some students might have been allowed to participate in Spanish. Assuring that Mexican nationals who attended the local university had all their classes in Spanish seems to be a distorted view of what actually happens in higher education; degree plans are standard and do not usually get tailored to accommodate people from different nationalities to offer them all coursework in their native languages. Even in the specific case of an

undergraduate degree in bilingual education at the local university, only a couple of courses are actually delivered in Spanish. Cassandra's version of language dynamics during her teacher preparation coursework was likely influenced by her personal experiences with speakers of Spanish in particular social environments; there is a politics of speaking, which implicates speaker and hearer in ways that are ideologically loaded, and which may be the basis of empowerment or discrimination (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Risager, 2006).

#### **4.3.2 Ideologies and nonstandard varieties: negative attitudes**

From the seven participating bilingual teachers, the ones who openly expressed negative views about codeswitching or speaking Spanglish were the first grade teachers, Felicity, Miranda, and Cassandra. Felicity consciously made an effort to keep both languages separate, whether she was having an informal conversation or while delivering instruction. Miranda also thought it was not optimal to mix languages while speaking; however, she would constantly codeswitch during conversations or during instruction, perhaps unconsciously. Cassandra's perspective was that Spanglish was not proper, nonetheless, that was the only version of Spanish she had learned while growing up.

I know the Spanglish, that's how I learned it, I mean because I knew the Spanish the way my mom taught me but then once I started school I picked up English more. We didn't have dual [language], we didn't have *que* Spanish class, they just put me in [English]. (Cassandra, Interview, 10/17/13).

Cassandra was aware that mixing languages, in this case Spanish and English, resulted in Spanglish which she knew is commonly viewed as inappropriate or as portraying lack of full proficiency in either language. This teacher explained that she had the influence of her mother's Spanish at home before schooling, but her schooling experiences in English only had a stronger influence in her language use and preference since she never received any formal instruction in Spanish. As shown in the previous example, it is interesting to note that even when Cassandra was speaking English she would occasionally insert a word in Spanish and this was a common

practice. Cassandra's view of Spanglish illustrates Filed's (2011) point about how Spanish is often stigmatized in schools and in society where it is labeled as "Spanglish," meaning a mixed variety.

In sharp contrast to Cassandra, Felicity would chose to communicate entirely in English or Spanish, but she would not mix the languages. Felicity strongly believed that people who are born and raised in Mexico speak Spanish correctly (like herself) in contrast to US-born Mexicans who mix languages resulting in the incorrect use of Spanish or Spanglish.

There is a huge difference between the people that were born and raised over there [in Mexico] and the people that are second generation Hispanics that live here [in the U.S.], not only in the way they think but the way they speak, I know there's different ways to say things but there are a lot of things that are not said correctly or the Spanglish, I can't stand it! I told you when I was in California I started to, not to lose my Spanish, but it is not fresh right there, you have to think, and it is probably what happens with them, it is easier for them to throw the words, so I understand why they do it. (Felicity, Interview, 10/23/13).

Felicity explained that second generation Hispanics are almost "like another race." Since she believed in the purism of languages, she viewed the codeswitching practices of Mexican Americans as negative, this perspective is closely related to González's (2005) study which captured the derogation of Chicano Spanish by native Spanish speakers is influenced by issues of class, prestige, and citizenship. Felicity explained that when she was temporarily immersed in a English-only environment in the US while in high school, sometimes it was hard for her to think in Spanish, and it was easier to "throw the word" in English. She understood this as the main reason as to why people mix languages.

Similar to Felicity, Miranda felt uneasy about mixing Spanish and English and this was her expectation for her students as well. This teacher delivered instruction in Spanish and constantly corrected her students for them to "speak it right," meaning for students to refrain from speaking Spanglish.

When they [students] would speak their *Spanglish* I would always correct them...they said “pushar” and I would tell them that word doesn’t exist. I’d just tell them that word does not exist, that’s an English word and it is slang, it is empujar, and some of them corrected it. I don’t know if they would keep it at home or not but here [they did]. I instill that in kids a lot...I tell them when we speak Spanish I always tell them that it’s important to speak it right, I mean not the Spanglish, the funny stuff with the Spanglish (Miranda, Interview, 10/28/13).

When students used a combination of Spanish and English in their speech, Miranda was concerned because she viewed it as using language incorrectly, a negative practice which included using slang words in English. This is one example of how Spanglish or US Latino Spanish is often stigmatized in schools and society (Murillo, Villenas, Galván et al., 2010). Miranda was teaching the Spanish component of the program and in several occasions she would sprinkle English words into her instructions which seemed counterintuitive to her belief that languages should be strictly separated. During my observations in her classroom, the first few weeks I would address her in Spanish but she would respond to me in English, then for a few weeks I approached in English, and as time passed, we eventually communicated in Spanish.

#### **4.3.3 Language dynamics with colleagues and parents at La Escuelita**

Historic communities have a wide range of proficiencies in the various languages, so we might anticipate learners’ varieties and a wide range of attitudes towards Spanish and English and their speakers, depending on attitudes towards cultural assimilation. In general, in the U.S., Spanish is not perceived as an asset, even students who manage to acquire English quickly enough to succeed in school are never rewarded or acknowledged for having such a valuable language skill (Field, 2011; Murillo et al., 2010). In general, from four teachers who discuss how they use language at school outside of teaching, two (Miranda and Marisol) communicated with colleagues in Spanish and two (Marissa and Cassandra) in English. A couple of the teachers mentioned that parents at La Escuelita did not speak English.

Miranda expressed that she viewed proficiency in Spanish as an asset. For this reason, Miranda questioned why teachers, in this case referring specifically to bilingual teachers at her campus, did not speak Spanish to their children. More specifically, I think Miranda was referring to the other teachers in her grade level since they communicate in English with their children. Miranda shared: “I struggle personally because you could ask, how many teachers in school speak Spanish to their children? I think maybe like one or two because you don’t even pass it down to your own family.” (Miranda, Interview, 10/28/13).

Miranda criticized why teachers did not teach the Spanish language to their children; she explained that she did speak Spanish to her children, with the purpose of developing their bilingualism since they only receive English instruction at the private school they attend. She also expressed that interacting in standard Spanish with her students was important because that way they had access to good role models, specifically, knowledgeable users of Spanish. Miranda externalized that she wished for her students to see that Mexicans are people who can be professionals, who speak Spanish properly, and who can make money. As a teacher she hoped to somehow counteract the negative stereotypes her students are exposed to, for example, she made reference to the news on television where “they just talk about undocumented immigrants”.

Regarding the language of communication among colleagues at La Escuelita, Miranda talked about how at her campus, groups of teachers form based on language proficiency and preference. She explained how the majority of teachers at La Escuelita speak Spanish and there are only a few colleagues who are monolingual English speakers.

There’s a few [colleagues] that don’t speak Spanish, so we speak to them in English, but the rest of us, the majority we speak Spanish. I think people attract, just language. It’s a group of us that just speaks Spanish. [I communicate with parents] in Spanish...I have maybe a few that just speak English, younger moms that do speak English. (Miranda, Interview, 10/28/13).

This teacher who delivered instruction in Spanish also mentioned that she communicated with parents in Spanish, except for a couple of young parents who are English proficient and

prefer to communicate in English. Miranda's quote reflects Risager's (2006) notion that the teachers' version of a language is influenced by her personal experiences with speakers of that language and in particular social environments. This finding is significant because this teacher described how in her experience, teachers form social groups based on language proficiency.

In contrast to Miranda, Cassandra delivered instruction in English and she expressed her views about the language proficiency of her students' parents. Cassandra explained that a lot of parents at La Escuelita do not have any English proficiency and she also discussed how she communicated with her colleagues.

Aquí en esta escuela muchos padres no saben nada de inglés *so* tengo que usar el español. Soy la maestra de inglés. Todo lo que mando a casa tiene que ser en español. Y con las maestras sí hablamos en inglés y en español, siempre se me sale el inglés y me comienzan a hablar en español y yo les contesto en inglés y nomas porque con los demás pues siempre ha sido en inglés (Cassandra, Interview, 10/17/13).

Cassandra told me that at the beginning of the semester, prior to sending everything in Spanish, she would send homework in English and that some parents complained because they were not able to help their children to complete the work. Since Cassandra's assignment was to teach the English component of the program, she expressed some disagreement in having to send all documents (e.g., homework, notes) written in Spanish to her students' parents. I would argue that part of the rationale for having bilingual certified teachers teach the DL program is to have practitioners who can and are willing to collaborate with bilingual or Spanish speaking parents. Regarding her language use with colleagues, this teacher mostly communicated in English even if the other teachers addressed her in Spanish. Our dynamic was very similar since typically, when would approach her in Spanish, she would answer back in English. Like in the example presented above, linguistic differences within the community become seen as sociolinguistic deficits (Cook-Gumperz, 2006; Mitchell & Weiler 1991).

Like Cassandra, Marissa taught the English component of the program, but was also responsible for teaching a small amount of Spanish. She was aware that she was still adding to



her own Spanish language repertoire, particularly because of her experience in learning Spanish as an adult in college, as she completed her teacher preparation program. Prior to college, this veteran teacher grew up with English at home in addition to English-only schooling.

Tenemos conferencias con los padres, se les pregunta en qué idioma gusta platicar y pues como nuestra área es casi puro hispano, me dicen pues español Miss --- entonces en eso tratamos de platicar en español y si se me traba la lengua les digo ¿cómo se dice esto? Y voy aprendiendo, siempre estamos aprendiendo algo nuevo. Entonces los padres se comunican conmigo, también así me ayudan, igual con los niños, me ayudan también. Les digo que escribo en el pizarrón en español y siempre me están agarrando con los errores “Miss --- aquí va la “a” no la “o” Ah! *So* también son bien recibidos los niños cuando me corrigen, yo no soy enojona de ay no, yo estoy bien. Los niños, también ellos son mis maestros para ayudarme en el español. (Marissa, Interview, 10/25/13).

Marissa positioned her students and their parents as her teachers of Spanish. Marissa gave the example of how the students correct her Spanish sometimes, specifically when using “a” or “o” at the end of words in Spanish, this happened during an interview when she would sometimes use *colegos* instead of *colegas*. Since in English it is just colleagues, there is no need to make this type of distinctions compared to Spanish. This interview took place in Spanish at my request; she accepted but this was the only time we interacted in Spanish. I requested this interview in Spanish because with all the participants I wanted to have at least one interview in the language in which we hardly interacted. In Marissa’s case, the parents, and more importantly the children, her bilingual students are positioned as her Spanish teachers. This position where Marissa situated herself as a learner, was particularly interesting because Marissa’s rapport with the children and her teaching style were very traditional, meaning it was mostly teacher-centered and she expected the students to be very quiet and in their best behaviors at all times; she preferred for students to speak after they had raised their hands and asked her for permission to do so.

Marissa discussed her preferred language to communicate with her colleagues and the principal at her campus and the rationale for her language preference. She explained how she spoke English most of the time in different contexts. With colleagues and the principal she clearly stated that she communicated in English, not Spanish, and this practice parallels her language use at home.

Marissa: Con mis colegas yo hablo en inglés, no les hablo en español. Cuando hablo con la directora es todo en inglés, el [poco] español es estrictamente aquí con los niños, lo mismo si voy a la casa es en inglés y eso es por mis padres porque nos dijeron tienes que hablar en inglés, desde chicos. (Marissa, Interview, 10/15/13).

Marissa taught in Spanish for a certain amount of minutes because it was required, but in one of our conversation at the beginning of the school year, she had expressed she was not happy about having to do this because she preferred to just teach in English. This preference towards English likely derives from her parents' push for English proficiency since she was a child. Smith (2002) observed that some people who grew up English-dominant, "credited their parents' school experiences with their decision to raise the family in English" (p. 20). Marissa is a teacher who shared this experience, while growing up, she was told by her parents that she had to speak English. Mitchell & Weiler (1991) affirm that the legitimacy of standard literacy develops at the sociopolitical level, where language is associated with national unification and mobility.

In contrast to Marissa, Marisol taught the Spanish component of the program and for this reason she communicated with her students and their parents mostly in Spanish. Sometimes she addressed English-dominant students in English if she needed to give them instructions outside of the classroom, for example, out in the hallway or in the cafeteria.

Since I'm teaching the Spanish component, with my students I always speak Spanish, sometimes I talk to them in English in the hallway or in the cafeteria to give them some instructions but with my colleagues, the majority speaks Spanish. [My partner teacher] talks English all the time and she is learning Spanish too. The parents, most of them speak Spanish so when we have parent-teacher conferences I go with the language they

talk to me. I ask them, do you prefer in English or Spanish? Most of them speak Spanish; they feel more confident in Spanish. The majority [speak] Spanish but they talk in English sometimes.

Marisol mentioned that her partner teacher spoke English all the time and for this reason, they communicated in English. Regarding communication with the parents, it took place mostly in Spanish since it is the language they are proficient and confident in. This section ended with positioning the parents as having some bilingual skills since they speak Spanish but also “talk in English sometimes.” This perspective of parents as emergent bilinguals might be shaped by the teacher’s own experience of becoming bilingual as an adult. This finding resonates with Risager’s (2006) notion about how an individual moves over the years through a number of networks and is thereby influenced when it comes to linguistic practice and the utilization of the linguistic resources that have been developed.

One of the main findings is that teachers’ identities are not limited to being Mexican or Mexican Americans; rather, their identities are multiple and constantly negotiated as indicated by the ways in which they have cultivated and enacted their linguistic repertoires in two languages, with various levels of proficiency and for diverse purposes. The teachers cover a broad range from being closely tied to Spanish and Mexico to being more identified with the U.S. and English. Similar to González’s (2005) findings, with the majority of the participating teachers, Spanish is indexical of identity, heritage, and tradition. English is given an instrumental load, a commodity to be traded for access to the larger communicative sphere.

Based on my findings, I argue that within the context of the U.S.-Mexico border, bilingualism and biliteracy are the result of countless meaningful experiences with two languages. Some of the meaningful experiences that are particular to border residents and were embedded in the participants’ linguistic identities, included having and visiting family members living in Mexico, for example Spanish-speaking grandparents and siblings, like in the case of Diana, Andrea, and Cassandra. Another common practice is to live in the Mexican side of the border and attend school in the U.S., either as a child or as an adult, as experienced by Andrea,

Felicity, and Marisol. In the case of Marisol, for a period of time she lived in the U.S., but kept commuting to Mexico to work as a school teacher. Most of the participating teachers, six out of seven, had a concern for raising bilingual children to varying degrees and through different means, but they ultimately saw bilingualism as an asset. Furthermore, the frontera is fertile ground for bilingualism and biliteracy to develop since there are ample opportunities to engage in two languages throughout the community.

Language learning, language use, and ideas about speakers of a given language are strongly shaped by the family environment, and schooling, and whether one has a closer connection to Mexico or the U.S., or easily navigates between both worlds. The levels of bilingualism in the seven teachers I studied cover a broad range, even when they teach at the same public school with the same Texas issued credentials. González's (2005) also found that within the borderlands, ideas about languages are neither uniform nor fixed. Drawing on teachers' personal and professional biographies, as well as institutional and cultural values and attitudes, identity offers a more complex way of thinking about teaching (Benson & Cooker, 2013). The linguistic practices of Mexican-origin Latina dual language teachers on the border illustrate the dynamics of structure and agency. It is important to remember that educators should cross the ultimate border as described by González, Moll & Amanti (2005):

The ultimate border -the border between knowledge and power- can be crossed only when educational institutions no longer reify culture, when lived experiences become validated as a source of knowledge, and when the process of how knowledge is constructed and translated between groups located within nonsymmetrical relations of power is questioned (p. 42)

Social approaches to language education research have reconceptualized language identities as multiple, dynamic, and contested. For women of Mexican-origin, including my participants, the hybridity of drawing from multiple semiotic systems and negotiating multiple identities is embedded in the continuum of daily life (Benson & Cooker, 2013; González, 2005). This chapter illustrated how identity development is an important outcome of language learning,

and the context where this learning takes place. In the next chapter, I will present data to discuss how the linguistic identities of the seven bilingual teachers are reflected in their pedagogical practice within a dual language setting.

## **Chapter 5: Latinas K-2 Dual Language Teachers' Pedagogical Practices**

The previous chapter presented findings about the teachers' linguistic identities. Such identities were not limited to being Mexican or Mexican Americans, their identities proved multiple and constantly negotiated as their linguistic repertoires in English and Spanish varied widely. The teachers ranged from being closely tied to Spanish and Mexico to being more identified with the U.S. and English. Within the context of the U.S.-Mexico border, varying degrees of bilingualism and biliteracy development result from constant meaningful experiences with two languages. Furthermore, the frontera provided ample opportunities to engage in two languages throughout the community. Language learning, language use, and language ideologies are shaped by the family environment, schooling experiences, and transnational trajectories. The levels of bilingualism and biliteracy in the seven teachers covered a broad spectrum, although they held the same teaching credentials. Identity development is closely tied to the context of language learning. In this chapter, I will present data to discuss how the linguistic identities of the seven DL teachers were enacted in their pedagogical practice.

In conjunction with teacher interviews, classroom observations revealed that pedagogical practices were influenced by the linguistic identities of the teachers. Instruction delivery at La Escuelita supported some guiding principles of DL education; for example, language separation was determined by having two teachers and two classrooms (Lindholm-Leary, 1990; 2001; 2009). One significant role of the DL program is guiding language interactions to integrate language and content (Cloud, Genesse & Hayaman, 2000; Thomas & Collier, 2012); therefore, teachers need to be skillful at designing a classroom environment where children participate in dialogue. Data reported from interviews captured the participants' teaching philosophies and attitudes towards language teaching and learning. Observational data reported examples of how teachers delivered instruction in English and Spanish in DL settings, and their willingness or refusal to accept contributions in the "unofficial" language of the day. The data also illustrated the dynamics of children's language use as they responded in English, Spanish or some

combination of these two languages, and a glimpse of their ability to develop early literacy in English and Spanish was captured. During the interviews, the teachers shared their teaching trajectories and philosophies, to give insight on how they viewed their roles in their classroom, what outcomes they wished to accomplish as practitioners, and how they perceived their pedagogical practice. The teachers' beliefs about language learning were exemplified by the language they preferred to teach which was partly based on their language proficiency positioned within the continua of biliteracy (Hornberger, 1989; 2003). The teachers' positions along the continua were determined by self-reporting, along with my informal evaluation of language proficiency displayed during interviews and classroom observations. Teachers' language use during instruction exemplified their attitudes towards translanguaging practices (García, 2009) during instruction.

In this chapter 5, I develop a case study for the seven K-2 bilingual teachers, Andrea, Diana, Miranda, Cassandra, Felicity, Marisol, and Marissa. This approach allows me to highlight several key aspects of their pedagogy while analyzing how their linguistic identities and philosophies shaped such pedagogical practice in these borderland DL classrooms. The following table illustrates the teachers' academic backgrounds and their professional trajectories, including their teaching preparation, experience, and current assignments.

Table 5.1 Participants' Academic Background and Teaching Trajectories

Name (pseudonyms)	National Origin	K-12 Schooling	Bilingual Education	Academic Degree	Teacher Preparation	Yrs Teaching Exp.	Yrs DL Teaching Exp.	Grade level	Lang of Instr.
Andrea	U.S	U.S.	K-2 transitional	Bachelor's Education	US traditional	7	3	K	Sp
Diana	U.S.	U.S.	K-3 transitional	Bachelor's Education	US traditional	4	4	K	Eng

Miranda	U.S.	U.S.	K-3 transitional	Bachelor's Business M.Ed.	US ATCP	17	13	1 <sup>st</sup>	Sp
Cassandra	MX	U.S.	No BED; mono Eng	Bachelor's Education	US traditional	3	2	1 <sup>st</sup>	Sp
Felicity	MX	MX	K-12	Bachelor's Business	US ATCP	10	3	1 <sup>st</sup>	Sp/Eng (Self- Cont.)
Marisol	MX	MX	No BED; mono Sp	Bachelor's Accounting	MX Normalista; US ATCP	17	3	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Sp
Marissa	U.S.	U.S.	No BED; mono Eng	Bachelor's Education	US traditional	28	6	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Eng

## 5.1 KINDERGARTEN

### 5.1.1 Case 1: Andrea

#### Teacher Background

When Andrea began attending college her plan was to get a bachelor's degree in marketing; however, she had the opportunity to work as a tutor and found this experience very rewarding. She decided to teach kindergarten because the children at this young age have so much to learn. When reflecting back on her teacher preparation program at the local university, she mentioned that all her coursework took place in English. This is relevant given she was being prepared to be certified as a bilingual teacher. Describing a couple of courses that came to mind when discussing her language requirements and proficiency, she mentioned she took an ethics course in Spanish because her peers took it as well; however, she mentioned it was difficult in to write in academic Spanish, particularly essays. Andrea explained how she made the decision to



become a bilingual certified teacher and she highlighted that her teacher preparation coursework was completed “all in English,” even a class about bilingual education:

Yo no estaba estudiando esta carrera antes, me cambié. Era [estudiante de] mercadotecnia. Empecé a trabajar con niños, especialmente en tutorías, me gustó muchísimo. Me gusta ver como aprenden. Me gustó especialmente en kínder, llegan, no saben absolutamente nada. [Durante mi preparación docente] pues todo era en inglés. En la universidad tomé una clase en español de ética y eso fue porque mis amigas estaban en esa clase y sí se me hizo difícil cuando teníamos que escribir los ensayos. Tomé una clase que se trataba de la importancia de la educación bilingüe especialmente en Texas y [también] estaban diciendo como en California no querían ya el programa bilingüe, eso fue en inglés. [Otro requisito fue] tomar un examen en español, tenía que estar hablando con una grabadora y dar un discurso, alguien ahí estaba escuchando nada más. (Andrea, Interview, 11/6/13).

Thinking back on classes Andrea took once admitted to the teacher education program she attended at the local borderland university, she remembered some information from a bilingual education course, where she learned about bilingual education in Texas and California, and this course was delivered in English. Andrea also described how her Spanish proficiency was assessed towards the completion of her teacher preparation program, during the oral component of the exam she had to give an impromptu speech to be recorded while someone was in the room monitoring her. This is one portion of the Texas state test, which determines if a future teacher fulfills the Spanish language requirement to become certified as a bilingual practitioner in Texas. Although Andrea was proficient in Spanish, interview data showed on several occasions she felt she lacked the academic Spanish necessary to teach higher grade levels. Her access to academic Spanish was limited during her K-12 schooling experiences, since she attended a transitional bilingual education program during her early schooling, but this excerpt exemplifies how Andrea also had limited access to academic Spanish during her teacher

preparation even though she was studying to become a bilingual certified teacher at a university located at the borderlands region.

Even though Andrea taught the Spanish component of the dual program, official business like work-related meetings and trainings both on campus and at central office were facilitated in English and Andrea participated in English in these settings. With most colleagues, Andrea spoke Spanish and she spoke English with a few colleagues. For example, with her partner teacher, Diana, who taught the English component of the DL program, Andrea spoke both English and Spanish; English when they were talking about their students and lessons and Spanish during informal settings such as during lunch. With another kindergarten teacher who taught a monolingual English section, Andrea spoke English. Then I also saw Andrea speak Spanish with Miranda, the second grade teacher who taught in Spanish. The reading interventionist for the early grades also spoke Spanish predominantly and Andrea addressed her in Spanish. It seems that Andrea chose to address her colleagues either in English or Spanish depending on what language they preferred and what language they were stronger in. Andrea explained that it helped her to be bilingual, to be proficient in English because most of her teacher preparation was done in English. Later on in her teaching career, Andrea would like to get pursue a master's degree in education with a focus in Curriculum and Instruction.

Andrea had the opportunity to describe her experience teaching in a dual language setting, and she compared the school she teaches at, La Escuelita to a local school known for its successful implementation of dual language schooling school wide. She mentioned the program at that school is well implemented unlike her school, La Escuelita, where she felt that the children were not learning Spanish or English.

Me gusta mucho el programa de Escuela Internacional porque esa sí es realmente una escuela dedicada al lenguaje dual. Aquí desafortunadamente no, entonces el programa no está bien hecho. Entonces los niños no están aprendiendo ni en español ni en inglés. Lo que pasa es que allá por ejemplo tienen a niños que hablan inglés y tienen a niños que hablan español. Y los maestros están muy bien preparados pero pues ahí les dan el apoyo

que necesitan, les dan el entrenamiento adecuado, les dan lo que necesitan para ellos poderles enseñar a los niños. Tengo cinco años de maestra y he enseñado kínder y primero. Este es mi tercer año en el programa de lenguaje dual. (Andrea, Interview, 11/6/13).

In contrast to La Escuelita, Andrea mentioned the student population as a relevant factor at the school she favors, since there are children who are English-dominant and Spanish-dominant (Andrea, Interview, 11/6/13). Andrea also credited that school with having teachers who are very well prepared because teachers have the necessary support, resources, and training in order to teach the students. Andrea has five years of teaching experience and has taught the Spanish component of the dual language program during three years. Andrea explained that the way they implement the program at La Escuelita is that in the morning, the students stay with their main or homeroom teacher and then they switch in the afternoon, every other day (10/17/13). For example, Andrea provided instruction in Spanish during the language arts block in the morning which included literacy development including reading, writing, and I Station, a computer based reading program which all teachers were required to monitor. In the afternoon, after lunch, her students would go to her partner teacher who would provide instruction in English for the rest of the subjects which included math, science, and social studies.

Andrea taught the Spanish component of the kindergarten class, thus, she was identified as a Two Way Bilingual (TWB) teacher. Interestingly, she expressed that she would have been comfortable with teaching in English as well since she believed that realistically, for attending college, students need to be proficient in English. Andrea explained she tried to push more English even though she taught the Spanish component because she wanted her students to learn English because “by the time they get to middle school it’s just in English” (Interview, 11/19/13).

### **Classroom Setting**

At the beginning of the school year this class had 26 students. It was a large class, especially for kindergarten; there were 14 boys and 12 girls. Both DL kindergarten teachers had

large classes and after the first six weeks of school, another DL kindergarten section (self-contained) was open to alleviate the overcrowding. Andrea shared that her students had different experiences with previous school attendance, for example, some children had attended prekindergarten either at La Escuelita or elsewhere, while some children were attending school for the very first time. At the entrance to the classroom, there were cubbyholes to the right side of the room against the wall, labeled with students' names. On one of my early visits to the classroom at the beginning of the school year, I noticed that this class was fairly crowded, and a couple of students sat at the teacher's desk which is a small kidney-shaped table. I sat down at this table next to two students while the teacher was walking around to monitor the rest of the children who sat together in small groups. Initially, I thought the two students were sitting there because the teacher wanted to monitor them closely, but the teacher explained that she had such a big class, there was no room for students to sit elsewhere but at her desk.

In this class, for the last part of the day, the children played centers at their tables, where they used various manipulatives. The teacher provided an activity basket to each table and told the students they could move around if they wished, but there should only be four students per table. The centers were: colorful Legos, plastic counting bears, plastic connecting circles, plastic chains, and plastic bugs (Fieldnotes, 9/17/13). This classroom did not seem as colorful and decorated as other kinder classrooms, and although I didn't bring it up, Andrea did. She mentioned that she used to be a teacher who would always stay late to fix her classroom, but now that she has a baby she goes home as soon as the school day ends. She also explained that she used to spend a lot of out of pocket money for classroom decorations and materials, but students usually destroyed those things. Another constraint she mentioned was fact that teachers are only given one half day to get the classroom ready right before the beginning of the school year, which is not enough time.

Most of the environmental print in this kindergarten classroom was concentrated on the calendar area, which was next to the chalkboard and in front of a colorful rug where the children sat to do calendar math. This calendar area was a bilingual space; there were some posters that

had information written in English and some in Spanish, for example, meses del año, number chart from 1 to 100, sonidos iniciales, U.S. coins pictures and values, figuras geométricas, and the weather is \_\_\_\_\_. The objectives for language arts, math, science, and social studies were printed out in English and posted next to the calendar area. (Andrea, Fieldnotes, 10/7/13).

### **Teacher-Student Language Use**

The teacher spoke Spanish most of the time in this classroom. The kindergarten students would talk to the teacher mostly in Spanish, but a few would also address her in English at times. Most students spoke Spanish amongst themselves, except for a couple who chose to communicate in English with their peers and the teacher. Some students would also communicate by combining some English and Spanish constantly, yet the students mostly talked in Spanish to each other. The students addressed Andrea mostly as Ms. Andrea or maestra, and occasionally as “teacher.”

Calendar math provided a space for many students to participate because they would raise their hand and the teacher would call on different students. At this time, the teacher pointed to different posters of mathematics concepts such as shapes, colors, and numbers. All the students got to sit together on the rug, in front of many colorful posters, and close to Andrea, who sat on a chair and had a wooden pointer. During calendar time, Andrea spoke Spanish and students’ responses were accepted in either English or Spanish, even though the teacher would usually translate the students’ contributions from English to Spanish. There was a large laminated calendar labeled “Octubre” where the teacher added a cardboard shape for every day of the month, this way the children reviewed the date, along with shapes and patterns.

During my observations, the teacher addressed the students in Spanish most of the time since that was the language she was supposed to follow based on the language separation policy where one teacher represents and uses one language in the dual language classroom setting. Andrea gave instructions in Spanish but would occasionally use English for regulatory purposes with a couple of students who were stronger in that language. For example, Adam was one of the

students who would sometimes have difficulty sitting on the rug and listening to the teacher read a book or do a mini-lesson. One day, after asking Adam to follow directions in Spanish a couple of times, the teacher asked him in English, “Do you want me to call your dad?” It seemed that the few students who were stronger in English were the ones who had a harder time following her directions. During a classroom observation, Andrea expressed that she switched to English to address disciplinary issues because they were used to listening to that language at home and she felt that made it more clear and effective.

The calendar activities lent themselves to bilingual interaction, partly because the posters that guided such review of the days of the week, months of the year, numbers, colors, shapes, coins, and the weather included posters and materials either in Spanish or English. Since the students would also do calendar activities in English when they went to Ms. Diana’s classroom, most students were very familiar with these concepts in both languages.

### **Implementing Pedagogy: Literacy Experiences with Print**

In comparison to the other classes I observed, including kindergarten, first grade and second grade classrooms, in this kindergarten class, I observed the most read alouds, most of them in Spanish; partly because I became interested in the teacher’s routine of systematically reading a book to the children right after lunch. Andrea read stories to her students while they sat criss cross applesauce on the rug. Andrea told me it was a way to get the students to calm down after recess and for them to transition into the afternoon activities where she would teach a different group of students every other day.

During one of my observations, I walked into Andrea’s classroom and the kindergarteners were seated on the rug in five small rows facing the teacher and opposite the chalkboard. When Andrea read books to her students, she sat on her chair in front of them, and in close proximity to allow them to see the pictures. The illustrations played a key role in keeping children’s attention and guiding their understanding and interpretation of the story. The pictures guided students’ answers to comprehension questions and prompted comments about how they related to the story. During one of my observations of a read aloud in this class, the students were

seated at the rug as Andrea read them a story in Spanish. She took time to show the illustrations carefully. The story was about a family who had lost their house to a fire and the mom was a waitress who was working to save money to buy a couch for her house.

Andrea: ¿ustedes por qué piensan que están poniendo las monedas en el botellón?

Andrea: gracias por levantar la mano

Andrea: ¿Marie?

Marie: porque está guardando dinero

Andrea: vamos a ver ¿para qué quieren el dinero?

Andrea: a ver ¿quién está criss cross applesauce?

Andrea: ¿para qué quieren comprar un sillón nuevo?

Niña1: para que se siente la mamá cuando llegue del trabajo

Niña 2: no, para que se siente el papá

Niño 1: todo se quemó en la casa

Ernesto: no, porque it's dark, sí, porque se quemó quebrada

Andrea: ¿se acuerdan como estaba el botellón? Estaba vacío, ¿lo quieren ver ahora? ahora el botellón está lleno

(Andrea, Fieldnotes, 12/11/13).

I've presented an excerpt of the last read aloud I observed in this kindergarten class, which was done in Spanish and the children seemed to be very familiar with this routine which went very smoothly, especially when compared to the beginning of the school year where most students had to be constantly redirected and many did not listen to the story or participate. Since most read alouds were done in Spanish, I've chosen to highlight how children participated for the most part in Spanish. As usual, this teacher asked comprehension questions throughout the story and relied on the book's colorful pictures to illustrate vocabulary for the children, for example, in this case, the words sillón and botellón. Andrea sometimes read bilingual books, in which the story was written entirely in Spanish and when the book was flipped over, the story was written in English. In this classroom, the interactions around print, specifically regarding books, took

place during read alouds facilitated by the teacher. Although in this the class I observed most read alouds compared to all the participating teachers, this class didn't have a designated area with books for students to read on their own, compared to Diana's kindergarten classroom. Andrea's classroom was missing a classroom library, and that seemed like a limitation for students' to access and read books on their own.

### **5.1.2 Case 2: Diana**

#### **Teacher Background**

Diana's bilingual trajectory is closely tied to her upbringing, and it began in her early years when her mother advocated for her to be placed in a bilingual program in the U.S., the transitional program she was enrolled in ended in third grade. Diana attributed her bilingual skills to her family, mostly her parents who encouraged her and her sister to maintain their Spanish so they could communicate with them and their grandparents in Spanish, as Diana's grandparents, who lived in Juárez, were monolingual Spanish speakers. Diana explained that at home, her parents would ask her and her sister to communicate in Spanish amongst themselves and this practice helped her to develop proficiency in speaking Spanish.

In Diana's role as teacher, her bilingualism allowed her to communicate with parents in their preferred language, verbally and in writing; in most cases, the preferred language was Spanish. Diana was very diligent about sending notes to parents in both English and Spanish; for example, at the beginning of the year she sent a note which explained that students were to complete all their homework assignments on Fridays instead of on a daily basis. In the work environment I had opportunities to see that Diana spoke Spanish with some colleagues and English with some other ones. Diana's partner teacher was Andrea, and they mostly communicated in English when they planned lessons or activities. I heard them speak in Spanish in more informal settings like during lunch. Diana would speak in English with the monolingual (English) kindergarten teacher, with the principal, and during meetings and professional development which took place in English. I noticed Diana was very fluent in Spanish when I



conducted one of the interviews in Spanish, and I saw her communicate with the early childhood reading interventionist in Spanish as well.

I thought it was good to keep developing both languages. That's why I felt I wanted to become a bilingual teacher to help students like me. I wanted to become a teacher I think since I was a little girl 'If I wanna be a teacher, I have to be bilingual.' I had a lot of teachers that taught me, so I kind of wanna continue that for kids that were like me. (Diana, Interview, 10/29/13).

It was significant that out of the seven participants, Diana was the only teacher who expressed she had wanted to become a teacher ever since she was a little girl because she wanted to work with bilingual children like herself. Diana shared that she felt her academic Spanish was developed only at a third grade level and she found this posed a difficulty for her to teach a higher grade level.

[During my teacher preparation] I remember taking one [course] that was about the laws, like bilingual laws. It was like a combination [of English and Spanish], because some of the material was in Spanish, but that was specific for teaching, it feels like it was a long time ago. (Diana, Interview, 11/11/13).

Regarding her teacher preparation, Diana only recalled taking one course about the bilingual education laws which was delivered in both English and Spanish. Similar to the majority of other participants in the study, Diana expressed that she plans to pursue a master's degree as an instructional specialist in reading or technology in the near future. Diana had actually enrolled in the master's program at the local university and attended the first class session, but was not able to continue due to family commitments.

Diana taught kindergarten, the English component of the DL program; therefore, she was labeled by the school as the Two Way Monolingual (TWM) teacher. This was her second year teaching kindergarten and her practice had always taken place in a dual language setting.

This is my fourth year [in the DL program and when I started] it was a third grade bilingual. It was dual, but it was self-contained. When I got here to this campus I was in

second grade and when we came back to school, they were like ‘You are in kinder now.’ It was really hard because I mean I started in fourth, and then third, and then second. I feel the DL program [at Escuela Internacional] is very consistent as opposed to what we have here. Everybody starts in Spanish. Everybody is in Spanish and only science is English and then, they have an hour a day of the third language; they start from kindergarten. (Diana, Interview, 10/29/13).

Diana liked the fact that she was teaching the same grade level for two consecutive years, since had prepared and accumulated kindergarten-level instructional materials from the prior year and was familiar with the content for this grade level. However, she expressed concern about teaching the English component of the program because very few of her students were English-dominant. Diana mentioned her own children were enrolled in a well-structured dual language program where everybody enrolled in kindergarten and received instruction in Spanish during the early grades while the percentage of English increased in the upper grade levels; this school’s student population was very heterogeneous compared to La Escuelita. Diana’s concern about having very few English-dominant students probably came from comparing the student population at her children’s school to the student population at La Escuelita, which is characteristic of a colonia, largely Mexican-origin and economically underprivileged.

### **Classroom Setting**

Diana’s classroom was very crowded during the first six weeks of the school year, there were 27 kindergarten students, and the class was made up of 15 girls and 12 boys. Both DL kindergarten teachers had large classes and after the first six weeks of school, another DL kindergarten section (self-contained) was open to alleviate the overcrowding. In Diana’s classroom all the seats at the small tables were taken and some students seated at the teacher’s kidney-shaped table, which was supposed to be used for small group instruction. Diana was very concerned about one of her students because he seemed to be a child with special needs and she felt she lacked the training or resources to help him adapt to the classroom. Diana told me this student wore diapers and did not interact with her or the rest of the students and he would stay

inside the classroom, but would only work on doing puzzles on the floor. Diana wanted to refer him but had to wait some weeks in order to fill out paperwork which would eventually result in a committee meeting to evaluate the situation.

This classroom was basically divided into two parts separated by a book shelf. On one side there were the small tables and the chalkboard and on the other side of the classroom there was a large colorful rug where the children would gather to do calendar math activities in English and listen to read alouds. The math calendar area was a chalkboard in front of the rug which had the following posters: a number chart, a calendar, the days of the week, months of the year, a weather chart, and the U.S coins. While doing calendar after lunch time, the students sat down to do calendar in English. As part of calendar activities, the students would get up to listen sing and dance Dr. Jean's songs in English, including Days of the week, Months of the year (to the Macarena rhythm), Kiss your Brain, Tooty Ta, and Alligator. The CD player was on top of the teacher's desk which was located right next to the classroom entrance (Field notes, 9/10/13).

This kindergarten classroom was a print-rich environment. The majority of the charts displayed were teacher created. Some of the charts included a coloring rubric, a chart showing student's progress represented by an ice cream cone where each scoop represented the skills acquired, there was a chart showing student's progress in IStation, a computer-based reading program which was implemented school wide, and there were also a few charts showing students how to draw people that were not just stick figures. Throughout the classroom there were word walls, for science vocabulary (e.g., bumpy, pointy, rough, hard, soft, smooth), and language arts vocabulary as well (e.g., first, then, next, last). There was a writing center as well, which represented the product of work completed in all different subjects.

The Writing Center is a section located next to the calendar, it has teacher created bubble maps and graphs on chart paper, most of them are in Spanish and a couple in English:

Vocabulario ilustrado con la letra o: oculista, ojo, oso, óvalo, oreja

Bubble map Yo soy: niño/niña, comelón, inteligente

Vocabulario ilustrado con la letra i: imán, iglú, iguana, indio, imagen

Bubble map Yo puedo: jugar, caminar, correr

Pictograph: How do you get to school? Walking/bike/car

Pictograph: How do you feel? Nervous/sad/excited/happy

(Diana, Fieldnotes, 9/30/13).

The Writing center included a collection of charts posted after the teacher created them along with the students, and some of these large, colorful charts were examples of *vocabulario ilustrado*, bubble maps, and pictographs. The *vocabulario ilustrado* and bubble maps were usually created during language arts and that is why they were written in Spanish; they were examples of guided writing activities which would usually lead to individual writing. The *vocabulario ilustrado* was basically a Pictionary where the teacher drew a picture of an item and labeled it in Spanish. The bubble maps were meant to provide ideas for students to be able to write sentences. Pictographs were mostly created as a whole group activity as well, but they were completed during social studies, science, and math instruction.

### **Teacher-Student Language Interactions**

Diana spoke mostly English in her classroom. Since the students were Spanish dominant, all the DL teachers were required to teach provide some literacy instruction in Spanish during part of the day, even if they taught the English component of the program. The teacher explained to me that in the morning she taught in Spanish and switched to English in the afternoon, after lunch. The language arts block lasted ninety minutes in the morning and she taught language arts in Spanish for one hour and in English for thirty minutes. For the afternoon instruction, which included math, and science, and social studies, the students switched classrooms every other day so they would receive instruction either English or Spanish with Diana or Andrea respectively. In the afternoons, Diana delivered instruction in English and some students addressed her in English and some in Spanish, but she replied in English. While the students still sat on the rug right after doing calendar math, Diana gave instructions about the math assignment to follow by using a white dry erase board. The students stayed seated at the rug and turned around to face Diana instead of the calendar materials; at this time she provided directions in English. After the

teacher provided directions, she asked for students to volunteer and repeat the directions for the whole class.

When a student doesn't remember the instructions to complete a math worksheet, another student says in Spanish "primero..." The teacher replies, "no, say it in English" and the student replies "I speak English and Spanish." Students work individually on a math worksheet which is written in English. One student asks "¿lo puedo hacer con lápiz? The teacher replied "no, we color with crayon." Once the students go back to work individually although they seat in small groups, the teacher does give quick instructions in Spanish to just a few students. (Field notes, 9/10/13).

Although Diana gave instruction in English during the afternoon, some students still approached her in Spanish, and the previous example was very interesting because a student spoke English as requested, but she clearly positioned herself as a bilingual. During my afternoon observations, I noticed Diana did specifically ask the students to respond to her in English not in Spanish. The snapshot of classroom language use discussed above was very meaningful because it demonstrated how the kindergarten student viewed herself as a bilingual child and apparently did not agree with having to express herself only in English when she was trying to clarify directions for her peers in a language more familiar for most of them, Spanish. Next, the students transitioned to do math work at their small tables. On another occasion during calendar, students reviewed the numbers 1-5 while seated on the rug and as they were getting ready to do math, the following language interactions took place:

Diana: How can we make 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 with the fingers?

Diana: don't scream

Diana: Ricardo, sit up please

Boy 1: ¿puedo ir al baño?

Girl: ¿puedo ir al baño maestra?

Diana: no, no, raise your hand! Ok raise your hand if you have a question

Boy 2: you forgot to read a story

Diana: what are you gonna write?

Boy 3: un dibujo

Diana: how do you say that in English? You're going to draw

(Diana, Fieldnotes, 9/30/13)

This previous interaction exemplified how students communicated with Diana mostly in Spanish, yet she continued to speak English because that was her assignment in the DL program. Sometimes when Diana replied in English, she also took the opportunity to translate what the student had said in Spanish, by first asking, how do you say that in English? I observed this approach with Felicity in her first grade self-contained classroom, where she constantly asked her students, *¿cómo se dice en español?* as she encourage them to speak Spanish

Students addressed Ms. Diana as teacher or maestra. Even though students knew they would be receiving instruction in English with Diana, they would still participate and approach her mostly in Spanish. Diana taught the vast majority of the day in English, but her proficiency in Spanish allowed her to clarify things for students in their native language if needed; in fact, she usually gave quick directions in Spanish to about three or four students individually. For example, during the math activity mentioned in the excerpt, she went to their seats once they were at their tables and told them, “tienes que trazar el número cinco, luego vas a colorear estos dibujos y aquí dibujas cinco cosas”, and then checked for understanding: “¿sí sabes que tienes que hacer?” (Diana, Fieldnotes, 9/10/13). I also observed that with some of the students who were stronger in Spanish, Diana switched to this language for regulatory purposes. For example, she would tell some students “*siéntese*,” “*haga caso*,” and “*pórtese bien*” and she had explained that some students were more used to hearing these requests in Spanish at home, so she thought it could be more effective if she tried that. In their small groups, students interacted mostly in English, but I also heard some interaction in Spanish or a combination of both languages (Diana, Fieldnotes, 10/17/13).

Diana had expressed in an interview that as a bilingual speaker and teacher, she was resourceful because she was able to explain things in Spanish if the children were not “getting it

in English.” She also added that she liked teaching the kids to think in both languages, “like if there’s a word in English they don’t know well, [I tell the students] think in Spanish, what word does it sound like in Spanish?” (Diana, Interview, 11/11/13). I think Diana was referring to the use of cognates, although she didn’t use that word specifically. While I did observe Diana using Spanish to explain some things when a couple of her students did not understand English, I did not observe her making reference to the use of cognates.

### **Implementing Pedagogy: Literacy Experiences with Print**

The language arts block lasted ninety minutes in the morning and she taught language arts in Spanish during one hour; thirty minutes in English. Even teachers who taught the English component of the DL program, it was required for them, to provide some literacy instruction in Spanish due to the Spanish-dominant background of the student body. With the goal of developing literacy skills, students engaged in computer-based reading with IStation which took place at the library under the teacher’s supervision. Since IStation was implemented and monitored schoolwide, as it was required for all students to use it, teachers had mixed feelings about it. The majority of them thought it was over used, for grades K-2, students were supposed to use it every day during 45 minutes. From all seven participating teachers, Diana was the only one who told she had done some research to find out how IStation was supposed to be implemented. She told me she found out from the website that it was a program designed to reinforce literacy skills, but not necessarily by using it every day for such a long period of time. Similarly, Andrea, the kindergarten teacher who partnered up with Diana, expressed in an interview she did not agree with a five-year-old having to sit for almost an hour to work on IStation. In Diana’s classroom I observed three read alouds in English; this practice usually took place in the afternoon, right after lunch and calendar math. Regarding the practice of reading stories to her students, Diana mentioned that usually it was done, “to kind of like calm them down.” The read alouds I observed in Diana’s classroom were connected to the lessons she taught, compared to Andrea’s class, where read alouds were chosen randomly or just for fun and

sometimes related to a Holiday such as Halloween for example. One of the read alouds I witnessed was used as an introduction to a science lesson and it was a big book about pumpkins.

When it was time to transition to science, Diana picked up students' math work and asked them to sit on the rug. The teacher read the big book *Pumpkin, Pumpkin* in English; the book was about the process of growing, harvesting, and carving a pumpkin. After listening to the story, the follow up assignment was a worksheet where students had to color, cut, and paste six pictures to explain the process or sequence of events. (Diana, Fieldnotes, 10/7/13).

The read aloud described in the excerpt took place when Diana's class had become smaller, made up of 18 students compared to the 27 she had at the beginning the school year. Additionally, students seemed familiar with the practice of sitting on the rug to listen to read alouds. The kindergarteners also seemed pretty interested in the book which was about pumpkins, and since this was during the month of October, most children were excited to learn about pumpkins because they related it to Halloween activities. This read aloud went pretty smoothly compared to when Diana introduced the book *Miss Nelson is Missing!* (Allard, 1977) but she did not finish reading the book because most children were not sitting down nor listening and she decided to stop reading the book by telling the students: "I can't do this today!" and transitioned to some math activity.

The book was about a teacher whose students misbehaved and took advantage because the teacher was nice. Then the students spend a few days with a mean substitute teacher, Miss Viola Swamp, who happened to be Miss Nelson in disguise; at the end the students appreciate their teacher. Ironically, Diana stopped reading the book because most children were neither sitting down nor listening to the story; therefore she decided to transition to another activity. It was interesting to observe that Andrea, who taught the Spanish component of the program, would sometimes include read alouds in English. On the other hand, in Diana's class, I only observed read alouds in English. This showed how it was easier for English to become integrated



into spaces designed for Spanish, in contrast to Spanish, which seemed hardly included in spaces designed for English.

In Diana's class there was an integration of Spanish in the morning and it was clearly defined by the time allotted to it during the language arts block. During this time I noticed students would approach the teacher mostly in Spanish and a few students used a combination of both English and Spanish. The students worked individually to develop Spanish literacy skills, specifically on *vocabulario ilustrado*. The students were doing an activity to develop vocabulary in Spanish, they were asked to draw pictures of items that began with the na, ne, ni, no, nu syllables. Some students were done with their assignment and some were still working on practicing their na, ne, ni, no, nu syllables in Spanish by completing a worksheet.

Los alumnos estaban completando una hoja donde tenían que escribir y hacer el dibujo de palabras que empiezan con las siguientes sílabas: na ne ni no nu. La maestra estaba ayudando a un par de alumnos y otros estaban trabajando en sus mesas. Algunas de las cosas que la maestra les dijo en español a diferentes alumnos...

Diana: saca tu bolsita [de palabras de uso frecuente] para que leas

Diana: ok ahora hágame los dibujos

Diana: saquen sus cuadernos de ortografía

Diana:ese [libro] es en inglés

Diana:(leyéndole palabras a un alumno) nuez...nueve...nube

Diana:¿qué empieza con nu?

Diana: borra esas líneas porque se ve feo

Diana: ¡Ricardo, no se avientan las cosas!

Diana: Jaime, ¿qué es?

Jaime: nube

Boy: teacher, no me hizo check [el trabajo]

Diana: ok Jaime, eso lo puedes terminar mañana

Diana: vamos a limpiar el salón para ir a IStation

(Diana, Fieldnotes, 12/3/13)

The students who were done, had the choice of reading their Spanish sight words or classroom books. Some children were reading books from the classroom library, but since they were not readers yet, they constantly asked the teacher if they “reading” a book in English or Spanish. The students who were still working, were at different sections of the same assignment. Some students were already drawing the pictures of objects that began with the letter n, some were waiting for the teacher to check their work, and there was one student seated next to the teacher’s desk as he got extra help. I chose to divide the teacher’s discourse into different lines because she was addressing different students, it was like she had all these conversations with various students simultaneously, which is common practice in classrooms, especially with young students. Diana, instructed, graded, and monitored her kindergarten students at the same time. These interactions took place within the last part of the sixty minute period allotted to Spanish literacy instruction in the morning before the students went to the library computers to work on IStation computer-based reading.

The teacher helped two students at her desk while she monitored the rest of the class. I joined one of the small groups as I observed and helped out some students. As students completed their work, they went to the rug to read books on their own. Most books available in the classroom shelves were written in English, but there were a few books in Spanish as well. About a third of the class, including four girls and two boys, had finished their work and they were seated on the rug “reading” books, they were looking at the illustrations as they pretended to read, mostly in English (Diana, Fieldnotes, 12/3/13). This example of how language was used during instruction was key because it was observable that Diana did not need to keep reminding the children to speak Spanish during Spanish instruction, compared to her constant reminders to speak English during English instruction in her classroom.

## **5.2 FIRST GRADE**

### **5.2.1 Case 3: Miranda**

#### **Teacher Background**

Miranda was responsible for teaching the Spanish section of the DL program; she was the TWB teacher in first grade, and her long teaching trajectory focused in the lower grades. Miranda's bachelor's degree was in business administration and she had attended an alternative teacher certification program at the local university. She had been teaching in Spanish for many years and she liked it because she felt very confident about her proficiency, using the language in both social and academic contexts. She mentioned her Spanish proficiency was one of her strengths as a bilingual teacher. She described the process of becoming certified teacher and her experience in DL settings as a practitioner.

I went through the alternative certification here in El Paso through UTEP. [My bachelor's is] in business administration. I just tried the alternative and I started teaching. Bilingual [teacher] just because of my background, I've always believed that the more languages you know the better. This is my 18<sup>th</sup> year [teaching] and I have my master's in education administration. For dual I have been doing it for about 13 years and I've done both components, English and Spanish. The English I've done it for only maybe about 2 or 3 years, but mostly I've always had the Spanish. I've done kinder, second and first grade. I teach the Spanish component so it's just pure Spanish; I don't have to worry about the English because the other teacher does the English part. (Miranda, Interview, 10/28/13).

Miranda, in addition to Felicity and Marisol, had gone through an alternative teacher certification program. Miranda had received bilingual instruction during her early elementary years, and she explained she felt strong in Spanish because growing up, that was the language they always used for communicating at home. Miranda explained that with the parents of her students, she communicated mostly in Spanish, except for a couple of younger parents who spoke English. I observed that Miranda communicated with her colleagues in both English and Spanish, but I saw her use more English. With her first grade colleagues and with the principal,

the conversations took place mostly in English. Miranda spoke Spanish mostly with teachers who taught the Spanish component of the DL program or with the reading interventionist who provided small group instruction in Spanish. In the classroom, instruction was delivered mainly in Spanish but I also observed that Miranda provided some instruction in English, including occasional read alouds and worksheets to increase vocabulary development.

Me siento igual de a gusto en los dos [idiomas] pero el español me gusta porque siento que puedo aportar un español bien para los niños, no todo el mundo por ser bilingüe quiere decir que necesariamente lo hables correcto. El español me gusta porque creo yo que aunque sea una palabra o dos palabras que se puedan los niños aprender, que se pueda corregir o sea en ese sentido me gusta porque les trato de enseñar lo mejor que se pueda, lo que es lo más apropiado, o sea lo más correcto. (Miranda, Interview, 12/9/13).

Miranda felt comfortable teaching in both English and Spanish, but she preferred teaching in Spanish because she felt she was a good role model for this language. She emphasized the correctness of language and for that reason she liked to correct students as needed, so they could learn it properly. Miranda was very proud that she knew Spanish well compared to some colleagues who were not as proficient, as expressed by her comment “there are some bilingual teachers who don’t know Spanish.” From the seven participating teachers, Miranda was the only one who had earned a master’s degree, which was in the area of education administration, and she told me her thesis had focused on bilingual education, dealing with second language acquisition processes.

### **Classroom Setting**

Miranda had a small class; there were 13 students, 6 girls and 7 boys. At the beginning of the year the students in this class sat in horizontal rows; after Miranda was formally evaluated, however, I noticed the seating arrangements had changed and the students then sat in small groups. This classroom did not have many decorations, posters, or teacher-created charts. The area for calendar math did not have a rug and it had some posters with the numbers, shapes, months and days in Spanish, and a poster in English which had pictures of U.S. coins. Next to

this area there was a space for displaying students work; this is where Miranda displayed students' writing assignments. The teacher's computer was located in a corner of the classroom and right next to it, there was a kidney-shaped table which she used as her desk to organize work to be graded, this table constantly had piles of worksheets, folders, and notebooks.

In this classroom, it was interesting to observe that each student had three black-and-white composition notebooks which stayed in the classroom, and they were labeled *ortografía*, *lectura* and *escritura*; these notebooks were kept in a large white metal crate right next to the teacher's desk. The Spanish textbooks that were kept in the classroom were *Tesoros de Lectura* for reading and *Todos Unidos* for social studies. On the chalkboard, the objectives were written in Spanish, for the following subjects: Language arts, math, *ciencia*, and *estudios sociales*. (Miranda, Fieldnotes, 9/10/13). In most classrooms, including Miranda's, the objectives to be covered in the different subject areas were printed and posted on the board, and they were written in English. (Miranda, Fieldnotes, 12/11/13).

### **Teacher-Student Language Use**

Miranda would give instruction in Spanish but would constantly sprinkle some English words or phrases when giving directions or talking to the students. However, during interviews and informal conversations she expressed that she believed in the separation of languages and for this reason, she would correct her students if they code-switched in her class. She would also correct students if they used colloquial Spanish words like *ira* instead of *mira* and *aigre* instead of *aire*. Interestingly, Miranda herself occasionally used colloquial words in Spanish as well, for example, *'ta* instead of *está* and *secre* instead of *secretaria*. The conversations I heard among the first grade students in this class took place in Spanish. Miranda did not like to be called miss or *maestra*, she preferred to be called Ms. Miranda and she would constantly remind her students to address her in this manner; within a few days after the start of the school year, students got used to calling their teacher Ms. Miranda.

During a science lesson in the month of November, the teacher wrote some instructions on the chalkboard and these were the same instructions written on the teacher-created worksheet she handed out to students.

Aire y Agua

1. Dibuja lo que ves en el frasco
2. Cuánta agua crees que le va a caber en el frasco. Colorea la cantidad de agua
3. Dibuja como se vera el frasco despues que le pongamos el agua

(Miranda, Fieldnotes, 11/15/13)

In the teacher-created science worksheet, there are some features missing in regards to standard Spanish spelling, for example, the words vera (verá) and despues (después). Item number two is missing question marks. As the teacher went over the questions with her students, there was a point where she put about 30 glassed colored marbles inside an empty clear plastic water bottle for students to make some observations which they were to record on their papers:

Miranda: ¿que estoy haciendo?

David: hechando camitas

Miranda: ¿que son David? venga, ¿qué son?

David: calamitas

Miranda: ¿nunca has jugado con canicas?... Hello ¿nunca has jugado con canicas?

David: no

Miranda: ¿qué son David?

David: canicas

Miranda: muy bien

(Miranda, Fieldnotes, 11/15/13)

Correcting student's language use in the classroom seemed to be important for Miranda. For example, in the previous interaction, even though the focus of the lesson was science and for students to be able to record changes, she took the opportunity to teach the word canicas to her

student. During my observations sometimes it seemed that teaching students to avoid code-switching took precedence over addressing other aspects of language.

Elsa: [complaining about an assignment] 'tá bien long

Miranda: ¿mande Elsa?

Elsa: 'tá bien long

Miranda: ¿'tá bien qué?

Miranda: está bien largo, cuando vaya con Ms. Cassandra allá le dice que está bien long, allá le presume su inglés. (Miranda, Fieldnotes, 11/15/13).

I presented a short example of how Miranda corrected a student in class where Miranda told her student that she should speak English when she goes with Ms. Cassandra, who is her partner teacher and teaches in English. This statement can also be interpreted as the teacher's request for the students to speak in Spanish when they are in her classroom, except for when she provided English instruction by doing a read aloud in English or had her students complete worksheets in English to develop vocabulary.

### **Implementing Pedagogy: Literacy Experiences with Print**

In this first grade class, Miranda taught mainly in Spanish; however, it was common practice to have her students do worksheets in English and she had explained "I'm doing this so they can learn vocabulary and use it correctly." During one of my observations, she told her students "Ok we're gonna switch to English now" and she handed out a worksheet in English where students had to label pictures and identify the letter they began with; the teacher wrote the words for student to copy from the board. For example, on a picture of a windmill the students wrote the name and glued the letter w next to the picture. Words: farm, dog, goat, nest. As Miranda read the words in English, some students translated the word to Spanish, and requested clarification, for example, she read "farm" and a student said "¿la granja?" (Miranda, Fieldnotes, 10/3/13).

The teachers who taught the Spanish portion of the DL program, were required to provide 30 minutes of English literacy instruction out of the 90 minute block. In this classroom I only

witnessed one read aloud during my observations, and it was Dr. Seuss's ABC book, in English. The book Dr. Seuss' ABC was mainly about identifying the initial letter of many different words, covering all the alphabet letters. During one of my observations the teacher prepared to read a book to her students by putting a stool in front of the classroom, where she sat down and explained to the students why she chose to read the story in English and what activity she expected them to do after the read aloud. Miranda told her students she was going to read a book in English and then they would write something so they had to pay attention. She made reference to following the same procedure as previously done for another book she had previously read. She told her students that due to time constraints, they would probably only have time to read the book and do the writing portion the following day. When Miranda finished reading the book, she wrote on the chalkboard and called on every student to say a word that began with the same letter as their first name did:

Dr. Seuss' ABC

Big\_\_\_\_little\_\_\_\_

Lots of words begin with \_\_\_\_

Miranda: and then right here your list of words (pointing to the board)

Miranda: You want to choose a letter or you want me to give you a letter? You wanna do the letter of your name? entonces here we go

Miranda: Fidel, ¿qué letra quieres?

Miranda: come on Raquel, you have to try

(Miranda, Fieldnotes, 12/3/13)

Marissa mentioned she was aware that some students don't like English, but either way, the level of spoken and written English had to improve. She told her students they would write a sentence and a list of things that began with that letter they got assigned. While the teacher read the book, she self-corrected on a couple of occasions, for example, on the word rhinoceros, she read it rhenoceros. Although Miranda mentioned that some students didn't like to listen to read alouds in English, it didn't seem to be the case on this occasion because the students were very



attentive listening and looking at the colorful illustrations as the teacher read the story. Miranda's students seemed to appreciate that fact that she did a read aloud because they clapped for her when she was done and I only observed that behavior in this classroom. In read alouds I witnessed in other classes, the children did not clap for their teachers when they were done reading.

Miranda emphasized to her students that their level of speaking and writing English should improve and that was the rationale for including some instructional activities in English; she had also shared that reasoning with me as well. When Miranda finished reading the book Dr. Seuss' ABC to her students, she went around the room asking each student to say a word in English that began with the same letter as the initial letter of their name. This example of a read aloud also briefly demonstrated how Miranda would sometimes mix both English and Spanish when teaching, for example, when she said "van a escribir so pay attention" and "entonces here we go." From the seven participating teachers, Miranda was one who strongly emphasized the separation of languages, yet, it seemed to be common practice for her to mix both English and Spanish during her instruction. Her first grade students were expected to communicate in one language only.

#### **5.2.2 Case 4: Cassandra**

##### **Teacher Background**

Cassandra taught first grade and delivered instruction in English, she was a TWM teacher. She expressed on more than one occasion that she liked teaching in English and that she preferred to teach in English because this was her stronger language; she also expressed that she knew Spanglish. This may be the result of having been schooled entirely in English and growing up on a border region. Cassandra had attended school in a sink-or-swim situation and this experience shaped her view about how children learn a second language, in this case English, "I think the way I learned English was better because they forced you to learn it" (Cassandra, Interview, 10/17/13). She had learned informal social Spanish growing up, but felt she lacked the

academic proficiency because she had never been schooled in Mexico or in Spanish in the U.S. When Cassandra attended college, she had planned to become certified as a monolingual elementary teacher but explained why she became a bilingual teacher:

I didn't become a bilingual teacher because I wanted to. I was put into it. When I was gonna graduate from UTEP, they said I needed my Spanish, but I was like "I'm not bilingual, I'm going for monolingual." I have no idea [how it happened]. I guess because of my last name or something, and then I figured, but I never chose bilingual. I had maybe two Spanish classes because I thought I had to and that was it and to me they were hard. When I had to take the last one [Spanish class] because I needed it, that's when I found out [I was following a bilingual education degree plan] and then I had to do the test because you have to take the Spanish test and I lucked out because it was the last time they had it oral. When I graduated, it was like "Ok, I graduated. I have the bilingual certification." I took the test, but I took it only because I wanted to graduate, so it's like that's the only thing I needed. But I mean it's not like chose it [bilingual education] but I always wanted to be a teacher though. I don't think I ever thought about being something else (Cassandra, Interview, 10/17/13).

Cassandra explained that she had not planned to become a certified bilingual teacher, but it happened because she was not aware that she had followed a bilingual education degree plan until she was very close to graduating. For this reason, she decided to fulfill all requirements to become a bilingual teacher when she completed her teacher preparation program at the local university about five years prior to the study. Cassandra explained that as part of her teacher preparation, she was required to take a total of three classes in Spanish, which she found difficult. She also took the Spanish proficiency test because it was a graduation requirement. Cassandra commented that prior to graduating she had been placed to do her student teaching in a class where instruction took place in Spanish. She added that students made fun of her and corrected her Spanish. Cassandra also mentioned that she would consider getting certified to teach Spanish in middle school or even high school. This idea might have been sparked by the

fact that at the beginning of the school year there was a position available to teach in this setting. In the future, Cassandra said that she would like to pursue a master's degree to become a diagnostician.

I loved that class [first grade monolingual class] because everything was English. I didn't have to worry that I had to teach this in Spanish or that I had to switch or anything. They never asked me and they don't have to, they don't. But I would like to have them asked me because I didn't want to go to bilingual. I mean I really wanted to stay in monolingual, but they said "No, because we need you here." (Cassandra, Interview, 10/17/13).

Once Cassandra graduated it took her a while to get a teaching position, meanwhile she worked as a substitute teacher. During her first year as a permanent substitute teacher, she covered a first grade monolingual class and enjoyed this position because she delivered instruction entirely in English. Since she was not in a DL position, she was not responsible for teaching Spanish and there was no need to switch so students would receive instruction in Spanish with another teacher. Cassandra brought up an important point about being given the choice to teach in a monolingual English classroom or having to participate in the DL program, in her case she was needed in a section and she was placed where she was needed most.

I did my student teaching in the Spanish component [of a DL program], at first the kids would make fun of me like "así no se dice maestra" and they would correct me the entire time. That's where they [the local university] placed me. (Cassandra, Interview, 11/22/13).

In regards to teaching experience in a DL setting, Cassandra first had some experience as a student in this setting at the same school district where she found a job once she graduated from college. In one of our conversations, Cassandra shared that having done her student teaching in Spanish in a DL setting was a helpful experience that partly prepared her for her current position where she taught part of the morning in Spanish.

### **Classroom Setting**

Cassandra's classroom was a print-rich environment and it was inviting. In this classroom there were plenty of bilingual posters and materials the students could make reference to during writing activities. The print around the classroom included posters of sight words in English and Spanish, First grade no excuse word list and Lista de palabras de uso frecuente primer grado. There were various teacher-created posters including: parts of a writer/ las partes de un escritor, metas del escritor/writing goals, and writing prompts titled What can I write about ? ¿sobre que puedo escribir? There was bilingual a word wall which created a pink and yellow checkerboard. The print around the classroom also included graphic laminated organizer templates in English, which were provided during professional development workshops. Additionally, there was a birthday calendar which had each month of the year written on a gift cutout with students' names on it. (Cassandra, Fieldnotes, 9/10/13).

Upon entering the classroom, the teacher's desk was located to the right hand side, next to the chalkboard. The schedule for the day and the rules and consequences were posted to the left hand side and visible as soon as one walked in. There was a table for small group instruction at the back of the classroom and this is the only class where it was used for assessment. I observed Cassandra use it to do an individual literacy assessment all K-2 teachers were required to do. In this classroom, each student had five composition notebooks labeled math, language arts, lectura, social studies, and science. The Spanish textbooks that were kept in the classroom were *Tesoros de Lectura* for reading and *All Together* for social studies. The objectives for all subject areas were printed and posted on the board, written in English. On the students' desks there were name tags that also included information such as the alphabet, colors, and shapes in English. (Cassandra, Fieldnotes, 10/10/13). The students sat in horizontal rows for a few weeks into the school year, and then Cassandra explained she rearranged her class for students to sit together in small groups as a result of her teacher evaluation; this was also the case with her partner teacher Miranda.

### **Teacher-Student Language Use**

Cassandra provided instruction in English except for the portion of the day when she taught language arts in Spanish. She would also occasionally use Spanish for regulatory purposes (siéntate) or to provide a quick clarification to a student. The students spoke to her in Spanish and she would reply mostly in English. The majority of her students called Cassandra maestra.

...the kids don't put that much effort into the English because if you listen to them, I am doing it in English and they answer me in Spanish, they do that because they are not forced to do it, and I tell them "remember that we are in English" and I have the ones that will switch to English, but the ones that don't want to, they never do it. But we have the kids that all they know is Spanish and they're not getting enough English. I understand that they get the Spanish at home, so we should be able to get more English into them. If I had my choice, I would like the kids come in and [say] "No, you can't use Spanish all the time." (Cassandra, Interview, 10/17/13).

During my observations, the language interactions between teacher and students in Cassandra's classroom were characterized by a dynamic where she spoke English and most of her students replied in Spanish. She felt that students did not advance their English speaking skills as much as they would have done if they were forced to do it, meaning if their communication and participation in Spanish was not accepted or allowed. She felt that some students resisted speaking English even if they were able to do so, simply because they preferred to speak Spanish. On one occasion Cassandra told her students "answer in English, I don't want to hear Spanish, you guys are using too much Spanish" (Cassandra, Fieldnotes, 9/30/13). In her perspective, students learned Spanish at home; therefore, school was the place for them to acquire English skills. In an interview she shared that she would prefer for students to not use Spanish all the time.

During my observations I noticed Cassandra addressed her students in English except for the portion of the morning when she was required to teach reading in Spanish during one hour. For the rest of the content areas, Cassandra provided instruction in English, and the students' contributions were made mostly in Spanish. During a science lesson in November, Cassandra

taught in English, while the students were paired up, and the lesson was about water as a natural resource. The activity was to create a graphic organizer, a bubble map specifically. The teacher drew a circle in the middle of the chalkboard and inside it she wrote natural sources of water. This activity was completed as a whole group, where the students gave input and the teacher took on the role of scribe.

Cassandra: please take out your science notebook, the green one. We're going to do a graphic organizer

Student: What's that?

Cassandra: a bubble map. We're gonna do a bubble map; you have done bubble maps before. We have been talking about water. Who can give me an example of the natural sources of water? Where do we get water from?

Student: playa

Cassandra: from the beach, ok, let's put oceans, how many of you have been to the ocean? (3 out of 14 students raised their hands). What do we find in the ocean?

Student: conchas

Cassandra: that's seashells, what else?

Student: peces

Student: seahorse

Cassandra: ok that's animals (and she wrote animals on the board)

Cassandra: I know I write messy, you guys should be used to it already

(Cassandra, Fieldnotes, 11/19/13).

The previous example of a whole class activity captured the common practice of Cassandra leading a discussion in English and receiving participation from her students in both English and Spanish; however, students gravitated more towards the use of Spanish in this first grade classroom. In this lesson, which was supposed to take place in English, the topic was water, and for the most part it ended up focusing on the ocean. Most of the answers provided by the students were in Spanish and the teacher would paraphrase their answers in English, as she

wrote their contribution on the chalkboard. The students drew a bubble map and copied what the teacher wrote on the board in their green composition notebooks. The language integration presented was meaningful because the students' contributions to the whole class activity were validated. It was common for Cassandra to have short conversations with her students where she spoke English while the majority of the students replied in Spanish. Cassandra told me in an interview that a lot of the kids don't get English because the only English they listen to is at school.

### **Implementing Pedagogy**

In an effort to develop reading skills in both English and Spanish, Cassandra requested for her students to check out a library book in English and one in Spanish, and she explained that the book in English was at a lower level of difficulty than the book in Spanish. However, a few students who were reading in Spanish close to a second grade level were allowed to check out more advanced books in Spanish. Cassandra taught reading in Spanish and she followed the stories found in the *Tesoros de Lectura* textbook; she expressed, "we do 'lectura' which is of course in Spanish for an hour, I follow the Treasures [*Tesoros de Lectura*] book." (Cassandra, Interview, 11/22/13).

Another component of literacy instruction consisted of IStation, a computer-based reading program which consisted of various interactive reading activities which gradually increased in difficulty and were based on the student's reading level. For example, at the beginning students work on letter and sound recognition, then move on to reading words, and short phrases, until they advance to reading short stories and eventually longer stories. Cassandra was scheduled to go to the computer lab for an hour to facilitate IStation; during this time she was able to work individually with a few students that needed extra help. In Cassandra's words "that's when sometimes I get the low ones and I practice their words with them and do word recognition because they don't know that so I have to be at the very very bottom with them and everybody else in the IStation, and of course we do it in Spanish." (Cassandra, Interview, 11/22/13).

During one of my last observations, Cassandra's students took turns reading the story ¡Máscaras! ¡Máscaras! ¡Máscaras! from their *Tesoros de Lectura* textbook, which was about how masks are used for different purposes in many parts of the world. The students seemed engaged in reading the story and enjoyed looking at pictures of colorful masks, some represented animals and others people's faces.

En el pizarrón: ¡Máscaras! ¡Máscaras! ¡Máscaras!

Cassandra: vamos a buscar detalles que dan información sobre las máscaras

Niño 1: una máscara que parece un sol

Cassandra: ¿Alma, qué me dijiste ahorita de la máscara?

Alma: que está muy rara

Cassandra: siguiente página Ismael (el niño leyó la página en voz alta) ¿qué vemos en el retrato ahí? ¿Alguien de ustedes ha hecho una máscara alguna vez?

Maggie: un pato

Cassandra: ¿con qué la hiciste?

Niño 2: yo el año pasado hice una con mi otra clase

Cassandra: si se portan bien, mañana van a hacer una máscara, la van a hacer como ustedes quieran pero también me van a escribir una historia sobre lo que es su máscara.

Vean esa máscara, ¿qué figuras ven? ¿Cómo se llama el animal que está arriba en la máscara? ¿Cómo se llama Ms. Fuentes?

Brenda: ¿una gaviota?

Cassandra: no, esas son más chicas. I know it's a seagull but I don't know in Spanish, I'm gonna look it up (and she went to the shelf to get an English-Spanish dictionary). It says gaviota. A ver Sophie, estás platicando cuando Alma está tratando de leer. ¿Qué cuento podrían contar usando estas máscaras? Y viéndoles las caras, ¿qué están haciendo? La siguiente, página 82, ¿quién no ha leído? ¿Mariel?

(Cassandra, Fieldnotes, 12/10/13).



This reading episode illustrated how reading was facilitated by Cassandra, although she had expressed during an interview that she was critical of having to teach reading in Spanish because she taught the English component of DL, because of her students' linguistic background, mostly Spanish-dominant. This quote also illustrated how Cassandra approached me in English mostly, even during the part of the day when she spoke Spanish to her students. This reading activity was very smooth, as the students took turns reading the story in Spanish, all students had an opportunity to read at least one page of ¡Máscaras! ¡Máscaras! ¡Máscaras! The conversations I heard took place in Spanish as well. Cassandra asked comprehension questions and the students participated in a whole class discussion. The teacher continued to call on different students to take turns reading a page of the story; she then stepped out for a minute and asked me if I could continue calling on the students to take turns reading out loud (Cassandra, Fieldnotes, 12/10/13).

When the class finished reading the story, the follow-up activity was to make a mask, and the directions were on the textbook. I asked the teacher if she wanted to start working on the masks I could help her and she agreed, then we got the materials for the masks ready (e.g., white paper plates, construction paper, scissors, glue). I cut out all the eyes and we both were cutting colored construction paper and helping students. The students seemed excited to make a mask, most students made cats or tigers, probably because the example on the book was a tiger mask. A couple of days later, out on the hallway, Cassandra displayed her students' masks along with the stories they had written in Spanish. This reading and writing activity was meaningful for different reasons, for example, it illustrated how the students practiced reading skills, and the kinds of comprehension questions they answered from their textbook. The kind of writing activities the students engaged in was also discussed. Additionally, the example shows how I was able to participate in classroom activities and how Cassandra chose to talk to me in English, Cassandra had told me informally that she preferred to speak to me in English because I knew “proper” Spanish.

### 5.2.3 Case 5: Felicity

#### Teacher Background

Felicity was the only participant who taught a self-contained section of the DL program. She was a Two Way Self-Contained (TWSC) teacher, which meant she was responsible for delivering instruction in both English and Spanish to her class of first graders; this setting allowed her and required her to display strong bilingualism and biliteracy skills. She grew up in Mexico with Spanish as her first language, and she was schooled k-12 mostly in Spanish, but also learned English from an early age since she attended a school where she received bilingual instruction. She explained she was taught English as a content area and the focus was in vocabulary development. Felicity held a bachelor's degree in business from a U.S.-based university and she had worked in that field for a few years and she also had some experience working with children from teaching Sunday school. She decided to go through an alternative certification program because she enjoyed working with children.

My major was business marketing. I went through an alternative program, ACEP, they got me certified, and a month later I was in the classroom. I have been teaching for ten years, I have been teaching for a while, before, it was very difficult. I think maybe out of ten years and I can't really tell you exactly, maybe two years have been English only. I have only taught kinder and first grade. This is my favorite age, kinder and first grade. (Felicity, Interview, 10/23/13).

Felicity really seemed to enjoy teaching first grade; she liked the age group and was knowledgeable with the content based on her ten years of teaching experience working with first grade and kindergarten. Regarding the requirements to become a certified bilingual teacher, Felicity attributed passing the Spanish language test to her knowledge of the language not because of college coursework or teacher preparation, but due to her Mexican background. Felicity was the only teacher who would sometimes incorporate dichos (e.g., Sana sana colita de rana, jaguas! O todos coludos o todos rabones, El que mucho abarca poco aprieta) in her instruction or when she would talk to me; using dichos in everyday discourse denoted her

Mexican identity. She told me that she was able to teach in Spanish because of her upbringing living in Mexico until going to college in the U.S. Felicity enjoyed teaching both English and Spanish and she taught both in a pretty balanced manner, partly because she was the only class that had half the class being English-dominant and half the class being Spanish-dominant. Her bilingualism and biliteracy skills were also useful to communicate with the parents of her students. Felicity communicated with colleagues in Spanish and English, for the most part, it seemed that she followed the language preference of her colleagues. Meetings and trainings were held in English so she communicated in that language. Felicity would like to go back to school to get her master's degree later on and she would pursue early childhood literacy or become a specialist in learning disabilities to focus on dyslexia.

### **Classroom Setting**

Felicity's classroom was an inviting learning space for her 17 students. There was plenty of environmental print in both English and Spanish. During my classroom observation the first thing I noticed about this teacher was that "she smiled and was enthusiastic when she talked to her students; she was giving instruction in English" (Felicity, Fieldnotes, 9/20/13). The calendar area was nicely arranged and had a lot of information for students to review during calendar math activities, but also for them to use as reference throughout the day. In this large area, there was an alphabet, the calendar with months in both English and Spanish, a number chart from 1 to 100, and a poster with the shapes labeled in both English and Spanish. The U.S. coins were enlarged laminated cut outs, there were some straws for students to learn place value, and there was a weather chart. There was a word wall in English and there was a teacher-created chart for science vocabulary in Spanish which was about the properties of objects. The chart read *Propiedades: textura, suave, pegajoso, liso, boludo, crujiente, duro, picudo, rasposo, peludo* (Felicity, Fieldnotes, 10/3/13).

There was a wooden book shelf with books written in English. In the back of the room there was a kidney-shaped table; this was the space Felicity used to monitor her students' reading by doing running records. She usually had these sheets, which were in both English and Spanish,

piled up at this table and the small white reading fluency calculator was there as well. The teacher's desk was located next to the kidney table. One desk decoration caught my attention: Felicity had a small Mexico flag on her desk, and once again, I saw this as a way of her showing pride in her Mexican heritage. Felicity had a space designated in her classroom to post the teacher notes and drawings she constantly received from her first graders.

### **Teacher-Student Language Use**

During my observations on days where instruction was delivered in Spanish, I witnessed that Felicity made a constant effort to respond back in Spanish and she would ask her students to speak Spanish as well by saying *¿en español?* Felicity was a teacher who was very mindful of giving instruction and addressing their students on the language of the day (English or Spanish) and she would push them to do the same. I observed that Felicity would sometimes rephrase for her students as needed or she would provide them the right word, especially when students were trying to communicate in Spanish. On days of Spanish instruction, she had to constantly remind some students to talk to her in Spanish. There were plenty of instances when Felicity spoke Spanish and her students replied in English. In Felicity's classroom there was a preference for English on part of the students, even when this class was very balanced in regards to having half of the students being English –dominant and the other half Spanish dominant. To encourage students to speak Spanish, Felicity would say things like: *a ver no te entiendo, dime en español ¿cómo se dice eso en español? ¿Me puedes decir en español?*

My class is half and half basically, but for some reason when we have the English days, it goes more smoothly. I don't know what it is, but if I say "*fórmense*" como que... If I say "line up" I don't know if I sound stronger in English because Spanish is my first language, anyways, I don't know what it is. There are times that when we have Spanish, they go "Aahhh" I take that opportunity to say "Did you know that if you speak Spanish you're gonna earn more money? Do you wanna make more money?" So I always go back to why it's important for you to know both languages. (Felicity, Interview, 11/13/13).

When Felicity expressed that her class was half and half she was making reference to the fact that eight of her students were Spanish-dominant and nine were English-dominant. Felicity mentioned she had noticed that sometimes when she told her students she would be teaching in Spanish that day, they would respond “aahhh”, like complaining a little bit, and she said she never got that response when it was a day of English instruction. When some students seemed to be unhappy about having to go through the instructional day in Spanish, Felicity would take these moments as opportunities to say something positive about being bilingual like “did you know that if you’re bilingual you can make more money when you grow up?”

I observed that even on days when Felicity taught in Spanish, many times her students participated and addressed her in English. One afternoon Felicity was doing a science mini-lesson where she reviewed vocabulary. Students had learned about some properties of objects. The whole class had previously created a KWL chart. All students went to the rug because it was time to transition to science and during science, Dr. Luisa, a scientist visited the students. Ms. Felicity would become Dr. Luisa by going into the closet and putting on a white lab coat, the kind worn by scientists and doctors.

Felicity: todos en la alfombra, yo voy a ir a buscar a Dr. Luisa (the teacher went inside the closet and came out wearing a white lab coat). A ver si se acuerdan, ¿qué estamos aprendiendo en ciencias?

Girl: What you know (referring to a KWL chart they did in English earlier)

Felicity: What you know, que quiere decir lo que tú sabes

Boy: bright

Felicity: ¿cómo se dice en español? Brillante

Girl: it’s fragile

Felicity: es frágil en español (Felicity, Fieldnotes, 10/10/13).

Felicity became a bilingual scientist during science instruction; sometimes she would tell the students stories about something she learned from traveling faraway and doing experiments. On many occasions I observed the students were very motivated to contribute to Dr. Luisa’s

discussion. For the most part students would participate in English and the teacher would either translate the word if they had not covered it before or she would request for them to say it in Spanish. The push for English from the students was ever present and Felicity seemed to find ways to push for Spanish on the days she provided instruction in this language in different subjects, for example in math during a lesson about counting money:

Felicity: ¿cuántas monedas de 10 hay?

Niño:nine

Felicity: nueve

[Israel went up to the teacher and asked her something in English]

Felicity: ¿en español?

Felicity: levanta la mano si te salió bien, levanta la mano si te equivocaste, gracias por ser honesto, tu respuesta debió haber sido 97centavos

Niño:with a crayon?

Felicity: con tu crayola

Melody: what if someone got it wrong and wants to change it?

Felicity: a ver en español, no te entendí

Melody: ¿que si alguien lo agarró mal y no quieren poner una tacha?

(Felicity, Fieldnotes, 12/10/13).

This example shows how some students communicated with their teacher in English even when they knew it was a day designated for instruction in Spanish. Many times the students were able to make the same contribution in Spanish as captured in this math lesson, but they would only do it upon the teacher's specific request for them to say it in Spanish. Concepts like number were reviewed on a daily basis and students were familiar with the numbers in both languages. In this instance, Melody translated her question from English to Spanish without difficulty; she communicated the main point without necessarily making a literal translation as many bilinguals commonly do. This student, Melody, would occasionally ask me a question in English during a

day of Spanish instruction, but I followed Ms. Felicity's lead and I would reply and help out in Spanish if that was the language of instruction for the day.

For the most part, Felicity's students were able to participate in Spanish. There were a few students for whom Spanish was not the first choice; however, they would do it upon the teacher's request. On days of English instruction, some students tried to clarify questions with a peer or they asked me. Melody was one of the students that would approach me quite a bit when I visited her class, but she spoke to me in English whether it was Spanish or English day.

### **Implementing Pedagogy: Literacy Experiences with Print**

Regarding instruction, Felicity mentioned that as a self-contained DL teacher, she was responsible for teaching both Spanish and English to her students which proved difficult in part to the lack of instructional materials available in both languages. Felicity found it harder to teach in Spanish because of the limited resources available. During one of the interviews when I asked the participating teachers to brainstorm what the ideal DL program would look like, Felicity emphasized the need to acquire balanced instructional materials, particularly quality teaching materials in Spanish because there are very few. Some teachers who create their own materials in Spanish such as Felicity invest a lot of time and resources.

Another important observation made by Felicity about her teaching assignment was that her position meant she had to do double the work, which was challenging and time consuming. Since half of Felicity's class was English-dominant and the other half Spanish-dominant, she taught reading and writing in both English and Spanish simultaneously. She shared she was able to do this by having some language arts centers prepared for student to work independently while she called one reading group at a time. Felicity explained:

The district right now is asking us to do one day in English and one day in Spanish. I'm expected to do both of the lessons for English and for Spanish, so I started doing centers... they [administrators] say "The Spanish group needs to get an hour in Spanish and then the last thirty minutes in English" (Felicity, Interview, 11/13/13)

Felicity mentioned the expectations that came for DL teachers from the central office at her school district and she also mentioned what was requested from the administration at her campus. As a result, during language arts instruction Felicity decided to have learning centers where students could be working independently in literacy development activities. She used this time to provide small group instruction to her reading groups at the kidney table; she had four reading groups, two in Spanish and two in English.

Basically, you have to do double the work, I type up homework sheets, I have to do them in Spanish, I have to do them in English and the stories, I have to know both stories, I have to know both curriculums, because they are not the same, so I have double books for the students. They are mixed in the classroom only eight are Spanish and nine are English, it's half and half. (Felicity, Interview, 10/23/13).

Regarding homework, Felicity had spelling words in Spanish for half of her class and the other half learned spelling words in English. Felicity mentioned that if she wanted to teach the same story to her students, then she had to spend a lot of time translating the English stories to Spanish. In most cases, for language arts, which she taught in Spanish to half her students and in English to the other half of her class, Felicity would plan activities for two different stories. Due to lack of instructional resources in Spanish, and in the interest of time, Felicity would sometimes use materials in English for delivering instruction on the days when she taught in Spanish. For example, during one of my observations, Felicity gave a math test which was written in English, but she read the questions in Spanish for the students; it went like this:

Felicity: Greater than gr...te lo está diciendo...grande.

Felicity:Smaller than, más chico.

Felicity: Equal to que quiere decir iguales

(Since Felicity was translating the test questions to Spanish, students would occasionally ask for the meaning of a word)

Niño: ¿qué es cohete?



Felicity:¿qué es cohete? Rocketship; cohete, rocketship, no cuetes, esos son los del 4 de julio.

Felicity:Vas a colorear los cuadrados, squares, squares, squares ¿cuál es el cuadrado? Square.

Felicity: Rectángulos, rectangles

(Felicity, Fieldnotes, 10/3/13).

When I walked in, the students were taking a math test and I could tell because they each had a laminated manila folder up on their desk to cover their test; Felicity refers to these folders as castillos. The students were mainly comparing numbers and identifying various shapes. Felicity was teaching in Spanish that day, but the test items were written in English; therefore, she mostly spoke Spanish, except for few words that she said in both languages in order to clarify a question, for example, rocketship, cohete, cuadrados, squares, and rectángulo, rectangles. Felicity would read the math test items to the students in Spanish, but the text was in English so students had to focus in order to understand the question when the teacher said it because most of them could not go back to read it and understand it on their own. This was significant because it was common practice amongst the participated teachers to do this, to use printed materials in English as they explained it in Spanish. In this particular instance where the students were being tested and required to work individually, inside their castles (manila folders) they couldn't talk to each other to figure out the question and they couldn't read on their own because they were emergent readers and because the text was written in English.

During another classroom visit, Ms. Felicity was doing a science lesson about sources of light and once again she used printed materials in English while she gave instruction in Spanish. The teacher drew a T-chart on the chalkboard and one column was labeled *luz* and the other column *no luz*. She had also drawn pictures of things that give natural or artificial light. Felicity pointed to the pictures one by one and asked the whole class in Spanish to decide if the items (e.g., light bulb, sun, firefly, lamp, candle, matches) were created by humans or nature

Felicity:¿hecho por humanos o natural?

Felicity: esta es la parte donde tienes que poner atención

Felicity: ¿cuáles son algunas cosas que te dan luz?

Joel: candle

Felicity: exactamente, pero en español por favor

Joel: I remember it from yesterday

boy: matches

Felicity: ¿saben cómo se dice en español?

Students: icerillos!

Felicity: ¿no que no? (Felicity, Fieldnotes, 10/10/13).

During this whole group activity, Felicity spoke Spanish and asked questions in Spanish, and she elicited students' responses, though in English, including "candle" and "matches." The students said "cerillos" only after the teacher specifically asked them if they knew how to say that word in Spanish; this was a common practice in this classroom. All the students in this classroom, even the ones who were identified as English-dominant, knew enough Spanish to understand Felicity on the days when she provided Spanish instruction. Once Felicity prompted the students to participate in Spanish, the students did. Sometimes Felicity also used cognates as she told students that many words were similar in both English and Spanish, in different observations she made reference to cognates, including symbols/símbols, rectangles/rectángulos, circles/círculos, president/president, city/ciudad, estate/estado.

## **5.3SECOND GRADE**

### **5.3.1 Case 6: Marisol**

#### **Teacher Background**

Marisol taught the Spanish component of the DL program; she was a TWB teacher in second grade. As a native speaker of Spanish who was schooled entirely in Mexico, even through higher education, she was very knowledgeable and comfortable in Spanish. Although Marisol preferred to teach in Spanish, she had previously taught a self-contained section where

she was responsible for teaching both English and Spanish. She communicated with the parents of her students mostly in Spanish. Marisol communicated with most colleagues in Spanish, but with her partner teacher, Ms. Marissa, she always spoke English because that was Marissa's preferred language. In regards to future professional plans, Marisol expressed having an interest in earning a master's degree as an instructional specialist in bilingual education.

A pesar de que estudié la carrera de contabilidad, en el mismo período de tiempo me fui a la normal de Durango porque estaban ofreciendo clases de verano intensivas. Estaba estudiando en el tecnológico y a la vez estaba estudiando en los veranos, saliendo de la preparatoria yo me fui a estudiar la normal para maestros en [cuatro] veranos. Trabajé diez años en Juárez dando clases en primaria, básicamente clases de segundo y primer año... Llego aquí a Estados Unidos, un sistema totalmente diferente, muchas cosas novedosas para mí en cuanto a educación porque para empezar los recursos que yo tenía en México cuando trabajaba en Juárez eran ¡nada! Gis y pizarrón, los libros de texto gratuito y es todo. Cuando llego aquí que trabajo en Escuela Internacional empecé gracias a Dios con buena suerte cubriendo a una maestra por cuatro meses, a mí el programa se me hacía padrísimo porque yo daba mi instrucción el 80% del tiempo en español. (Marisol, Interview, 11/1/13).

Marisol held a bachelor's degree in accounting from Juárez, Mexico and while she attended college to obtain this degree she also enrolled in a teacher preparation program. Marisol attended la normal para maestros during four intensive summer sessions in another part of Mexico, where her mother was from Marisol's mom had also become a teacher by attending la normal para maestros. Marisol taught at the elementary level for ten years in Juárez and this teaching experience combined with learning English in El Paso (as an adult) allowed her to complete an alternative certification program to teach in the U.S. Marisol's first teaching position in the U.S. was as a substitute teacher in a public school that implemented the DL program school wide. She really enjoyed this teaching assignment because she felt very lucky and competent since she provided 80% of instruction in Spanish.

Marisol experienced a sharp contrast between the educational system in Mexico and the U.S. She noticed the differences regarding instructional resources between public schools in Mexico and in the U.S.; she mentioned that in Mexico, she only had chalk, a chalkboard and the free textbooks provided to each student. Prior to becoming a bilingual-certified teacher in the U.S. Marisol had taught at the elementary grade level in the public school system in Mexico. Some of the material differences between both systems of public schooling were instructional resources such as having computers in the classroom, a classroom library, a projector, maps, and access to the school library, to name a few differences.

In the U.S. Marisol had previously taught third grade during seven years and that was the first year she taught second grade. She mentioned that she was a bilingual teacher previously in contrast to her current assignment as a DL teacher. She explained how the implementation of the program has changed in the last few years in her school. In the past, there was more emphasis in Spanish instruction since the percentage of English increased gradually, for example from 20% to 30% of the time. Marisol expressed that the DL program at her school has been 50/50 for the past three years. Additionally, Marisol expressed that the previous school year they were switching on a weekly basis, but then they were told by the school district that by following that model, students missed out on a week of instruction in the language they are not proficient in. Based on this reasoning, during my observations, students in the DL strand switched every day.

### **Classroom Setting**

There were twenty students in Marisol's class, and her classroom was a print-rich environment, where the large majority of materials displayed were written in Spanish. On the green chalkboard, on the left hand side there were laminated pictures of templates for graphic organizers labeled in English, as they were handed out in a workshop. On the far right side, the learning objectives were written in Spanish and listed as follows: lectura, escritura, language arts, ciencias, matemáticas, and estudios sociales. In front of the board, on the left side there was a small book shelf with books about science concepts written in Spanish. On the right side of the board, there was a projector and a collection of large colorful maps (e.g., U.S. map, world map)

that Marisol rolled out as needed during instruction. This classroom had teacher-created word walls in Spanish for vocabulary in matemáticas, lectura/artes de lenguaje, ciencias, and estudios sociales. There was a teacher-created chart titled Resolver un problema and this chart explained a four step process for solving a math problem.

The calendar math area, which had no rug, had a calendar with the months of the year labeled in Spanish; there was a clock, enlarged pictures of U.S. coins, and a valor de posición chart (place value for ones, tens, and hundreds). Moreover, there was a number line, a number chart from 1 to 100, and a poster with the numbers 1 to 100 represented in symbols and written out in Spanish as well. The teacher's desk was located in a corner in the back of the classroom right next to the kidney-shaped table for small group instruction, which I saw her use when she tested reading fluency in Spanish. The students sat in small groups and they had the alphabet written out on strip of paper stuck on their desks. There were a couple of large wooden bookshelves in the back of the classroom for the textbooks used by the second graders during Lectura and Estudios Sociales.

### **Teacher-Student Language Use**

During my observations, Marisol delivered instruction in Spanish and the students addressed her in Spanish as well. The students called her miss o maestra. The students' conversations were in Spanish, but I noticed that when Marissa's students switched to this classroom, there were more conversations in English among the students. On more than one occasion Marisol reiterated that she was lucky to be teaching in Spanish.

Obviamente me siento más cómoda en el español que es mi idioma nativo y tengo la suerte de que sí me pusieron el componente español. Pero digo, si un día me dicen [enseña] el componente inglés pues...también [lo enseño] o sea no puedo decir que no. (Marisol, Interview, 11/1/13).

Marisol felt more comfortable teaching in her native language, Spanish, and she said that during her teaching experience had mostly taught the Spanish component of the DL program. She realized there was a possibility for her to someday be asked to teach the English component

of the program, and if that were to happen she would not refuse that assignment. I observed that Marisol communicated with her students in Spanish. She would sometimes switch to English for regulatory purposes when addressing an English-dominant child. For example, one day she told a student to follow directions and work independently, and then she said to the boy “no quiero estar como una babysitter, como una nana.”

During one social studies lesson, Marisol had passed out a printout of a U.S. map and she pulled down one of the classroom rolled maps (which was labeled in English) to show her students where that state of Texas was located in the U.S. map. The students were to identify the state of Texas on their maps. Then the follow up activity was for students to write a detailed description about a holiday they celebrated in the community or some special occasion they celebrated at home with their families.

Marisol: ¿En dónde vivimos? Pongan una x en el mapa de Texas, ‘pos sí ¿’pos dónde más?

Marisol: escriban algo que celebran en la comunidad

alumna: ¿aquí o en México?

Marisol: aquí, donde vive

Alumno 1: en México celebran el...

Marisol: no me diga, escríbalo

Marisol: piensen ¿qué es algo que celebran en su casa muchachos, cumpleaños, Navidad, Día de las Madres?

Marisol: ¿Qué es algo que celebran en tu familia?

Alumno 2: Father’s Day

Marisol: muy bien, pero póngalo en español. El Día del Padre.

alumno 2: Día del Padre (Marisol, Fieldnotes, 9/26/13).

The example shows the strong and presence of Spanish during language interactions between the teacher and her students. Marisol was in front of the classroom when she showed the map to her students and brainstormed ideas about holidays or celebration the students could write

about. One of the students asked if she should write about something she celebrates in the U.S. or in Mexico. This is one of several examples I witnessed where students realized they were part of Mexico because of their parents' background or because of the proximity to Mexico. Even when Marisol used the colloquial word in Spanish 'pos instead of pues when she answered the student's question, that speech was clear to these students in the border region, but it would probably not be clear if she were teaching in another place. Because of the proximity of this borderland school district to Mexico, there are many varieties of Spanish used, including colloquial, academic, and regional varieties of Spanish. In border region such as this one, there tends to be an influence of English in spoken Spanish and the celebration of American and Mexican holidays seem to blend as well. This medley of language and customs results from the contact between the two border cities which the teachers and students have connections to. Marisol walked around to monitor what holiday the students were writing about. One student said in his house they celebrated Father's Day and Marisol gave him positive feedback and the name of the holiday in Spanish, Día del Padre, asking the student to write it in Spanish.

### **Implementing Pedagogy: Literacy Experiences with Print**

In Marisol's classroom there was a focus in developing the ability of writing paragraphs in Spanish and reading was encouraged in both languages and this was consistent with her opinion that it is the school's responsibility to teach the structure of language, to teach it formally. During language arts, Marisol's students usually read a story as a whole group and everybody took turns reading aloud. These stories came from their *Tesoros de Lectura* textbook in Spanish. Usually the next activity was for students to talk and write about they had read.

...vemos treinta minutos de artes de lenguaje en inglés. Ese es el período en que ellos reciben inglés, en lo que es lectura. En español es una hora, ahí va combinado ortografía, lectura y escritura. (Marisol, Interview, 11/20/13).

During language arts instruction, Marisol commonly used graphic organizers which she drew on the board, and the students participated as a whole group to categorize information. Then the students would copy the completed graphic organizers in their notebooks, sometimes

students got a printed version of the graphic organizer they used; then they would fill it out and glue it on their notebooks. Graphic organizers were used for students to practice summarizing skills, to compare and contrast, and as a foundation for writing paragraphs with detailed information. Sometimes as soon as the students finished the graphic organizer or a paragraph they had to write, they took it to Marisol and she would grade it. I noticed that students who completed their assignments first, were asked to read a book for a few minutes while the rest of their classmates finished and they actually did. Students read library books or reread stories from their reading textbook.

The students were asked to read a book of their choice. The students were reading library books in either English or Spanish and a few students were rereading stories in Spanish from their textbook (e.g., *Vacas Escritoras* and *La Canción de Babú*). Most students read in small groups or with a partner. I noticed that a few students were reading Dr. Seuss' books in English (*Hop on Pop* and *Fox in Socks*), they had checked out the same titles. While the students were reading independently, I walked around asking the students about their stories and the teacher was calling one student at a time to test their reading fluency in Spanish. (Marisol, Fieldnotes, 10/18/13).

It was common practice that during a language arts lesson, the teacher took on a scribe role as she wrote a paragraph on the chalkboard based on students' input. The information students provided was mostly based on some graphic organizer (e.g., bubble map, double bubble, circle map) they had completed in a previous lesson. This time, the students' contributions were based on information they had summarized about *Lucha contra el fuego*, a story in their reading textbook. The graphic organizer they had worked on earlier was a circle map.

Marisol asked her students to take out their language arts notebooks and to find their circle map about firefighters. On that circle map, there were six details that the children would use to write a paragraph. The children took turns to provide details from their circle maps to the teacher. As she wrote the paragraph on the board, the children copied it on their notebooks. The teacher walked around the classroom to briefly check children's writing.



Marisol: el título comienza con mayúscula, la U es mayúscula, es grande. Se pasan una línea y van a dejar la sangría

Javier: ¿cuál es la sangría?

Marisol: pasa una línea y deja la sangría

Marisol: (a otro alumno) pasa una línea y deje la sangría

Marisol: (a otro alumno) tienes que empezar en la línea rosa, bórrame esto y empieza en la línea rosa

Marisol: (a otro alumno) no, no lo copiaste bien, eso no dice ahí [en el pizarrón]

Marisol: (a toda la clase) no se les olvide poner su punto final.

(Marisol, Fieldnotes, 10/18/13).

Every time I observed Marisol's classroom, there were paragraphs written in Spanish on the board, I noticed she constantly modeled different kinds of writing for her students. On the excerpt presented above, it is visible how Marisol approached teaching grammar and spelling rules to her second grade students. On several occasions, I observed that once the teacher finished writing the paragraph on the chalkboard; she walked around the classroom to monitor her students' writing. Since the students had worked on the content of the paragraph as a whole class, she corrected some of her students as she mentioned details that students must in keep in mind regarding the structure of writing. For example, she asked students to address different things: write the title with a capital letter (con mayúscula), indent the paragraph (la sangría), start writing on the margin of the paper (la línea rosa), and observe punctuation rules (punto final). Marisol wanted her students to develop the skills to write well-developed paragraphs while they observed the grammar and structure of standard written Spanish. Marisol occasionally used a colloquial word in Spanish during instruction or allowed her students to say colloquial words in Spanish because she explained that was how some of the students' parents spoke at home and naturally the children picked up the same kind of speech. Nonetheless, when it came to writing, Marisol was very strict as she emphasized for her students to learn academic writing in Spanish.

### 5.3.2 Case 7: Marissa

#### Teacher Background

Marissa taught the English component of the DL program in second grade. She was a TWM teacher. She expressed that her bilingualism and biliteracy were not fully developed due to her schooling experiences in an English-only setting during the 1960s. Additionally, she had been raised as a monolingual English speaker and she explained she understood her parents' motives for these decisions. Marissa shared that she learned Spanish during college through coursework, by watching novelas, and reading comics at the time when she was going through her bilingual teacher preparation. These opportunities allowed Marissa to learn some Spanish, but not enough to give her a strong foundation in speaking and writing academic Spanish.

I got into education because of my coach. She was Anglo, but she pushed us “You all need to go to college” and she was a good role model for me... When I was a sophomore, I said “Ok, I’m gonna go into teaching,” that was my goal to be a teacher. I remember everybody kept telling me “You have to go into bilingual ed” and when I went to my advisor, I told him “I’m going to go into teaching”. He said “Ok, you’re going bilingual” and I said “Ok, I’ll do bilingual,” I didn’t know what I was getting myself into. I wasn’t very strong with my Spanish. You had to take Spanish courses, that’s when I started learning how to conjugate. When we took our courses in education we had to recite a certain poem in Spanish, and do other things. We were so embarrassed because there were a lot of the people from Mexico and they were very strong with their Spanish, when we did it in front of them, they were giggling and laughing. We felt so bad because we were trying our best to say it in Spanish. But then it was our turn and we had to recite in English, they felt bad because they had the strong accent. That was my luck, to go into bilingual education. (Marissa, Interview, 10/24/13).

Marissa was encouraged by a high school teacher to attend college and decided to become a teacher when she was a sophomore in college. Marissa shared that she had been able to attend college because she received a grant from the local university; she also mentioned that

probably because of her last name she had been told to go into bilingual education and that was why she became certified as a bilingual teacher. During her teacher preparation program, Marissa struggled with coursework in Spanish because she was not proficient in the language. She also mentioned the tension she experienced while taking courses at the local university, where students like Marissa who were stronger in English had difficulty with assignments in Spanish and students who came from Mexico who were stronger in Spanish had a hard time speaking English. Marissa concluded that it was her “luck” to go into the field of bilingual education. She didn’t mention having plans to pursue a master’s degree, probably because she mentioned being close to approaching retirement. Marissa shared that upon retirement she would still like to continue working with children and as an option she might consider volunteering at a school for tutoring students.

### **Classroom Setting**

There were 21 students in this second grade classroom and students sat in small groups. This classroom usually felt pretty cold. The environmental print in Marissa’s classroom was in English and it consisted of teacher-created charts with vocabulary words for science, social studies, and math. There was also a chart titled problem solving and it was a for step process to solve math problems and a poster which outlined the steps of the writing process. On the far left side of the green chalkboard there were objectives written in English for the following subjects: LA, Ortografia, Lectura, Science, Math, SS. Some objectives were written in English and some in Spanish. Some of the words written in Spanish were not written in standard Spanish, for example, “escribera” (escribirá) and “leera” (leerá). (Marissa, Fieldnotes, 9/20/13).

On the right hand side of the board there was a poster with the rules and consequences. There was a calendar for students’ birthdays, which was a poster in the shape of a castle. The calendar math area had no rug and the students stayed at their desks when they reviewed math concepts during calendar. The calendar included a calendar with the months of the year labeled in English and the days of the week had different shapes to practice pattern recognition.

Additionally, in this area, there was a clock, a number chart from 1 to 100 and enlarged U.S. coins next to a small dry-erase board where students created different ways of counting money.

The teacher's desk was in the back of the classroom and right next to it, there was a small shelf with Marissa's teaching books, for example, the ELPS booklet and the TEKS flip chart. This is where she kept the books the teachers at her campus were required to read as part of professional development and she kept some other teacher resources as well. Next to the Marissa's desk was her kidney-shaped table. I usually sat that table when I observed her classroom. When a student misbehaved in class, she sent them to this table or she separated the student's desk from their small group. Although I did not observe Marissa test the reading fluency of her students, she had the sheets and small white calculator to do running records at the kidney table.

### **Teacher-Student Language Use**

During my observations in Marissa's class, she talked to her students in English most of the time, except for the small portion of the day when she taught reading in Spanish. When she taught reading she followed the stories from *Tesoros de Lectura* and the students took turns reading out loud. The follow up activities were provided by the book as well, usually comprehension questions to be covered after reading the story. These questions were answered orally. The students would sometimes speak Spanish among themselves in this class, and although Marissa had expressed that "students need to be taught in their first language until they are very strong" because she agreed "that if they're strong in their first language, it's going to transfer to English" (Marissa, Interview, 10/24/13), on a few occasions I observed that Marissa told her students to speak in English even when they talking to their peers about the activity they were working on. The second graders spoke to Marissa in English, unless it was the 60-minute period allotted to reading instruction in Spanish. I noticed that her students always called her Ms. Marissa, not miss, teacher or maestra.

This was a traditional class, which was usually teacher-centered, although students sat in small groups. There was one occasion in November when I observed some group work and it

was interesting to see how the students worked together to brainstorm ideas while they helped each other to understand new vocabulary words. Marissa was teaching a social studies lesson about needs and wants and she began the lesson with a whole group discussion and then she transitioned to an activity where students had the opportunity to work in groups. She wrote the following question on the board: If you were on deserted island, what would you need?

Student 1: Food

Student 2: water

Norma: clothes

Girl: house

Marissa: that is shelter, a big second grade word [some children were talking amongst themselves] Excuse me, Ms. Marissa is speaking. You're gonna talk with your group

The teacher walked around giving each of the four small groups a blank sheet with one of the following words written on it: food, water, clothing, shelter. The students were told to talk to their peers and together create a list of items that could be found on a deserted island and it would serve the purpose of providing food, water, clothing, and shelter. As Marissa walked around to monitor the activity she said "talk to your peers" and as soon as some students started talking in Spanish within their group, she said "English." The students continued their conversation at a slower pace upon switching to English upon the teachers' request; however, a couple of words in Spanish were still present in the students' conversations as demonstrated by the way the groups reported back the list they had created.

Group 3 Clothing

Girl: leaves, sticks, cocos, vines to close the body

Marissa: what do you mean?... Yes, to clothe the body

Marissa: what would you do with the leaves?

Hilda: stick [using her hands to represent sewing] them together with the sticks

Group 4 Shelter

Boy: sticks, branches, rocks, cocos, leaves

Sonny: what are branches?

Girl: son como palos

Marissa: [telling the whole class] stand up, spread out your arms, like the trees. Branches are pieces of wood hanging from the trees (Marissa, Fieldnotes, 11/11/13).

The groups reported back to the whole class mostly in English because a few words like cocos, and palos were used. Marissa corrected a student when she said close instead of clothe and when a student asked, what are branches? Marissa decided to show the whole class explained the meaning of branches and used body movements to represent what branches are, but she didn't translate the word to Spanish, she did not say ramas.

### **Implementing Pedagogy: Literacy Experiences with Print**

Marissa taught the English component of the DL program and preferred to teach in English because that was her native language. She had delivered instruction entirely in English for many years. In an interview, Marissa had expressed that a sixty-forty DL model would be ideal because students would be learning more Spanish and getting stronger in this language before transferring to English. At the beginning of the school year she expressed she wasn't happy about having to teach a portion of language arts in Spanish as a DL teacher, but said she would do it even if it meant students would have to correct her at times.

I did the monolingual portion, it was all English and I was comfortable. Now that I'm having to do Spanish, even when I write, the kids will correct me. I'll say "Oh, thank you for correcting me." I feel when they [the students] come here, they learn one style, and then when they go to the other teacher, they're learning another style. They're having to change so much I think it causes a little bit of confusion. (Marissa, Interview, 10/24/13).

Regarding the fact that students received instruction from two teachers in two languages, Marissa felt this caused some confusion in the students, mostly due to being exposed to different teaching styles. It is also relevant to mention that during the year of the study, students were

switching every day in comparison to the previous year when the students switched on a weekly basis.

Marissa liked to teach writing; she felt that was her strongest area, since she had previously taught fourth grade for about twenty years. She explained that in fourth grade, there was a big emphasis on writing because of the state-mandated testing and that is why she had requested a change of grade level to second grade, because she did not want to be in a grade level that required testing. Marissa mentioned that teachers need more training in how to teach writing in Spanish.

On one of the occasions that I observed Marissa's practice, in the beginning of the fourth week of school, the teacher was teaching in Spanish and the students were reading a story from their textbook *Tesoros de Lectura* in Spanish. The title of the story was *Mi Nuevo Hogar* and it was about a girl who moved to a new city with her family. The students took turns reading the story out loud. The vocabulary to be learned was included throughout the sentences of the story, for example: Me parecía que aprender otro idioma me daría sabiduría. Marissa and her students discussed the meaning of vocabulary words in Spanish. The vocabulary words the students were learning were written on the chalkboard: paciencia, orgullosamente, practicar, preferido, sabiduría, and instalarse. Marissa checked for understanding of the Spanish vocabulary as she asked the students: "enséñame, dame un ejemplo" (Fieldnotes, 9/17/13). The students tried to explain the meaning of the vocabulary in their own words or by using it in a sentence. The students understood the vocabulary pretty well, from this vocabulary list, the word that seemed to be more difficult for them to understand was instalarse. The way Marissa taught literacy in Spanish was by closely following the stories from the textbook and having the students orally answer the comprehension questions that followed the story. Additionally, she supplemented the learning of vocabulary words by having the students actually show the class they understood the meaning of words. When Marissa saw a few students volunteered to explain the meaning of a word instalarse without defining it correctly, she gave a few examples to clarify its meaning for her students.

During my observations I witnessed a few instances when Marissa's students took tests. When students took a test, it seemed like it was a very important task because students were required to be very quiet, and everyone covered their test paper. All students had to complete the test at the same pace, as Marissa read the test items for them. One time in September I observed the students took a science test which was written in English and had about 20 questions in a multiple choice format. In preparation to take the test, Marissa passed out copies of the test and asked her students to write their name and the date on it while she walked around the classroom to check for this information. The second grade students used a blue folder to cover their answers as they completed the test. I also saw this practice of covering the test in Felicity's first grade classroom, when her students took a multiple choice science test. Marissa read each test item out loud and students were instructed to circle the correct answer.

Marissa: write your full name and the date please

Marissa: you're missing the date sir

Marissa: this is a test, please do your best

Marissa: [student's name], I can do without your humming

Marissa: don't write so big

(Marissa, Fielnotes, 9/20/13).

For the first few questions, some students blurred out the answer rather than circling and the teacher seemed to be bothered by this and she firmly asked them to stop doing this (shhh, this is a test! circle your answer). After a while, students just circled their answers on the paper, but did not say it out loud. The teacher walked around showing some students the correct page.

The students started talking a little bit and the teacher turned off the lights and she waited for the class to become completely quiet. The test items were about science concepts; for example: Will the candle melt with the heat? The teacher drew a candle on the board when she read this question. Another question was which picture shows the hottest thermometer? As the teacher read the science test questions, some students needed further explanation. When there was a question that listed goggles as a possible answer and some students didn't know what



goggles were, Marissa showed some goggles to her students. When a student asked about the meaning of the word bridge, Marissa gave a local example, she mentioned the Juárez-El Paso bridge which most students were familiar with:

Boy: what's a bridge?

Marissa: for example, on the weekends, some of your parents take you to Juárez and then to come back to the United States, you need to cross the bridge

(Marissa, Fielnotes, 9/20/13).

The previously mentioned example is significant because using transnational examples to illustrate vocabulary is very likely unique to classroom interactions that happen in a borderland context. In this second grade class, just like in Marisol's class, the students made connections to the border region they are familiar with and for various reasons. Marissa provided an example that was very familiar to most students, some students constantly go to Juárez during the weekends to visit family members, go out to eat, get medical attention, or simply buy groceries. If this class was not taking place very close to the U.S.-Mexico border, the teacher would have probably mentioned a different bridge. DL language students seemed to quickly make sense of new information, especially when it was explained based on something they were familiar with. In this chapter I developed a case study for the seven K-2 bilingual teachers, Andrea, Diana, Miranda, Cassandra, Felicity, Marisol, and Marissa. This approach allowed me to highlight several key aspects of their pedagogical practice which reflected their linguistic identities and philosophies in their borderland DL classrooms. I explored the teachers' academic backgrounds and their professional trajectories, including their teaching preparation, experience, and current assignments. I focused on the teaching practice of the seven participants; four had attended a traditional teacher preparation program and three had gone through an alternative certification program. I presented mostly observational data to highlight classroom episodes to explain how the teachers drew from their teaching background as bilingual educators in a DL classroom setting. In these instances, language interactions were significant, and they reflected teachers'

conceptualization of pedagogy. To illustrate the implementation of DL pedagogy, I decided to shed light on snapshots of literacy instruction where students had experiences with print.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusions and Implications**

### **6.1 SYNTHESIS CHAPTER 4**

In chapter 4, Linguistic Identities, I presented key findings regarding how the intertwining of language and identity came through in teachers' narratives. I developed three main sections. The first was the linguistic background of DL teachers on the border which was shaped by country of origin and languages, schooling experiences, and transnationalism. The second part described the language practices of the families of the teachers, namely their intergenerational influences, including the maintenance of Spanish, the push for English-only and linguistic motherwork. The third component explored the beliefs teachers held about language, which brought forth ideologies about Spanish, ideologies about English, and language dynamics with colleagues and students' parents at La Escuelita. Figure 6.1 Developing and Enacting Linguistic Identities, represents the main components and all the emergent themes related to the linguistic identities of the teachers.

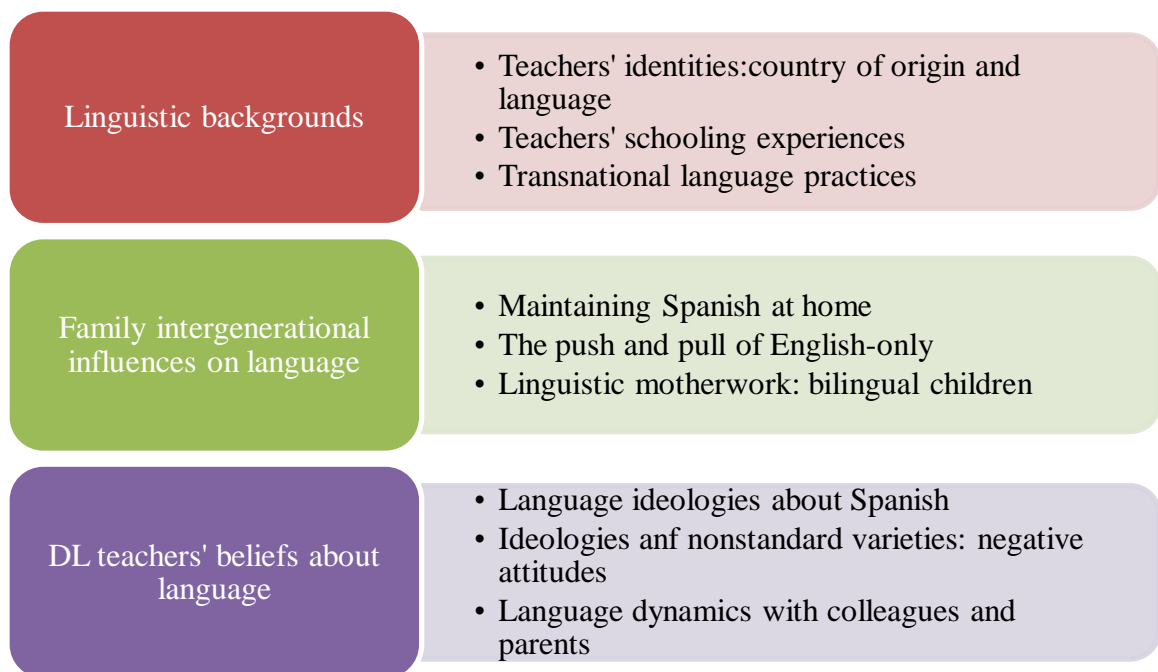


Figure 6.1 Developing and Enacting Linguistic Identities

Chapter 4 explored the linguistic identities of practitioners, thus, illustrated how teachers constructed multiple identities for themselves as they used language in different contexts and for various purposes. Figure 6.2 Formation of Linguistic Identities, shows the overlapping of three main categories: family intergenerational influences on language, linguistic backgrounds, and beliefs about language that contributed to the formation of the linguistic identities of the seven participating DL teachers.

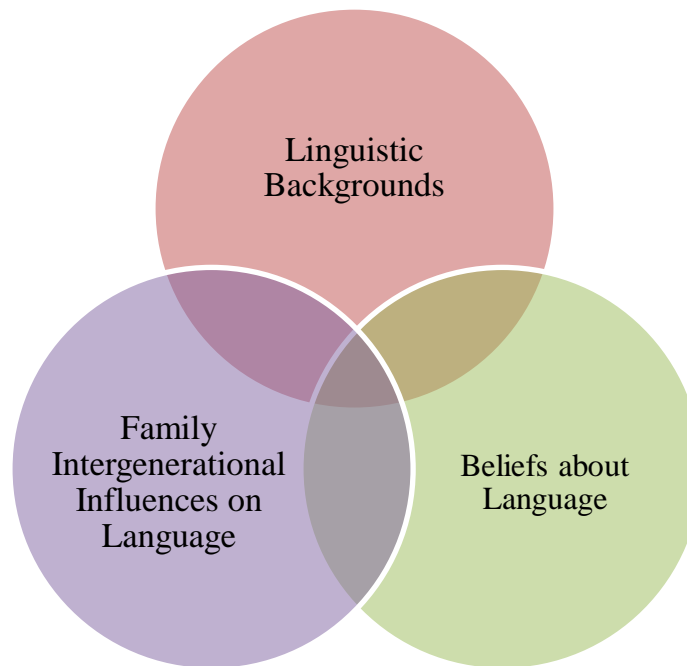


Figure 6.2 Formation of Linguistic Identities

In this study, the focus was on seven Mexican-origin female bilingual teachers whose linguistic resources included varieties of Spanish and English. Barton (2007) affirms that every person has a literacy history which goes back to early childhood and encounters with literacy practices at home, it continues with involvement in community and school practices, and on into adulthood with its varying and changing demands; at any point in time a person's choices are based on the possibilities provided by their past experiences and our view of literacy is dependent on our view of language. For Risager (2006), to understand how the teachers' linguistic resources have been formed it is imperative to study at the micro-level how various languages and language varieties are used and mixed in the ongoing interactions taking place.

In this chapter I explored how the linguistic profiles of seven borderland practitioners were shaped, while highlighting strong connections between language and identity formation. For González (2005), issues of language and identity formation are relevant both in households and classrooms; regarding the discourses of Mexican-origin women and children in the borderlands, she explained that issues of language are further complicated by hegemonic

structures since language is closely tied to heritage and identity. The border distinguishes Mexican-origin populations from other Latinos because Mexicans have a long, indelible history rooted in the borderlands. González (2005) reminds us that the complexity of the borderlands is a factor in language socialization.

All seven participants were Mexican-origin, and whether they considered themselves Mexican, Mexican-American, Hispanic, and/or Latina, was based on their national origin and upbringing which also played a role in their language practices. The heterogeneity of the Latino population is based on their varied histories, national origins, and reasons for US immigration, as well as the numerous modes of incorporation into the nation; most Latino groups have a deep attachment to the nation-specific label that denotes their origin, like Mexican American (Murillo, Villenas, Galván et al., 2010). Vélez- Ibañez and Greenberg (1990) use the term Mexican American to refer to those born in the United States of Mexican heritage. First-generation immigrants are more likely to use Spanish as their primary language, as are their children (Murillo, Villenas, Galván et al., 2010). In the literature, it is common to find research supporting that the lack of English fluency of many Latino parents limits their participation in their children's schooling since they do not feel comfortable participating in school activities, and are unable to adequately advocate for their children in their schools (Murillo, Villenas, Galván et al., 2010).

Field (2010) discusses that many different labels are used to signal ethnicity. Hispanic was first used in the 1970 census for classification purposes and later expanded to Hispanic or Latino in 2000. Hispanics are typically considered an ethnic group, but ethnicity is difficult to define. The term Hispanic can be controversial and it is highly politicized; to some people it can be a term of ethnic pride, a link to Spain or to others it can signify five hundred years of domination. Field (2010) also explains the term Latino is a shortened form of Latinoamericano or Latin American. Regarding the Latino category, Gándara and Contreras (2009) state that writing about Latinos as a group, given the diversity among Latino subgroups, presents challenges to researchers. Latinos may be of any racial background, from different nations, and

may hold different social positions, yet, they are bound together by a shared language, and to a limited extent, a shared cultural heritage. “Latino” becomes a catchall for all Latino subgroups, although the largest component is usually Mexican, since individuals of Mexican origin make up 64 percent of all Latinos in the United States (p. 7).

Very interestingly, none of the participants self-identified as Chicana. Chicano is typically associated with the Civil Rights Movement and Chicano activism and it is used in the southwest; Chicano indicates social identification with indigenous populations from Mexico and to those of mixed European and indigenous ancestry, mestizos. Chicano can generally refer to US born Mexican Americans or those born in the United States of Mexican heritage. Chicanos usually display a hybrid identity of both the United States and their countries of origin (Anzaldúa, 1999; Field, 2010; Vélez- Ibañez & Greenberg, 1990). Figure 6.2 Linking Country of Origin and Heritage shows how the teachers self-identified based on their country of origin and heritage. Marisol and Felicity were born in Mexico and self-identified as Mexicans; Miranda was a U.S-born Mexican. Andrea and Diana were U.S. born from Mexican parents, therefore they identified themselves as Mexican Americans, just like Cassandra who was born in Mexico and raised in the U.S. Marissa self-identified as an American because she was born and raised in the U.S. like her parents, and she had mentioned maybe she was Mexican-American, because her grandmothers were Mexican.



Figure 6.3 Linking Country of Origin and Heritage

Most of the participants' experiences about developing proficiency in academic Spanish resonated with Guerrero's (2003) study of four novice Latina bilingual teachers in the Southwest where he found that Spanish was present in each household prior to schooling. There were opportunities to acquire Spanish within the family context and community; however, the value of English eventually displaced the value of Spanish within the households. His findings reflect that membership in the bilingual education teacher community entails the ability to communicate in academic Spanish and use the language for various educational purposes.

Although two of the participants attended private schools throughout their educational trajectories, one of these teachers received bilingual instruction in this setting in Mexico. Smith's (2002) findings indicate that language resources are likely to be tapped in from elite groups. Moreover, this example demonstrates how ideas about the global power of English and its market value influence learners (González, 2005). Field (2011) establishes that English was learned as a second language by many at least as far back as the mid-nineteenth century, among speakers of indigenous languages, and multilinguals in Spanish so we might anticipate learners' varieties and "accented" English. Furthermore, every English speaker has an "accent," whether he or she is from London, England, or London, Ontario, Canada. We all seem to assume that we, as individuals, don't have accents when we stay close to others who speak the same as we do, from our respective communities. It is only when we move away from that community that we notice the speech patterns of others, but *they* notice ours, too.

The different power relationship of English and Spanish in U.S. society also impacts the sociolinguistic identities of U.S. Latinas/os. Thus, English-speaking Latinas/os often mark English as their own, with phonological characteristics, loanwords, and code-switching. For the Mexican-origin child, the issue of language is complicated by hegemonic structures that inhere minority status (García & Menken, 2006; González, 2005). Stavans (2004) has used the concept of Spanglish to explain the many ways in which Latinos use Spanish in the US differently from the ways in which Spanish is used in Spain and Latin America. This author views Spanglish as a



language that is part English, part Spanish; Stavans (2004) and Chicana feminist Gloria Anzaldúa (1999) embrace this hybrid type of language use.

The factors that determine which language or language variety is used are social; the situations in which people find themselves typically determine which language a bilingual uses. Additionally, among proficient bilinguals, the choice of language, such as Spanish or English, is very similar to selecting from among individual registers, particularly among peers and other members of the bilingual community. Furthermore, for U.S.-born Latinos, conversational code-switching is often the norm, indicating a high degree of personal involvement (Field, 2011). Spanglish is the combination of English and Spanish in conversational code-switching (Field, 2011; Stavans, 2003). Sometimes bilinguals do not choose one language or the other, but select from both, this process of going back and forth from one language to the other is generally referred as code-switching. In some instances, the switch is intrasentential, occurring within a sentence (González, 2005).

Perhaps sometimes people code switch because they can't think of a word, but I would argue that people mix languages for a variety of purposes. For example, to use a word that doesn't translate exactly, to show proficiency in two languages, or even to leave someone out of a conversation. In most cases, mixing two languages to some degree depicts proficiency. Code-switching often occurs spontaneously among bilingual speakers in communication with others who share their languages and far from being a sign of inadequacy or sloppy language usage, code-switching is a sophisticated linguistic skill and characteristic of fluent bilinguals (González, 2005). García (2009) discusses the communicative practices of U.S. Latino communities draw on both their linguistic knowledge of the Spanish language and their cultural knowledge of the U.S., "Spanglish puts U.S. Spanish speakers in a position of deficiency, seen from a monolingual Spanish or English perspective, and denies their agency as speakers engaged in complex linguistic practices that express their new realities" (p. 46). Figure 6.4 Academic Spanish Proficiency shows the levels of proficiency in academic Spanish as self-reported by the practitioners. The teachers' proficiency in academic Spanish was closely related to their

schooling experiences. Marissa and Cassandra were schooled in the U.S. in English. Andrea, Diana, and Miranda received U.S.-based bilingual education instruction in the early grades. Felicity and Marisol were schooled in Mexico. Felicity received bilingual education K-12, Marisol was schooled in Spanish.



Figure 6.4 Academic Spanish Proficiency

One of the main findings is that teachers' identities were not limited to being Mexican or Mexican Americans; rather, their identities are multiple and constantly negotiated as indicated by the ways in which they have cultivated and enacted their linguistic repertoires in two languages, with various levels of proficiency and for diverse purposes. The teachers cover a broad range from being closely tied to Spanish and Mexico to being more identified with the U.S. and English. Similar to González's (2005) findings, with the majority of the participating teachers, Spanish is indexical of identity, heritage, and tradition. English is given an instrumental load, a commodity to be traded for access to the larger communicative sphere.

Based on my findings, I argue that within the context of the U.S.-Mexico border, bilingualism and biliteracy are the result of countless meaningful experiences with two languages. Some of the meaningful experiences that are particular to border residents and were embedded in the participants' linguistic identities, included having and visiting family members

living in Mexico, for example Spanish-speaking grandparents and siblings, like in the case of Diana, Andrea, and Cassandra. Another common practice is to live on the Mexican side of the border and attend school in the U.S., either as a child or as an adult, as experienced by Andrea, Felicity, and Marisol. In the case of Marisol, for a period of time she lived in the U.S., but kept commuting to Mexico to work as a school teacher. Most of the participating teachers, six out of seven, had a concern for raising bilingual children to varying degrees and through different means, but they ultimately saw bilingualism as an asset. Out of the five teachers who had school age children, Dina, Cassandra and Marisol had their children enrolled in DL language programs at local public schools, the Felicity and Miranda has their children schooled in English, but communicated in Spanish with them at home. Furthermore, the frontera is fertile ground for bilingualism and biliteracy to develop since there are ample opportunities to engage in two languages throughout the borderland community.

Language learning, language use, and ideas about speakers of a given language were strongly shaped by the family environment, and schooling, and whether they had a closer connection to Mexico or the U.S., or easily navigated between both worlds. The levels of bilingualism in the seven teachers I studied covered a broad range, even when they teach at the same public school with the same Texas issued credentials. González's (2005) study also found that within the borderlands, ideas about languages are neither uniform nor fixed. Drawing on teachers' personal and professional biographies, as well as institutional and cultural values and attitudes, identity offers a more complex way of thinking about teaching (Benson & Cooker, 2013). The linguistic practices of Mexican-origin Latina dual language teachers on the border illustrated the dynamics of structure and agency. It is important to remember that educators should cross the ultimate border as described by González, Moll & Amanti (2005):

The ultimate border – the border between knowledge and power- can be crossed only when educational institutions no longer reify culture, when lived experiences become validated as a source of knowledge, and when the process of how knowledge is

constructed and translated between groups located within nonsymmetrical relations of power is questioned (p. 42)

Social approaches to language education research have reconceptualized language identities as multiple, dynamic, and contested. For women of Mexican-origin, including my participants, the hybridity of drawing from multiple semiotic systems and negotiating multiple identities was embedded in the continuum of daily life (Benson & Cooker, 2013; González, 2005). Chapter 4 illustrated how identity development is an important outcome of language learning, and the context where this learning takes place.

## **6.2 SYNTHESIS CHAPTER 5**

In chapter 5, Pedagogical Practices, I presented data to discuss how the linguistic identities of the seven DL teachers are reflected in their pedagogical practice within a dual language setting. In conjunction with teacher interviews, classroom observations revealed that pedagogical practices were influenced by the linguistic identities of the teachers. Instruction delivery at La Escuelita supported some guiding principles of DL education; for example, language separation was determined by having two teachers and two classrooms (Lindholm-Leary, 1990; 2001; 2009). One significant role of the DL program is guiding language interactions to integrate language and content (Cloud, Genesse & Hayaman, 2000; Thomas & Collier, 2012); therefore, teachers need to be skillful at designing a classroom environment where children participate in dialogue. Data reported from interviews captured the participants' teaching philosophies and attitudes towards language teaching and learning. Observational data reported examples of how teachers delivered instruction in English and Spanish in DL settings, and their willingness or refusal to accept contributions in the “unofficial” language of the day. The data also illustrated the dynamics of children's language use as they responded in English, Spanish or some combination of these two languages, and a glimpse of their ability to develop early literacy in English and Spanish was captured. During the interviews, the teachers shared their teaching trajectories and philosophies, to give insight on how they viewed their roles in

their classroom, what outcomes they wished to accomplish as practitioners, and how they perceived their pedagogical practice. The teachers' beliefs about language learning were exemplified by the language they preferred to teach which was partly based on their language proficiency positioned within the continua of biliteracy (Hornberger, 1989; 2003). Teachers' language use during instruction exemplified their attitudes towards translanguaging practices (García, 2009) during instruction.

In chapter 5, I developed a case study for the seven K-2 bilingual teachers, Andrea, Diana, Miranda, Cassandra, Felicity, Marisol, and Marissa. This approach allowed me to highlight several key aspects of their pedagogical practice which reflected their linguistic identities and philosophies in their borderland DL classrooms. Chapter 5 explored the teachers' academic backgrounds and their professional trajectories, including their teaching preparation, experience, and current assignments. Figure 6.5 Components of DL Pedagogical Practices includes the intertwining components of teacher background, classroom setting, teacher-student language use, and conceptualization of pedagogy which resulted in the everyday pedagogical practices in K-2 DL classrooms.

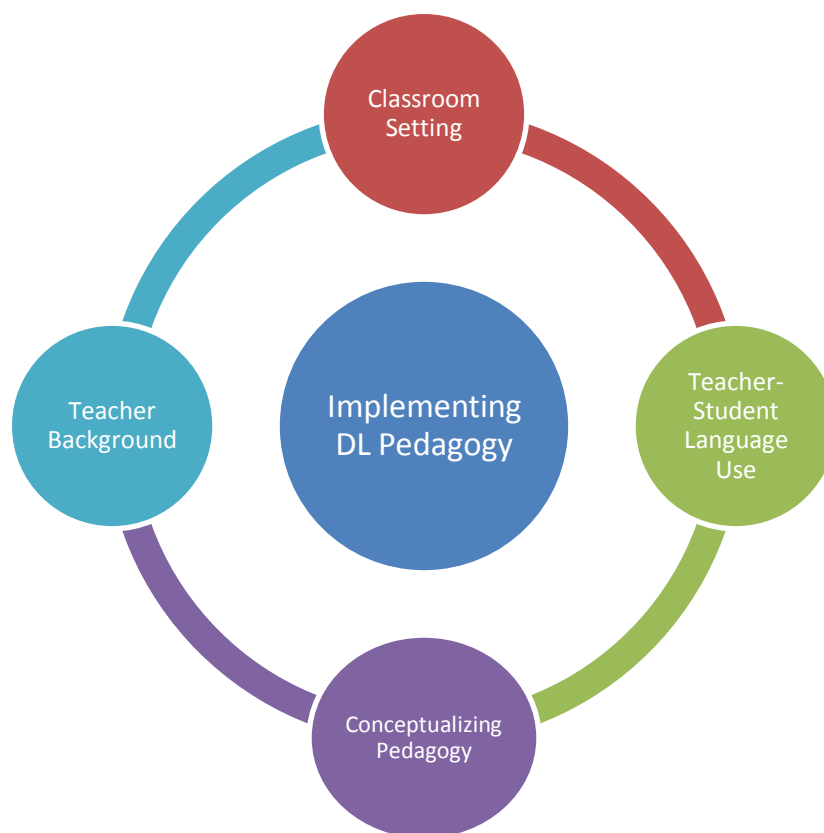


Figure 6.5 Components of DL Pedagogical Practices

Chapter 5 focused on the teaching practice of the seven participants; four had attended a traditional teacher preparation program and three had gone through an alternative certification program. I presented mostly observational data to highlight classroom episodes to explain how the teachers drew from their teaching background as bilingual educators in a DL classroom setting. In these instances, language interactions were significant, and they reflected teachers' conceptualization of pedagogy. To illustrate the implementation of DL pedagogy, I decided to shed light on snapshots of literacy instruction where students had experiences with print. Next, I summarize the practices observed in kindergarten, first grade and second grade DL classes.

The first grade teachers were Andrea and Diana and they were partner teachers. Andrea spoke Spanish most of the time in her kindergarten class and students talked to her mostly in Spanish, but a few also addressed her in English at times. Most students spoke Spanish amongst

themselves, except for a couple who preferred to communicate in English with their peers and the teacher. Some students communicated by combining some English and Spanish constantly. From the seven classes that I observed, most read alouds took place in the kindergarten classrooms. In Andrea's kindergarten class, I observed four read alouds, most of them in Spanish. In Diana's classroom I observed three read alouds in English. Both Andrea and Diana felt that read alouds were helpful to get students to quiet down after recess and to transition into the afternoon activities. Both Andrea's and Diana's students engaged in IStation in Spanish, a computer-based reading program which took place at the library under teachers' supervision, this activity had the goal of developing literacy skills based on students' reading level in their native language. Diana spoke mostly English in her classroom, although she taught part of the morning in Spanish, one hour out of the ninety minute language arts block. In the afternoons, Diana delivered instruction in English and some students addressed her in English and some in Spanish, but she replied in English. Afternoon instruction included math, science, and social studies, and the students switched classrooms every other day to receive instruction either in English or Spanish with Diana or Andrea respectively.

In first grade, there were three participating teachers, Miranda, Cassandra, and Felicity. Miranda and Cassandra were partner teachers and Felicity taught a self-contained section. Miranda gave instruction in Spanish and constantly integrated some English words or phrases into her speech when she gave directions or talked to the students. However, during interviews and informal conversations she expressed she believed in the separation of languages and for this reason, she corrected students if they codeswitched in her class. She also corrected students if they used colloquial Spanish words and wrote the correct word on the board for students to see it. In this first grade class, Miranda taught mainly in Spanish, however, it was common practice to have her students do worksheets in English for students to increase their vocabulary. Students had to label the pictures in English as the teacher modeled the spelling of the words on the chalkboard. In first grade, both Miranda and Felicity expressed they believed in the separation of languages, although, it was Felicity who strictly followed this principle. Cassandra provided

instruction in English except for the portion of the day when she taught reading in Spanish as she followed the stories from the textbook. Cassandra occasionally codeswitched throughout the instructional day, she inserted a few words in Spanish into her speech. Sporadically, she used Spanish for regulatory purposes and provided quick directions in Spanish to a couple of students. The students addressed her in Spanish and she replied mostly in English. Seeking to develop reading skills in English and Spanish, Cassandra just like Marisol in second grade, requested for her students to check out a library book in English and one in Spanish. In Cassandra's class the books checked out in English were at a lower level of difficulty than the books in Spanish; A few students who read fluently in Spanish were allowed to check out more advanced books in Spanish. Felicity's class from the previous year looped with her, meaning she had taught the same group of students the previous year as kindergarteners. On the days when Felicity delivered instruction in Spanish, she made a constant effort to respond back in Spanish and she requested her students to speak Spanish as well. Felicity consistently taught and addressed her students on the language of the day (English or Spanish) and she encouraged them to follow this practice. Felicity sometimes rephrased for her students as needed or provided the right word, especially when students tried to communicate in Spanish. On many occasions Felicity spoke Spanish and her students replied in English, this dynamic where the teacher spoke Spanish and students replied in English also happened a few times in Andrea's and Marisol's classrooms, where they taught in Spanish. Regarding instruction, Felicity emphasized that as a self-contained DL teacher, teaching both Spanish and English to her students proved difficult largely due to the lack of instructional materials available in Spanish. Felicity searched or created instructional materials in Spanish and explained that her TWSC position required her to do double the amount of work.

In second grade, the two partner teachers were Marisol and Marissa. Marisol delivered instruction in Spanish and the students addressed her in Spanish as well. Marisol expressed she felt lucky to be teaching in Spanish, her native language. The students' conversations were in Spanish, but I noticed that when Marissa's students switched to this classroom, there were more conversations in English among the students. Marisol's practice focused in developing the ability



of writing paragraphs in Spanish during language arts. Both Marisol and Marissa had their students read stories from their *Tesoros de Lectura* textbook in Spanish as a whole group and everybody took turns reading aloud. In Marisol's class, although reading was taught in Spanish, students were also encouraged to read library books in both languages. Marissa talked to her students in English most of the time, except for the portion of the day when she taught reading in Spanish. Reading follow up activities were provided by the *Tesoros de Lectura* textbook, for example, comprehension questions were covered after reading the story. The students sometimes spoke Spanish among themselves in this class and on a few occasions Marissa told her students to speak in English when they were talking to their peers about an instructional activity. The second graders spoke to Marissa in English, unless it was time for Spanish instruction. I noticed that her students always called her Ms. Marissa, just like Ms. Miranda in first grade, who did not like to be called miss, teacher or maestra. Marissa taught the English component of the DL program and preferred to teach in English because that was her native language. At the beginning of the school year Marissa had expressed she wasn't happy about the requirement to teach part of language arts in Spanish. In contrast, her partner teacher Marisol taught the Spanish component of the DL program, and liked to teach in Spanish because it was her native language.

Regarding DL programs, Hornberger, (2003) expressed that faculty continually face challenging decisions touching implicitly on larger questions of power; Decisions arise about the distribution of English and Spanish in the program structure and the classroom and the co-existence of standard and nonstandard varieties of English and Spanish and the implications of this instruction and assessment. In the U.S., two-way bilingual education programs tend to have a policy of language separation on the basis that concurrent language use favors the majority language (Cloud, Genesse, and Hamayam, 2000). Regarding dual language arrangements, decisions as to how the languages are to be separated follow one of the following strategies: time-determined, teacher-determined, place-determined or subject-determined (García, 2009).

The school makes a decision as to when one language or the other is used. The languages can be divided by: half-day, alternate-day, or alternate week. Six of the seven participating

teachers (Andrea, Diana, Miranda, Cassandra, Marisol, and Marissa) fall under the arrangement of having two teachers and two classrooms which combines teacher-determined and time-determined language separation. In this kind of setting, one teacher teaches in one language while at the same time another teacher teaches in the other language. At an alternate time, the two teachers switch children. This arrangement requires two teachers who are bilingual but who in effect function as a monolingual teacher, for this reason, the teachers' bilingualism and biliteracy do not need to be fully developed. It is possible to use two teachers who are only receptive bilinguals (e.g., Cassandra and Marissa), able to understand the children and texts, but not completely literate to teach in two languages.

If there is only one bilingual teacher teaching a section, like in the case of Felicity who taught a self-contained class, a time-determined separation of languages is preferable. The teacher switches languages at specific times and the advantage of this arrangement is that teachers teach the same group of students. Teachers in this setting have to be quite literate and professionally educated in two languages and have to prepare material in more than one language; Felicity fit this criteria. Figure 6.6 Linking Linguistic Identities and Pedagogical Practices shows how linguistic identities are woven into the art of teaching. The linguistic background of the teachers leads to becoming bilingual-certified teachers which is a requirement to become a DL teacher. Moreover, teachers' family influences on language carry over to their classroom settings they teach in and how they decide to use language with their students. Finally, teacher's language ideologies shape how they visualize pedagogy and are embedded in their everyday teaching.

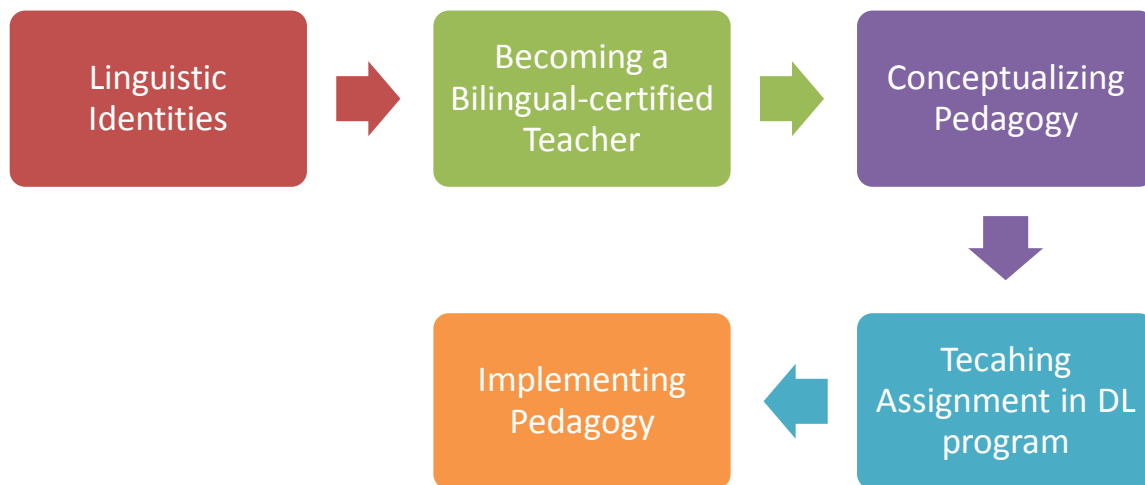


Figure 6.6 Linking Linguistic Identities and Pedagogical Practices

### 6.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION TEACHER PREPARATION AND PRACTICE

I conducted this study in a DL program because of my interest in bilingualism and biliteracy. The contribution that this dissertation makes to these areas of research is how the practitioners' identities influence how they facilitate language and literacy learning. Next, I offer recommendations based on the experiences of the DL teachers who participated in this study. The pedagogies implemented by DL teachers in this study offer examples for teachers who already have bilingual students in their classrooms. These recommendations aim at improving the way teacher educators prepare bilingual teachers in Texas. Opportunities to explore identity formation, develop academic Spanish skills, and knowledge about bilingual education models are essential areas to be addressed. Teacher preparation programs should integrate bilingual education courses which create ample opportunities for pre-service teachers to reflect on their lived experiences; for example, this can be done by having peers interview each other about their life history. Pre-service teachers should be encouraged to examine existing case studies to look at

how in-service teachers' conceptualizations might align with pre-service emerging teacher identities and philosophies for teaching (Taylor, 2013).

Subtractive bilingualism tends to frame teacher preparation in the U.S., and instruction in English is most often the focus (Cevallos, 2014). In my study, bilingual teachers had received limited coursework or professional development on how to teach biliteracy. Except for Marisol, who studied education in Mexico, none of the participants had received specific courses for teaching Spanish literacy in their teaching preparation programs in the U.S. Researchers and advocates in the field of bilingual education have voiced the need for specific development and research in biliteracy in the U.S. (Flores et al., 2011). Escamilla's (2006) study regarding the lack of specific professional development in Spanish, found that such training usually consisted of using assessments and strategies researched with monolingual English-speaking populations instead of bilingual students. It seems that teacher preparation programs do not recognize the importance of biliteracy and Spanish skills and these areas get insufficient attention in the preparation of bilingual teachers. Only researchers in the field of bilingual education advocate for language considerations in the preparation of bilingual teachers (Guerrero & Valadez, 2011). Biliteracy development for teachers is also an important step for preparing qualified teachers (Blum Martinez & Baker, 2010; Flores et al., 2011). Teacher preparation programs should have required courses taught in Spanish in order to support academic Spanish development and improve Spanish proficiency for teachers who will teach in Spanish-English bilingual programs. Specifically addressing DL teachers, like the participants in this study, Christian (1994) defines qualified personnel as teachers who can understand and instruct them in both languages fluently. Not all seven teachers at La Escuelita fit these criteria; furthermore, teachers should be knowledgeable and prepared to teach the different programs available to bilingual students, including DL bilingual programs; the differences need to be addressed carefully, including the tensions and underlying stances of the models (López, 2008).

#### **6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS**

In addition to learning opportunities orchestrated by teacher preparation programs, there are issues to be addressed from an administrative perspective. For example, at the state level, TEA should require and facilitate that current bilingual teachers take courses or professional development specific to biliteracy development in order to obtain or renew a bilingual educator license. The process of acquiring bilingual teacher licenses and the definition of bilingual skills should be revised in order for teachers to have viable access to develop language proficiency and in turn teach language in a manner that meets high standards. Some changes that would benefit DL teachers' practice are initiatives that could take place at the school district level. Some of my recommendations include allotting time in the schedule of bilingual teachers to read and discuss literature about bilingualism and biliteracy. Along the lines of inducting teachers to practitioner-friendly research, there should be collaboration with teacher preparation programs to conduct research in DL programs where there would be an exchange of learning experiences from pre-service teachers, in-service teachers, and teacher educators. There should also be support to motivate and sponsor bilingual teachers to attend and present at local and national conferences that focus on bilingual education, biliteracy development, or specific to dual language. Regarding DL education, it would be essential and beneficial to the school district for all campuses to uniformly implement the DL program. It would also be helpful to arrange visits to schools with exemplary DL programs locally or in the state, and alternatively, teachers from those programs can be invited to go to the district to share their experience and expertise. The recommendations listed above would advance the practice of bilingual-certified practitioners, especially DL teachers, with the goal of improving the education of K-12 settings.

#### **6.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

As is the case with all studies, this dissertation research had limitations that need to be considered alongside the findings and implications. A limitation of the study is that it captured the lived experiences of female bilingual practitioners in one school in one school district. In this

sense, the study only represented seven participants who experienced the same educational context and DL program besides being from the same gender. The participants were purposefully selected based on their teaching assignment, rather than randomly selected. As a native-Spanish speaking bilingual teacher, I identified with most of the participants who shared similar ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Additionally, as a former teacher at this school district, I was familiar with the context and had experience teaching biliteracy to a similar student population with whom the participants worked. As a Spanish-speaker I could critically see how Spanish was taught, spoken, and presented in writing or orally in the classrooms and schoolwide events. Therefore, my preconceptions and prior experiences were limitations to this study as personal bias may have affected the interpretation of data.

The unique characteristics of the DL program at La Escuelita may not be characteristic of more established programs, where there may be more experienced DL teachers or greater schoolwide knowledge about DL education. During the school year I conducted the study, a new bilingual director was hired by the district, and La Escuelita did not have an instructional coordinator during the first two months of the school year; in addition, the two kindergarten teachers had very large classes during the first six weeks of the school, until a new self-contained kindergarten section was open. This study was not intended to measure teacher effectiveness or bilingual programs. A final limitation of this study is that I did not specifically analyze the use of oral language beyond instructional interactions between teachers and students. I provided examples throughout the dissertation to support my claims about pedagogy, but discourse analysis was beyond the scope of this study. Even taking these limitations into account, my findings indicate there is a need for more classroom-based research in DL classrooms to explore if the findings from this study conducted in the frontera would differ or be similar around the country.

## **6.6 FUTURE RESEARCH**

A study that explores the same research question regarding the linguistic identities and pedagogical practices of Latina K-2 DL teachers but expands to include participants from other schools within the same district or to include teachers from other school districts would provide insights about the DL teacher pool in this borderland area. Potentially, a productive area for future research would be to follow new bilingual teachers graduating from teacher education programs as they move into DL classrooms and investigate how their practices are related to their teacher education coursework. Instruction in DL programs should be the focus of more research so that we can learn more about how teachers support emergent bilingual children's language development through their everyday instruction. More ethnographies of bilingual teachers' classrooms lives are imperative because it is important to record their narratives and observe their practices. Research is needed to study teachers from their point of view and within their teaching contexts (Guardia-Jackson, 2009).

## **6.7 CONCLUSIONS**

This study generated important findings applicable to dual language programs and classrooms. The importance of adhering to a structure program model (Lingholm, 1990; Lindholm-Leary, 2001) presupposes the equal distribution of time and resources are determining factors in student learning. In practice, DL teachers negotiate and decide the distribution for time and at the same time they are language resources. In some cases, the DL program showed limitations in teachers' proficiency of Spanish language because Spanish was being spoken with mispronunciations or limited vocabulary. Although most participating teachers agreed upon the goal of biliteracy, there may have not been enough opportunities for all students to become biliterate due in part to the lack of materials and the interpretation and implementation of the program at La Escuelita.

Similar to Brochin's (2010) study with pre-service bilingual Latina teachers, the findings of this study demonstrated that characteristics of in-service DL teachers included a mixture of

language varieties, transnational literacies, and subtractive schooling experiences (Valenzuela, 1999). The Mexican-origin DL teachers held different ideologies, and entered the profession based on their personal and educational histories; their stories are worth exploring for the knowledge they offer since most of the current Spanish-English bilingual education teachers are Latinas (Hernandez, 2010; Prieto, 2009). DL practitioners' lived experiences within the context of home, school, and community shaped their beliefs, and approaches to teaching and learning. This research provides the basis to argue that future bilingual teachers should be encouraged to discover and research the funds of knowledge found in bilingual borderland communities. This study shed light on in-service DL teachers' identity, ideologies and practice. This research strongly identifies ample opportunities to contribute to both preparation and practice that integrates identity formation, access to developing academic Spanish skills, and deep understanding of the structure and implementation of bilingual education models.

This research drew from self-reported data and the observations of teachers' practice in DL classroom which are complex learning environments. Although the participants taught in English-Spanish bilingual programs, findings from this study could reflect the experiences of DL teachers who work in other languages besides Spanish and English. This scholarly work aimed to understand teaching practices, with the goal of contributing to the reframing of bilingual education, and the preparation and retention of teachers.



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## **Appendix A Consent Form**

### **University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) Institutional Review Board Informed Consent Form for Research Involving Human Subjects**

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**Protocol Title:** Latina K-2 Dual Language Teachers: Juxtaposing Linguistic Identities and Pedagogical Practices

**Principal Investigator:** Brenda Oriana Fuentes

**UTEP:** College of Education

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#### **1. Introduction**

You are being asked to take part voluntarily in the research project described below. Please take your time making a decision. Before agreeing to take part in this research study, it is important that you read the consent form. Please ask the researcher to explain any information that you do not clearly understand.

#### **2. Why is this study being done?**

The purpose of the study is to explore bilingual teachers' linguistic identities in relation to pedagogy. This study seeks to discover how dual language teachers develop views about learning and teaching by researching how cultural resources, linguistic repertoires, experiences, and networks influence the pedagogy of bilingual Latina educators. The focus is on practitioners who are bilingual and biliterate in English and Spanish and teach in a public school in the U.S.-Mexico border region. The results of this study will contribute to the literature about bilingual education, providing data for future investigations which could benefit bilingual communities. Approximately 7 participants will take part in the study. You were selected to participate because you are a Latina K-2 dual language educator in a public U.S. school.

#### **3. What is involved in the study?**

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If you agree to be part of the study, you will be asked to participate in a series of three interviews about your experiences related to your practice as a bilingual educator. These interviews will be audio taped and may be conducted in English or Spanish; they may be completed in about one hour and a half each.

#### **4. What are the risks and discomforts of the study?**

There are no known risks associated with this research, however, there is a slight possibility that the participants' identity may be known but given that you will not be asked to say your name during the interviews, that possibility is very rare.

#### **5. What will happen if I am injured in this study?**

The University of Texas at El Paso and its affiliates do not offer to pay for or cover the cost of medical treatment for research related illness or injury. No funds have been set aside to pay or reimburse you in the event of such injury or illness. You will not give up any of your legal rights by signing this consent form. You should report any such injury to Brenda Fuentes (915) 747-5426 or email bofuentes@utep.edu and to the UTEP Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (915) 747-8841 or irb.orsp@utep.edu.

#### **6. Are there benefits to taking part in this study?**

Your participation might potentially benefit you by prompting reflection about your practice. The community might benefit because through your participation the knowledge base about bilingual borderland teachers can be expanded.

#### **7. What other options are there?**

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You have the option not to take part in this study. There will be no penalties involved if you choose not to take part in this study.

#### **8. Who is paying for this study?**

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No funding from any organization or agency is being provided for this study.

#### **9. What are my costs?**

You will not be asked to pay for participating in this study.

#### **10. Will I be paid to participate in this study?**

You will not be paid for taking part in this research study



### **11. What if I want to withdraw, or am asked to withdraw from this study?**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may suspend it any given moment you may chose to without causing you any penalty. However, you are encouraged to talk to the researcher to explain your reasons for leaving the study.

You are given the opportunity to ask any questions related to the study and your questions will be answered to your satisfaction. If there are any new findings during the study that may affect your participation in the study, you will be informed immediately.

The researcher may decide to stop your participation in the study without your permission without consulting you previously, if he or she thinks that being in the study may cause you harm.

### **12. Who do I call if I have questions or problems?**

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The researcher will explain what your participation will consist of in the study and how it may affect you. You may call and ask questions about the study. If you wish you may contact Brenda Fuentes by phone at (915) 747-5426 or via email at [bofuentes@miners.utep.edu](mailto:bofuentes@miners.utep.edu). If you have questions or concerns about your participation as a research subject, you may contact the UTEP Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (915)747-8841 or via email [irb.orsp@utep.edu](mailto:irb.orsp@utep.edu).

### **13. What about confidentiality?**

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Your answers will be confidential and your name will only appear on the informed consent form and not in the interviews. The researcher has received the appropriate training to guarantee the confidentiality of the study. All the documents related to the study will be kept in a locked cabinet while audio recordings of interviews will be secured in a password-protected file on the researcher's computer; files will be kept for five years. Forms related to the study will be kept at Dr. Mein's office (Educ. 813) who is advising Brenda Fuentes and it is located in the Teacher Education Department at UTEP. All records will be protected and only accessible to the researcher. The results of the study may be published at scholarly venues; however, your identity will not be disclosed.

### **14. Mandatory reporting**

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The researcher will inform the IRB periodically about the progress of the study.

### **15. Authorization Statement**

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I have read each page of this paper about the study (or it was read to me). I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and I choose to participate in this study. I know I can stop being in this study at any moment without penalty. I will get a copy of this consent form now and can request information about the results of the study when they become available.

Participant Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to audio taped for all three interviews      \_\_\_\_\_ I do not agree to be audio taped

Consent form explained/witnessed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix B Interview Questions**

### **Semi-structured Interview Protocol for Life History of Bilingual Teachers**

Adapted from Protocol for Oral History of the Public School Principalship by Patrick Carlton

#### **Interview I**

1. Would you begin by telling me about your family background/childhood development? (Birthplace, elementary and secondary education, family and language background)
2. Would you discuss your education for entering the field of teaching? How many years have you served as a dual language teacher? What grade levels have you taught?
3. What are your endorsements in? How long have you been a bilingual-certified teacher?
4. Why did you become a bilingual teacher?
5. If you could create the ideal bilingual program, what would it be like?
6. I wonder if you would discuss those experiences or events in your life that constituted important decision points in your career and how you feel about them.
7. What motivated you to enter the teaching field? How have your motives changed over the years?
8. Would you describe your personal philosophy of education? How has it evolved?
9. What do you like/dislike most about a teaching career?
10. How did your life experiences prepare you for teaching?
11. Describe “professionalism.” What does it mean to you?
12. What are the three most important characteristics of an effective teacher?
13. Why do you feel you are qualified for your position?
14. What three words would your students use to describe you?

## **Interview II**

1. What kinds of things are dual language teachers expected to be able to do?  
Describe your views on what it takes to be an effective teacher.
2. As a follow up question, would you describe the expectations, both professional and personal which are placed upon teachers by their employers and the community?
3. Would you discuss the nature of your student body and comment on the problems, challenges, and triumphs in which you participate as a teacher?
4. Could you describe your work day? That is, how do you spend your time? What is the normal number of hours you put in per week?
5. Would you describe some of the pressures you face daily and explain how you cope with them? Describe your concerns on the job. Describe the toughest decision you have made.
6. Would you tell me the key to your success as a bilingual teacher?
7. What does it mean to be a teacher?
8. Describe an extraordinary teacher.
9. What is the ideal relationship between a teacher and student?
10. Why do you teach in this school district/elementary school?
11. How did you become bilingual in English and Spanish?
12. How did you learn to read and write in both English and Spanish?
13. Did your teacher preparation include courses in Spanish? If yes, which courses?
14. Do you prefer to teach in English or Spanish? Why?
15. What would you expect your students to have gained after having you as a teacher?
16. How do you meet the needs of bilingual students in your classroom?

17. What are the most important things a child should be learning in kindergarten/1<sup>st</sup> /2<sup>nd</sup>?

18. What is your belief on the best way to learn a language?

### **Interview III**

1. Please discuss your professional code of ethics and give examples of how you apply it in your career.
2. Would you describe those aspects of your professional training which best prepared you for bilingual teaching? Which training experiences were least useful?
3. If you had to do it again, what kinds of things would you do to better prepare yourself for bilingual teaching?
4. What suggestions would you offer to universities as a way of helping them to better prepare candidates for bilingual teaching positions?
5. If you were advising a person who is considering a bilingual teaching career, what would that advice be?
6. Since you have now had some time to reflect on your career, I wonder if you would share what you consider to be your teaching strengths and weaknesses.
7. Would you like to share your views about bilingualism?
8. How have you experienced bilingualism in your professional life?
9. What are your goals for next year?
10. What is the last book you read or conference you attended that benefited you professionally? Why?
11. How do you keep abreast of your field?
12. Professionally speaking, where do you see yourself in five years?
13. What is the most significant professional development you have received?
14. What parts of your teacher training do you use the most?

15. What professional development workshops would you like to attend?
16. How do you evaluate your own teaching?

## **Vita**

### **Brenda Oriana Fuentes**

#### **Teaching, Learning, and Culture**

Brenda Oriana Fuentes earned her Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies degree in Bilingual Education in 2005 and began her career as a first grade dual language teacher in a public school district; international opportunities of teaching and studying abroad led her to pursue a graduate degree. In 2009 she received her Master of Education as Instructional Specialist in Bilingual Education. In 2010 she became a full-time doctoral student in the program Teaching, Learning, and Culture with a specialization in Literacy/Biliteracy.

Dr. Brenda Fuentes has been the recipient of numerous honors and awards including a Southern Education Foundation Fellowship with placement at Mexican American Legal Defense Educational Fund and she was awarded the National Scholastic Achievement Award from The League of United Latin America Citizens. She was also recipient of the Dodson Research Grant and Student Travel Grant from University of Texas at El Paso Graduate School

Dr. Fuentes has presented her research widely. National conferences include the American Educational Research Association in 2013 and 2015 and the Literacy Research Association in 2013. International meetings include the International Symposium on Bilingualism in Latin America in 2011 and the Scotland Educational Research Association in 2014.

While pursuing her degree, Dr. Fuentes worked as a research associate and lecturer for the Teacher Education Department. Dr. Fuentes's dissertation entitled "Latina K-2 Dual Language Teachers: Juxtaposing Linguistic Identities and Pedagogical Practices on the U.S.-Mexico frontera" was supervised by Dr. Erika Mein. The rest of her dissertation committee members were: Dr. Elena Izquierdo, Dr. Char Ullman, and Dr. Gina Nuñez-Mchiri.

Dr. Fuentes's research interests include bilingual education; language and identity, and ethnography. She is currently in the process of securing a faculty position seeking to make a contribution based on her research which aims to improve teacher preparation and practice.

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This dissertation was typed by Brenda Oriana Fuentes.