UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Agency, Identity, and Power: Bilingual Mexican American Children and Their Teachers Talk About Learning English in School

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education

in

Teaching and Learning

by

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2008

The Dissertation of Cheryl A. Forbes is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm:

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Chair

University of California, San Diego

2008

DEDICATION

para “Isabel”

y todos los alumnos del salón 17

EPIGRAPH

The more we become able to become a child again, to keep ourselves childlike, the more we can understand that because we love the world and we are open to understanding, to comprehension, that when we kill the child in us, we are no longer.

-Myles Horton & Paulo Freire (1991)

We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Agency, Identity, and Power:
Bilingual Mexican American Children and Their Teachers
Talk About Learning English in School

by

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How do bilingual Mexican American children make sense of their school experiences in the context of restrictive language policies such as California's Proposition 227? The primary goal of this study was to better understand relationships among agency, power, and identity through an examination of participants' views, or ideologies, about language. Data were collected at an urban public school near the U.S.-Mexico border, through group and individual interviews as well as through participant observation in a bilingual third-grade and a mainstream English fourth-grade classroom. Four research questions guided the study: What views about language were held by the teachers? What views about language were held by the children? How were these views

enacted within and shaped by classroom language practices? How did these views and practices contribute to the construction of children's identities at school?

Overall findings suggest that children explicitly valued bilingualism but were beginning to enact the hegemony of English in keeping with the institutional structure of the transitional bilingual program. However, when teachers challenged theories of linguistic expertise and authority embedded within the policy context, children were able to exercise agency in constructing more positive academic identities. The third-grade teacher helped students understand a developmental perspective on second language acquisition. The fourth-grade teacher drew children's attention to multiple textual voices within academic discourse. Thus, children were provided multiple opportunities to be recognized as "good students."

Previous and contemporary literature on student accommodation and resistance (e.g., Carter, 2005; Foley, 1990; Willis, 1977) has largely overlooked elementary school children. Studying children allows for an examination of identity construction within schools not only as a situated enactment or performance (Bucholz, 2004), but also as an aspect of social, emotional, cognitive, and physical maturation (e.g., Cole & Cole, 2001). The findings of the present study highlight possibilities for agency on the part of children and teachers through explicit attention to language use, informed by a theory of educational practice as struggle (Freire, 1970; Remillard & Cahnmann, 2005) within restrictive contexts.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

> The scene is a bilingual third-grade classroom a few miles from the U.S.-Mexican border. It is early in the school year, a time when instruction here is conducted in Spanish, the dominant language of all twenty children, for some academic subjects during part of the day. By spring, the students will "transition" to English for all subjects. The teacher is conducting a social studies lesson with a small group of children in Spanish. The group is seated at a cluster of desks at the front of the room. The lesson objective is that of classifying regions as *urbano*, *suburbano*, or *rural* (urban, suburban or rural). As they talk, the teacher and children look at a large laminated map spread out in front of them, running their fingers along the blue coastline, the yellow deserts and green mountains, and along the dotted line indicating the border between two *Californias*. Other dots represent cities named in Spanish: *San Diego, Escondido, El Cajon, Chula Vista*. A girl suddenly stops her finger on the black dot beside one of these names. She hesitates a moment, gazing at the map, and then looks up quizzically at her teacher. The teacher laughs lightly. "*¡El idioma no se quedó allí!*" ("The language didn't stay there!"), she says, pointing to the border south of the black dot where the girl's hand rests. "*Los idiomas no reconocen fronteras*." ("Languages don't recognize borders.")

What do Spanish and English represent to a bilingual Mexican American[1] child attending school within a context shaped by restrictive language policies? How does a child like the young girl in the scenario reported above make sense of her school experiences, when she lives in a city with a Spanish name, and yet Spanish, her home language, is something to be left behind in the name of academic "progress"? How does the same child's recognition of this unequal status between Spanish and English at school

[1] The students participating in this study were of either of Mexican origin or were descendents of immigrants from Mexico. However, because specific information regarding each participant's generation of immigration was not collected, the term "Mexican American" is used as a general descriptor throughout the text.

influence the construction of her academic identity, and what role do her teachers play in this process?

The overarching goal of this study was to explore answers to questions such as these. Certainly they are important questions to the growing number of Spanish-speaking Latino[2] children in public schools in the United States, for as poet Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) writes, "I am my language. Until I can take pride in my language, I cannot take pride in myself" (p. 81).

However, these questions are also critical to all who are concerned about the future of this country. Pragmatically, bilingual children's linguistic skills are an asset in an increasingly global economy, as well as their abilities to negotiate multiple cultural worlds. Moreover, by nurturing Spanish-speaking Latino children's pride in themselves and in their home language, along with their biliterate academic skills, educators can promote a civic democracy that invites dialogue rather than alienation. As González (2001) argues, "When identity formation is viewed as a necessary component of sound and healthy child development, the specter of fragmentation into corporate ethnic identities is defused" (p. 184).

Finally, answering such questions provides a means to better understand relationships among language, agency, power and identity in the lives of children caught in what Cummins (2000) calls the "crossfire" of competing discourses regarding the very definitions of citizenship, education and democracy within a diverse society. Listening to the voices of these children, as well as to the voices of their teachers, offers insight into

[2] The term "Latino/a" is used in this text to indicate the larger population of immigrants and their descendants from a variety of locations throughout Mexico, Central and South America and the Caribbean.

life within pressurized school communities. Examining children's talk about growing up bilingual offers an understanding of, in the words of Zentella (1997), "community life revealed in language" (p. 15).

Growing Up Bilingual in the Border Zone

As I transcribed the field note that opens this study, I considered what a focus on language in the lives of children in the local community where the classroom was located might reveal. From my own experiences as a bilingual teacher at a nearby elementary school, I knew that children in the border zone grow up with an awareness of multiple languages. On billboards along the freeway overpass bisecting their neighborhoods, on the airwaves as they listen to the radio, in overheard conversations at the corner market where they buy *dulces* after school, children encounter Spanish, English, Tagalog, Ilocano. Negotiating this rich linguistic environment is all part of an ordinary day.

However, the young girl's startled recognition of the fact that places on both sides of the dotted line wore names in Spanish, the language of her parents and grandparents, was not completely a surprise to me. By middle childhood, children growing up in the border zone receive both subtle and overt messages telling them that, even though languages may not be contained by borders, the people who speak them often are. And many learn that not all languages or ways of using them accord one the same freedom to pass through the very real border represented by that dotted line on a map.

The case of Isabel[3] provides an illustration of ways in which language can both construct and reveal these larger sociopolitical forces and impact the life of a child. Isabel was a student in my first classroom several years before I began this study. A sixth-grader, she was strong and somewhat stubborn, mature for her age both physically and socially. I had visited her family in their small apartment near the school, and knew that she frequently helped her mother, a single parent who worked long hours. Although Isabel had been born in the US, like many of the students in my classroom, her family had moved several times. They lived at times in Tijuana with extended family and at other times in San Diego County. In Spanish, Isabel gave the impression of a much older child, with teen-age interests and concerns, and a sharp, even sarcastic wit. However, she became very shy when speaking English, often covering her mouth in embarrassment.

One Monday, Isabel was unusually withdrawn in class. After I asked her several times what was bothering her, she finally told me about a disturbing event that had occurred over the weekend. As Isabel, her mother and younger brother were crossing back into the US after visiting relatives in Tijuana, she had been asked to step aside by the customs agent even though the family carried the necessary paperwork. The agent then asked her many questions in English, which made her anxious, although she told me that she answered the best she could. According to Isabel, the agent then directed her to "sing the *Star Spangled Banner*," telling her that her English was not "good enough" and asking her to "prove" that she had the right to cross the border. At this point in her account, she began to cry. Eventually, the agent let her cross back into the US, but the

[3] The names of all persons and institutions in this study are pseudonyms.

memory of that day appeared to haunt her, and she had changed. While she participated in English class, continuing to learn what she needed to learn, it was without enthusiasm.

I have never forgotten the look of humiliation and anger in Isabel's eyes. The small games that we played, the songs that we sang to help the children learn English must have seemed especially silly to her after that.

She also withdrew from participation in activities in Spanish. My classroom was part of a maintenance bilingual program in which instruction was offered in Spanish and English on alternating weeks, with the goal of helping children become fully proficient in both languages while acquiring academic content knowledge. Once she had tackled complex mathematics problems in Spanish with gusto, for example. After this experience, she appeared disengaged and did not turn in assignments. Yet, as her participation in Spanish declined, she also began to lose out on new concepts being taught and began to fall behind.

I wondered if Isabel might even be angry that I had never taught the children to sing the *Star Spangled Banner*, and whether I should, in fact, put more emphasis on so-called "cultural literacy" (Hirsch, 1988). I suspected, however, that no definitive list of items existed that could not be amended at the whim of a particularly zealous immigration official. As a new teacher, I had little experience with ways to help children understand and cope with such events, let alone with how to draw upon them as "teachable moments" that engage children in dialogue and critical inquiry. The best I could do at the time was to listen, and to offer her what reassurance and support I could.

All Bilingualism is Not The Same

I learned much from Isabel, however. Her experiences were so different from my own, even though I too remembered an encounter with a law enforcement officer in a language I didn't yet speak well. As a Spanish major in college, I had received a scholarship to study in Spain. One day while riding the bus when I lived in Barcelona, my wallet and passport were stolen. I remember my frustration in trying to explain what had happened to the police by phone. Fortunately my roommates, who were native speakers, were able to help me finish that phone call. However, without a passport, the presence of armed *Guardia Civil* on each corner as I walked about on my daily errands in Franco-era Spain was unnerving. Nonetheless, my status as an adult American tourist in Europe was many times more powerful than that of a twelve-year-old Mexican American girl crossing the heavily patrolled San Ysidro port of entry.

When learning Spanish, as a white, middle-class Midwesterner I was accustomed to receiving applause for my efforts to learn another language, and my errors were good-naturedly tolerated or occasionally corrected by the few native speakers with whom I had contact. For Isabel, hearing her own attempts at speaking English rebuffed or belittled was a daily occurrence, and it was expected that she keep trying regardless, for the burden of communication was on her.

I was becoming what Valdés (1992) calls an "elective" bilingual: Spanish was a prize for me, and represented enrichment. For Isabel, a "circumstantial" bilingual in Valdés' terminology, the same language was the object of derision in some places, even though it was the language of her childhood and family. Certainly the words "Spanish" and "English" held very different meanings and were aspects of two very different

identities for the two of us. These meanings and identities were in part shaped by our distinct locations within political, economic, socio-historical and ethno-linguistic landscapes, even as we shared the same classroom space.

Affirming Bilingual Identities

As is the case with many teachers, I have particularly vivid memories of that first group of children, the majority of them either recent immigrants or children of the first generation, and I have kept in contact with many of the students. I lost track of Isabel, however, after she left my classroom. Yet over the years I have often wondered what happened to her. Did she continue her education, like some of her classmates? Among them were graduates of Berkeley and Stanford, including a woman who entered my class as a young girl speaking no English who is now a bilingual teacher at a nearby high school. Or did she drop out, perhaps taking a job in one of the local clothing factories, as had a few of the other girls in her group?

A constellation of factors influence a child's educational trajectory. Opportunities to learn, family histories, individual inclinations, and the presence or absence of supportive social networks are among the many variables. As a classroom teacher, I often had the feeling that children began to decide toward the end of their elementary school years whether or not the promises schooling held out for a better future were real and included them.

While I cannot be certain, I believe that through her experience with the customs agent, Isabel began to lose some of the hope instilled over time by her teachers and family that learning English at school might help her obtain a better future. At the same

time, she was increasingly aware that in junior high school, her Spanish would not be of as much value to her as it was in her bilingual elementary classrooms.

To be sure, learning English for academic achievement, while critically important, will not in and of itself transform long-standing economic and social inequities and guarantee a successful life for children such as Isabel. Equally important, however, are the messages that children receive affirming or negating their identities. Through their interactions with their students, as well as through the learning opportunities they provide, teachers have the power to impact the ways in which a child comes to view possibilities for the future and to construct positive identities.

In my current work as a teacher educator, I remember Isabel and her experiences when my students ask me how they should respond to children's errors in the classroom, and what kinds of texts they should provide. Particularly in my work with prospective bilingual teachers, who come from both elective and circumstantial bilingual backgrounds, I think of her situation when they ask me why children may seem reluctant to speak Spanish in the classroom. This study was motivated in part to help my own students understand relationships between language, power, and identity in the lives of the bilingual children they will teach. In this way, I hope that when they encounter situations such as I did with Isabel, they will be able to help their students exercise agency in the creation of successful bilingual futures.

CHAPTER II

LANGUAGE, POWER, IDENTITY AND AGENCY IN THE EDUCATION OF LATINO STUDENTS

In this chapter, an examination of minority language use in education in the United States situates the present study in a broad historical and theoretical context and underlines the political and ideological character of discourse around education for the children of immigrants. An explication of the theoretical framework that informed the research design and data analysis follows, including discussion of the key constructs. The chapter concludes with a review of selected studies of language ideologies relevant to K-12 settings.

Educating Linguistic Minority Children: Historical and Theoretical Perspectives

How to improve educational outcomes for the growing group of linguistic minority students in the United States remains a subject of much discussion. Olsen (2000) notes that "how quickly, how well, and in what manner immigrants learn English has become the major public issue in the socialization of immigrant children in the United States" (p. 197). This discourse is not new. Historically, scholars have long documented that immigrants to the United States lose their native languages within three generations or less (Fishman, 1991; Pease-Alvarez, 1992; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996; Veltman, 1983). Yet the educational issues confronting immigrant and linguistic minority students continue to be constructed as a language "problem" by policymakers (Crawford, 2004).

This logic is usually framed as a neutral and benevolent attempt to provide English learners with access to postsecondary education and expanded economic opportunities.

However, English language proficiency alone has not resolved educational inequalities, as the experiences of African Americans, Native Americans, and U.S.-born Latinos attest. A review of recent studies found that the dropout rate for second or third generation Latinos who spoke only English was equal to or higher than that of bilingual Latinos and that English proficiency had only minor significance for academic achievement once family background and migration history were taken into account (Schmid, 2001). Acquiring English, then, is not the only challenging facing linguistic minority students, although it is an important one.

That immigrant students want and need access to learning English is not in question. The educational implications, however, are not so obvious. Should students be required to give up their native languages and concentrate on English as they learn school subjects? Or should they be given opportunities to learn bilingually? In reality, the decision as to whether children receive instruction in their native tongue or in a second language has long been a political rather than pedagogical one. It is a decision that has changed in the United States over time given different political agendas, as a brief survey of the use of minority languages in public schools will illustrate.

A Survey of School Minority Language Use in the United States

Bilingualism is a ubiquitous and normal part of life in most societies (Grosjean, 1982; Laponce, 1987; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988), including the United States (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). Bilingual education is a common practice around the world, as well

(Tucker, 1999), although in the United States this approach has met with much controversy in recent years. In the following sections, I will present a brief survey of the ways in which minority languages has been used for instruction in public schools in the United States.

Recognition of Bilingualism in the Early Period

Anderson and Boyer (1970) divide the history of bilingual education in North America into four periods: a) 1550-1815, bilingual education for religious instruction and conversion, b) 1816-1887, bilingual education for preservation of native languages through public school instruction, c) 1880-1960 abatement of minority language use in public schools in the interest of the "Americanization" of immigrants, and d) 1960-70s, revival of bilingual education. During the first period, missionaries used Native American dialects to teach Christianity (Hansen, 1961). German-language schools established by Lutherans prevailed until the late nineteenth century, despite external pressures to close them. The existence of documents such as the *Articles of Confederation* in several languages provides further confirmation that bilingualism was a significant part of life during these periods (Heath, 1976).

Furthermore, the right to bilingualism was considered to be one of the principles on which the unity of this country was established, one that should be protected by the Constitution. When John Adams proposed a national language academy in 1780 to standardize and regulate the use of English, for example, his attempt failed because it was considered to be "out of keeping with the spirit of liberty in the U. S." (Heath, in Zentella, 1988, p. 50). It is important to note, however, that the languages protected were

not those of the Native Americans, once the majority population, who were systematically deprived of their native tongues through schooling. Instead these protected languages were European, such as German, Swedish, and French in the Eastern part of the country and the Midwest. Spanish had its own long history of official and unofficial use in New Mexico and the Southwest.

Anti-Immigrant Policies at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

It was with the wave of immigration, primarily from Eastern and Southern Europe, during the latter part of the nineteenth century that English-only laws began to appear. Political loyalty became linked to the use of English, and after the Spanish-American War, the United States mandated that English be used as the medium of instruction in Puerto Rico and the Philippines (Cafferty & Rivera-Martínez, 1981). Strong nationalist and isolationist sentiments in the United States in the early part of the twentieth century accelerated the decline of bilingual education and the rise of English-only regulations, as well as xenophobia spurred by two world wars in the first half of the century. Generations of Americans suffered linguistic discrimination, intimidation and physical violence in schools at the hands of their teachers and English-speaking classmates in the context of these policies, as a recent oral history project undertaken at a university in the Southwest vividly documents (McGregor-Mendoza, 2000).

Bilingual Education in the Civil Rights Era

The 1960s and 1970s saw a revival of bilingual education, this time as a strategy for improving the educational achievement of linguistic minority students. This revival

was due in part to the climate of reform engendered by the Civil Rights movement, including the creation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act authorized as part of President Lyndon Johnson's "War on Poverty." Title VII of that act was specifically established in 1968 to provide support for programs using native language and culture for instruction and promoting achievement in both languages. Furthermore, these programs were aimed at developing bilingualism for both language minority and native English-speaking students. The impetus for this legislation came largely from the success of dual language bilingual programs in Canada as well as those established in southern Florida in the 1960s, designed to serve an influx of upper-middle-class Cuban immigrants in the Dade County (Miami) area (García, 1999; Hernández-Chávez, 1988). This model was replicated through Title VII demonstration grants throughout the country, and although the socioeconomic background of the Spanish-speaking students often differed from those in the Canadian and Miami models, on the whole, both linguistic minority and native English-speaking students reached or exceeded grade-level expectations (Krashen & Biber, 1988).

In the 1970s significant legal battles gave material impetus to the use of minority languages in education, such as the landmark Supreme Court ruling in *Lau v Nichols* (1974) which determined that states had a legal responsibility to provide students who did not speak English with access to the curriculum, either through bilingual education or specialized English language instruction to make content comprehensible. The subsequent Lau Remedies indicated that bilingual programs should be provided wherever there was a sufficient concentration of linguistic minority students.

Anti-Immigrant Backlash and Restrictive Language Policies

Important as these legal decisions were in ending official repression of minority languages in schools, the primary ideology behind the majority of those programs developed after *Lau* viewed language as a "deficit" to be overcome rather than as a resource for instruction, resulting in a focus on Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) (Hernández-Chávez, 1988). Whereas the Title VII demonstration project programs were based on the dual-language instruction models used in Florida and Canada, in TBE programs, linguistic minority children receive native language instruction only until such time that they are deemed ready to be moved into all-English instruction, typically by the middle of elementary school. The earlier federally- supported demonstration projects were promising, but insufficient alone in meeting the widespread need of building teacher capacity to deliver effective bilingual instruction. In this context, mandated approaches to using native language for instruction were sometimes weak, poorly understood and implemented, if not subject to outright subversion (Roos, 2007). These factors contributed to the vulnerability of bilingual education in the United States to attack from proponents of English-only agendas, as the success of recent anti-bilingual education policy initiatives in California, Massachusetts, and Arizona attests.

However, the furor directed at bilingual education was misplaced. A review of studies conducted shortly before the passage of Proposition 227 outlawing bilingual education in California in 1998 revealed that fewer than one-third of all students who qualified for linguistic assistance were receiving any form of bilingual education, and that furthermore, these programs were showing positive results (Gándara, 1999).

Some of the success of Proposition 227 can doubtless be attributed to the political posturing of Ron Unz, its sponsor, in capitalizing on an anti-immigrant backlash during the late 1990s. However, as Crawford (1992) and Fillmore (2004) observe, opposition to bilingual education in the United States has long been focused on Spanish speakers in particular, although bilingual programs were designed to serve children from all language backgrounds. Fillmore argues that opposition to bilingual education became tied to xenophobic fears that the U.S. is being "overrun" by "illegal aliens," a reaction promoted by California's governor during the 1990s in a series of television advertisements (Mehan, 1997) and contributing to the passage of Proposition 187 which sought to curtail all public services to undocumented immigrants and their children before being ruled unconstitutional. In addition, the political power of a growing Latino majority in states such as California likely contributed to this reaction in some quarters.

Tensions Produced Within the Current Policy Climate

This brief historical sketch illustrates ways in which the official use or restriction of minority languages in schools in this country has varied according to ideological currents in the historical moment rather than to educational needs or goals. In a few cases, such as the dissemination of Title VII bilingual demonstration model programs in the 1970s, resources have been devoted to approaches that have helped particular groups of linguistic minority students achieve a measure of school success. More often, official attention to the use of minority languages in education has been driven by political agendas and has not devoted substantive attention to the educational needs of

marginalized populations, although for those who bear the brunt of these symbolic attacks on their native tongues the effects are tangible, embodied and profound.

From “Bilingual” to “English Learner”

Currently, while bilingual education continues to be debated through public referenda, the attention of policymakers is increasingly focused on the acquisition of English by linguistic minority students. If this emphasis is not new, as the historical account presented above indicates, acceleration in the rate in which students are expected to acquire English proficiency and the minimal amount of support provided is unprecedented in recent times.

In particular, the reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act as the *No Child Left Behind* Act (NCLB) has profound implication for the education of linguistic minority students. Among the most visible changes, in keeping with the symbolic politics of language in education, has been the renaming of the “Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs” (OBEMLA) as the “Office for English Language Acquisition” (OELA), and favoring of the term “English learner (EL)” to describe linguistic minority students.

The NCLB legislation generally marks a sea change in federal policy in that it sharply focuses discourse on expected student outcomes while shifting attention as well as material resources away from inputs, or the support needed in schools to meet these exacting goals. Full discussion of the impact of NCLB is beyond the scope of this study, but even a brief survey reveals the ways in which NCLB impacts the education of linguistic minority students.

The Era of Accountability

NCLB requires that school districts monitor the progress of students designated as English learners (EL) on a regular basis in the form of Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs). NCLB further sets aggressive annual benchmarks toward both English proficiency and grade-level academic achievement, including sanctions for schools and districts where EL students as a group do not meet these benchmarks on time. If a district fails to meet AMAOs for two consecutive years, the state must provide technical assistance to the district and require a District Improvement Plan to ensure that AMAOs are met in the future. If a district fails to meet AMAOs for four consecutive years, the state must require the district to modify its curriculum, program or methods of instruction, or the state must make a determination on whether the district shall continue to receive funds. It may also require the district to replace educational personnel "associated with the district's failure to meet these objectives" (Title III Public Law 107-110, Sec. 3122b, 1-4).

NCLB: "Putting Kids on the Map" or Making English Learners a Target?

On the surface, attention to English language development as well as to the academic achievement of linguistic minority students in the rhetoric of the NCLB agenda would seem to advance equity and discourage practices of "submerging" students in mainstream English instruction without support. Kathleen Leos, a senior policy advisor for OELA and associate deputy undersecretary to the U.S. Secretary of Education, promoted this view when interviewed for a newsletter geared to educators of English

learners (Adam, 2004). Leos stated that NCLB "put kids on the map" (¶ 17), meaning that schools could no longer ignore the needs of English learners, no matter how large or small their numbers. Arguably, this argument may have merits. However, she continued by characterizing NCLB as the "civil rights law" of "non-English speaking students." (¶ 6). Invoking the discourse of the civil rights movement in this way distorts history, narrowing the focus of "rights" from earlier support for bilingualism to "English" and "accountability" in this millennium.

In the same interview, UCLA's Kris Gutiérrez provided a more nuanced view. According to the interviewer, Gutiérrez, who had recently been invited to testify before a bipartisan congressional forum on EL issues stemming from NCLB, agreed that the attention to linguistic minority student needs stimulated by NCLB was important. However, she also argued that combined with the emphasis on high-stakes testing and English-only legislation, NCLB had greatly restricted students' opportunities to learn. Based on her observations in public schools, Gutiérrez remarked that "A student may be gifted in math, but then today's intervention reduces [him or her] to an EL" (Adam, 2004, ¶ 4). She observed that "…kids will spend all day on …reading and not get social studies or science. If they don't get the language first, they don't learn content" (¶ 5). In the end, according to Gutiérrez, when EL students have academic difficulties given this lack of opportunity to learn, "people don't assume that ELs can engage in rigorous learning activities" (¶ 14). With lowered expectations for student learning, linguistic minority students may well become targeted for inappropriate interventions, such as special education, echoing historical over-representation of Spanish-speaking students in these programs prior to the revival of bilingual education in the 1960s.

Learning English Alone Does Not Guarantee Academic Success

Gutiérrez's observations illustrate key assumptions about second language acquisition underlying accountability systems such as NCLB. In general, these measures are predicated on the notion that once they achieve basic English proficiency, bilingual students will enter some type of level linguistic playing field enabling them to progress on par with native English-speaking peers. Such assumptions are challenged not only by the history of poor educational outcomes for U.S.-born English-speaking Latinos discussed previously, but also by recent analyses of accountability system data in California. Even though nearly half of EL students reached proficiency as measured by the state's English Language Development Test, overall the academic achievement of EL students as a group remains below standards and flat in comparison to native English speaking peers (Rumberger & Gándara, 2005).

At the secondary level, an emphasis on teaching English as a prerequisite to content instruction has led to the isolation of linguistic minority students in ESL classes (Valdés, 2000). This isolation negatively impacts students' academic achievement. In a recent study of achievement and language proficiency data at a comprehensive California high school, for example, Callahan (2003) found that opportunity to learn in the form of track placement was a better indicator of students' academic success than their English proficiency level. The situation of secondary English learners is especially alarming given the advent of exit exams required in many states for high school graduation. In California, for example, where passage of the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) became required for graduation in 2006, only 39 percent of EL students were

able to pass the English portion of the CAHSEE in 2004, compared to a pass rate of 82 percent among all other students (Rumberger & Gándara, 2005).

In short, policy initiatives such as NCLB create pressures within the school system to teach English to linguistic minority students as quickly as possible, largely so that they will succeed on the norm-referenced standardized tests that are used to measure success within accountability systems. The type of English that students are to acquire is generally described as "academic," and while it is not clear how this term has been operationalized in school settings, it is generally accepted that English learners are expected to read grade-level content textbooks in English and to compete with native speakers of English on writing tasks, including on college entrance tests. And most importantly, they are to do these things within an unforgiving time frame and with minimal specialized support.

California's Proposition 227, for example, provides initial support for children who are not fluent in English. However, this support is not to exceed one school year, or 180 days, and is to occur "overwhelmingly" in English. In other words, children are "submerged" in English as soon as possible. Parents do have the right to request alternative programs for their children, including bilingual education. Nonetheless, in many cases parents have not been informed of their rights to request these services or have been actively discouraged from exercising their rights.

Research Perspectives on Learning English in School

In response to these accountability pressures, researchers knowledgeable about the processes of second language acquisition argue that it takes time and sustained,

effective instructional support in order for bilingual students to acquire academic English. They further emphasize that students need to have access to content while they are acquiring this language in order to keep up with native English-speaking peers, particularly when they are deprived of their own linguistic resources for learning through policies restricting bilingual education (Scarcella & Rumberger, 2000; Valdés, 2000).

Within this context, some researchers have focused on the amount of time needed to acquire the type of language proficiency needed for school success (Hakuta, Butler & Witt, 2000) as well as on accommodations to achievement measures (Bailey & Butler, 2002). Some have focused on helping teachers learn how to provide students with access to content through what are called "sheltered" techniques (Echeverria, Vogt & Short, 2004). Another line of research has focused on describing the type of linguistic competencies that students should be taught under the rubric of "academic language" (Cummins, 1984; Scarcella, 2003; Schleppegrell, 2004). Several influential studies and position papers over the past several years have attempted to set out a framework for what teachers themselves should know about language or linguistics in order to teach English learners (Adger, Snow & Christian, 2001; Fillmore & Snow, 1999; González & Darling-Hammond, 1997; Valdés, 1998).

However, while there is widespread agreement in educational research circles that students need to acquire more than conversational English skills in order to achieve academic success, Valdés (2004) observes that there is a lack of consensus in conceptualizations of "academic language." Researchers within a socio-cultural perspective focus on helping all students, including English learners, acquire the language of disciplinary communities of practice through engagement in authentic tasks

(e.g., Gee, 2002; Lemke, 1990). Others working within the field of applied linguistics argue for more explicit attention to the forms and functions of language (e.g., Scarcella, 2003; Schleppegrell, 2004).

The different paradigms underlying these approaches sometimes produce tensions and a lack of clarity regarding pedagogical implications for practitioners who are struggling to make sense of teaching both content and language in the classroom. This situation leaves teachers often searching for guidance in designing instruction and evaluating student English language development.

Teachers' Perspectives: Relying on Intuition

All teachers, not just those who work in bilingual or English as a second language (ESL) contexts, face the daily responsibility of helping bilingual and bi-dialectical students succeed. Particularly in states such as California, with its large population of English learners, teachers encounter mounting pressures in an environment where the stakes are high.

Socio-cultural approaches, while theoretically powerful, are sometimes opaque for teachers who themselves may have had few opportunities to acquire and reflect on sophisticated disciplinary language practices in order to make these practices visible to students. Furthermore, particularly in classes where the majority of students are English learners, the absence of more expert peers to model and scaffold English language development within authentic tasks puts increased responsibility on the teacher. In the absence of clear pedagogical guidance, practitioners rely on intuitive models. When

relying on intuition, teachers often equate teaching "academic language" with teaching vocabulary and the surface features of what they consider to be "Standard English."

In practice, then, notions of "academic language" tend to become associated with "Standard English." Depending upon how teachers view the teaching of Standard English, as well as upon their pedagogical skills, bilingual students may be provided with opportunities to add this variety of English to their linguistic repertoires or they may be faced with unrealistic demands for correctness and the devaluing of their own ways with words.

Students' Perspectives: Silenced Voices

Missing from discussion are the voices of the Latino students themselves who are at the center of these tensions. From an ethical stance, as the stakeholders most affected but least consulted, students' perspectives deserve to be heard about the ways in which they experience and make sense of second language acquisition in schools. Whether they will encounter authentic opportunities to acquire the discourse used in academic settings or textbook-based grammar drills (or some combination of the two), bilingual students will increasingly find themselves, to use the language of California's anti-bilingual Proposition 227, "overwhelmingly immersed" in English of an "academic" variety. As they prepare for high-stakes assessments such as high school exit exams and college preparatory courses, along with their bi-dialectical classmates, they will further be expected not only to understand but also to nearly exclusively produce Standard English in school. How do bilingual and bi-dialectical Latino children view learning English in all its varieties? What are their aspirations for the future, and what ways of using their

languages do they believe they will need to acquire in order to reach their dreams? What are their beliefs about the value of bilingualism, and their feelings about losing, maintaining or learning Spanish?

Theoretical Accounts of Language and Power in Education

A valid understanding of what students have to say, however, must take into account the ideological dimensions of school language practices given the history of minority language education presented earlier. Ofelia García (2004) argues that the current emphasis on standardized testing marginalizes Latino students and excludes them from participation in educational opportunities, while simultaneously holding out the promise that acquiring academic English will help them advance. She asserts that their voices have been silenced "not now through slavery, extermination or displacement, but through reifying academic English as a tool of empowerment, when in reality it has become a tool of oppression" (p. 6). Understanding the ways in which particular uses of language become privileged and taken for granted, as well as the ways in which these uses serve to mask inequities and even to promote false hopes, can illuminate any examination of Latino children's talk about language at this historical moment.

The Production and Reproduction of Legitimate Language in School

According to Bourdieu, educational institutions play a role in producing and reproducing what counts as "legitimate" (i.e., "academic," "standard") language (1991). Schools reward the language of those who already hold power, according cultural capital to the sons and daughters of the elite. By masking or mediating the relationship between

economic inequities and daily life and promoting ideologies of meritocracy, schools contribute to the illusion that by acquiring a prestige language variety along with other accoutrements of cultural capital, an individual can achieve social mobility.

In addition, reproduction theories suggest ways in which school language practices contribute to the symbolic domination of certain languages or language varieties over others in the wider society (e.g., Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). Heller (1997) argues that this symbolic domination comes to serve the economic interests of the elite in an era of globalization. In her study of French-language minority schools in Canada, Heller (1995) shows how the language of middle class speakers of the more valued variety of French comes to be privileged over that of the bilingual francophone working class children. Other international studies in bilingual settings have demonstrated the relationship between economic interest and the subjugation of languages and language varieties used by politically oppressed groups. It should be noted that these studies document the ways in which both language choice and code-switching are implicated in these reproductive processes (c.f., Martin-Jones, 1995).

Resistance Theories

Resistance theories acknowledge structural constraints but focus on the ways in which students themselves play a role in reproducing inequalities by rejecting assimilation into the dominant culture and disengaging from participation in school practices. Three studies using ethnographic methods to explore the way in which students contribute to their own academic problems have greatly influenced the field. Willis (1977) documented the ways in which a group of English working-class high school

dropouts, or "lads," actively rejected an achievement ideology, subverting the authority of their teachers and disrupting their classrooms. These lads recognized oppression, but "joyfully affiliated" themselves with their working-class roots and their masculinity by rejecting school achievement and joining the shop floor. In the United States, Macleod (1987) in Boston and Foley (1990) in South Texas documented similar patterns of school resistance and self-sabotage among working-class boys from varied ethnic backgrounds.

Ogbu (1988) posited a difference between immigrants and what he called "involuntary" or "caste-like" minorities (Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, African Americans, and Native Americans) who were either brought to this country by force or whose indigenous lands were seized or overtaken by the United States government. According to Ogbu, the latter group, aware of a history of oppression, may consciously or unconsciously reject language practices, such as the use of so-called "Standard" English, that would constitute "acting White." In empirical studies, Labov found that low-income black students formed group identities around linguistic codes. For example, African American students in one of these studies (1972) who spoke "school English" were often rejected by their peers, leading them to resist engagement in school.

More recent work has contested and extended the theories of Ogbu. Carter (2005), for example, studied urban low-income African American and Latino high school students in New York and found that the most successful students were those she calls "cultural straddlers" who were able to conform to more "white" academic expectations while still maintaining the ability to "act black" or "act Spanish."

Limitations of Reproduction and Resistance Theories

An understanding of reproduction and resistance theories is useful in the analysis of bilingual children's use of and theories about their languages within school contexts. However, as Mehan (1992) observes, reproduction theories do not account for either the action of individuals or the social organization constructed by school practices, such as those that stratify students into so-called "ability groups," or tracks. These practices accomplish the work of reproduction, but are also sites that can potentially be disrupted or transformed through human agency. The use of constitutive ethnography employing videotape and other retrievable data in the study of educational testing, classroom lesson, and counseling sessions enabled researchers to document and analyze the ways in which students were constructed as "handicapped," for example, (Erickson, 1975; Mehan, 1978; Mercer, 1974).

Zentella (1998) notes that resistance theories tend to obscure intra-group differences and "make conquered peoples synonymous with opposition" (p. 105) rather than understanding both accommodation and resistance as part of daily life. Zentella's ethnographic and sociolinguistic studies (1997, 1998) demonstrate the ways in which Puerto Rican children growing up in New York develop "multiple codes for multiple identities," bilingual and multidialectical repertoires that enable them to interact with a wide range of people. As Zentella states, "…their reaction to people who sound White is oppositional only if they have to defend themselves because those people *act* superior" (p. 109). In this example, bilingual children draw upon their linguistic and cultural resources as well as their own human agency to either engage with others or to resist oppression, depending upon the situation and their own goals.

Within the school setting, Mehan and colleagues (Mehan, Hubbard, & Villanueva, 1994; Mehan, Villanueva, Hubbard, & Lintz, 1996) found that low-income African American and Latino students participating in an untracking program developed what they termed "accommodation without assimilation," a strategy for participating in school practices without naïve attachment to an achievement ideology or giving up home languages or identities. Other researchers focus on constructing classroom literacy practices as what Gutiérrez calls a "third space" in which students can acquire academic discourse without devaluing home languages and language practices (Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López & Tejeda, 1999; Lee, 1993, 2001). Schools, then, can play a role in either "subtracting" the linguistic and cultural resources of students (Valenzuela, 1999) or in assisting students to construct academic identities that do not necessitate giving up home identities when networks of support are provided.

Structure, Culture and Agency

This latter group of studies calls attention to interactions between the categories of structure, culture and agency employed by Mehan (1992) to understand inequity within education. Structure refers to the social, political and economic constraints placed upon actors and the ways in which these are instantiated in practice, such as described in the example of "handicapping" above. Cultural accounts draw attention to beliefs and values and the ways in which these influence action. The construct of agency highlights the actions and choices made by actors within specific contexts. While one of these categories may be in the foreground within a particular investigation, Mehan and colleagues argue that they influence and constitute each other (Datnow, Hubbard &

Mehan, 2002; Mehan, 1992) and thus should be considered together. In accounting for the relationship between schooling and achievement in "subtracting" students' linguistic and cultural resources, for example, Valenzuela (1999) analyzes historical and economic constraints, as well as larger social conflicts between U. S. -born and immigrant Mexican-origin youth. However, she illuminates the agentive process of what she calls "authentic caring" on the part of teachers, even within a subtractive environment.

Such agentive processes are the key focus of the present study, in the interest of transforming educational practice. However, the conceptualization of structure, culture and agency influences the larger theoretical frameworks in which this study is grounded, in the attempt to better understand how bilingual Mexican American children and their teachers exercise agency in the construction of positive academic identities given an anti-immigrant sociopolitical context and the culture of tight accountability within schools.

Here, the construct of "language ideologies" draws attention to the ways in which beliefs and attitudes about language both construct and reveal larger social structures or relations of power. "Identities" are seen as constructed and realized in social practice, partially constituted through language and bearing the cultural values and beliefs of the multiple groups and communities in which an individual may participate. The theories of "agency" underlying this framework draw attention to the ways in which actors are positioned by social constraints, but also draw upon cultural symbols to guide their own actions as well as to improvise new possibilities. An overview of these constructs is provided below, situated first within the overall perspective on language that informs this study.

Conceptual Frameworks

Socio-cultural and Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Language

The present study was grounded in a socio-cultural framework. It was guided by the general paradigm of language socialization, or the assumption that children learn about language through interaction with adults and peers (Lee & Smagorinsky, 2000; Vygotsky, 1934/1987; Wertsch, 1991) as they participate in ongoing activities (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 1990), including specific language practices of bilingual communities (e.g., Moll, 1994; Valdés, 1981; Vázquez, Pease-Alvarez, & Shannon, 1994; Schecter & Bayley, 2002; Zentella, 1981, 1997). Following Rogoff (1995), an analysis of participant's views about language use should take place within these personal, interpersonal and contextual planes of analysis.

Sociolinguistic perspectives on language also informed this study. In the words of Wolfram, Adger & Christian (1999, p. 15), "all speakers use a range of styles depending on the situation of speaking," and language variation corresponds to socio-cultural characteristics such as cultural background, geographic location, social class, gender and age. Wolfram and colleagues define "dialect" as a variety of a language generally associated with a regionally or socially defined group. All dialects, in this view, are complete linguistic systems. The term, however, often carries negative social connotations and thus terms such as "language variety" are sometimes used to avoid these stigmas.

However, certain language varieties, or dialects, are accorded higher social prestige than others through practices that create or maintain social relations of power (Bourdieu, 1991), as previously discussed. While some societies accord power to

institutions that set and regulate linguistic standards, Wolfram and colleagues observe that there really is no dialect of English that could be officially considered standard. They define "Formal Standard English" as "the norms prescribed in grammar books" that are most typically reflected in written language (p. 15). Because virtually no one speaks this language variety, Wolfram and colleagues refer to "Standard English" as a "collective noun," intended to refer to "socially preferred dialects from various parts of the United States and other English-speaking countries" (p. 17). They use the term "vernacular dialect" rather than "nonstandard" to refer to the speech of people who do not speak a standard dialect.

In addition to variation within one language, this study draws upon sociolinguistic understandings about languages in contact. Linguistic phenomena such as code switching between languages in the same conversational turn, intensive borrowing between languages, and simplification of grammar and vocabulary may typify what are termed "contact language" varieties (Silva-Corvalán, 2004). Zentella (1981; 1997) and others have extensively documented the regularities that occur within code switching and the ways in which bilingual speakers draw upon two grammars without interference or harm to either. The regularized features of bilingual discourse that have arisen in the Southwestern United States have also been studied. For example, Fought (2003) has examined the variety of English spoken by U.S.-born Chicanos, and Sánchez (1983) their bilingual discourse. Valdés (2006) and Silva-Corvalán (2004) have documented varieties of Spanish spoken in the California and other areas of the Southwest. Yet the use of code switching and other bilingual language practices, which actually distinguish the most

proficient bilinguals, remain among the most misunderstood and stigmatized of all language varieties (Zentella, 2002).

The connection between language and identity is apparent in these sociolinguistic understandings. As Zentella observes with regard to Latinos:

> Language, the medium through which all culture is learned and transmitted, is a powerful lens through which we can detect the ways in which Latinos use different voices to speak as members of different groups at different times, and even at the same time. (p. 321)

The next section presents an overview of the conceptual framework for identity underlying this study.

Social and Developmental Perspectives on Identity

Social as well as developmental perspectives informed the understanding of identity on which this study was based. Although these frameworks intersected in the study, for the purposes of discussion they will be separated here.

Identities are constructed or built by actors as they engage in social practices and become members of particular communities formed around specific activities (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). An individual's sense of personhood as a "carpenter," for example, may be achieved through the successful construction of a table through reaching independence in a process of apprenticeship with a more skilled expert. Within as well as outside these communities, individuals are also recognized by others in ways that confirm or disconfirm what Holland and colleagues call "identities-in-practice" (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998). Individuals may also form identities

through affinity or affiliation with particular groups on the basis of shared experiences, such as “skaters” or “computer nerds” (Gee, 2000-2001).

However, identities are also constructed for as well as by actors. In part this occurs through the recognition work described above by other community members, and can be benign or beneficial. It also occurs through social positioning and ways in which language is used within the practices of powerful institutions. For example, Foucault (1973, 1977) writes of the way that identities are formed through discourse, as institutional practices ensure that an individual comes to be recognized in particular ways, but not others. Wortham (2007) uses the concept of “metapragmatic identities” to refer to socially-recognizable categories, such as “student” and “teacher.” These identities may vary according to local contexts, while others are privileged within the practices of institutions of power over time. Gee (1999) differentiates between these local identity models as “discourses” and those that accrue institutionalized power as “Discourses.”

The effects of the ways in which identities are constructed for individuals or groups can be pernicious. González (2001) recounted, for example, an incident published in a local paper in which an Arizona middle school teacher claimed to have been shot by a “young Hispanic male with a shaved head,” although in reality she shot herself. As one Latina mother commented, her son could have easily been arrested at school the next day and jailed based on appearance alone (p. 196).

Not only can such incidents of mis-recognition have devastating immediate consequences for the individuals involved, but their effects contribute to what Carola Suárez-Orozco (2000) calls the negative “social mirror” often held out to immigrant youth, and it is here that discussion of social and developmental perspectives intersects.

Suárez-Orozco found that school age children and adolescents were aware of anti-immigrant discourses through media representations and school practices of differential treatment, as well as through experiences of outright hostility.

Erikson (1968) held that the central task of adolescence was to achieve a coherent sense of self across contexts. Suárez-Orozco (2000) observes that such concepts made sense within a homogeneous society. She argues that instead, "The children of immigrants must construct identities that will, if successful, enable them to thrive in incommensurable social settings such as home, school, the world, of peers, and the world of work" (p. 217). Language plays many critical roles in this process of identity construction. Falicov (2002) points to the "pockets of remembrance" that maintaining the home language can provide in order to facilitate this developmental process of negotiating multiple worlds. Likewise Wong Fillmore (1991) found that when adolescents lost their ability to communicate with parents and grandparents in the home language, family communication and parental authority began to break down, often with serious consequences.

Within these multiple forces, as Mexican American children grow up toward adolescence, they construct identities and are constructed by others. Immigrant and second-generation children and youth in particular may experience the pull of conflicting worlds. In the words of Suárez-Orozco (2000): "Many are torn between the attachment to the parental culture of origin, the lure of the often more intriguing adolescent peer culture, and aspirations to join the American mainstream culture (which may or may not welcome them)" (p. 217). These worlds imply different communities and different identities, as well as often, different languages.

A model accounting for ways in which agents come to identify with what Holland and colleagues (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain, 1998) call the "figured worlds" represented by these various identities, or to exercise agency, is discussed below.

Agency

Holland and colleagues (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain, 1998) define "figured worlds" as "frames of meaning in which interpretations of human actions are negotiated" (p. 271). These worlds are not imaginary or linguistic constructions; instead, they are constructed through collective activities, or practices, and as such are also differentially socially positioned. Holland and colleagues draw upon Vygotskian theories of mediation (1978) as well as Bakhtin's (1981) notion of dialogism in offering a model of agency that attempts to illuminate the processes by which agents take up or come to identify themselves (and be identified) within given figured worlds. They suggest that involvement, or the salience of and identification with a given figured world or cultural system, co-develops with expertise vis-à-vis that world, in a process of continuous shaping within social interaction.

Thus, in the case of a child who encounters a school context shaped by policies restricting the use of home language, for example, the pull of the "figured world" of bilingualism, or maintaining the home language, might require the exercise of agency. The child would need to recognize the salience, or importance, of such a bilingual world. With this recognition, she would also need to develop expertise, in order to participate and be viewed as a participant by others.

The issues of salience and expertise within this model and its application to the situation of a bilingual child suggest the usefulness of bringing the study of language ideologies to bear within an investigation of agency. Views about the values of particular ways of using language, or about bilingualism itself, as well as the ways in which linguistic expertise is defined and enforced, are inherently ideological within a socio-cultural and sociolinguistic framework.

Language Ideologies

The following sections define and describe what is mean by the concept "language ideologies" in this study, beginning with a discussion of the term "ideology" itself. After defining the concept, relevant studies of language ideologies in school settings are reviewed. The chapter concludes with observations about the implications of the conceptual framework and literature reviewed for the research questions and design of the study.

Ideology: Idea, Sign, Weapon or Tool?

The term "ideology" embeds an array of historical meanings, ranging from 'neutral' to 'negative' or 'critical' (Woolard, 1998). In the neutral sense, ideologies refer to particular beliefs held by social groups (Althusser, 1971; Geertz, 1964; Williams, 1977) that may form coherent systems of signification (Eagleton, 1991) or may lack logic or unity (Volosinov, 1973). Althusser drew upon psychoanalytic theory as well as political economy in theorizing ideology, from which he posited there was no escape.

This relative independence of ideology from the material base distinguishes so-called "neutral" views of ideology in the work of many analysts.

Critical uses of the term imply struggles for power and the maintenance of social asymmetries through distortion (Lenin, 1939), positing a more direct link between the economic base and an ideological superstructure. Some thinkers within the Marxist viewpoint complicated this economic determinism, however. Gramsci (1971) theorized that the bourgeoisie maintained power not just through ownership of the means of production and control of the state apparatus, but ideologically through cultural hegemony, or the process by which the values of the elites "saturated" the consciousness of the working class and came to be viewed as "common sense." Yet this "saturation" was not complete. Gramsci called for an educational practice capable of creating working-class intellectuals who could lead counter-hegemonic struggles. Along with Lukacs' (1971) notion of class consciousness, these conceptualizations are examples of what may be termed a positive view of ideology in which it becomes a tool for consolidating liberation and maintaining freedom, not just for domination. The views of Gramsci and Lukacs correspond in certain ways to the project of critical pedagogy as practiced later by Freire (1970), with his concept of "conscientization."

Some critical scholars (e.g., Fairclough, 1989; van Dijk, 1996) use "ideology" in a more nuanced way than the economic determinism of earlier approaches in Marxian tradition. Burbules (1995), for example, argues that ideologies have cognitive and affective aspects that, taken together with a person's social location, help us understand why an individual would embrace them. Van Dijk (1996) proposes a theory of ideology as socially shared cognition in which people use ideologies to "guide their interpretations,

discourses and other social practices" (p. 8). The complex and distributed character of ideology in this view is illustrated by the fact that social groups may overlap with but are not identical to ideological groups: class, ethnic or linguistic groups may represent conflicting ideologies, and within particular ideological groups, a diversity of social membership may be present. Such theories complicate our understanding of ideologies and their relationship to the ways in which group membership as well as subjectivities are constructed in different contexts.

Conceptualizing Power Through Ideological Analysis

Despite the different conceptualizations of ideology, Woolard & Schieffelin (1994) note that "What most researchers share, and what makes the term useful in spite of its problems, is a view of ideology as rooted in or responsive to the experience of a particular social position…" (p. 58). Ideological analysis is particularly useful for understanding the social context of education for Latino students in the way that it locates attitudes and beliefs in socially shared cognitions that implicate power, rather than construing these as individual characteristics. Reading out emergent ideologies in children's notions of bilingualism and language variation directs attention to institutional and social factors in producing inequities, as well as to subjective experience, as recent studies using the construct of language ideologies in educational settings demonstrate.

Language Ideologies in K-12 Settings

Language ideology as a field emerged relatively recently from linguistic anthropology (Schieffelin, Woolard, & Kroskrity, 1998). Woolard (1998) observes that

within this larger tradition, some researchers have explicitly studied language ideologies (e.g., Heath, 1989; Hornberger, 1988). She further suggests, however, that many other studies have examined conceptions of language, and that the field could benefit from "re-thinking much of this material within an explicitly social-theoretical frame of ideology analysis" (p. 4). Some of the areas relevant to this study include language attitudes (e.g., Labov, 1972; Cummins, 1984; Fishman, 1989), class-based linguistic stratification (e.g., Hymes, 1980; Labov, 1966), linguistic purism (e.g., Hill, 1985) and standardization (e.g., Milroy & Milroy, 1985), and the "revalorization" of language varieties, or the way in which they come to symbolize social, intellectual or moral character (e.g., Eckert, 1980; Heller, 1988; Zentella, 1997).

There is a small but growing body of literature in this area. Together these studies illustrate a range of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of language ideologies in K-12 second language educational settings.

Language Ideologies in ESL Classroom Discourse

Razfar (2003) employed Gal & Irvine's (1995) notions of recursivity and erasure along with an analysis of "mock voice" drawn from the work of Bakhtin (1981) to argue that ideologies of linguistic correctness were co-constructed by a high school teacher and ESL students. In a year-long case study in a high school with predominately Latino students, Razfar observed all levels of ESL classes, videotaping and transcribing classroom discourse using conversation analysis techniques. Among his findings, Razfar reported that while teachers seldom explicitly stated language ideologies, these were manifested via the social organization of learning and practices such as repair of student

language, especially repair of pronunciation. Particularly interesting was his discussion of the teacher's use of what Razfar termed "mock voice." In one example, a teacher was discussing Franklin Delano Roosevelt's role in the internment of Japanese Americans. He assumed the voice of FDR, using rising intonation to mock the President's own words. In this way, according to Razfar's analysis, the teacher distanced himself from an objectionable historical event. Razfar notes that throughout his study, teachers used mock voice regularly to mark "incorrect" forms of language. He relates this practice to what Gal and Irvine call "recursivity," or the process through which certain linguistic forms become subordinated. "Mock voice" accomplishes this subordination of linguistic forms in the repair of errors. Its use also indexes ideological stances toward speakers or content, following Bakhtin's concept of heteroglossia. Razfar notes that the teacher's authority was co-constructed through these processes, although the students are for the most part silent during the lessons he analyzed given the teacher-centered social organization of learning.

Practice Theory in An ESL Classroom

Olivo (2003) drew upon practice theory (Bourdieu, 1977; Heller, 1997) in analyzing classroom discourse to argue that a teacher's language ideology restricted opportunities for students to learn through limiting their abilities to talk in a Canadian secondary ESL classroom. This study used ethnographic methods over a six-month period in one ESL classroom, including observation of informal period such as recess and after-school activities. Olivo found that the teacher's stated educational goals included giving ESL students the opportunity to use language during instruction, but in practice,

he restricted their opportunities, insisting on quiet. For their part, the students resisted the teacher's practices by subverting one of the classroom literacy routines: when the teacher called on one of the newcomer students to supply a word in a word game, the more advanced students who had been in the classroom for awhile would surreptitiously supply the answer, ventriloquizing for the newcomer. In this way, both parties received an opportunity to speak as well as either overt or covert evaluation. Olivo concluded that while the ESL students appeared to recognize the teacher's traditional ideology about the separation of talk and work, they demonstrated a different understanding of talk as relevant to language learning.

These two studies primarily locate language ideologies within classroom discourse. While certain of the analytical tools used, such as mock voice and recursivity, yield new insights, the limitation of each study seems to be the privileging of the teacher's voice within the Initiation-Response-Evaluation pattern which has long been documented in the classroom discourse literature (Mehan, 1979; Cazden, 1988) as a means of social control. Razfar notes this limitation, recommending the study of language ideologies in bilingual settings where ESL students' native languages might be heard. Olivo's article, in particular, demonstrates the difficulty of trying to "read out" ideology from students' behaviors: as Giroux has pointed out, not every act of misbehavior constitutes resistance. The desire to participate in class demonstrated by ESL students during the word game may or may not be related to ideological conflict. Had these students been interviewed, or invited to reflect on transcripts or videotapes of their language practices, more evidence might have been obtained to support Olivo's conclusions.

Studies of Language Ideologies with Young Children

Another pair of studies examines language ideologies in bilingual settings with young children. In contrast with the studies analyzed in the previous section, each of these studies uses methods that incorporate bilingual children's voices, including the use of interviews and group discussions.

Intergenerational Language Ideologies

Martínez-Roldán & Malavé (2004) used the concept of mediation and the tools of critical discourse analysis to explore the ways in parents' ideological discourses shaped the biliteracy development and identity formation of second grade children participating in literature circle discussions in a dual language classroom. They focus on the case of Steve, an English-dominant speaker of Mexican descent. Through participant observation in the classroom and family interviews, the researchers construct the narrative of Steve's language development and his emerging, sometimes conflicting, ideologies about bilingualism. Among the examples reported by Martínez-Roldán & Malavé is an incident that involves Steve's participation in a literature discussion group with two Spanish-dominant students. The researcher asked the children if they believed the bilingual protagonist was smart. The two Spanish-speaking students said yes, while Steve answered an emphatic "No-o-o." When asked by the researcher if a person who speaks Spanish is smart, Steve replied: "I speak in English and I can't speak Spanish and I'm not smart 'cause I don't know what they're saying" (p. 156).

Using van Dijk's notion of ideologies as a socially shared mediational tool, Martínez-Roldán & Malavé focus their analysis of this incident and other examples of Steve's talk on the ways in which his parents' ideologies shape Steve's developing concepts. His father, a first-generation immigrant from Mexico, is Spanish-dominant yet insists that the family speak English at home, also expressing ambivalence toward other Mexican immigrants. Steve's mother identifies herself as Hispanic, claiming both Spanish and Native American ancestry. She was born in the United States, and only learned Spanish after marrying Steve's father. For Steve's parents, bilingualism had an instrumental value, useful for getting jobs. However, it had no symbolic value and neither parent saw Spanish as necessary for the transference of cultural heritage, according to Martínez-Roldán & Malavé's analysis of propositions within their discourse. In fact, Steve's father actively expressed negativity toward immigrants, Mexicans, and the teaching of Spanish in schools as well as discouraging the use of Spanish at home.

The researchers stated that their purpose is not to critique such a formation, but to raise questions about the "self-depreciation" (Freire, 1970) experienced by some Latino immigrants and their children when they portray their ethnic group and cultural heritage in a negative way. Although they did not have any way of gauging Steve's ethnic self-identification, based on the excerpt reported above along with other samples of Steve's written and oral language production, the researchers speculated as to whether he might have been developing a negative image of Mexicans that might later affect his self-image when he becomes aware that he is viewed by others as a Mexican boy. Martínez-Roldán & Malavé made it clear that the language ideologies expressed by Steve and his family are uncommon within their sample, although this case illustrated how some young

students of Mexican descent are becoming English monolinguals even within a supportive dual language instructional context. The researchers further drew attention to the important role of the teacher in providing experiences, such as the literature discussion groups, that afforded a space for children to challenge dominant discourses and to reflect on alternatives.

Language Ideologies in a Transnational Setting

Orellana, Ek, and Hernández (1999) studied language attitudes and beliefs in a bilingual community after the implementation of California's Proposition 227 outlawing bilingual education. Their sample included 19 parents and 37 fourth and fifth grade students, as well as 27 parents of preschool children from a second study. The participants were immigrants from Central America or Mexico living in central Los Angeles. Based on long-term participant observation, focus groups, and interviews, they found that parents focused on their children's language learning as a measure of progress, while children treated their two languages more as symbolic tools for establishing identities. Some of these identities invoked larger societal discourses about who is and who isn't "American" or "Mexican," "Guatemalan," and so on. In the case of the many transnational families in this sample, the ambiguities and contradictions faced by the children in terms of these identities were particularly acute. Parents and children alike worried about the impact that loss of the child's native language, or of academic abilities in that language, would bring. What varieties of Spanish, for example, would children be expected to use if attending school next year in Mexico or Guatemala? What type of academic identities would the children be called upon to construct?

Orellana, Ek, and Hernández note that their qualitative data confirm what Portes and Rumbaut (1996) found in a survey of 5200 immigrant youth in the United States: the students, as well as their parents, clearly valued learning English. Children and parents alike, to differing degrees, seemed to view English as having instrumental value that would help them secure economic futures. Both groups also seemed to see English as a solution to equity, a belief that with greater command of English they would be treated more fairly, be able to claim identity as an 'American'. Yet as the authors observe, "….being 'American' is a birthright for the majority of the children in the …. community, and this birthright has not protected them from racist treatment in a society that sees all Latinos as foreigners" (p. 126).

This last observation recalls the link between patriotism and speaking English made during Americanization campaigns that began with the wave of immigration to the United States after the industrial revolution and continued through two world wars in the first half of the twentieth century. After an era in the 1960s and 70s in which some concessions, such as the right to use native languages in schools for learning, were gained, the present climate is one of increasing restriction and mounting xenophobia. During the time period in which this study occurred, for example, California's conservative Austrian-born governor called for "sealing" the U.S.-Mexican border, and then in a display of symbolic politics, attempted to appease his opposition, including the powerful Latino caucus within the State Senate, by claiming to have made a lexical error owing to his status as a non-native speaker of English. While Latino children may not be directly aware of this type of discourse, they encounter its effects, as documented in the research reported above. The intersection of "nation" and "identity" is part of these

children's daily experiences, and so it is not surprising to find evidence of this in their talk, not only indexing ideological formations but also saturated with emotion. Orellana, Ek & Hernández provide a rich portrait of the diversity within the category of "Latino," including the complex academic identities constructed by many bilingual children in the transborder setting that is the site of so much political contestation.

Considerations in Studying Children's Language Ideologies

The last set of studies calls attention to differences between adult and child views about language, and raises the question of whether or not we can say that children hold "ideologies." Moll and colleagues are conducting longitudinal ethnographic studies of bilingual children attending a dual language school and their families. They have found that bilingual children's language ideologies, including the values they attach to Spanish, English, and bilingualism, change over time and do not depend on unilateral transmission from parents or other adults (Moll, 2002, 2004). Based on this work, González (2003) writes, "theoretically, we consider children's utterances concerning language use as a kind of apprenticeship, a trying out and trying on of language ideologies" (¶ 6).

Conclusion

An historical survey illuminated the ideological character of discourse around minority language use in the education of immigrant children as well as tensions within the current policy context impacting English learners and their teachers. Concepts highlighting interactions among social structures, beliefs and values, and human agency

suggested the usefulness of studies which take all three aspects into account when examining problems related to educational equity.

A conceptual framework incorporating socio-cultural and sociolinguistic perspectives was presented, in which children's identities are achieved and recognized through social interaction, as well as through individual processes of physical, cognitive and emotional development. A perspective on agency which highlighted interactions between salience and expertise in the process of constructing identities within particular social contexts drew attention to the usefulness of examining language ideologies within the topic of bilingual children's identity construction at school.

A review of relevant studies in K-12 settings indicated that children do demonstrate emergent and dynamic awareness of larger social discourses, and underline the importance of taking the teacher's own language ideologies as well as the institutional context into account. The usefulness of investigating ideologies within classroom discourse as well as through interviews was also suggested. Even within dual language schools, where both languages are explicitly accorded prestige, children were aware of larger societal discourses accelerating a push toward English. The following chapter presents the research questions, study design, and methodological approaches suggested by this review.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an overview of the research design of the study. It includes discussion of the key constructs and how they were operationalized, as well as of the rationale for the overall study design and methods employed. The criteria for selecting the specific setting and participants is provided, followed by a general description of the research activities and procedures for data collection and analysis. The chapter concludes with an outline of the remaining chapters, in which further information is provided about the setting and participants and findings from the study are discussed. Each of those chapters presents detailed samples and descriptions of the data collection processes within the presentation of findings.

Research Questions

The overarching goal of this study was to better understand relationships among agency, power and identity in the talk of bilingual Mexican American children and their teachers through an examination of the participants' views, or ideologies, about language. Four specific research questions were investigated:

1) What views about language use were held by the teachers?

2) What views about language use were held by the children?

3) How were these views both enacted within and shaped by language practices in the classroom?

4) How did these views and practices contribute to the construction of children's identities at school?

Definition of Key Constructs

The term "bilingual" as used here draws upon the concept of communicative competence (Hymes, 1972) and the notion of bilingualism as a range of communicative competencies in two or more languages (Hornberger, 2003; Valdés & Figueroa, 1994).

The term "views" was used rather than "ideologies" in the research questions in order to draw broadly upon both neutral and critical perspectives about language, as discussed in the previous chapter.

The construct "language use" included the participants' own reports of when, how, and with whom they spoke Spanish and English, as well as of their proficiency in each language. It included their perspectives on contact varieties of each language, operationally defined as "Spanglish" based on participant responses in the early phases of data collection. "Language use" further included topics such as the participants' beliefs regarding the meaning and value of bilingualism, their histories of first and second language acquisition, and their views regarding nature of linguistic expertise in either or both languages.

"Language practices" included ways in which teachers organized language instruction, including when, where, with whom and for what reason it was permissible to use Spanish or "Spanglish." The term also included ways in which teachers and students engaged in classroom discourse, such as how children bid for the floor during discussions and what, if any sanctions were applied when explicit or implicit rules were violated. It

referred to how teachers' responded to children's errors in oral or written language, as well as to how children talked about and engaged in these evaluations.

Research Design and Methodological Approaches

Given the sociocultural and sociolinguistic theoretical frameworks informing the study, the bilingual child and teacher within the social context of second language instruction were selected as the unit of analysis. Because children develop understanding about language through participation, it is not tenable to examine their talk outside of the social context in which it takes place. In addition, Thorne (1987) observes that children have primarily been studied from an adult's point of view and recommends the use of interpretive research methods (e.g., Erickson, 1986) in order to better understand children's own perspectives. Therefore varied ethnographic methods were used within a qualitative, interpretive approach.

Two principal data sources were used in order to explore the research questions: observation of classroom activities, and the talk of participants during group and individual interviews. This aspect of the design was informed by recent research within the field of language ideologies. An area of unresolved tension for researchers is where to site, or locate, ideology (Woolard, 1998). Some hold that ideology is discoverable through explicit discourse about language (Silverstein, 1993) while others emphasize the unsaid, arguing that dominant ideologies are naturalized and rarely available for conscious reflection (Kroskrity, 1998). A different approach concentrates on both implicit and explicit language ideologies within discourse (e.g., Mertz, 1998; Philips, 1998) or across multiple sites of data collection (González, 2001; 2003). This study took these

complexities into account by combining the analysis of naturally occurring classroom discourse with that of children's and teachers' responses to interview questions about language.

Selection of Setting and Participants

The classrooms selected were part of a Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) program because, as argued in the previous chapter, several factors typically combine to make the ideological dimensions of language particularly salient in such a setting when bilingual students are required to "transition" to English in upper grades. Although social attitudes favoring English are overt within TBE programs given their design, research on children's language ideologies demonstrates that children may experience pressures to abandon Spanish even in dual language programs, where proficiency for all students in both languages is an explicit goal and both languages are accorded equal prestige (Moll, 2002; 2003). In addition, due to demographic resegregation (Orfield 2001), dual language models may not be feasible in locations with dense populations of Spanish-speaking Latino students. Thus it is important to better understand conditions and learning opportunities that may exist even within TBE programs where at least some use of Spanish is allowed.

For this study, I selected a bilingual third-grade and a fourth-grade mainstream English classroom at an urban public school with a high percentage of English learners. The school was located in a low-income area of Southern San Diego County where the population was predominately Mexican American and included recent immigrants as well as long-term residents.

I knew the two classroom teachers, both of whom were of Mexican heritage, from my work as a student teaching supervisor. I knew first-hand that each of them was a dedicated veteran teacher who provided excellent instruction, valued bilingualism, and created nurturing classroom environments. I had observed that each was respected by her peers and students, as well as by the family members I had occasion to meet. The site administrator and the District superintendent validated this selection on the basis of each teacher's effective practice and the achievement of her students over time.

The selected classrooms met two conditions: children received at least some instruction in Spanish during the school year or were otherwise encouraged to use their primary language, and the teacher provided English language development (ELD) as well as content instruction. Activities were observed during Spanish language instruction in the bilingual third-grade classroom. ELD instruction was observed in both third and fourth-grade classrooms, in addition to English language arts activities.

These two classrooms, where students received explicit instructional support and overt messages valuing bilingualism even as they faced pressures to "transition" to English, were chosen in order to be able to explore a range of children's thinking about language. Although this study was not longitudinal, the fourth-grade class contained many students who had been in the third-grade bilingual class with the same teacher the previous year. This fact allowed for an examination of ways in children thought about the "transition" from Spanish to English instruction, as the third-graders anticipated and the fourth-graders reflected upon that process.

Because of the way "bilingualism" was defined for this investigation, the participants included not only children who were classified by the school as English

Language Learners (ELL) and whose home language was Spanish, but also a few of the fourth-grade children who were officially classified as "English only" according to school records but who understood or spoke Spanish. All of the children in the third-grade classroom were from Spanish-speaking homes. These families had elected to enroll their children in the school's alternative bilingual program, exercising their rights under the provisions of Proposition 227.

Research Activities

The study consisted of three principal activities: participant observation in the two classrooms, two group interviews per classroom with students, and individual interviews with children from each classroom as well as with both teachers.

The phases described above were recursive: I talked with individual children and teachers beginning with the earliest observations in order to gain understanding of the setting as well as to verify themes identified within an initial analysis of field notes. Likewise, I continued to observe in the classroom after conducting group and individual interviews, confirming or disconfirming patterns identified within the analysis of these activities.

Data Collection

Gaining Entry

The study began with participant observation in order to for me to familiarize myself with each classroom setting and get to know the children, observing their participation and language use in small and large group activities as well as in the context

of informal interactions at lunch and recess. In consultation with the teachers, I visited each classroom informally for the first time in November, 2005, during periods while the children were engaged in small group or independent work. Following this, I arranged a second visit to more formally meet the students, to explain the study, and to distribute the research permission forms.

The first of these presentations occurred in the third grade classroom, where the teacher introduced me as a "college teacher who taught people to be teachers" like the university supervisor who came to visit the student teacher who was working in their classroom at that time. Several of the children in the fourth grade classroom remembered me as "Mr. C's teacher" because I had supervised a student teacher in their classroom the previous year. Based on this introduction, I explained to both groups that I was working on a book that would help new teachers understand what children thought about learning English at school and about being bilingual.

Explaining the research forms to the students required that I decide which language to use. All of the research forms were printed bilingually, with Spanish on one side of the page and English on the other. I conducted the discussion in Spanish in the third grade classroom. In part, this decision was based on the fact that Spanish was the language of instruction. My choice was primarily informed, however, by a desire to establish my own positive attitude toward Spanish and establish my bilingual abilities, given the socially favored position of English within a TBE program and in light of my own appearance as a middle aged European-American female like many teachers at the school. I was also mindful of expectations that my status as a "teacher of teachers" might create. During my initial informal interactions with the class a few children had expressed

surprise that I, a white woman, spoke Spanish. However, when I presented the research forms one boy asked if I, too, had learned English as a child in school. I explained to the class that I grew up speaking only English and had begun learning Spanish at school when I was a teenager. Although I knew that it would be apparent to them with more interaction that English is clearly my dominant language, I did not explicitly talk about this factor because I wanted the children to feel comfortable approaching me in either language. I told the group that I had been a bilingual teacher just like their own teacher before I had gone on to work at the university.

In the fourth grade classroom, I introduced myself and gave the short presentation in English, the language of instruction in that classroom. However, I also used Spanish in greeting the students, and told them about my language learning history and experience as a bilingual teacher in much the same way as I had done in the third grade classroom. Finally, in each class, I made sure that they understood that the permission forms for their parents were printed in both Spanish and English. I had observed that most written communications to families sent home by this school were printed in both languages, and although it didn't surprise the children to find that my permission slips were bilingual, I wanted to be sure to extend my explicit valuation of Spanish to their families as well.

I did build upon my work in the university and the teachers' desire to encourage their students to think about college by offering a folder and pencil bearing the university logo as an incentive for children who returned signed permission forms, regardless of whether or not they or their families gave consent.

Participant Observation

After establishing the purpose of the research and obtaining permissions, I sought to downplay my status as "teacher of teachers" during future visits while still providing a meaningful context for discussions and interactions and establishing trust with the children. Mindful of the institutional messages they were likely receiving regarding the status of the languages, I attempted to mitigate children's perception of my own connection to the institution of the school as much as possible. I helped individual students at times with a variety of tasks upon their request, such as when they were completing computer lab activities or individual writing assignments. However, I avoided taking any responsibilities that would put me in the position of "teacher," such as conducting instructional groups or supervising children in the teacher's absence, for example. Based on our initial consultations, both teachers were in agreement with having me in their classrooms as an observer, and while they did on occasion refer to my role as a "teacher of teachers" at the university, they facilitated my opportunities to observe and interact with children informally.

Throughout this time, I was conscious of my own language use and sought to establish rapport with individual children as well as further demonstrate my own positive regard for bilingualism while not drawing undue attention to the topic of language. When initiating conversation with the children, I began by using the language most often in use in the classroom. In the third grade classroom, that was usually Spanish. In the fourth grade classroom, instruction occurred in English, although the teacher used Spanish frequently. She did this during lessons to clarify concepts for bilingual students. However, she also used Spanish words or phrases in more informal moments of

interaction with students as well as occasionally during lessons for the whole class. In both classrooms, then, I established my own bilingual abilities and values in the beginning, and after that took my cues from the children, usually responding to them in the language with which they approached me.

In addition to observing classroom interaction, I also spent some time with children as they played at recess. I walked with them to and from their classroom and the playground, or observed as they gathered in the hallways at the end of the school day. These informal observations primarily served to help me establish rapport with the children, but in addition provided me with insight into how I would form groups for interviews as well as into the language use of individual children outside the classroom. I was able to observe two school-wide assemblies: a holiday program held in December, and what school staff members described as a "teach-in" in favor of immigrant rights held on May 1, 2006. These assemblies helped me to better understand the unique local practices of the school community, including language use. Theses gatherings provided an opportunity to observe in which the students and teachers in my study interacted among themselves and with other groups within the larger school context.

During observations, I jotted down notes on a small steno pad, which I then transcribed as field notes on a computer outside the classroom. After establishing a degree of rapport with the children and of comfort on the part of the teachers with having me in the classroom, I also recorded several classroom activities using videotape or a digital audio recording device. Because the purpose of these observations was to develop trust with the children and teachers as well as to better understand the ways in which Spanish and English fit into the life of each classroom, I chose to observe a variety of

activities in each classroom over the course of the school year. My observations concluded in June, 2006, at the end of the school year.

Group Interviews

I conducted small group interviews about language use with two groups of children from each participating classroom during December. Based on observations and in consultation with the teachers, I held separate groups for boys and for girls. The rationale for this choice was my belief that children would be more likely to speak freely in gender-alike groups, as well as to possibly contradict each other. Children were selected to participate in a group interview by three methods: a) during my observations, I noted children's language use in order to identify children who used both languages and who seemed to be comfortable talking in a group; b) I asked the cooperating teacher for recommendations, based on what the teacher knew about individual children's linguistic proficiencies and which children each teacher believed would be comfortable in the interview setting; and c) the teacher and I asked for volunteers who would be willing to participate. From the names that matched all three conditions, I eliminated any names of children who did not have permission to participate and randomly selected groups of three or four boys and three or four girls from each classroom.

I then asked the teacher to look over the list, and to add the names of any children about whom she was particularly interested in learning more in terms of the child's views about language. I also asked each teacher to eliminate the names of any students she felt should not participate for a particular reason. I asked the teachers to do this in order to honor each teacher's knowledge of the students in her classroom, and to minimize any

intrusion the interviews, which occurred during class time, might cause on the children's learning. The actual list of participants varied somewhat from this process due to unforeseen circumstances such as absences or schedule conflicts: occasionally a volunteer who had permission would take the place of an absent child.

These interviews were held in an empty classroom at the school site during class time rather than recess, each lasting approximately 20 minutes. Because of the status of Spanish and English in the wider society, I anticipated that children might perceive that I wanted them to use English. Thus, I decided to begin each discussion in Spanish, telling the children that we would be able to use "Spanish, English, or both" in the conversation as they preferred.

The purpose of these group interviews was to elicit conversation about language use. To this end I used a variety of elicitation prompts. Some of these included asking the children to talk about the languages that were used at home, and whether or not they considered themselves to be "bilingual." I asked them what they liked best and least about learning English in the classroom and what advice they would give to a teacher about helping children learn a new language, and what the teacher should do if children made mistakes. I asked them to talk about what they wanted to be when they grew up, and whether or not they thought they would be bilingual in the future. While I used these elicitation prompts with each group in order to be able to compare responses, I also focused discussion on questions or topics raised by the children themselves with regard to language. I recorded these group discussions using a digital recorder, while recording occasional notes in a small notebook after explaining to the children that I did this in

order to help me remember. Afterward, I listened to the recordings and took notes on the computer, indexing recurrent themes by noting the time stamp for later transcription.

Individual Interviews

I interviewed nine students individually during June: three girls and two boys from the third grade, and two girls and two boys from the fourth grade classroom. I attempted to individually interview each child who had participated in the earlier group interviews, although some children were absent on the day scheduled. These interviews were conducted in an empty classroom or in the library when it was closed to students for inventory at the end of the year, and lasted around ten to fifteen minutes. The interviews followed a writing activity in which I had asked children to give advice to an imaginary new child on how to be a good student at their school (an activity described further in Chapter Seven). I asked the children to talk about these writing samples, asking them to tell me whether or not they considered themselves to be "good students" and why. I also repeated some of the elicitation prompts from the group interviews regarding future goals and whether or not each child believed he or she would be bilingual in the future. In this way, I was able to validate patterns from the group interviews and explore individual cases in more depth.

I conducted semi-structured interviews with each of the teachers at two points in time in order to be able to learn about each of their perspectives on language as well as to understand the classroom contexts in more depth. During November, I met with each teacher to gather information about individual children, including their proficiencies in both languages, family information such as generation of immigration and languages

used at home, and noting other insights that each teacher wanted to share with me. Because both teachers had many years of experience with the school community and had taught older siblings of the children involved in this study, they provided information about many of the families, including the generation of immigration of several students.

The second interview with each teacher consisted of a language biography, in which I asked her to talk about her own language learning history and memorable experiences in first and second language acquisition, given that each was bilingual. I also asked them to talk about any ways in which they thought their own experiences with language might influence their teaching.

I recorded these individual interview sessions with both children and teachers using a digital recording device, following the same procedure described above for listening to and annotating the recordings.

Data Analysis

A grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used in order to examine emergent categories within an interpretive framework. Throughout the process of participant observation, inquiry groups, and interviews, I reviewed field notes and video or audiotapes made of group discussions and interviews using analytic induction (see Becker, 1998; Erickson, 1986) in order to build and test theories about children's language ideologies and increase the interpretive validity of the study.

Along with attending to these themes and categories, I linked close analyses of specific cases within the data to relevant research literature on language ideologies in K-12 settings (e.g., Martínez-Roldán & Malavé, 2004; Orellana, Ek, & Hernández, 1999). I

anticipated, for example, that children would invoke ideologies of nation and ethnicity (Who is "Mexican"? Who is "American"?) in their talk as well as awareness of the status of non-prestige languages and language varieties. I also anticipated that intergenerational language maintenance would be discussed.

In fact, I found that children did not invoke national origin or ethnicity in their talk; instead, they identified each other by language use, as "more Spanish" or "English guys." They did talk about intergenerational language use, with some describing the shift toward English among their older siblings.

Thus, the literature reviewed in Chapter Two not only served to derive the research questions and design, but was also was an integral part of data analysis. I continued to examine research literature as it became relevant to the study, further seeking disconfirming evidence and comparing findings in the literature to my working theories. In this way, the results of my study could be situated within larger theoretical and sociopolitical contexts, as detailed in the following chapters.

As data collection and analysis progressed, I refined the analysis of ideologies in the talk of children and teachers to three principal categories: the values accorded to bilingualism, views about linguistic expertise, and relationships among language, power, and identity. I did this in order to examine whether and how conceptualizations of identification as the interaction between salience and expertise might be useful in illuminating the opportunities for agency exercised by children and their teachers in contrast with the assumptions implicit within the current policy context. These categories provide the organizational structure for the presentation and discussion of findings.

Notes on Transcriptions

Throughout the text, I transcribed the words of participants verbatim, with minor editing for legibility. My initials (CF) are used to indicate when I am speaking. Bold type indicates a word or phrase that was spoken with emphasis. Spanish words are italicized, with an English translation provided in parentheses. Brackets contain contextual information, including nonverbal participation such as gestures or pauses. Slashes (/ /) enclose phonemic transcriptions.

Organization and Presentation of Findings

In the following chapter, further description of the setting is provided, including demographic information and an introduction to the school and classrooms. In addition, the ways in which the District and school have instituted larger policy initiatives such as NCLB and Proposition 227 are discussed in order to provide a context for the presentation of findings that follow.

After a description of the setting in Chapter Four, each of the chapters that follow addresses one or more of the research questions. Chapter Five presents findings with regard to the views held by the teachers about language, while Chapter Six discusses those of the children. Chapters Seven and Eight both address the third and fourth research questions: how were the views of children and teachers enacted within and shaped by classroom practice? How did these views and practices contribute to the construction of children's identities at school? The final chapter provides a summary of findings. It also includes discussion of the larger questions suggested by these findings regarding relationships between agency, identity, power and language in the lives of bilingual

Mexican American school children, as well as implications for future research and practice.

CHAPTER IV

THE SETTING

In the previous chapter, the rationale was provided for selecting a transitional bilingual class typical of those in which the majority of Spanish-speaking Mexican American children who are fortunate enough to have any native language instruction are enrolled. This chapter begins with a snapshot of the geopolitical context in which the present study is situated, along with description of the school site itself and the participating classrooms. An overview of demographic information about the participants follows. The chapter concludes with observations regarding school achievement patterns and contributing factors within the District and policy context.

The Border Context: A Snapshot

From the air, the scene looks much like the map viewed by the teacher and student in the opening vignette of this study: mottled green mountains and sandy beaches, against an expanse of blue ocean. One of the continent's most variable estuaries, the Tijuana Estuary, is visible, with its dunes, mudflats, coastal sage and upland habitats. Stretching out along this scene are the urban centers of San Diego and Tijuana, with a combined population estimate as high as 4.3 million people.

Closer to the ground, the border becomes visible, running east from the ocean through San Ysidro, said to be the world's busiest port of entry with over 56 million crossings each year. A stretch of green parkland runs parallel to the border fence and toward the ocean on the north side. Once named "Friendship Park," it is now named

"Border Field State Park," reflecting the growing sociopolitical tensions in the area between the two countries.

Another kind of dividing line, Highway 805, runs perpendicular to the border on the U.S. side. The nation's seventh-growing city and its environs, with 40,000 new residents in the past five years, is located within San Diego County, and is bisected by the highway. To the east lie expensive homes with manicured lawns dotting canyons and hills. To the west are older homes, apartment buildings, auto dealers, shops and small factories. A three-mile stretch of coastline in this area is home to Naval Station San Diego, the largest naval installation on the West Coast. Poverty is three times as high on the west side of Highway 805 as on the east. Most of the residents of the west side are classified as "Hispanic" by the U.S. census, and include both recent immigrants and long-term residents.

The School Site

Westside School is located in one of these west side neighborhoods, in an area zoned for mixed industrial and residential use. The street on which the school is located includes small homes, with an auto repair shop located immediately adjacent to the playground. Stretching out beyond, however, is a neighborhood park established by teachers and children from Westside where once another auto repair shop stood.

Brightly painted murals with children's drawings of wildlife, plants and birds mark the entrance to the park. One mural is labeled in Spanish, and the other in English: *Parque Comunitaria Educacional* (Community Educational Park). Next to a trailer that houses the Educational Park office is an outdoor lab with two large benches where

children conduct readings of soil quality covered by a latticework roof. On the November day that I visited, orange and green papers with print *Calaveras* (skulls) were strung across the roof, remnants of the community celebration of *el día de los muertos* (The Day of the Dead) held the previous weekend at the creek. Looking out over the area of the park, viewing platforms overlook a small creek that glistens as it winds its way past a welding shop and auto detailing operation, a storage yard, and other industry, through the open space behind the school, to the larger marsh area and to the ocean.

Walking from the park into Westside, its connection with the surrounding community is visible. Several large color photos of the student *Ballet Folklorico* group sponsored by a long-time teacher hang in the foyer. Current copies of a bilingual community newspaper are available on a podium set up by the front door. While these artifacts reflect the ethnic and linguistic composition of the neighborhood, the school's role as a governmental institution is also in evidence, beginning with the plaque that hangs at the entrance indicating that the building was constructed as part of the Works Progress Administration during the 1930s. Photographs of local and national governmental leaders are also displayed in the hallway.

The Classrooms

A short walk down the school's interior corridor leads to Natalie Ryan's bilingual third-grade classroom on one side and Susan Bachman's fourth-grade mainstream English class on the other. Entering either classroom, a visitor is struck immediately by the presence of scientific equipment: microscopes, binoculars, specimens of different varieties in glass cases. Both teachers are highly involved with the neighborhood park

project, and use it as a context for teaching. Posters are displayed in their classrooms and in the hallways in which children display their investigations, charting soil samples and drawing pictures of local birds and plants. Both classrooms contain a rich variety of books, as well, in English and Spanish. Along the walls in each classroom, children's self-portraits are hung, painted in a variety of hues of brown and tan. Natalie's classroom is arranged with children sitting facing each other at tables, while Susan's students sit next to each other theater style, facing a central focus at the front of the room. However, in both classrooms, students are frequently engaged in conversation with each other as well as with their teachers.

Situating the Study

This brief description of the school setting illustrates contrasts: land and sea, wealth and poverty. It is in this context that I wish to situate the two teachers, their classrooms and the children participating in this study: in the midst of an urban community impacted by poverty and conflicts over immigration, rich learning opportunities were created that extended beyond the walls of the school. Although classroom discourse and children's experiences with learning English was the focus of much of the data analyzed here, it is important to situate the study within the total range of opportunities they had to learn, create and communicate. When bilingual Mexican American children are constructed only as "English learners," many other identities are missed. These children had daily opportunities to engage as scientists and mathematicians. They poured over colorful books in both languages, had opportunities to write and paint, and to use their skills in service of the community along with their

families. These classrooms were selected in large part because of the commitment on the part of each of their teachers to make learning languages meaningful, as will be evident in the data from interviews with teachers presented in the chapter that follows.

Participant Data

Of the 457 students enrolled at Westside during the period of this study, 95.4% were classified as Latino, and 99% of the student body qualified for free and reduced lunch. Forty-five percent of the children were officially classified as English learners, with 99% of them speaking Spanish as their home language.

All 20 of students in the third-grade bilingual classroom participating in this study were classified as English learners, and all spoke Spanish as their home language. All had been enrolled by their parents by choice in the school's alternative bilingual program. According to the teacher, all of the children were of Mexican heritage. Four were recent immigrants from Mexico. Most of them had never attended school in the United States; one boy in the newcomer group had attended school briefly in Texas as well as Mexico before migrating to California.

Of the 30 students in the fourth-grade mainstream English classroom, all but three were or had been classified as English learners, meaning that a language other than English was spoken at home. Of the three students classified as "English only," only one did not have any family members who spoke Spanish. I did not collect demographic information regarding self-reported racial or ethnic categories at the individual level. However, the majority of the students in this classroom were also of Mexican heritage, according to the teacher. Over half of the students in this classroom had previously been

in the third-grade bilingual classroom the year before, prior to "transitioning" to English instruction. The other half primarily came from classrooms in which English was the sole language of instruction.

Achievement Patterns

Westside had a strong record of academic success, one that might not be predicted by its demographic profile. It had been designated as an under-performing school in 1999; by 2004, it was selected as a California Distinguished School. The hard work of teachers and children was also apparent under the accountability benchmarks of *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB), as well: all subgroups met the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals for the two years proceeding the period of this study. While an analysis of the factors contributing to this record of success is beyond the scope of this study, I suspect that two aspects related to this investigation played a part. One is the presence of an alternative bilingual program at the site that was well-implemented and fully supported by the District, and the other, several unique characteristics of the school staff itself, including the relationships between teachers and the community.

Bilingual Education at the Site and in the District

Westside had a successful alternative bilingual education program with classes offered in kindergarten through third grade, and all taught by certified bilingual teachers. Under the provisions of Proposition 227, parents of English learners can request such classes for their children, and Westside had an active relationship with the community in promoting its program and inviting feedback. As a result, there was usually a waiting list of children whose parents wanted them to be placed in the bilingual classrooms. During

the period of this study, when one child moved away and left the third-grade classroom, another child from the waiting list immediately took his place.

Indeed, the District supported the efforts of bilingual programs across its school sites. In contrast to the replacement of the word "bilingual" with "English learner" in many policy documents and in the renaming of governmental agencies, the District continued to promote its bilingual program and approaches on its website as well as in other published information.

The District's commitment to bilingualism and biliteracy was more than just symbolic, however: 90% of the administrators were bilingual, and the District actively sought to recruit candidates with bilingual as well as English learner certification. Professional development in biliteracy as well as English language development was provided for teachers.

However, the District and its school sites faced demographic challenges in offering a dual language program, given the fact that at schools such as the one participating in this study the vast majority of students were themselves learning English. Nor had any groups within the District or at individual schools sites to my knowledge pursued the establishment of developmental or maintenance bilingual education options extending beyond third grade. Thus, while the successful implementation of the transitional bilingual program was important both symbolically and instrumentally for the students, the difficulties inherit in the deficit model underlying such programs as discussed in Chapter Two was still present.

School Staff and Parent Programs

Children attending school in similar demographic areas are often underserved. Yet students at Westside benefited from a number of factors. Their teachers were unusually skilled in comparison to those often found in like settings. All of them had specialized training authorizing them to teach English learners, and the majority had many years of experience in schools such as this one. Nearly 40% had advanced education at the Master's Degree level or beyond. In the year prior to the period in which this study was conducted, one of the site teachers had been chosen as District teacher of the year and one of ten finalists for the County Teacher of the Year. The teachers were also more than usually representative of the school population: 68% of the teaching staff was Hispanic or Latino, with whites comprising less than a third.

In addition to the faculty characteristics, the school had a number of active parent involvement programs, including Community Based English Tutoring (CBET), as well as numerous informal ways in which the school and community interacted through activities in the nature park as described in the previous section.

Conclusion

The demographic and geopolitical snapshot presented here highlights the location of Westside within a challenging set of contrasts. While the school was predominately comprised of English learners from low-income families, the children had demonstrated high academic achievement. The school staff worked with the community and District to maintain an alternative bilingual program in the face of an anti-immigrant climate and the restrictions of Proposition 227. Despite the tight focus on accountability, teachers still

made time for art and science, as well as meaningful projects that connected the school and the surrounding community. The staff itself was unusual in several ways, as it was comprised largely experienced and well-educated teachers, which is not commonly the case in urban schools. Furthermore, more than half of the teachers shared the same ethnic background as the students, another unusual characteristic.

The next chapter focuses on the two teachers who participated in this study, presenting further information about their backgrounds and experiences, as well as an analysis of their views about language.

CHAPTER V

THE TEACHERS' VIEWS ABOUT LANGUAGE

A teacher's power and influence within the classroom context is an important contributor to children's identity construction as well as to their first and second language development. Teachers' use of language in the classroom is influenced by their beliefs about language, as well as by their knowledge of pedagogy and of the subjects that they teach. Thus, it is important to take teachers' language ideologies into account in an interpretive study of schoolchildren's views about language. In the following section, I investigate the first research question regarding the teachers' ideologies or views about language through an examination of interviews with each of the two classroom teachers. Their perspectives serve as a valuable lens in understanding the children's talk and behaviors.

Three primary questions frame this analysis. First, how does each of the teachers talk about the meanings and values of bilingualism? What are each teacher's expressed understandings and beliefs about what constitutes linguistic expertise? Finally, what relationships between language, power and identity are constructed in each teacher's talk about her own language history as well as in her talk about students' language use?

The Teachers' Perspectives on Language

The data in this section are primarily drawn from two semi-structured interviews I held with each of the classroom teachers involved in this study. In one of these, I asked the teacher to tell me whatever she thought was important for me to know about each of

her students when it came to first and second language development and use, or anything else she felt was relevant. The second interview consisted of the teacher's "language autobiography." In this case, I asked each teacher to talk about her own experiences in learning languages, as well as how she thought these experiences might influence her practice. In addition, I draw here upon informal conversations with the teachers recorded in classroom observation field notes.

Natalie: Language as Adventure, Relationship and Independence

For Natalie, the third-grade bilingual teacher, language represented a way to connect with her family. Natalie is of European and Mexican heritage. She had been teaching for over twenty years at the time of this study, most of them spent at Westside. Her parents were divorced when she was a young child, and Natalie's maternal grandmother, an immigrant from Zacatecas, often cared for her while her mother worked. She reported that she was "on her way to becoming bilingual" when her grandmother's health problems resulted in her having a new babysitter who spoke only English. She was five years old at that time. She stated that although she continued to study Spanish in school, she lost much of her bilingualism. The Spanish courses that she took in secondary school did not challenge, according to her statements in our interview. She commented that her teachers did not realize that Spanish was one of her primary languages as a child. She stated that they were often surprised by her ability to "ace" the material because, given her mixed ethnic ancestry and European surname, she said she "did not look the way she was supposed to look" in order to be recognized as a Spanish speaker. Natalie

told me that she learned Spanish primarily as an adult in college, in order to be able to communicate with her maternal grandfather.

However, she also seemed to see reclaiming the Spanish of her childhood as a way of setting her own agenda in the world. Sometimes this agenda actually distanced her from her family. During her university years, for example, she acquired not only conversational proficiency but also advanced literacy in Spanish. Her mother, who is bilingual, commented to Natalie's Spanish-dominant maternal grandfather that "Natalie can outdo us both now" in using the language. Natalie further described the way that her family talked about her continued study of Spanish during our first interview:

Natalie: My uncle was convinced I was doing it [studying Spanish] for my mother. I thought, well, "You don't know me very well, do you?" [laughs
CF: You mean, like to please her?
Natalie: Yes, to please her. My mom would always say, "No, Edward, she doesn't do it for that, I know my daughter better than you do." It was funny, the things that would come out. But no, this is me! This is mine, and I'm gonna go for it!

Natalie frequently talked about the strength of her own will in sharing stories from her life. As she put it at another point during our first interview, "That's how I am in my life. If it's something I really want, I'm going to go after it!" In the segment of her interview presented above, Natalie's talk further suggests the connection she sees between language learning and establishing her own identity as an adult daughter and a professional, even when this resulted in some degree of conflict within the family as well as pride when her academic language proficiency exceeded that of her mother and grandfather.

Thus, the theme of learning a language to reach personal goals was balanced with a strong connection to family in Natalie's account. Although there may have been tensions over the years, she characterized her relationship with her mother as a close and caring one. Initially, Natalie's mother had been opposed to her daughter becoming a teacher, instead encouraging her to enter another profession in which bilingualism would be an advantage, such as law. Later, her mother expressed pride in her daughter's career, Natalie said, and even came to help in her bilingual classroom.

The Power of Multiple Languages to Open New Worlds

In one of our interviews, Natalie described the desire to deepen her knowledge of Spanish as something that "ate at her," a "gnawing" during her adolescence, in contrast to her younger sister, who remains almost completely monolingual in English. Given this visceral imagery in relationship to Spanish, I asked Natalie why she had chosen to major in linguistics rather than in Spanish literature at the university. She told me that it was because she likes puzzles and logic, even remarking that her husband calls her "a walking Vulcan" in reference to the hyper-logical Dr. Spock from *Star Trek*. The notion of taking a language apart and putting it back together through linguistic analysis appealed to her.

The connection between language and playing with ideas was a second prevalent theme in Natalie's talk. She is active in a professional organization for teaching geography and participated in a collaborative research study with local universities that investigated the use of visualizations in helping students learn geo-science concepts, drawing upon images taken from space as well as from earth. She mentioned that some of the scientists with whom she worked called her a "geographer," and she described herself

during our interview as a "language geographer." She defined this as an interest in the "movement of ideas" and called language a "huge piece" of that movement.

For Natalie, then, language seemed to be important both as a tool for thinking about the world and as the subject of analysis, in addition to establishing interpersonal relationships. Her passion for using language to wonder, to solve puzzles, and to communicate as widely as possible across the boundaries of time and space, was something she wanted to share with her students. For example, I noticed a dictionary of American Sign Language (ASL) in her classroom library, and discovered that she had studied ASL in college. I had observed that children used some signs in the classroom, and she described explicitly incorporating this practice into her teaching during our first interview. She explained:

Natalie: I want to share the idea of bilingualism. What little I know [of ASL] I'll use. I want my kids to be culturally comfortable. There's a huge deaf community in San Diego.

At the end of our final interview, Natalie said she wanted "it all," explaining that she wanted to continue her own study of languages as well as to promote both a wide repertoire of linguistic skills and a positive regard for bilingualism in her classroom. In addition to the year of independent study of ASL she had undertaken in college, she and another teacher from the site had recently taken an ASL course at a local high school, for example, and she talked about wanting to continue developing the basic French that she had learned in college. It was clearly important to Natalie to see herself as a learner of language, one who was willing to take risks and who would use knowledge of a language

to help her students understand the adventure of ideas and the power of knowing multiple languages in widening intellectual as well as cultural horizons.

Learning a Language Means Taking Risks

In her talk about her students' language development, a word that surfaced often was "fear." Natalie believed that the children in her classroom were unusually fearful to take what she described as the "risks" necessary to learn a new language. During our second interview she described her students in this way:

> Natalie: But never have I seen it in a class so...it's just this pervasive thing that hangs over us in the shape of a cloud, you know, a heavy fog. I almost feel this is a pretty solid wall I've run into this year, in terms of **just chiseling away** [making gestures of chiseling with her arms] at these misconceptions about being **perfect**, and having it come out of their mouths **perfect.**

Natalie invokes strong and contrasting metaphors to express her concern about what she perceives to be her students' fears about learning English. In particular, in the statement cited above she focuses on what she calls children's "misconceptions" about language acquisition, what she characterizes as their erroneous belief that "what comes out of their mouths" must be "perfect." Her own frustration as a teacher in feeling that she couldn't reach through the "fog" or break through the "wall" surrounding the children was evident. It is useful to note, however, that she includes herself in the fog. Rather than characterizing language as a "barrier" for the children, she draws attention to the children's ideologies about language as a barrier. Several times during my visits to the classroom, Natalie had commented to me informally that the learning needs of the

particular group of students she was teaching during the period of this study had caused her to re-examine her own understanding of second language pedagogy. During our interview, Natalie elaborated more about this pedagogical dilemma, based on information the teachers had recently received at a meeting where English language development test scores were discussed:

Natalie: These kids as a total group…their scores are contrary to everything I ever learned in terms of what you focus on in ELD (English Language Development). Listening, speaking, you develop that, you get them to talk, speak, practice, that will carry itself to reading and writing, not that they're done in exclusion. But this is the opposite: writing, reading, then listening and speaking. When they get here they are all mute, they are terrified to make a mistake. The amount of conversational English, just the BICS, never mind the CALPs…

Here Natalie refers to Cummins' (1984) distinction between what he calls "Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills" (BICS) and "Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency" (CALP), a construct, which has been influential in teacher training for second language pedagogy. When the teachers discovered that the ELD scores were actually higher for their students in reading and writing compared to listening and speaking, this came as a surprise and clashed with their expectations, based on prior experience as well as their pedagogical training. Natalie felt that this finding supported her own observation that her students were "terrified to make a mistake," leaving them "mute."

During our interviews and informal discussions, I asked her on several occasions why she felt this phenomenon was occurring. She presented three overall hypotheses: first, she believed that parents were pressuring their children to "say it right" as she put it

during our interview. Natalie felt that this reflected parents' concern that their children do well in school, but that it also might be due inadvertently to her own reputation as a "strict" teacher who told parents and children alike during back to school night that "no one gets a free ride to fourth grade." Although she made no apologies for her standards in the classroom, she did feel that her high expectations were perhaps what she called a "double-edged-sword." Another difficulty she felt the children faced in acquiring oral English was the press of time to cover more curriculum, which might have resulted in fewer opportunities to practice the new language in earlier grades. Finally, she also believed that children, as well as their parents, had more than likely encountered negative evaluations of their own efforts to speak English. During one of my classroom visits, she connected this last observation to what she called the "discrimination" faced by the current and previous student teachers in her classroom, both native speakers of Spanish who learned English as adult immigrants and who she said were "scared they won't get jobs because of their accents."

In order to progress in learning English, Natalie said that she believed that the children would need to be able to take more "risks." In our final interview, she compared these risks to the task of learning to walk:

Natalie: If they don't start talking they're never gonna ask the questions. And that's where the learning comes in. It's like, "why?" or "how? I want to take them back to where they were two years old or three years old, three probably, and they're going, "Why? Why is the sky blue?" I want to take them back to that freedom to just blurt it out, "Why is it this way, how come?" Where there's just no holds barred, and they risk it, they risk it to do it, and it's OK to make the mistake and realize that their world is not going to come crashing down upon them in the process.

In these comments, Natalie characterizes the second language acquisition of her students in a developmental metaphor, recasting them as younger children, a theme which will become important in the children's own talk in the chapter that follows. However, here Natalie connects this image to imagination and wonder, to what she called the "freedom" of very young children to ask questions. In this way, she suggests that the purposes for learning a language, whether home language or new languages, is to imagine and to question the world. She continued, describing to me what she once told her students:

> Natalie: "Well, when you were learning how to walk and you fell down and you landed on your Pampers, did you cry? Well once in awhile I'm sure I did." I said, "Did you just stay there and never get up? It's funny, because you walk pretty good." [Laughs]. And they go, "Yeah," and I said, "So why is this any different? Why is this any different?"

In this speech, Natalie addresses her students not as babies, but as competent seven and eight-year-olds, who already know how to walk, and engages them with humor. Presumably, they will develop as much competence in English as they already have with movement, following this metaphor, once the "natural" language development process kicks in. Implied in her metaphor is the support of a nurturing and more "expert" walker, one who ensures that the child is safe as she takes her first step, and who encourages all efforts, no matter how small. Another interpretation of the metaphor, however, might be that of language as a means of taking a child on her first steps away from home and family, a means of establishing independence in the world through individual effort. Establishing independence through studying Spanish had been

Natalie's own experience, although she simultaneously sought to remain connected to her relatives by improving her own command of the language.

Summary of Natalie's Views

Natalie valued bilingualism for cultural and intellectual reasons. She had herself experienced loss of childhood Spanish, and regaining that language was a way of connecting with family. She was now a proficient bilingual, judged to be very fluent by the parents who requested that their children be placed in her classroom. Learning languages, such as ASL, also enabled Natalie to learn about other cultures and was a source of intellectual stimulation, leading her to major in linguistics at the university. She wanted to share these aspects of bilingualism with her students, while respecting parents' concerns that children acquire English. Natalie viewed second language acquisition as a developmental process and believed that at least in part, children's fear of making mistakes when speaking English was inhibiting their progress. She attributed those fears not only to the fact that they were acquiring a second language at an age where they were more self-conscious than younger children, but also to what she termed linguistic "discrimination" in the larger society based on one's accent, particularly for Mexican American Spanish speakers in the current political context. Her own experiences as a person of Mexican-European ancestry led her to question assumptions about linguistic and cultural identity based on racial phenotype or surname. Thus Natalie expressed an awareness of ways in which language use contributed not only to an individual's sense of self but also to the construction of sociopolitical identities by the outside world. She talked about situations in which these identity constructions could have material

consequences, such as affecting an individual's opportunities to learn or to gain employment.

Susan: The Power of Communication in Collective Action

Like Natalie, Susan, the fourth-grade teacher, spoke often in our interviews of a connection between language and thinking. However, while Natalie's talk drew attention to language as a tool for conceptual development, for exploring patterns and thinking about what she called "the movement of ideas," Susan emphasized language as a means of communication and for doing things in the world in collaboration with others. She talked about the power of articulating one's ideas in terms of deepening conceptual understanding, much like Natalie, but also in terms of access to opportunities in society. When I asked her at the end of one of the interviews if she had anything else to say about the ways in which language was important in her classroom, she replied:

> Susan: The more effectively they can express themselves, I think, the happier they are going to be in life. The richer their life is going to be. You take two people with the same core, but if one is able to articulate, they just have so many options, so many doors will open to them, and their own understanding. It seems the more you articulate your understanding, as we know the deeper it goes and the broader it can become.

In this statement, Susan posits a connection between effective expression and happiness. Her use of the term "richer" might suggest economic benefit for those who are able to communicate well, through the doors of "opportunity" that will open. On the other hand, she describes the benefits of "rich" understanding that is deep and broad. She had often talked with me during our interviews as well as our informal conversations about

her own efforts to be as precise as possible in her own use of language, in her daily life as well as in the classroom. In my observations of her teaching, I noted that she seemed to choose her words carefully and spoke with deliberation, a factor that made her talk within classroom discourse and interviews relatively easy to transcribe. She used the same precise diction even at times when she was not being recorded, but spoke more informally during interviews as well as during periods in the classroom when she was not instructing students.

Susan traced her own beliefs about and ways of using language to those of her parents, and to the emphasis they had placed on education. She noted that her parents, who were both bilingual Mexican immigrants, spoke Spanish as well as what she called "very proper" English. Such a command of oral language was a particular accomplishment for her father, who had started school for the first time when he arrived from Mexico in the Midwestern United States as a young adolescent before migrating to work in California. He never had the opportunity to continue his education past the ninth grade. While Susan's older siblings were bilingual, as one of the youngest children in her family she had not acquired as much Spanish, and grew up primarily speaking English. During our interview, Susan expressed the desire to improve her Spanish as well as some degree of self-consciousness about speaking the language. However, in my observation she spoke Spanish frequently with students, staff and parents. She also often used a contact variety of English employing vocabulary in Spanish during informal interactions as she did during the interview. However she also used this language variety at times during lessons in the classroom in my observations.

Susan also spoke about the importance her parents placed on the children using the public library near their home, describing it as a "pretty important part of growing up." This experience seems to have further shaped her beliefs about language development to include the importance of literacy, as she indicates in characterizing her own language use:

Susan: I think because of the emphasis that was placed on it, I am really aware of how I speak and try to be very correct in how I express myself, even though I know that my vocabulary is limited only because of my own reading, and not expanding out into different areas.

It is not difficult to imagine why Susan's parents might have encouraged "proper" English and instilled the value of literacy: as immigrants, they knew well the importance of such skills in navigating a new country. In addition, there were individual historical influences. Susan also disclosed that not only was her father placed in fourth grade when he began school as an adolescent, but that he also stuttered. Although Susan did not state this explicitly, linguistic evaluation on the part of other youngsters and adults alike may have been especially painful for her father as an immigrant child within a relatively small Mexican American community in predominately white Kansas.

<u>The Many Uses of Language: Social Justice, Respect and Joy</u>

Susan and her siblings were also raised with a strong social conscience: among the career paths they have followed are nursing, teaching, and working in a library. One of her sisters entered the convent. Susan herself has long been involved in social causes, ranging from the Chicano movement of the late 1960s during her college years, to

working within labor and political organizations as a young adult, and later becoming involved with the environmental causes as a teacher. She described her growing up years: "I was straight-laced. We had our home world, and our school world, and our church world." She attributed her family's activism to the fact that "we were very well steeped in Catholicism, which contributed to the feeling that you need to do something, your life has to be of some value."

Susan's desire to effect a positive change in the world and her beliefs about the power of language in "opening doors" or gaining access to opportunity came together as she talked about her past as well as her own goals for the future in our second interview. Susan had entered the classroom after leaving another career, and had been teaching for more than fifteen years at the time of this study. She told me that she had begun to consider the next phase in her life after retiring from the classroom, and had discovered a strong passion for working with parents in the local community, which was, after all, her home. She described her vision of helping to organize a group of parents who would go out into the community to build networks of information and support so that their children would be successful in reaching higher education. She referred to these parents as "*promotoras*," a term in Spanish that literally translates as "promoters" but that has been widely within public health organizations to refer to community members, usually women, who learn about specific health issues facing the community and develop leadership skills in order to become advocates. Susan likely had been involved with such efforts through her work in environmental causes. Based on her experiences as an organizer, she began to talk about the necessary steps she would need to take, such as determining where to meet, finding transportation for the women, and raising money. She

added, “And what am I going to do about my Spanish?,” stating that she would “want to be able to explain things really well.” Susan laughed in a self-effacing manner as she compared her own attempts at speaking Spanish during parent conferences to an incident in which one of the children in her class made a mistake in English usage during a guest speaker assembly that resulted in an embarrassing *double-entendre*. She continued, in a serious tone, “And also for the whole idea of respect, you know?”

Finally, in addition to using language with precision in order to effect social change and to demonstrate respect, Susan talked about the importance of providing children with opportunities to find joy and purpose in their lives, and the way that language could facilitate these opportunities. When we discussed the difficulties children faced when acquiring academic language along with subject matter content during our final interview, I mentioned that I had observed several English Language Development (ELD) lessons in Natalie’s class that were connected to the community environmental project. She commented:

Susan: the whole idea about basing it all [ELD] on environmentalism, is giving them a purpose for it, making it real, making it important, and it’s just so much fun! Children **learn** when they’re having **fun!**

However, the project did not serve merely as a context for developing academic language. Rather, when I asked her about the families’ involvement in the restoration of the local environment, Susan described it as a place for the entire community, adults and children alike, to “come and recreate and learn and renovate.” The purpose of teaching the children about the environment was to encourage them not only to dream but also to

take action, creating a place for them and their families to come together and enjoy. In her words:

Susan: I think it's extremely important for the kids to wonder about the world around them and to marvel about it so they can protect it.

Languages – English and Spanish, as displayed in the signage posted around the nature trail in the restoration project – were the tools for that wondering, marveling, and protecting.

Learning a Language Means Learning to Switch Codes

Susan had a different task than Natalie in teaching English. As a teacher, her students included children who had "transitioned" from the bilingual program, as well as children who were designated as "English-only" in school records. Some of the students with this label were children from Spanish-speaking homes who had not been placed in bilingual classes earlier in their school careers for a variety of reasons, or were from other non-Spanish speaking ethno-linguistic backgrounds. Often the parents of Susan's "English only" students were second or third generation immigrants who had either lost or not learned Spanish themselves. Aligned with findings from bilingual education research (c.f., Slavin & Cheung, 2005; Thomas & Collier, 2002), Susan observed in the interview that it was often the students in the "English only" group who struggled the most with the demands of acquiring academic registers of their native language, while children from the bilingual program who had developed more advanced language and literacy in Spanish had an easier "transition."

As an English-dominant Mexican American who grew up and now lived in the same neighborhood as her students, Susan was highly aware of the multiple language varieties her students brought to school in both English and Spanish. Perhaps because of the emphasis in her family on speaking "proper English," her Catholic school education with its grammar worksheets, or her own penchant for mathematics and what she described as tasks where there is a "right answer," Susan sometimes invoked prescriptivist language ideologies in her talk. For example, when talking about one of the "English only" children in her classroom, she commented that "he falls under what a lot of our kids fall under…of speaking English but still grammatically incorrect." I knew from our interviews that she placed a great emphasis on teaching children Standard English in her classroom, and told me that she took pains to explicitly model this register herself.

However, I also knew from my observations that Susan regularly code-switched or used features of contact variety English in the classroom, not only during informal moments, but also as part of her instruction. She would often draw children's attention to the explicit features of different language varieties in music and literature, which were an important part of her program, without negative evaluation. For example, she taught the children many blues songs, and rather than either change or ignore the linguistic features, as I have heard some teachers do, she had the children talk about the meaning of the song, moving back and forth between their own contact variety of English, Standard English, and the regional language variety used in the song. For example, one song that the children particularly enjoyed was the *Crawdad Song* made popular by Harry Belafonte in the 1960s with its refrain, "ain't no crawdads in that lake!" Thus, notions of

sociolinguistic appropriateness were present in her talk about her teaching and her practice as well as prescriptivist ideologies.

We talked about her use of these songs as well as her philosophy about teaching Standard English to her students during our final interview:

Susan: I am correcting them every day and as soon as I remind them, they'll change it. They know what they should say, but I've gotta figure out what to do here so that they're on, like on alert here, because if they learn how to do it here, I think they might get that idea that academically, when I'm in academic circles this is how I speak. When I'm at home, I can speak another way. It's that, you know, "coding" or whatever you call it.
CF: How do you think you promote that yourself?
Susan: Well, I try to be very aware of how I speak to them. I used to be of the thinking, I guess that we were told you know, "encourage them to speak, don't correct them!" [Laughs] Now I correct them. In most settings, I'll correct them. It's only the kids that I know need support and if I try to correct them, then they won't speak anymore. You know, so I have to gauge who they are. But no, I don't have a way right now of engendering that kind of an attitude that [switches to mocking tone] "In this classroom, you will at all times…or else!" [Laughs] Because that's just about what you have to do! You know, you just have say, like, "That's it! We're not going to use double negatives, we're not going to say, 'I did went', we're not gonna say, 'I ain't got no…'"
CF: Unless we're singing a song by Woody Guthrie or….
Susan: Yeah [Smiles]
CF: You know what I mean? It's like there…
Susan: Ain't no crawdads in that lake! [Laughs]

In this dialogue, three points are particularly relevant to this analysis. First, although she talked about "correcting" the children's language production to a linguistic standard, Susan also linked the use of discourse register to the speaker's social context and purpose, which she called "coding" in reference to code switching. Second, she indicated that her knowledge of her students, along with the context and purpose, guided her in deciding when to "correct" children's "errors" in oral language production. She

made these decisions with the goal of promoting oral language development: on several occasions when I visited the classroom, Susan told me that she felt the students did not have enough opportunities to talk because of the pressure to cover more content more quickly in preparation for tests. As well, in the statement above, she indicates a belief that negatively evaluating the oral language of some students at particular times would inhibit this oral language development.

Finally, I suggest that by including multi-lingual and multi-dialectical lyrics and literature within her classroom program and drawing students' attention to the ways language was used, Susan demonstrated the legitimacy and authority of different ways of using language while simultaneously teaching the surface features of Standard English. The *Crawdad Song* provides one example, with its use of a vernacular variety of English such as the line quoted above in Susan's talk, "ain't no crawdads in that lake." She used many other pieces of literature or song lyrics written in a variety of language varieties as well as Chicano literature incorporating both English and Spanish. However, she grappled with helping students acquire the features of Standard English in their own speech and writing, as well as to distinguish these features in print. Thus students would presumably need to explicitly recognize when they could themselves switch registers or codes within the classroom as an "academic" space.

Summary of Susan's Views

Susan valued bilingualism as a form of communication as well as in the service of community action. She asserted a connection between communicating effectively and thinking clearly in order to gain opportunities in life, but also in order to wonder about

and protect the world. Although she was the child of Mexican immigrants and had grown up and still lived in the community surrounding the school, Susan was English-dominant. While not confident of her own skills in Spanish, she believed it was very important to use what she called "proper Spanish" as a sign of respect for the families of her students. Susan frequently emphasized an awareness of the status of discourse registers in the larger society. This awareness led her to emphasize the importance of learning the features of Standard English in her classroom, as she believed this language variety or register would provide access for her students to advanced educational and economic opportunities. However, she also demonstrated respect for varied ways of speaking by using multi-dialectical and multi-lingual literature or lyrics in her classroom. She also used different varieties of both Spanish and English in the classroom, both formally and informally, and expressed the belief that part of her task as a teacher was to help children learn how to switch between language varieties or registers, which she called "coding." Thus, she encouraged her students to become aware of the social appropriateness of switching between ways of using language, encouraging them in this way to adopt multiple identities as language users at school, at home, and in the community rather than exclusively emphasizing Standard English.

Synthesis of Teachers' Views and Discussion

Meanings and Value of Bilingualism

Although Natalie was a credentialed bilingual teacher and Susan was not, both teachers valued bilingualism and used Spanish in their classrooms in varied ways as well as encouraging their students to continue speaking and developing their Spanish.

Bilingualism was associated with activities ranging from the pleasure of intellectual pursuits to the organization of collective action in order to provide a place to learn and play. The teachers wanted to share these powerful uses of language with their students, drawing upon and extending children's bilingual repertoires. In addition, both teachers had experienced the loss of the Spanish spoken by their parents and grandparents within their own families, and recognized the strong connection between bilingualism and maintaining family ties in the lives of their students.

Characterizations of Linguistic Expertise

Natalie emphasized developmental aspects of second language acquisition, believing children needed adequate time and an environment of low-risk in order to become proficient. Susan focused on a sociolinguistic perspective in which the primary task for first and second language learning consisted of adjusting language use to social context. In general, at the same time that both valued the communicative powers of bilingualism and the use of multiple language varieties, both teachers felt an increasing need to focus their instructional time on teaching specific features of Standard English. In addition to being mandated by the elementary school curriculum standards and required tests, both teachers also believed acquisition of these linguistic features to be essential in order for the children to access future educational opportunities.

Language, Power and Identity

Both teachers expressed the belief that the current accountability context negatively affected the children. Particularly, they were concerned about children's

awareness of negative evaluations made of their own language use and their effects on children's sense of themselves as well as on their second language development. Each of the teachers wrestled with whether and how to provide evaluative feedback on children's language production in English, in terms of the child's self-concept as well as second language acquisition. In addition to the impact of restrictive language and accountability policies on classroom practice, each of the teachers talked about larger societal pressures and their effects on identity construction. Natalie spoke of language "discrimination" in education and employment, and of the ways she had seen this impact the self-confidence and language use of her Mexican American student teacher. Susan talked about improving her own Spanish as a way of signaling respect to the local Mexican American community in which she worked as a social and environmental activist.

Discussion

In their talk, these two teachers demonstrate a view of bilingualism as an asset, reflecting an orientation toward language as a "resource" rather than "problem" (Ruíz, 1984) in education. They also demonstrate several of the understandings about language called for in contemporary scholarship on teaching English learners (e.g., Fillmore & Snow, 2002; Scarcella, 2003), such as an understanding of second language acquisition processes, the types of errors and progress that English learners should be expected to make, and the sources of variation in language use.

In particular, Natalie focused on the time and social support necessary for second language acquisition. She compared this acquisition to stages of child development, in much the same way proposed by Krashen and Terrell (1983) in their Natural Approach to

second language pedagogy. She also emphasized what she believed was the importance of a low-risk environment, in keeping with the affective filter hypothesis of Krashen (1987, 1995). Both of these theories were likely aspects of her pedagogical training (Díaz-Rico & Weed, 2002).

Susan drew attention to a sociolinguistic component in which speakers adjust their language use to social situation and communicative intent. In part, this awareness may have been part of her university studies or pedagogical training as well, as suggested by her use of the term "coding." Texts for use in teacher education courses on language in education frequently include at least some reference to sociolinguistic competence. However, as textbook authors Díaz-Rico & Weed (2002) observe, "Unfortunately, in language classrooms, emphasis has been placed on grammatical competence over sociolinguistic competence" (p. 5), leading to the conclusion that the former is of more importance. Susan's own life experiences may have exerted a more important influence on her understanding. In our interview, Susan related her awareness of language variation to the opportunities she had to use multiple discourse forms as a professional educator and community activist, as well as to her own identity as an English-dominant Mexican American. She was familiar with switching between contact varieties of English and Spanish common in the Southwest (c.f., Fought, 2003; Sánchez, 1983; Valdés, 2006) and recognized this phenomenon in her students.

Both teachers talked about the importance of acquiring prestige varieties of language for their students. Natalie referred to Cummins' (1983) theory of Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), while Susan used the term "Standard English." Each of them at times invoked ideologies of linguistic prescriptivism or an emphasis on

"correctness" in their talk. However, they believed in linguistic "correctness" not for its own sake or in the interests of linguistic purism, but instead asserted that mastering the type of English used in academic settings was critical to the future success and life chances of their students. Each teacher grappled in particular with the dilemma of whether and how to correct students' language production against a perceived linguistic norm, be it called "Standard" or "Academic" English. Error correction remains a dilemma for many second language educators, particularly within a high-stakes accountability context (Cahnmann, 2003).

However, while cognizant that academic language necessarily involved literacy, the language of textbooks, neither of the teachers exclusively privileged written language as the norm in their classrooms. For example, Natalie took classes in ASL and was teaching her students some beginning signs with the goal that they could become aware of and one day communicate with the local deaf community. Susan regularly incorporated music in her classroom as a teaching tool, including many songs written in vernacular dialects that she taught the students. At times, as with the *Crawdad Song*, she provided lyrics written in dialect form and explicitly drew their attention to differences between Standard English that she believed would be expected in academic discourse and the language used in the song, without negative evaluation. In these ways, the teachers promoted a more nuanced view of biliteracy such as that of the oral-literate continua suggested by Hornberger (2003).

Both teachers affirmed the importance of language use and bilingualism to the construction of identities by the children in their classrooms, particularly with regard to intergenerational communication. Again, both Susan and Natalie had experienced

language loss within their own families. In addition, they were aware of the importance of English to children and their families alike. Natalie drew attention to the ways in which not only learning English was important, but also her awareness of the ways in which Spanish speakers of Mexican origin faced discrimination based on linguistic style, echoing the findings of Lippi-Green (1997). Susan understood from her own experience the linguistic insecurity that her bilingual and English-dominant Mexican American students might face when negatively evaluated by Mexican nationals (c.f., González, 2001; Valdés, 2006) for their Spanish, as well as by Anglophones for their contact varieties of English. The dilemma reported by the teachers over error correction was rooted not only in their theories of second language acquisition and sociolinguistic competence, then, but also in their understandings of relationships between language, identity and power.

Conclusion

By affirming bilingualism and the use of multiple language varieties, they explicitly demonstrate ideological resistance toward restrictive language policies such as Proposition 227 with its English-only ideology. Their stances also contradict the ideology implied by NCLB that allows for some degree of assessment in Spanish but ultimately counts only outcomes in English.

Their views further complicate the assumptions embedded about linguistic expertise in these two policies. Proposition 227 holds that English learners should acquire English quickly (in 180 days or less), and is silent about what type of English students should acquire, in contrast to the teachers' views that language acquisition takes time and

support, as well as their claim that students' need to acquire the type of language privileged in academic discourse as a particular variety of written language. With its focus on outcomes, the policy context created by NCLB often truncates processes as educators rush to "teach to the test," in the words of the teachers, by any means necessary, even if it means ignoring what teachers such as Natalie believed were sound principles of second language acquisition pedagogy.

Finally, the current policy context emphasizes individual academic achievement outcomes and defines bilingual students primarily as "English learners" until such time as they acquire sufficient English to pass tests. However, the teachers did not talk about themselves or their students in terms of language proficiency alone. Through the emphasis that each of them gave in their interviews to language in the service of thinking, activity, and social action, they affirmed the importance of an academic identity, but not to the exclusion of other identities. Languages, according to the teachers, were not only school subjects to be learned and studied, but enabled children to build relationships, explore and solve problems, and serve the community. By promoting the development of multiple languages as well as language varieties or dialects, both teachers encouraged the students to construct varied identities through language use.

As Zentella (2002), observes, language, power and identity are interrelated in complex ways, particularly for Latinos in the United States like the Mexican American children in this study:

> Language, the medium through which all culture is learned and transmitted, is a powerful lens through which we can detect the ways in which Latino/as use different voices to speak as members of different groups at different times, and even at the same time (p. 321).

In the following chapter, an analysis of the talk of the children themselves provides a lens into their emergent views or ideologies about language, power, and identity.

CHAPTER VI

LIKE BEST FRIENDS: THE CHILDREN'S VIEWS ABOUT LANGUAGE

> Spanish is kind of difficult to me right now that I'm speaking with English so I'm practicing my Spanish to be best friends with my English.
>
> --Eva, grade 4 girl

Tensions in Children's Views About Language

How do bilingual Mexican American children think about their languages as they experience the shift to English instruction at school, particularly in the context of restrictive language policies? In this chapter, the second research question regarding children's views or ideologies about language is explored through an analysis of data from group and individual interviews. As in the previous chapter, three questions frame this analysis: How do they talk about the meanings and value of bilingualism? How do they characterize what constitutes linguistic expertise? Finally, what relationships between language, power and identity are constructed in their discourse?

Overall, children's talk suggested the presence of critical tensions in their perception of the meanings and value of bilingualism as well as in their identities as bilingual children. While they clearly wanted to learn English, children also valued maintaining or improving their Spanish proficiency. They came to recognize themselves and others in terms of perceived language proficiency at school, among other identities. And as they reached middle childhood, several talked about conflicting experiences of relative personal power when speaking English or Spanish, depending upon the setting. They were proud of their bilingual skills and their capacity for helping their families.

However, at a time of rapid cognitive, physical and social development, children sometimes felt infantilized when trying to communicate in English, a socially dominant language with which they were developing proficiency. How children make sense of these tensions has consequences for their participation at school and the construction of their identities.

Children Talk About Growing Up Bilingual

The tensions described above were particularly salient in the group interview I held with five girls from the fourth grade classroom who were between nine and ten years old. Sections from this transcript provide a framework for examining the children's notions of linguistic expertise as well as the nexus of language, power and identity in their talk. Although these themes were most visible in the fourth grade girls' group interview transcript, data from individual and group interviews with other students in both grade levels as well as from interviews with teachers is used to extend and refine the analysis. In addition, I draw upon field notes from classroom observations. The sections that follow begin with a description of the context of the group interview and an introduction of the focal participants.

The Interview Setting and Participants

Eva, whose quote opens this chapter, was one of five girls from the fourth- grade classroom who participated in a group interview. The other girls included Anita, Julia, Debbie and Xochitl. Later I conducted individual interviews with Eva, Anita and Debbie,

in order to explore more fully some of the themes emerging from the group interview and my classroom observations.

As I did with other groups, I selected these girls from among those who elected to participate in my study primarily through consultation with their teacher as well as through my observations. In this case, I asked the teacher to help identify children who were receptive and/or productive bilinguals, and who she thought would be willing to participate in a group interview with me. I had also been observing the children's participation and interaction during classroom activities, noticing their willingness to join in class or small group discussions. I also paid attention to children's use of Spanish informally among peers as well as in the classroom (given that instruction was delivered in English in this classroom). Finally, I recorded any comments that might suggest a child's explicit awareness of language use. For example, I had noticed that Anita was a very confident English speaker during lessons across curriculum areas. However, I also observed a small group lesson in which she and her peers decided to use Spanish in order to compose an imaginary letter to government officials in Latin America about rain forest conservation during a language arts lesson. Although the children would likely have needed to write in Portuguese since they were studying about Brazil, I noted their language awareness as well as their bilingual skills.

As described in Chapter Three, I introduced the research activities to the whole class when I distributed the permission forms. At that time, I told the students I would be looking for volunteers to participate in a group discussion. A few days later, the teacher reminded the students about the upcoming group discussion and asked who would like to

participate, collecting their names. I then consulted notes from my interview with the teacher and my classroom observations, and selected the participants.

On the day of the interview, the teacher announced the names of the girls who had been selected for this activity, and I met them at the door. We met in an empty classroom a short distance away that was often used for a variety of small group lessons and club meetings. On the way to the classroom, I chatted informally with the girls, using both Spanish and English. The classroom contained two large rectangular tables in addition to individual student desks. I selected a seat in the middle of one side of these tables rather than at the head where a teacher might typically sit, and invited the girls to choose a place. I had previously placed a group microphone on the table, and began by allowing them to investigate the audio equipment in order to help them feel comfortable being recorded in this setting. I allowed them to record themselves saying whatever they liked, and then played the recording back for them before beginning the interview.

This group was the final of four groups with whom I conducted interviews, as detailed in Chapter Three. As I had with each of the previous group, I began by reviewing the purposes of the discussion, referring to the presentation I had made when distributing the permission forms in each classroom. I told the girls that they could speak in Spanish, English, or both languages as they preferred. I gave this introduction in English, as that was the language of their classroom. However, I had interacted previously with the whole class and each of the individuals in Spanish on other occasions, as well as on our walk to the interview site. In this way I hoped to set up a context supporting the children's own choice of language or dialect, although this choice was constrained by the institutional setting in which English was clearly the officially sanctioned language as well as the

children's perception of me as an white adult English speaker whom they didn't know well.

Balancing the Equation of Language and Identity

After framing the acceptability of Spanish, English or both languages during discussion, I asked the girls about their skills in each language in order to establish the receptive and productive bilingualism of the individuals in the group, trying to ensure the most inclusive definition of bilingualism possible.

CF: I think all of you know some Spanish and some English?
Xochitl: I know a lot of English, a little Spanish… but I'm learning.
Anita: Me [pause]…equal, too.
Debbie: A little bit less Spanish. I used to be more Spanish but now I'm more English.

In this brief exchange, Anita, Xochitl and Debbie introduce two themes found across data sets. First is the identification of self or others with a language. When talking about their own language use during group or individual interviews, children would often refer to themselves as "being" a language, as Debbie did in the excerpt above. At other times, children would identify their peers by language use. When one fourth-grade boy observed during a group interview that he learned English at school the previous year, for example, another boy commented: "That was because you were hanging around with some English guys." Because the vast majority of the children were of Mexican origin and from Spanish-speaking homes, the boy was most likely referring to a Mexican American child speaking English. Thus, language use served as a marker within this group of children who shared similar ethno-linguistic backgrounds.

The second theme is a type of metaphorical arithmetic in which Spanish and English, the children's two language were conceived as separate entities that could or should be relatively "equal." Likewise, it appeared from their talk that children believed they could and should have equal proficiency in each one. Anita expressed this notion when she said she was "equal, too" in the excerpt presented above.

At other times, children characterized the relationship between their languages as a sort of contest. When Eva talked about her own language learning history during our individual interview, for example, she described Spanish "advancing" first and then English, accompanying her description with gestures in which she alternately placed one hand in front of the other as if her hands were racing. The outcome of this race, in the best of cases, would result in a tie. Other metaphors were personal: as Eva somewhat wistfully stated, she wished for her languages to become "best friends."

Through these varied metaphors, children emphasized maintaining Spanish and learning English as a balancing act: in the words of a third grade boy during an individual interview, "I only need a little bit more English to get equal." Not only did children desire to have equal proficiency in each language, but also implied in this calculation is the notion that their languages themselves could and should be equal.

It is not difficult to see the possible dilemma posed for children who embrace both of these notions: if I "am" a given language, and if that language is not "equal" to another language in some way, then I am not equal to other people who "are" that language, either. Therefore, by balancing my languages, by becoming "equal" in Spanish and English in this case, I should also be equal to other users of those languages. By

balancing the language equation, I can bring together my worlds of home and school, and maintain relationships in each domain with the important and powerful people in my life.

The Equation Breaks Down: "I Used to Be…. But Now I Am"

In fact, as comments made by Xochitl and Debbie in the above transcript indicate, most of the time children talked about actually being "unequal" in their two languages. Typically, the inequality resulted from change over time: "I used to be… but now I am…" As they were on the brink of "transition" to English, Spanish was still dominant for the third graders. However, during group interviews, both boys and girls expressed the belief that this would no longer be the case the following year. Nearly all fourth-graders who reported speaking Spanish as their first language said that they now spoke more English than Spanish, although some who had participated in bilingual education described their languages as "equal."

A few of the children in the fourth-grade classroom, such as Xochitl, were receptive bilinguals who understood some degree of Spanish but had not developed much productive language nor had been provided the opportunity to acquire biliteracy. I talked to individual children who, like her, were actively trying to learn more Spanish through watching television or listening to music, often in order to communicate more fully with their grandparents or other family members.

For Debbie, as for most of the children in my study, however, the inequality between languages reflected eventual loss of the Spanish spoken in childhood. Debbie's linguistic history illustrates this process. Although unique in its biographical details, the larger themes of her narrative were repeated in the stories of many children with whom I

spoke. As I learned during an individual interview, Debbie was born in Los Angeles, but grew up within her extended family moving often between different cities Baja California and San Diego County. Although she had not attended bilingual classes after preschool, Debbie also reported that her mother encouraged her to maintain her Spanish in order to communicate with her family. Debbie stated that she believed her mother's emphasis on maintenance of the language was perhaps due to the fact that her older sister no longer spoke Spanish often in the home. Although Debbie's mother herself was a fluent bilingual, and thus spoke with her daughters in English as well as Spanish, she wanted them to maintain Spanish in order to be able to communicate with the grandmother who had helped raise them. According to Debbie, her mother, who worked in a local social service agency, also wanted them to have opportunities to extend their educations and to travel through developing bilingual skills.

Like Debbie, children often noticed that Spanish and English did not seem to stay "equal" as time went by. While there were exceptions, such as the case of Xochitl, who was trying to balance her own equation by learning more Spanish, the children also recognized that the scales were tipping toward English. Sometimes they experienced this shift in their own language development; those with older siblings were particularly aware of the ways in the tilt toward English created uncertainty or disappointment within their families. Debbie's interview illustrates both of these situations.

For many children, it was within the family that they first experienced the way that language use contributed to constructing identities and relationships. They also noticed that when language use changed, so did these identities and relationships, in both subtle and more marked ways.

"I'm the One That My Mom Likes:" Shifting Status Among Siblings

Often, changes in language proficiency among family members resulted in a change in status or power relationships. As the fourth-grade girls' group interview proceeded, Anita reiterated and elaborated the claim she made in answer to my original question about the girls' language proficiencies that she was "equal" in her languages.

Anita: [I'm] equal. I learned more Spanish, but my brother, he like used to know equal but then he forgot Spanish. And now he can't read Spanish.

Anita, who had been in bilingual classes through third grade, saw herself as equally proficient in both languages. She was proud of this fact, and spoke in both group and individual interviews about her goal to be a bilingual veterinarian some day. Her ability to speak, read and write Spanish also differentiated her from her older brother within the family. Anita is the youngest in a family of three children. Through maintaining Spanish, she could gain a certain advantage within her family, as she told me later during my individual interview with her:

CF: Do you think of yourself as bilingual?
Anita: Yeah.
CF: Do you feel like English and Spanish are about the same for you?
Anita: Yeah. And I don't want to be like my brother. He forgets how to say stuff. He like…
CF: In Spanish?
Anita: Yeah. And my sister can't pronounce the words in Spanish and so she just says them in English. And my mom can't understand.
CF: So you don't want to be like that…
Anita: Yes. And I'm the only one that my mom likes, because I could understand them [her parents] and they can understand me.

For Anita, Spanish was key to maintaining her ties to her parents, something that most children in my study frequently mentioned, and it conferred the additional benefit of improving her status within the family in her eyes. Bilingualism and sibling rivalry interact in interesting ways in her story, as well as in those told by several other girls and boys. In all four of the group interviews, for example, individual children who were more fluent in Spanish than in English related that they sometimes had difficulty communicating with their older siblings who no longer spoke much, if any, Spanish. Occasionally this dynamic was reversed. Again, Xochitl, who was English-dominant, presented a contrasting example, reporting during the group interview that her mother was now trying to make sure that her younger sister spoke Spanish. Xochitl often participated in activities with her sister such as watching television programs for younger children in Spanish in order to continue her own learning and "keep up." The interweaving of language and family ties for the children was complex and often involved shifting and re-shifting status.

Changing Relationships With Parents

All of the children in this study who were interviewed individually reported that their parents wanted them to learn English, and many children stated the same during group interviews. It appeared clear to these children that their parents believed learning English was the key to a better future. In addition to changes within the family that many children noted with regard to their siblings' loss of Spanish, they also experienced shifts in their own relationships with their parents as the children acquired more English. Primarily these changes involved increasing interaction outside the home as children

translated in doctors' offices or other public settings. One or two children commented that they tired at times of this role. More often than not, however, children reported feeling proud that they could help their families in this way. Eva, for example, said during the group interview that her family thought of her as what she called (in English) a "teacher in the home" when she translated for them, a role that she clearly cherished given the admiration she held for her own teachers.

Indeed, several children spoke of either helping their parents learn English, or learning together as a family. One fourth-grade boy, for example, talked during a group interview about studying *Inglés sin barreras* (*English Without Barriers*), an audiovisual study program, with his mother, which prompted other boys to begin talking about similar activities. Many children in other groups and individual interviews reported that their parents were attending classes or otherwise actively engaged in organized learning programs either to acquire English or to improve their existing skills. In some cases, they used expensive programs such as *Inglés sin barreras*, while several others were attending free classes held at the school site through a community-based tutoring program.

However, Eva' description of herself as a "teacher in the home" also points to the change in status that can also result when parents are cast in a relatively more subordinate role. Sometimes in the case of the children I interviewed, this change in status provided opportunities for children to "trick" their parents, as one child stated. Anita, for example, described the way in which she and her siblings would try to hide information from their parents by speaking in English, or at times by refusing to translate. During the group interview, she related the way the children occasionally mistranslated songs on the radio when her father requested that they tell him what the lyrics were about while the family

was driving in the car. They did this so that he wouldn't know that the song contained "bad words." However, his usual response was simply to turn off the radio or change the channel as he typically detected their attempts at obscuring the truth. Anita's respect for her father was evident as she related her short narrative. This respect was typical of the ways that children in the study talked about their families, even as their talk also suggested that they were aware of their own growing relative power within the family as they acquired greater English proficiency through activities such as "tricking."

Spanish, English and Establishing Identities Away From Home

In fact, children sometimes observed that conflicts arose between adults and children within the family as their older siblings gained English and began to lose Spanish.

For example, during an individual interview, Nancy, a third-grade girl, talked about occasional tense moments that erupted at home when her thirteen-year-old brother would ignore their mother when she spoke to him in Spanish. Nancy believed this was in part because her brother had begun to forget Spanish, but also because he found his emerging identity as a non-Spanish speaker to be an advantage at times when he didn't want to comply with certain requests. When I asked her whether or not she wanted to continue to speak Spanish, given her brother's experience, she quickly nodded her head, yes. I asked her then if she thought she would be able to do so. At that point she paused, sighed, and waited a long time before answering, "no."

Nancy had also participated in the third-grade girls' group interview prior to our individual interview. At that time, I asked if the children planned to keep on speaking

both Spanish and English when they grow up. Their responses were mixed: yes, no, maybe. It was Nancy who explained: "*después [del tercer grado] vas a estar en esta escuela y después vas a otras y hablas puro inglés y se te va a olvidar el español*." ("Later [after third grade] you will be in this school and then go to others, and you will speak only English and forget Spanish."). She made this statement without any discernable emotion, as if it were simply a matter of fact, and her statement was not disputed by any of the other girls.

In Nancy's statement, bilingualism was a zero sum game: both languages couldn't "win." Two languages always must eventually add up to one. Learning English and "forgetting" Spanish were somehow inevitable to Nancy as well as other children I interviewed, as predictable as the end of one school year and the beginning of another. And just as children anxiously await the beginning of a new school year, children were anxious about learning English. They might approach learning English with a variety of emotions, just as some either eagerly anticipate a new teacher and classmates while others dread returning to school. However, regardless of their feelings about the matter, children seemed to accept that learning English, like going to school, was important to their families and their futures. If learning English meant forgetting Spanish, this was just part of the price to be paid. The fact that this change in language use occurred at school was also very clear to the children, as Nancy's comments indicate. And just as they observed or experienced changes in status that occurred within the family as English was introduced, they found that at school, learning or not learning English had social as well as academic consequences.

Establishing Identities at School

In addition to talking about the complex and changing dynamics between family members related to language, children talked about changes they noticed or experienced among their peers at school as they began to learn English. When I asked the girls to talk about their earliest memories of learning English during the fourth-grade girls group interview, Julia described using her knowledge of English as a way to establish advantage over other children:

Julia: When I was in kinder….no, preschool…I was riding with my friend [on] the little tricycle and I started speaking English and I went, "Ha, ha you don't know how to speak English!"

With this statement, Julia shows us how language can be used among bilingual children to establish a more powerful identity. Asserting one's claim to a language is a way of trading on its symbolic as well as instrumental value. Anita was able to do this among her siblings by maintaining her Spanish and thus what she considered to be a favored status within the family. At school, English was the language of relative power. Children knew that their parents wanted them to learn English at school, and that English was the language of most classrooms and teachers, although their principal and many staff members were bilingual.

However, promoting one's own status as an English speaker in the way that Julia reported above was not something I saw in evidence during my observations in the classroom or on the playground. I asked children during group and individual interviews whether they knew any peers who bragged about knowing English. None of them offered

any examples. Nor did they think that someone who spoke a lot of English was "showing off." During individual interviews with third graders, a boy commented, for example, that when he and his friends played dodge ball, they usually used both English and Spanish, while a girl observed that English was "*algo para aprender, no para estar creyéndose*" ("something to learn, not to be 'getting a big head' about"). Although this child downplayed learning English as a way of establishing power in this statement, the fact that she noted the possibility suggests awareness of differential status among those students who spoke English and their monolingual Spanish-speaking peers.

In addition to talking about themselves as language users, children in the group interviews at times contested the ways in which individuals within the group staked a claim to one or the other language, usually to English. In the following excerpt from the fourth grade girls' group interview, Eva joined in the discussion after I asked the children to confirm my impression that each knew "some Spanish and some English:"

CF: Eva, what about you?
Eva: I'm equal.
Debbie: You know more Spanish, don't you?
Eva: I speak a little more Spanish than English.

Here, Eva also uses the "I am" construction and represents herself as "equal" in both languages. However, Debbie questions this claim, and Eva revises her identification as being "a little" stronger in Spanish. Debbie's own academic status in the classroom may have played a role in persuading Eva to change her mind. Debbie was officially part of a GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) cluster in the fourth-grade classroom, although I never observed that the teacher in any way called attention to that group or its

status either during official lessons nor informal interactions. According to my initial interview with her, the teacher believed that Debbie was becoming concerned with appearing to be "too smart," and wasn't participating too much in class. However, the teacher had noted that when no one else seemed to know the answer, Debbie would sometimes choose to volunteer.

Based on my observations and interviews, it is likely that Debbie's high academic status might not have been lost on Eva. Although Eva was not classified as GATE, she was considered to be a hard worker who strove to achieve by both her current and former teachers. Susan, her fourth-grade teacher, talked about explicitly trying to give Eva as many opportunities to talk as possible, in spite of the difficulties that sometimes presented for her in interpreting what Eva was trying to say in English. Natalie, who had the opportunity to work with Eva in Spanish as well as in English during third grade, described her as "poetic" and "brilliant," commenting that a hug from Eva could "get her through a week." In my individual interview with her, Eva talked often about wanting to "advance" herself. Combined with Debbie's self-declared status as "more English than Spanish," Debbie's identity as "smart" within the classroom may have influenced Eva' perception of her own abilities.

In fact, when I interviewed Eva individually a month after the group interview, she presented the history of her development in both languages quite differently than when she previously described herself as "equal:"

CF: And then when you were in kindergarten, did you speak Spanish and English in school, or just English, or just Spanish?

Eva: I was going to advance in English but something is broke to my English language so I need [to] speak a little bit [of] Spanish while I learned about English. So now I'm more advanced in English than Spanish.

Eva' use of the word "broke" with regard to her English, combined with her assessment that she only needed to speak "a little bit" of Spanish while she learned more English, suggest that she is perhaps painfully aware of the larger social dynamics around her in the push for English, despite the best intentions and caring of her teachers. Even if Debbie did not intend to exert power over Eva' emerging sense of self, even small evaluations such as hers may have an impact. The accumulation of statements by others, whether intended as a show of power or more benignly as an observation, shapes the contours of identities children construct. It is relevant to note that particularly for children nearing adolescence, perceived negative evaluation from admired peers can leave lasting impressions. Here, Debbie was making a negative rather than neutral evaluation. If it is important to the children to be "equal" in their languages, then any imbalance might be perceived as unfavorable.

"Like a Baby:" Shifting Relationships With Peers

Not only explicit statements, but also the impact of different degrees of linguistic proficiency between peers, particularly when speaking English at school, affected children's developing sense of self. At precisely the time that they were experiencing rapid cognitive, social and physical growth, the children in my study who were acquiring English encountered situations in which they felt linguistically subordinate to their English-speaking peers. Even so, they may have simultaneously found themselves in

positions of relative power *vis a vis* older siblings and even parents due to their developing bilingualism. These contrasting situations appeared to result in a variety of emotions, ranging from pride to anger. At times, children seemed to turn these emotions inward. Twice during the fourth-grade girls' interview, for example, Eva stated that she felt "mad" at herself when she had difficulty expressing what she wanted to say in English. On other occasions some children attempted to assert their own power over those who they perceived to be less fluent in English, as the earlier example in which Julia teased a preschool classmate who spoke less English than she did.

These imbalances in social power due to differing linguistic proficiency in English resulted in uncomfortable or frustrating experiences according to some children. During the fourth-grade girls' group interview, Anita recounted the following narrative:

> Anita: When I was learning how to speak English, I was playing with my friends and I was just talking Spanish, and [my friend] started saying, "Talk in English! I don't like Spanish that much!" Only if I started talking English she could just barely understand me. I was just saying baby words in English.

In addition to the negative valorization of Spanish on the part of Anita's friend, the way in which she described saying "baby words" is important to note. Several times, children described activities in which they engaged during English Language Development time as too "babyish," for example.

In Anita's case, the contrast between her vibrant identity as a proficient bilingual and that of an English-speaker limited to "baby words" was striking, as a brief biographical sketch will illustrate. During an individual interview, I was able to more fully appreciate what a spirited and adventurous youngster she was, one whose major

concerns seemed to be those of many ten-year-old girls: she was worried about being too short, about taking care of her pets, and particularly, about winning an upcoming school election in which she was running for office. She spoke primarily English during our interview by her own choice, although she switched easily to Spanish when reporting dialogue in that language.

Anita had already traveled a great deal in her young life, and experienced many different worlds. She was born in New York City, the youngest child in a family of two parents and an older brother and sister. Her parents had moved to New York from a small town in the state of Michoacán, Mexico, where their first child, Anita's brother, had been born. She described her early years in New York as happy ones, where she spoke Spanish at home with her family as well as in the neighborhood, and also began to learn English. During her early elementary school years, the family moved to San Diego. Anita's family also frequently visited her grandmother in Michoacán during the summers. She spoke very enthusiastically about these visits, describing life in Michoacán as "normal" and telling me many stories about her adventures such as winning prizes in a parade, tricking her brother whose limited Spanish put him at a disadvantage, and moving freely for hours at play all over the small town. In one of these stories, she dramatically recounted having been harassed by some older boys, acquaintances of her brother, while she walked to a nearby market to buy candy. Anita dramatically re-enacted the way in which she was able to shout at them in Spanish and drive them off with a stick.

In the classroom, I had observed that Anita was a quick learner, particularly in mathematics, and quickly gleaned subtleties in her reading in English. Her teacher had told me that Anita "had no fear," and described her English as "very good." As

previously indicated, during our interview, Anita chose to use English, and spoke in what might be described as a contact variety. She told me that she had relatives in Texas and that people told her she "talked like a Texas girl," which did not appear to please her. At another point in the interview, Anita mentioned that she initially had difficulty understanding the Spanish spoken by some of her neighbors in New York who she said were from Puerto Rico. Thus, Anita's commentary suggests not only her appreciation of her own bilingualism in English and Spanish, but also her awareness of variation with each of her languages.

Anita possessed skills in negotiating multiple social worlds and displayed a high degree of confidence. She told me that she planned to remain bilingual, and to study Spanish in both high school and college. She commented that as a bilingual veterinarian, she would be able to "help twice as many people" care for their animals, in the same way that being bilingual now allowed her to have "twice as many friends." Anita's narrative calls attention to the rich repertoire of possible bilingual identities children could imagine and construct: class officer, veterinarian, trickster, college student. Bilingualism conferred upon her a power to defend herself as well as to establish or maintain relationships and help others.

At other times, however, bilingual children in the study reported fear or vulnerability as they acquired English in the United States, particularly given the time and place in which they were growing up, as the following section will illustrate.

Children's Encounters with English in the Community

As the fourth-grade girls continued talking about their experiences in learning English, Julia introduced a theme that promoted much discussion among the group:

Julia: when I was I think three years old I knew how to speak Spanish and my grandma was in the hospital and my mom told me to go with her so I could see my grandma. And then a guy in the hospital, he told me…um…to "Stop!" And I started speaking English with him.

At that point, Julia's voice dropped off and she looked down, displaying a quite different manner than her earlier almost boasting attitude when teasing other children about their English proficiency during preschool. She whispered something that I could barely hear, and so I sought to clarify:

CF: You wanted to leave the hospital?
Julia: Yes. I didn't want to go. I didn't want to talk to him.

Rather than probe any further into an experience that made her so obviously anxious, I tried to respond to the general fears rather than the specific details.

CF: Hospitals are kinda scary places….
Debbie: You're like….choking!
Anita: It's like you see blood everywhere….
Debbie: Oooh!

This exchange prompted a flurry of short narratives from the other members of the group about fearful situations. Several of these involved incidents in which the girls

were shopping and became separated from their parents. Eva, for example, gave the following account:

Eva: One day when I was a little kid I didn't know English and an old man wanted something…because I was lost…and then the old man saw me [and said] "Where's your mom?" And then I didn't understand it and I got angry about myself because I didn't know English and then [inaudible] it [English] just came out."

In these narratives, the fear of strangers that parents and teachers necessarily impart and a child's intuition of danger merge with the challenges of acquiring a new language. As these girls struggled to interpret and respond to the intentions of adults, whose motives, either benign or harmful, exceeded their understanding, they did so in a tongue that still felt unfamiliar. And they sensed that even their parents, otherwise powerful protectors, might not be omnipotent in these linguistic situations. Anita, for example, recounted an incident while shopping in the local Wal-Mart. She had been approached by a man speaking English who made her suspicious, and went running to find her mother, presumably for her own safety but also to warn and possibly protect her mother by translating for her if necessary.

The experiences recounted in these narratives point to the way in which everyday events, such as shopping or visiting relatives, were sometimes marked by their protagonists' relatively vulnerable status as female children. Boys were less likely to characterize their experiences with English in the outside world in terms of fear, but they did talk about feeling "embarrassed" and "confused" at times, situations that often resulted in their feeling powerless. For example, during a group interview one third-grade

boy recounted with great frustration a situation in which he realized he had been manipulated into paying too much for a toy at the swap meet due to his difficulty responding quickly enough in English.

These daily experiences for both boys and girls were rendered more complex by the demands of negotiating world where English held greater sociopolitical power while acquiring proficiency in the language. And although the children did not directly comment on this aspect, their vulnerability, along with that of their parents, was heightened by their ethnicity in a local context where those who were perceived to be "Mexican" by physical appearance or language, regardless of citizenship status, faced the very real possibility of being included in deportation sweeps by uniformed and armed strangers, the *migra* (immigration officials). Not speaking English "well enough," as indicated by Isabel's experience recounted in Chapter One, could have very real and devastating consequences in encounters with *la migra*.

Children Talk About Spanish

However, it was not only in their experiences with English that children expressed awareness of the ways in which some ways of using language were legitimated or deemed "better" than others, but also in their experiences with speaking Spanish. The meanings of Spanish as well as English in the lives of the children are the subject of the sections that follow.

"They Teach You Standard Spanish"

Most of children's talk about older siblings during both individual and group interviews focused on the ways in which their older siblings were forgetting or no longer speaking Spanish, as illustrated earlier in Anita's example of the way she helped her brother negotiate relationships in Mexico with her own stronger command of Spanish. However, children also described struggles their siblings or other family members sometimes had when they did attempt to maintain or improve their Spanish. These experiences typically involved negative evaluations of the variety of Spanish spoken. The following segment of the fourth-grade girls group interview transcript provides an illustration:

CF: I had a really hard time learning Spanish in school because I was in high school, and I just couldn't learn it. But it was when I started talking in Spanish to people outside of school, that's when I started learning Spanish. [Several hands shoot up to volunteer] Let's go back to Debbie and then Anita and then to Xochitl, how's that?
Debbie: It's because in school they treat… they teach you Standard English. I mean Spanish.
CF: Oh, so and how is it different?
Debbie: Like…like my sister's friend he was learning the parts of a car in Spanish and [the teacher] said "*el capo*" (Latin American Spanish term for "automobile hood").
Julia [pronounces in hyper-corrected Spanish]: ¿*El capo*?
Xochitl: It's like "*el campo*" ("field" in Spanish)
CF: Instead of…. ?
Debbie: [Pause]. Umm……I dunno! [All laugh.]

In this exchange, Debbie reveals her awareness of the way school legitimated certain types of language and eliminated others, even using the term "Standard Spanish." Although I wasn't able to determine where she had learned that terminology, she and the

other girls recognized that the type of Spanish taught in secondary school often did not correspond to the Spanish of their families and community, as suggested by the fact that several children wanted to volunteer an example related to my prompt. My own situation, of course, was quite different the experiences of the bilingual Mexican American children in this study when it came to studying Spanish at school. As a white, middle-class Midwesterner, I was learning Spanish as a foreign language. For Debbie, as for most of the children in this study, Spanish was a home language, with which they had at least some receptive experience. As discussed in Chapter One, the children's families were circumstantial bilinguals. Yet Spanish is often taught at the secondary level as a foreign language even in courses designed for Spanish speakers, privileging varieties of Castilian or Latin American Spanish deemed to be the standard (Valdés, Fishman, Chávez, & Pérez, 2006).

Apparently, Debbie had heard this brief narrative from her sister, who she earlier described as having "forgotten" Spanish. The children did not recognize that the term *el capo* referred to the part of the car that they would know in Northern Mexico and Southern California as *el cofre*. It may be that Debbie's sister repeated the Latin American Spanish term likely used in the school textbook without explanation. Thus, Xochitl connected the pronunciation to "*el campo*" in an attempt to establish meaning, but the girls were unable to come up with a synonym for *el capo*. Although they didn't explicitly discuss their own attitudes toward this anecdote, Julia's mocking tones in pronouncing *el capo* suggest a perhaps intuitive awareness of status issues involved, and I noted that the girls' laughter at the end of this segment seemed to be a little nervous. At the time I did not know what *el capo* meant myself, and only learned the difference

between this item and the term in regional use after consulting with multiple dictionaries and two native Spanish speakers, one educated in Ecuador and one in Northern Mexico. However, in my silence, the girls might have wondered if I actually knew what the term meant and was negatively evaluating them myself.

The girls in this group had few formal opportunities to extend their knowledge of Standard Spanish, those varieties of Latin American Spanish and Castilian that they would most likely encounter in books or during school instruction, after third grade. As Eva stated in my individual interview with her:

> Eva: In school I'm supposed to know more English than Spanish. So when I read I need….well, I get expected to read in English by the school but Spanish just [at] home.

Some girls, such as Eva, Julia and Anita, talked about reading at home with their parents in Spanish, as did a few of the boys I interviewed. However, for the most part, children's continued literacy development in Spanish occurred as they read magazines about favorite *telenovelas* or *lucha libre* wrestlers, if at all. A few mentioned reading in Spanish at church. Typically, they talked about continuing to use oral Spanish to communicate with their families, although some, like Anita, did say that they thought they would take classes in Spanish in high school or college.

With regard to oral Spanish, children also talked about experiences in which they stated that they felt embarrassed about their pronunciation, word choice or fluency in Spanish and were unable to use the language to negotiate the world around them. For example, during the fourth-grade boys group interview, Cesar described being unable to

order food at a restaurant when visiting relatives in Mexico City. In that case he had to rely on his father to assist him, an experience Cesar described as fairly upsetting. After all, Cesar had become relatively accustomed to his own role as language broker in the United States, helping his father by translating English to Spanish for him. Cesar's experience was somewhat surprising to me, as he had been a student in the third-grade bilingual classroom the previous year, and given the fact that his teacher had described him as fluent in Spanish. Perhaps away from the border region, Cesar experienced a different variety of Spanish in a monolingual setting and was at least temporarily unsure of both specific linguistic usage and his own identity as a Spanish-speaker.

"Spanglish:" Not Part of the Equation

Spanish and English represented separate and sometimes conflicting experiences for the children as they built their identities. However, the children also mentioned practices in which both languages were used together or came into contact. The following segment rejoins the fourth-grade girls group interview after our discussion of standard Spanish:

CF: But I know what you're saying because sometimes that's true in English, too, right? Does the English you learn in school…does that sound like the English you hear outside of school? Or is it different?
[mixed responses of no, yes]
Debbie: It's different. Because outside of school I hear Spanglish.
Anita [laughs]: Spanglish!
CF: Spanglish? What do you mean by that?
Debbie: Spanish and English. Like "*parquéate*." [All laugh]
Julia: [to Debbie] Is that a Spanglish word?
Debbie: [to Julia] Yeah, it's "park" and then….um…."*estaciónate*."
CF: Oh, so is that good? Or ….what do you think about that?
Julia: *Yo* (I)….no, no. Bad!
Cheryl: Why? Julia says it's bad.

Julia: I don't know! [All laugh]
CF: Have you heard people say it's bad?
Debbie: Yes… well, no.
CF: No? Well then it might be ….
Anita: Well, my mom says that it's bad and my dad, because if we start talking more English we're not going to be able to talk to them because they only speak Spanish.

The fact that Debbie was able to quickly generate an example of what she called "Spanglish" suggests that it had been the subject of conversation somewhere in her young life. Julia apparently recognized the term *parquéate*, but had not heard it referred to as "Spanglish."

After my talk with this group of girls, I raised the topic of "speaking both" Spanish and English at the same time with many children during individual interviews. I sometimes used the term "Spanglish" in our interviews based on Debbie's use of that word. However, in their talk children referred to a variety of linguistic practices under this rubric, including the use of contact varieties of both English and Spanish. At times, they talked about the use of lexical items, such as "*parquéate*" that usually represented the insertion of English into Spanish discourse. When I asked about "speaking both" only Eva explicitly mentioned one of the many borrowed Spanish words in the English language around them: *chocolate*. Otherwise none of the children commented on these widespread English appropriations of Spanish, ranging from common terms for popular food items to the names of several regional cities, although they occasionally marked such items in their speech with a Spanish pronunciation. Other ways in which children talked about "speaking both" included the use of cognates, such as "*refrigerador"*/"refrigerator," an example given by a fourth-grade boy. Finally, they

sometimes gave examples of switching between Spanish and English when speaking to different people.

Not all children used the term "Spanglish" when referring to any of these practices of "speaking both," although one third-grade boy referred to it as "Spinglish." However, all were familiar with various ways in which speakers drew upon both languages to communicate. For the most part, children in individual and group interviews seemed at best ambivalent about "speaking both" Spanish and English to communicate in any of the practices described above. They freely recognized that this was the way people talked, both inside and outside of school, but children apparently believed that at least some adults in their lives did not explicitly approve of Spanglish, for a variety of reasons. Anita, for example, stated that her parents discouraged the use of Spanglish because it would in some way promote English at the expense of the children's Spanish.

Children may have also experienced negative evaluation of these language practices from their peers. For example, I asked José Luis, a third-grade boy, about Spanglish during an individual interview:

CF: Have you ever heard the word "Spanglish"?
José Luis: Yeah. [Laughs]
CF: What do you think about that?
José Luis: [Laughs]. It's funny.
CF: It's funny? Do you think people should speak both Spanish and English….or use Spanglish?
José Luis: No.
CF: No? But they do anyway, right?
José Luis: Sometimes.
CF: Are there some places where you should do that and some places where you shouldn't?
José Luis: [Pauses]. No places.
CF: No places? Why not?
José Luis: Because then they're gonna say, "*¡Estás loco!*" ("You're crazy!")

Based on my classroom observations, I knew that José Luis was a child who frequently played with the sounds and structures of language. His English proficiency was growing quickly, and I noted that he used both Spanish and English socially with friends. When I let him know (in Spanish) that we could conduct the interview in "English, Spanish or both" languages, he told me that he wanted to speak English, but would also like to use Spanish "when he needed to." I believe José Luis was intentionally code-switching in the above statement itself, however, rather than using Spanish because he "needed to," or randomly, the way in which code-switching is often mistakenly understood by monolinguals (c.f., Grosjean, 1982). Instead, it seems to me his choice of the informal form of address in Spanish suggests that he was referring to how the use of Spanglish might be received within his peer group of Spanish-speaking boys.

On the other hand, José Luis' laughter and comments about Spanglish being "funny" also suggested the possibility that he associated this linguistic phenomenon with entertainers. I knew from his interview that José Luis was interested in what he described as "pop, hip hop, and rap" music, and that he frequently watched television in both English and Spanish because, as he told me, "we are close to Tijuana." When I asked him what performers he thought sounded "cool" he answered that he liked the speech of characters on the program *South Park*, although he quickly added that he knew they "used bad language" and that he only watched that program when his father was asleep because his parents didn't permit him to watch it. While the characters on *South Park* don't use Spanglish, it seems likely that José Luis may have encountered comedians and

musicians who do. For José Luis, Spanglish may have held some power in association with popular youth culture and the lure of the forbidden.

Any linguistic practices considered to be Spanglish, then, were regarded with some ambivalence by the children I interviewed, alternately "funny" or to be avoided. In general, however, Spanglish was something that children said they usually heard "outside of school," as Debbie stated. My observations suggested that in fact, a great variety of bilingual language practices to which the children might have referred as "Spanglish" were evident at the school. Teachers and students alike used these practices, including during formal lessons. Yet in the comments of Debbie and José Luis, Spanglish is viewed as a marginalized phenomenon, used for entertainment or informal conversation.

Summary and Discussion of Children's Views

Meanings and Value of Bilingualism

Children generally valued bilingualism and desired to maintain or improve their Spanish as well as to learn English. They indicated both instrumental and social reasons for this choice. Pragmatically, children stated that they knew learning English was the key to a successful future in school and work in the United States, reflecting the desires of their parents. In contrast to the fears promoted by proponents of English-only agendas, children in the third-grade bilingual classroom as well as the mainstream English fourth-grade classroom alike stated these beliefs in the value of learning English.

Children also recognized the pragmatic value of bilingualism. Several indicated that speaking Spanish would be advantageous in the adult career world, as when Anita stated that as a bilingual veterinarian she could help "twice as many" people. Particularly

because they were growing up in the border region, during interviews and classroom observations children identified many careers in which bilingualism would be an advantage, ranging from auto mechanic to attorney to entertainer. Often, as they told me, their perspectives were based on the experiences of their own family members as well as representations in bilingual and international media. These findings are consonant with those reported by Orellana, Ek, & Hernández (1999), who learned that children and families alike valued the maintenance of Spanish for communication within the family while expressing concern that children acquire English in order to secure better economic futures. Because the families interviewed by Orellana, Ek & Hernández often lived transnational lives, like the children in my study they also valued Spanish for instrumental reasons such as attending school or gaining employment in Mexico or another Spanish-speaking country of origin. Similarly, González (2001) documented multiple ways in which bilingualism brought social and economic benefits in her detailed ethnographic study of families in the Arizona-Mexico border region.

In addition, as Anita's statement hints, children also valued bilingualism not only economically but also as a way to help others. Children's experiences in helping others often began with their parents or younger siblings when they served as translators. The social as well as academic benefits of children's experiences as family translators have been well documented by Orellana and colleagues (Orellana, Dorner & Pulido, 2003; Orellana, Reynolds, Dorner & Meza, 2003), in keeping with the ways in which children in this study described their experiences. In addition, Soto (2002) found that bilingualism was related to a sense of altruism among children of Puerto Rican origin she studied in an urban industrial town on the East Coast. Beginning with the ways in which bilingualism

provided aid within their own families, children extended these altruistic possibilities for language use to the larger community despite their own experiences of linguistic and ethnic or racial discrimination in the wider society.

Although they valued bilingualism and believed that it represented benefits to them both socially and instrumentally, several children expressed doubt that they would, in fact, be able to maintain or improve their Spanish. Children with older siblings who had begun to speak primarily or exclusively English particularly expressed this uncertainty. I did not explicitly document the generation of immigration of all the students who participated in the study. According to the classroom teachers, the majority of students in both classrooms were second or third generation immigrants, with relatively fewer newcomers. Although no conclusions can be drawn about the range of the experiences of the children in the study, the interview statements cited in this chapter reveal snapshots of dynamics at work in societal language shift. Both Debbie and Anita, who reported that their older siblings were becoming English-dominant, were second-generation immigrants. Nancy, who commented on the same phenomenon with her older brother, was a first-generation immigrant. Thus, the children's observations cited here regarding language loss within the family echo research documenting language shift showing that English becomes dominant by the third generation, if not sooner (e.g., Fishman, 1991; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996).

As children talked about their perception that all of their schooling would take place in English after third grade, they occasionally voiced either apprehension about their skills or enthusiasm to learn, given the positive value that they accorded to acquiring English. However, children did not seem to question the desirability of the situation.

Instead, they appeared to regard this trajectory as an inevitable fact of life in the United States. Perhaps because of their experience with language shift combined with the transitional nature of the bilingual program, monolingualism in English seemed to be inevitable to at least some of the children. Nancy was one such child, and segments of her interviews were cited in this chapter. A third-grader in the bilingual classroom, she was a first-generation immigrant and identified herself primarily as a Spanish speaker. She spoke exclusively in Spanish in both individual and group interviews. Nancy also indicated in both of those settings that she wished to remain bilingual in contrast to her older brother. Yet during the group interview she commented to the other girls that, eventually, "*se te va a olvidar el español*" ("you will forget Spanish"). In part, this commentary might reveal developmental reasoning. Cole & Cole (2001) observe that middle childhood is a time in which children treat social conventions as "more or less equivalent to natural laws" (p. 595), although they also assert that during this time children begin to develop increased sophistication. It is also possible, then, that statements such as the one made by Nancy suggest that for at least some children, the push toward English was becoming internalized and naturalized. Becoming monolingual in English through the process of schooling was a lived experience, a taken-for-granted aspect of the world around them, much as Bourdieu (1991) describes the workings of habitus through which social structures are reproduced.

Children's Notions of Linguistic Expertise

Children overall appeared to believe that to be bilingual, on an individual must be equally proficient in both languages. Although Spanish was relegated to an increasingly

small portion of the school landscape and instructional day, many children held onto the notion that they could become – and remain - "equal" in their two languages. In the fourth-grade girls' group interview analyzed in this chapter, it might be argued that at least in part, the girls' characterization of bilingualism as equal proficiency in both languages might have been influenced by the wording of my question: I asked them to verify that they knew "some Spanish and some English," thus inviting comparisons. However, in individual interviews, I provided an open-ended prompt: "tell me about being bilingual." As cited in this chapter, one third-grade boy told me in an individual interview that he "only needed a little more English to get equal," and Eva, in the quote that opens this chapter, characterized her languages metaphorically during an individual interview as "best friends," implying equality. On the one hand, such a perception might be construed as a positive regard for both languages in spite of the lower status of Spanish in the larger society. Children's desire to be "equal" in their languages could thus represent a message cutting against the grain of transitional bilingual education, in which Spanish is used for instruction only until such time as English proficiency has been reached. In this way, the children's comments recall the notion of the "balanced bilingual" (c.g., Grosjean, 1979).

Nonetheless, the notion of the "balanced bilingual" is an idealized view. It does not represent the practices of those who live with more than one language whereby speakers most often have differing proficiency levels in their languages depending upon context and purpose, and where they may unequally master reading, writing, listening and speaking in different languages (c.f., Grosjean, 1982; Valdés, 2004). It would appear that the children tended to understand bilingualism primarily in terms of speakers'

relative command of each code, setting the stage for linguistic insecurity if they begin to perceive they are being negatively evaluated along presumed "native speaker" standards in either or both languages. This negative evaluation includes judgments about the children's use of English, with its relatively greater sociopolitical power, whether this occur through well-intentioned attempts to correct children's language use at school (c.f., Cahnmann, 2003; Krashen, 1995; Razfar, 2003) or outright linguistic discrimination such as that documented by Lippi-Green (1997; 2004). However, particularly given the fact that children had little access to academic instruction in Spanish after third grade, they were also subject to such evaluations against an idealized norm in Spanish. Children such as Cesar had already begun to experience this phenomenon when speaking Spanish among Mexican nationals, similarly to cases documented by González (2001), for example.

In fact, bilinguals living in situations of language contact engage in various practices in which languages intermingle. Children viewed such bilingual practices as code switching or the use of contact varieties of either Spanish or English negatively. In both individual and group interviews, children sometimes referred to these practices as "Spanglish." Officially at school, "Spanglish" had no status, although its use was widespread both in and out of school, according to the children. They also noted its use in the entertainment industry in both television and popular music. In this sense, at the same that Spanglish existed everywhere, it was to be used "nowhere," as one third-grade boy stated. It is not possible from the data presented here to determine precisely how or why children developed these attitudes, although some children indicated that their parents or teachers discouraged "mixing" the languages, even though the same children observed

that in reality, such mixing commonly occurred at school as well as at home or in the community. The children's ambivalent or negative attitudes toward what some termed "Spanglish" are echoed in wider social discourse about language in education. As Zentella (2002) observes,

> Pejorative references to 'Spanglish' (or to 'Tex-Mex' in the Southwest) conjure up images of a linguistic mish-mash, a deficient code spoken by deficient speakers and responsible for their academic failure (p. 328).

However, as Zentella observes, the linguistic evidence is clear that code-switching and other bilingual practices represent normal or even highly skilled language development in bilingual communities.

Relationships Among Language, Power and Identity

Spanish and English were resources for establishing identities as sons or daughters, siblings, and friends for the Mexican American children in my study. Bilingual children were able to help their families negotiate the outside world while still maintaining traditional family relationships.

However, changes in language use were also markers of power shifts within these relationships. At least some children had begun to witness differential positioning or even friction that arose among family members when children of the second and third generation began to lose the ability to communicate with parents or grandparents. For example, Anita expressed the belief that her bilingual skills made her the favorite child in her family. Nancy described arguments between her monolingual Spanish-speaking

mother and English-dominant older brother when he either misunderstood or, in Nancy's view, ignored his mother's requests for help with household tasks. This finding is reminiscent of observations by Wong Fillmore (1991) of the negative impacts of language shift on parental authority among immigrant families. As Wong Fillmore observes, while children and adolescents who are experiencing language shift may be able to express basic needs in the home language but have more difficulty with communicating complex or subtle thoughts and emotions. At the same time, based on cross-cultural evidence, Cole & Cole (2001) conclude that, while there are variations among and within cultural groups, parents generally begin to use less direct forms of control during middle childhood. They employ more appeals to reason and self-esteem or guilt, and use humor to mitigate directives. Thus, children's linguistic proficiency in, along with their attitudes toward, the home language may combine with developmental changes within the family to set the stage for conflict.

At school, children's relative lack of fluency in English sometimes left them feeling vulnerable, or in Anita's words, "like a baby," when they were unable to express themselves fully to more English-proficient classmates. From a developmental perspective, children experienced these feelings of vulnerability at precisely the time when they were becoming more aware of social comparisons among peers (Cole & Cole, 2001). The stresses produced by these comparisons may be amplified for bilingual Mexican American children within an anti-immigration political context that devalues their ethnicity and language. At times, even a child's other bilingual Mexican American peers may hold up what Carola Suárez-Orozco (2001) refers to as a negative "social mirror." Such was the case when Anita's Spanish-speaking friend stated that she "didn't

like Spanish that much" in the interview segment cited in this chapter. Suárez-Orozco argues that immigrant children are aware of these larger social messages, such as a pejorative view of Spanish. She observes that, for immigrant children, "When the assumptions about them include expectations of sloth, irresponsibility, low intelligence and, and even danger, the outcomes can be toxic" (p. 212).

The data in this study would suggest that not only newcomers, but also the second and third generations and beyond, also receive these messages. Language, like ethnicity, is easily marked in the larger society, constructing identities for as well as by children. Commentators such as Uricoli (1996) and Lippi-Green (1997) observe that while overt racist discourse based on phenotype or ethnicity may no longer be socially permissible, discrimination based on language use is, and in this way, it could be said that racism has been mapped onto language. Children such as Debbie and José Luis were aware of pejorative views of code switching and other bilingual practices they recognized as Spanglish. In addition, Hill (1995) describes the phenomenon of "mock Spanish" whereby phrases such as "no problemo" or "hasta la vista, baby" are employed in ways that denigrate Spanish and thereby Spanish speakers, primarily by whites. However, José Luis sometimes incorporated mock Spanish in his own talk, perhaps influenced by popular movies and television programs as suggested in his interview. Combined with the experience of negative evaluation of their Spanish proficiency in some cases by Mexican nationals, the data presented here suggest that the Spanish language may have had conflicting symbolic value for the children. On the one hand, children spoke of both social and instrumental values of bilingualism and maintaining Spanish, much as the children in the study by Soto (2002) cited earlier. Yet through situations such as the one

reported by Anita in which her bilingual friend disparaged the use of Spanish, children recounted experiences in which they became aware of negative views of the Spanish language. In addition, the children expressed a generally negative view of "Spanglish" or other bilingual practices in which they languages were mixed.

Conclusion

Based on the data examined in this study, proponents of restrictive language policies such as California's Proposition 227, titled "English for the Children," need have no fear: bilingual Mexican American children do want to acquire English. All of the children reported the desire to learn English and become proficient in the language. All reported that their families desired English language proficiency for their sons and daughters, as well.

In addition, the children also desired to maintain or improve their Spanish. Thus, the school's transitional bilingual program and overall climate would seem to be promoting positive regard for bilingualism.

However, these positive attitudes toward bilingualism were potentially mitigated by their awareness of negative social evaluations of Spanish and bilingual practices they termed "Spanglish." Emergent language ideologies of linguistic purism, or keeping the codes separate, may set the stage for children to develop linguistic insecurity as their access to advanced language and literacy instruction decreases over time. Some children had already begun to conclude that monolingualism in English was inevitable for them. In part, they related this perception to the experience of older family members. However, children such as Nancy also observed that the structure of the school bilingual program

itself resulted in “forgetting Spanish.” Within these tensions, the stage may be set for reproduction of the social order imagined in policies such as Proposition 227, despite the efforts of families, children and school staff.

Bilingual Mexican American children display a wide range of skills and competencies, such as those demonstrated by the brief biographical sketch of Anita, a fourth-grade girl. These resources can be tapped and nurtured in a setting that values and allows for their bilingualism. However, in situations in which they are restricted to using only English as they develop proficiency in the language, children reported sometimes feeling infantilized. Some talked about their dislike of school activities that seemed too “babyish,” particularly during English language development instruction.

Thus far, this study has primarily examined assumptions about language and identity present in the explicit discourse of teachers and children in the form of group and individual interviews. How were these views about language enacted in classroom practice? What identities were constructed for and by children in the process? The following two chapters present an investigation into these questions.

CHAPTER VII

CO-CONSTRUCTING THE "GOOD STUDENT:" LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES AS HEURISTICS FOR THE EXERCISE OF AGENCY

Introduction and Overview

The previous two chapters examined the talk of Mexican American bilingual children and their teachers during interviews where language itself was the topic of discussion. Specifically, their views or ideologies about bilingualism, linguistic expertise and relationships among language, power and identity were investigated. This chapter and the one which follows present an analysis of the ways in which these views were enacted within the classroom and the academic identities that were constructed for and by children in the process. Given the current focus on English language proficiency within educational institutions as discussed in Chapter Two, how did bilingual children and their teachers exercise agency, defining or redefining what it means to be a "good student?"

This chapter explores the workings of agency in identity construction within English Language Development (ELD) instruction in the third-grade transitional bilingual classroom. In particular, I argue that language ideologies regarding expertise in second language acquisition served at times as heuristics for the development of agency (c.f., Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain, 1998). That is to say, aspects of the teacher's language ideology regarding linguistic expertise as instantiated in classroom discourse became a symbolic cognitive resource that helped mediate the participants' talk and action during one ELD classroom event. In turn, these views about language influenced whether or not individual children might recognize themselves or be recognized by others

as “good students.” As a result, possibilities for building academic identities were expanded beyond those represented within the context of restrictive language policies such as Proposition 227.

In the first section, ways in which the children in this study themselves described the “good student” in relationship to language use is examined through analysis and discussion of their responses to a written activity and segments of their individual interviews. These local models of identity are contrasted with larger cultural (Gee, 1999; Lee, 2001) or metapragmatic models (Wortham, 2006), including those represented within institutional discourses (Gee, 2000-2001) such as Proposition 227 and NCLB.

The second section presents an analysis of one event that I observed during an ELD lesson in the third-grade classroom. Language ideologies regarding linguistic expertise implicit in the third-grade teacher’s interview as discussed in Chapter Five are examined. The models of identity suggested in children’s talk and writing along with those implied in interviews with the teacher are compared, followed by narration and discussion of the event itself.

The chapter concludes with observations about the ways in which language ideologies contributed to the possibilities of becoming a “good student” within this classroom.

What Does It Mean to Be a “Good Student?”

In the previous chapter, tensions between children’s overall value of bilingualism and their awareness of the differential status of Spanish and English in the larger society were discussed. Individual children talked about their perceptions that, despite their

desire to maintain Spanish, they would eventually become monolingual in English. Often this perception was expressed in relationship to societal language shift as experienced within the family as children observed the loss of Spanish among older siblings or extended family members. Some children related the push toward English to schooling, as when Nancy told the other girls in her group interview, "*se te va a olivdar el español*" ("you will forget Spanish") after third grade. Nonetheless, children also indicated that they believed bilingualism was valued at their school and by their teachers.

In addition to tensions within children's value of bilingualism, their beliefs about the nature of linguistic expertise and relationships among language and power in constructing identities were evident. In particular, children talked about their pride in being able to use their bilingual skills in order to help their parents when they served as family translators. However, several expressed feelings of vulnerability when speaking English at school or in the community, when a relative lack of linguistic proficiency could leave a school age child feeling, in the words of Anita, "like a baby." Perhaps owing in part to these perceptions of differential status between Spanish and English, in combination with their experiences of power imbalances, children put a great deal of emphasis on becoming equal in proficiency in their languages, and of speaking both of them "correctly."

In order to verify the existence of these tensions and perceptions about bilingualism, particularly in relationship to schooling, I conducted a writing activity with the entire group of participants. I then conducted individual interviews with children who had participated in the earlier group interviews, asking them to comment further on their written products in order to explore patterns among the larger group of samples in more

depth. A description of the data collection process and findings from the writing activity is presented below, accompanied by discussion of patterns among the written samples and individual interviews.

Toward the end of the school year, I asked all children in both the third and fourth-grade classrooms to give advice to an imaginary new student by completing a brief writing and drawing activity. I gave each student a sheet titled "Advice for A New Student/*Consejos para un/a estudiante nuevo/a*" that asked them to give advice about how to be a good student at their school, including how to get along with others and how to stay out of trouble with teachers. Each question was written in English and Spanish. At the top of the page, a space for drawing was included (Figure 1: "Advice for a New Student" Writing Assignment).

I introduced the activity in English in each classroom, as that was the language of instruction in by that point in the school year in both settings. However, I also explicitly pointed out and read the Spanish text, and encouraged the children to use either or both languages as they desired. I attempted to describe the "new student" in as few details as possible, telling the children they could decide whom to imagine – boy or girl, from "anywhere in the world." I did not specifically name "Mexico" or any other country because I was interested in which linguistic choices children would make in order to represent the conversation. I demonstrated on an overhead transparency how one might sketch quick stick figures and include dialogue bubbles (which I left blank on my sample) to encourage children to use drawing as well as text. Finally, I encouraged children to ask questions of me in English or Spanish about the task itself. I used the language of a

child's question as my cue for the language in which I responded to requests for clarification or to the ideas they proposed.

Advice for a New Student/Consejos para un/a estudiante nuevo/a

What advice would you give about how to be a good student at your school?
¿Qué consejos darías acerca de cómo ser buen estudiante en tu escuela?

What should a new student do to in order to get along with others?
¿Qué debe de hacer un/a estudiante nuevo/a para llevarse bien con los demás?

What should a new student do in order to stay out of trouble with the teachers?
¿Qué debe de hacer un/a estudiante nuevo/a para evitar problemas con los maestros?

Figure 1: "Advice For a New Student" Writing Assignment

Being a Good Student = Being Good = Speaking English Correctly

Children's overall writing and interview responses suggested, not surprisingly, that they equated being a "good student" with "being good." Although this compliant response might have been influenced in part by my asking them how to "stay out of trouble with the teachers," it is useful to note that the children did not write about keeping quiet or avoiding contact with adults at the school. Instead, the majority appeared to indicate that the possibility of being a "good student" existed through interaction with adults at the school, rather than by being silent and obedient alone.

The children's work also illustrates the power dynamics between Spanish and English at the school in broad strokes. As might be predicted given the structure of the transitional bilingual program, the majority of third graders wrote in Spanish, and represented both themselves and the "new student" as Spanish speakers. In contrast, all fourth graders wrote exclusively in English including in the dialogue accompanying their drawings as well as in the text. In this way, the children's written products, taken together, reproduced the existing linguistic order of the school. Spanish was the language of third grade, for the school's lone bilingual third-grade classroom, at least. By fourth grade, English had taken its place. By implication, then, in order to move from third to fourth grade, and remain a "good student," one must obey the school rules regarding behavior, and speak English.

A few of the third grade samples suggest variations on this theme. One boy, for example, wrote his advice in Spanish, yet depicted himself and the new student speaking English on the playground. A girl wrote her advice bilingually in both Spanish and English, carefully echoing the parallel construction of the worksheet I gave them,

although her dialogue was written solely in English. However, only two of the responses, both from the third-grade classroom, explicitly mention English itself. Brenda and Marta, friends who sat near each other in class, both listed learning English as first on their to-do lists for the new student. Each accompanied this advice with a brief dialogue in English in their illustrations. Indeed, Marta's list of two points sums up both the explicit and implicit messages found across the samples. I have an included an English translation of the text she wrote in Spanish below:

1. *Como aprender inglés* (How to learn English)
2. *Aprender reglas en la escuela*. (Learn the school rules)

Being a "good student" in the eyes of the children seemed to be equivalent with following the rules. Although nowhere did I see "learn English" written as a rule at the school, for the students speaking English was part and parcel of "being good." In this way, many children's own aspirations for learning English, rooted in their families' hopes for the future, converged with the dominant societal discourse embedded in the policy context of agendas such as Proposition 227 and NCLB, as well as in the institutional design of the transitional bilingual program. Becoming a good student, then, with all of the life advantages this was assumed to accrue, might be a relatively straightforward trajectory if one followed the rules and learned the English taught at school. Spanish, in a sense, disappeared, at least from the explicit description of a successful academic identity.

Complicating the Picture: Spanish Reappears

However, in contrast to these written products, children's talk suggests that they were also aware the picture of a "good student" in real life was not so neatly drawn. For

example, during an individual interview shortly after the writing activity, I asked Sammy, a fourth-grade boy, what would happen if the new student in his drawing with its English dialogue came to the school from Tijuana, just the way that his own father had done. Sammy elected to speak in English during his interview. He replied, "I could help him speak English and when he learned he could talk to everybody in English or in Spanish." I asked him then to confirm that bilingualism was not "against the rules:"

CF: It's still OK to speak Spanish here in school?
Sammy: Yeah, some people speak Spanish, too. …. Like almost everybody [is] bilingual.

He continued by talking about a friend who spoke what he called "too much Spanish," telling me about a boy in his class who used Spanish almost exclusively unless directly questioned in English by the teacher. In order to determine what he meant by "too much Spanish," I asked him:

CF: So is it hard for you when he wants to talk in Spanish because you want to talk in English?
Sammy: No, it's OK to talk in Spanish.
CF: It's OK for you in both.
Sammy: Yeah, I'm bilingual.

I then asked Sammy if children ever got in trouble for speaking Spanish at school, and he said that they did not. He recounted the story of a boy who didn't speak much English when he arrived as a new student in his fourth-grade class. Sammy noted that his teacher spoke to this student in Spanish because, as he stated, "she knows bilingual, too." However, according to Sammy, the boy was eventually placed in the newcomer classroom where Spanish was used in instruction.

All students interviewed confirmed Sammy's assessment that many if not most students at their school spoke Spanish. Although the children recognized that to be a good student meant to speak English (outside of the newcomer and designated bilingual classrooms), they also expressed awareness that many of their peers spoke Spanish, either as their primary language or as part of being bilingual, as Sammy noted. At their school, there was no penalty for speaking Spanish. Therefore it was both theoretically and actually possible to be a both a good student and speak Spanish, as long as one spoke English, too, or was on the path toward becoming bilingual. In addition to the students, several of the teachers, as well as the principal, were bilingual. In my observations and interviews, it seemed that the children largely respected these adults. They also indicated that becoming a "good student" was the pathway to becoming a "good adult," given the emphasis that their families as well as teachers put on receiving a good education. Thus these staff members represented the possibility of being successful and speaking both Spanish and English in the more powerful adult world, within and outside of the bilingual program.

Language and Power in Children's Academic Identity Models

The children's explicit written descriptions of the steps in becoming a "good student" suggest that they perceived a connection between speaking English and complying with powerful authorities, in this case the school staff, in the construction of a favorable academic identity. This connection was complicated by their recognition that there were, in fact, many examples of successful bilingual students and adults alike at their school. Spanglish, however, was absent from the students' writings and illustrations:

individual children wrote entirely in one language, including in the short dialogues they added to illustrations, with few exceptions, such as the girl who composed parallel translations of her statements. By the omission of Spanglish, as well as in light of the data presented in the previous chapter, it can be inferred that a "good student" would not be likely to use Spanglish at school according to the children.

In these short writings, children's inclination to please adults seemed to merge with awareness of the institutional and social powers of English in the world as they represented the "good student" as one who follows rules as well as speaks English, echoing the discourse surrounding English-only agendas such as Proposition 227.

For many of the children in my study, however, the description of the "good student" may have been further nuanced by other cultural models, such as familial values of *educación* (Reese, Balzano, Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1995), which may be defined as being respectful and knowing right from wrong. I did not directly interview the families of the children in my study, nor did I visit and observe them at home, and it is important to be cautious in ascribing values and beliefs to individuals given the wide diversity actually represented within Mexican American families. However, several statements made by children during interviews suggested that they embraced the values of *educación*.

For example, I asked children during individual interviews what a teacher should do if a child says, "I ain't got no pencil." I was interested in what children might say about the use of the linguistic construction "ain't," the use of double negation, and the overall use of an informal register. However, after a few responses, I realized that unless I explained my interest in whether and how the teacher should correct the imaginary

student's speech, several children responded to the situation represented in the statement and what they believed was the lack of respect shown the teacher by not being prepared with materials. Others found the form of address problematic even if they did not modify the grammatical structure, adding phrases such as "Excuse me, teacher" to the original statement. Once I clarified the intent of my question, all of the children I interviewed believed that the teacher should correct the child's speech, even though they did not identify the grammatical construction as incorrect.

This belief was not entirely born of the children's recognition and acceptance of the teacher's authority and of the respect due her, however. As one third grade boy saw it, even though being corrected might make a child feel "*avergonzado"*(embarrassed), the benefits outweighed the embarrassment, because otherwise "they're going to keep on getting it wrong" (stated in English during the interview).

In this way, awareness of English as a marker of power at school, as well as "correct" and "incorrect" ways of using it, was at times explicitly discernable in the children's talk about what it meant to be a "good student," and at other times invisible and assumed. The teacher's authority to evaluate their speech was expected by the children and even seen perhaps as a duty performed to help students by saving them from future mistakes. The importance to a child of not "getting it wrong" when speaking English appeared to be relevant to the goal of being a good student. However, given the data presented in the previous chapter, speaking English "correctly" also appeared to be relevant to children's goals of establishing equitable peer relationships and negotiating the outside world through helping one's family, as well.

Summary

Models of a successful academic identity implied in the children's talk and writing suggest that they had begun to associate being a "good student" with speaking English as they reached upper elementary school grades. At the same time, they valued bilingualism and recognized that many if not most children and adults at their school were bilingual. They were also aware of variation within their languages and were particularly concerned with speaking English "correctly," accepting the authority of their teachers to correct their language production. However, children acknowledged awareness that such correction might affect them negatively at times, leading them to feel "*avergonzado*" (embarrassed).

Less explicit in their written products or interview responses were notions of how a second language is learned beyond receiving evaluative feedback from the teacher. Instead it seemed that proficiency in English would be acquired as a taken-for-granted consequence of progressing through grade levels. In this sense, the ideologies regarding linguistic expertise underlying the children's talk might coalesce with those embedded in the discourse of restrictive language policies such as Proposition 227: beyond a minimal level of support, proficiency in English through "submersion" in mainstream classes is assumed. A child whose progress in second language acquisition did not meet these presumed timelines and was not manifested in speaking English "correctly" might then not be locally recognized by the children themselves as a "good student," thus enlisting bilingual children in their own linguistic oppression.

In this context, the teacher's own language ideologies and the ways in which these are enacted during classroom discourse become particularly important in either

facilitating or disrupting these processes of social reproduction. How, then, were the goals and beliefs about language on the part of children and their teachers enacted in classroom activities that involved second language acquisition, site of converging tensions and pressures for them both in the current sociopolitical context?

Exercising Agency in Academic Identity Construction During ELD

In this section, an event from the third-grade bilingual classroom during English Language Development (ELD) instruction is analyzed with regard to the enactment of language ideologies on the part of children and their teacher. First, the third-grade teacher's language ideologies regarding linguistic expertise are reviewed from Chapter Five, in comparison with the analyses of those embedded in the policy context and suggested in children's discourse. An introduction to the participants and the activity follows. Next the focal event itself is narrated, accompanied by discussion that highlights the working of language ideologies within classroom discourse.

Ideologies of Linguistic Expertise: Focus on Second Language Acquisition

As argued earlier, the current policy context impacting educational institutions clearly emphasizes English instruction for bilingual students but is largely silent on the processes of second language acquisition. Under the mandates of Proposition 227, bilingual children are expected to acquire sufficient English to compete in mainstream academic instruction within one school year or less with minimal support. The provisions of NCLB do hold schools accountable for the linguistic as well as academic progress of children acquiring English as a second language, but emphasize outcomes within an

unforgiving timeline while ignoring the processes required. The children themselves desired and expected to learn English. However, they appeared to regard learning English as a taken-for-granted consequence of moving from one grade level to the next. Receiving corrective feedback from their teachers on their English language production was viewed as helpful, if also sometimes embarrassing. Being corrected in their production of oral English was also part of being a "good student" and behaving appropriately at school. In both the policy context and in children's discourse, attention to the end result of proficiency in English received more attention than the means to achieving this goal.

In contrast, the third-grade bilingual teacher emphasized her view of second language acquisition as a developmental process during our interview as discussed in Chapter Five. She indicated a belief that children need substantial time and social support for learning English, and expressed concern that neither was sufficiently available in the current institutional context. This teacher explicitly valued bilingualism, and specifically encouraged children to make connections between Spanish and English when appropriate. Finally, she emphasized what to her was the importance of a low-risk environment for second language acquisition, while still maintaining high standards and expectations for her students. She stated that the children in her class appeared fearful of making mistakes. The teacher acknowledged the importance children and their families placed on surface aspects of language, such as pronunciation, through her observation that her Mexican American student teachers had faced what she called "language discrimination" based on accent. However, she suggested that children's fear of making mistakes was inhibiting their progress in second language acquisition, and talked about

various ways in which she endeavored to counteract this fear while simultaneously providing corrective feedback.

Academic Identity Models in ELD Instruction in the Third-Grade Classroom

The children's talk and writing suggested a model of identity in which the good student as second language learner would "learn English" and "follow the rules." Specifically during ELD instruction, building a successful academic identity would likely imply that a child should demonstrate English proficiency in some way and accept corrective feedback when needed. Although the good student may be bilingual, children generally emphasized the importance of speaking English at school, particularly as part of progressing from one grade to the next as they neared the end of the elementary grades. It did not seem likely that the good student would engage in code switching or other bilingual practices that children sometimes referred to as Spanglish.

Within the identity model implied in the teacher's talk, the "good student" during ELD would take risks and make errors in producing oral or written English. These errors were viewed as a natural and predictable aspect of second language acquisition within a developmental process. Because this teacher viewed bilingualism as an asset, the good student would also likely draw upon knowledge of both Spanish and English in learning, even while the languages were sometimes separated for instructional purposes such as ELD. Because she held that second language learning required time and effort, the good student would persevere. Finally, because she viewed second language acquisition as a natural developmental process, the teacher encouraged her students to support the efforts

of their peers rather than to compete, viewing motivation to learn as engagement within a social community. Thus, the good student would be respectful of others.

In the following section, these two models of identity form the basis for analysis of an episode in which two boys are focal participants during ELD instruction. The analysis illustrates ways in which each boy might or might not be recognized as a "good student" during the lesson and the workings of language ideologies in the construction of these identities.

Academic Identities Created in Practice: René and José Luis

René was a year older than the other students in the third-grade classroom, having been retained in first grade. He was somewhat taller than the other boys, and appeared physically stronger than many. He seemed to have a degree of physical power and social influence among the other boys: I noticed that on the playground, for example, he was frequently at the center of the liveliest games of dodge ball or tag. He often joked good-naturedly with the teacher during work periods in the classroom, exchanging smiles with her. It appeared that teacher and student held each other in high regard. Generally speaking, René gave the impression of being a very affable and polite youngster. However, during my interview with a group of boys from his classroom, I learned that some of them considered him to be "mean," reporting that, although René was their friend, he sometimes said "bad words" to them and would enforce his claim to the ball during games by hitting anyone who got in the way. From his teacher, I learned that René and his brother, a sixth grader whom she described as his "role model," had gotten in

some trouble at the school over stealing cartoon character patches from a bulletin board display in the corridor.

Beginning with my earliest field notes, I also noted that René seemed to speak mainly Spanish with other children, both boys and girls, inside the classroom and on the playground. When lessons were conducted in Spanish, he participated in whole class discussion as well as in small group talk: during "English time," however, he rarely spoke.

José Luis, on the other hand, was almost never quiet. Whether in English or Spanish, José Luis always had something to say. He often delivered his statements with a great deal of expressiveness, playing with intonation and imitating a variety of accents or making funny voices. Like René, José Luis appeared to be respectful and polite toward his teacher and other adults. However, José Luis had a unique charisma. His verbal virtuosity allowed him to be a leader in organizing games on the playground and led his peers to seek out his attention and assistance in the classroom during several of the lessons I observed. Often, according to the teacher, José Luis' desire to communicate in English exceeded his proficiency in the language. At these times, the teacher reported that José Luis would often switch to Spanish and ask her for assistance, or generate an approximation in English for what he wanted to say.

In this brief introduction, it can be seen that, given children's recognition of the good student as someone who follows the rules, as well as within the larger institutional culture of schooling, children and adults alike might construct René as a "bad student" at times. He might receive this negative recognition due to the bullying behaviors identified by his peers on the playground and incidents of misbehavior in the school corridor such

as the bulletin board episode recounted by the teacher. In addition, his lack of participation in English might be construed as either lack of proficiency or resistance to learning the language as he progressed through the grade levels, particularly in light of the fact that he was older than the other children by virtue of having been retained. However, his interactions with his teacher suggest that his academic identity within the third-grade classroom was not one-dimensional, and included positive interactions and rapport.

José Luis might be recognized as a "good student" by his teacher, particularly during ELD instruction, given his willingness to engage in verbal interactions in both languages. His popularity on the playground as a leader during games seemed to be recognized by boys in his peer group, as well. It is less clear how other children might have regarded his academic identity when he mixed languages. However, it is likely his teacher would have recognized his attempts at making sense of English by drawing upon Spanish as successful learning strategies.

An examination of interactions within an ELD lesson will further explore academic identities constructed by and for these two boys.

José Luis as Risk Taker

The following incident was recorded during a visit to the third-grade classroom in late November when she was teaching a lesson from the mandated English Language Development (ELD) curriculum. The focus of the lesson was on familiarizing children with concepts and vocabulary associated with technology, as well as providing them with an opportunity to practice using the language by learning and reciting a chant about

technological tools. The children were seated at their tables for this lesson, José Luis and René sitting diagonally across from each other. I made a digital audio recording of the lesson, and was seated taking notes in a small notebook off to the side of one row of tables. The teacher conducted the lesson from the open space in the front of the room near the white board.

The teacher began by writing the word "Technology" on the board. As she wrote, José Luis called out "Te/ch/-no-lo-gy!" He pronounced the consonant digraph "ch" as it would be pronounced in Spanish, perhaps based on his Spanish reading ability. He did not appear to notice a connection with the Spanish cognate "*tecnología*" ("technology"): the term has common Greek roots in both languages, from which the English pronunciation is derived. On the other hand, he may also have had knowledge of the more common pronunciation for this digraph in English (such as in "chair").

Any teacher is faced with deciding how to respond when children make errors of oral language production during classroom interaction. Should the teacher correct the child's utterance toward Standard English conventions? Or should she accept the content of his contribution and ignore these conventions for the moment? For the teacher in this incident, then, it was necessary to perform an on-the-spot assessment of which response to make to José Luis' pronunciation of "technology." The concern she indicated for the children's self-concept, or their identity formation, during interviews suggests that she believed her response would not only provide him with linguistic cues about English sound-symbol relationships, but that it would also shape his identity as a reader (or non-reader) and English speaker in front of his peers.

The teacher replied, “Good, you used what you know about ‘ch’ but here it sounds like /k/.” In this way, she publicly recognized his skill and background knowledge, while still providing corrective feedback.

In this opening sequence, José Luis demonstrated his willingness to take risks by generating an oral reading of the word written on the board. In turn, the teacher, who explicitly stated her belief during interviews that it was through taking such risks that children acquire a second language, supported his efforts. Thus, José Luis’ linguistic behavior and the teacher’s response together would seem to have constructed an identity for him as a “good student” through their interaction, while simultaneously supporting his learning of a new sound-symbol relationship in English.

René Accesses Bilingual Resources

This sequence was followed by an opportunity for children to generate examples of “technology” from their own experiences while the teacher wrote their ideas in a list on the board. As children took turns volunteering, René looked across the table to get José Luis’ attention. They spoke softly to each other: although I couldn’t hear their exact words, I could tell that they were speaking in Spanish. After this exchange, René raised his hand and volunteered an example in English.

René appeared to understand what was being talked about in this discussion, but to be unsure of how to express what he wanted to say in English. As was customary in the classroom, children were encouraged to use Spanish in making sense of English instruction, as well as to view each other as resources in this sense-making. René was able to draw upon José Luis’ relatively greater productive vocabulary in English and

bilingual skills in order to find the word he was looking for, and as a result, was able to participate in the discussion. In this way, René, like José Luis, had the opportunity to publicly be recognized as a "good student" by participating in English and contributing an idea to discussion, even though his proficiency in the language was still developing.

The instructional practices the teacher established in the classroom instantiated her ideologies about language. In the interviews discussed in Chapter Five, the teacher indicated her positive regard for bilingualism and her concern for possible negative impacts of evaluations of their language use. In the examples illustrated above, she allowed for the use of Spanish as a resource for learning and participating in ELD instruction. She also responded to José Luis' error in pronunciation in a way that supported his prior knowledge. In this way, the teacher's language ideologies supported identity constructions that were generated by a more complex view of linguistic expertise than that embedded in the current sociopolitical context with its emphasis on rapid acquisition of Standard English. Through on-going experience with practices such as these, children had multiple opportunities to participate as "good students" in the day-to-day life of the classroom.

In addition, the teacher's language ideologies regarding linguistic expertise also generated a socially shared symbolic resource that mediated the children's exercise of agency in identity construction (c.f., Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain, 1998; van Dijk, 1996). The following section provides an illustration of this process.

Language Ideologies as Symbolic Resource for Constructing Identities

After the initial discussion about the meaning of the term "technology" described above, the teacher asked children to provide examples from their daily lives, which she listed on the board. Next, she introduced a chant that incorporated vocabulary related to technology. It included some of the examples students had given such as "computer" and "cell phone." The curriculum series included frequent activities such as poems, songs, and chants to help children develop oral fluency. Often posters providing visual representations of the concepts or vocabulary being practiced accompanied these poems or songs. In this case, the publisher provided a poster containing paper flaps that opened to reveal pictures of children using different types of technology. A short stanza using phrases about technology use accompanied each picture. These stanzas were set to the tune of *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*.

As the teacher began to introduce the chant, José Luis had already figured it out and was singing ahead softly to himself. Again, José Luis' enthusiastic participation combined with his apparent ease in producing oral English suggest the construction of a positive academic identity for him on the part of children as well as the teacher. The other children soon begin to sing along, echoing their teacher in a familiar practice used during ELD time. José Luis' verbal skills positioned him as a leader during this activity, much like the ways in which his skill in communication resulted in other children seeking him out on the playground to organize games.

René, however, sat silently, watching the flaps unfold. To no one in particular, he called out softly, in English, "That's a baby song!" The teacher heard him say something,

but appeared not to be sure what he had said. She asked him to repeat it, but not in a confrontational manner. He seemed flustered, and didn't answer.

In this episode, neither his teacher nor his classmates might recognize René as a good student, given his lack of participation and apparent disregard for the chant. However, when he called the chant a "baby song," his words are reminiscent of the ways in which children talked about experiences when their relative lack of proficiency in English caused them to feel vulnerable when communicating with peers or in the community as discussed in Chapter Six.

Re-cognizing Participation

The class continued practicing the chant, with most children chiming in with great gusto. These chants and poems were something that the majority of the class seemed to enjoy, often asking the teacher for permission to recite them over and over.

René, however, remained noticeably disengaged. He alternately covered his mouth with his hands during those moments when he appeared to be singing along, or put his hands in his desk, fidgeting. At one point, toward the middle of the lesson, he asked (in English) if it was time for recess. All of the time, he continued moving around in his seat.

As the lesson drew to a close, René suddenly winced and made motions with his hands that suggested he had hurt them on something in his desk. The teacher approached his desk to intervene. It was a pivotal moment in the classroom: René's lack of participation in English combined with what his peers and teacher might construe as

misbehavior or resistance could easily lead to him being constructed as a "bad student" during ELD, a particularly high-profile part of the instructional day.

As the teacher quietly removed the object from René's desk, José Luis, who was watching from his nearby seat, called out to her: "*¡Se le acabó la gasolina [a René]!* (He [René] ran out of gasoline!). He don't got no more gas!" The teacher repeated his statement, using Standard English. She did this in a neutral tone, without evaluation, in the form of a question: "He doesn't have any more gas? He ran out of gas?"

In keeping with her views regarding linguistic expertise, the teacher often used comparisons to familiar experiences to help the children understand the time, instruction and effort required to acquire a second language. "¡*Se le acabó la gasolina!"* or "He ran out of gas!" was one such expression with shared meaning in this classroom. To "run out of gas" was the natural result of working very diligently during lessons without time to stop and rest.

Within the pivotal moment that the teacher approached René's desk, his behaviors might have been construed by the other children as evidence that he was a "bad student" who either resisted learning English or lacked proficiency. By publicly interpreting his classmate's silence and fidgeting as "running out of gas," José Luis, in a sense "re-cognized" or reframed the meaning of participation. He highlighted a frame of reference rooted in language acquisition theory rather than in demonstrations of competence and compliance, a frame that might be more socially-powerful to the children. Thus, René became a participant in the lesson, after all; a participant who was expending energy in the effort to learn, even if he wasn't yet able to perform the chant. He became what Lave and Wenger (1991) might term a "legitimate peripheral participant" in the activity of

English language development in the classroom community. José Luis' relatively high status within the classroom given his leadership among at least some of the boys likely influenced how positively the others regarded his statement, as well.

This developmental perspective on linguistic expertise contrasts with the assumptions embedded in restrictive policies such as Proposition 227, for example, which holds that learning sufficient English for school success can occur quickly with minimal support and without access to bilingual skills. Children are perhaps not directly aware of these larger discourses, but do perceive the results of restrictive policies in the form of institutional practices limiting the use of Spanish at school, as well as through their experiences with societal language shift at home. Thus, "running out of gas" also contrasts with taken-for-granted assumptions implied in the children's discourse that learning English is the result of progressing through the grades and behaving at school. Instead the phrase calls attention to the time, opportunity to learn and sustained effort needed for second language acquisition.

Heuristics for Re-cognizing Identity

In the episode analyzed above, José Luis was able to access the teacher's views regarding linguistic expertise through recalling a phrase she frequently used to explain children's participation in terms of second language acquisition theory. The phrase "running out of gas" served the symbolic function of representing second language acquisition as an automobile, thus objectifying multiple phenomena related to second language acquisition, such as fatigue, or lack of time or opportunity to learn. Other students also understood the meanings of this phrase within their classroom, making it a

locally shared symbolic resource. In this case, the children might have viewed René, a classmate who appeared not to be participating in an ELD lesson, as a "bad student" who either could not or would not participate. Instead, José Luis framed René's behavior as "running out of gas." In this way, José Luis invoked the teacher's developmental views of second language acquisition and framed René's behaviors as participation, as the result of effort. In this interpretation, being a "good student" might involve more than just "speaking English" and "being good," as the children's views tended to suggest. On occasion, being a "good student" might also look like misbehavior, given the time, instruction and effort required for second language acquisition.

This more complex identity of the "good student" during ELD could then serve a heuristic function in that it had the potential to help children resolve conflicting frames of reference when constructing academic identities in the future. Thus, the language ideologies of the teacher, as expressed over time in her own discourse, had the potential to help her students exercise agency. That is to say, the metaphor used here could help children direct their own actions or those of others when they decided how to behave during ELD or how to interpret the behaviors of their classmates, given what "counted" as successful participation.

Exercising Agency

I have argued in the previous sections that José Luis' statement that René had "run out of gas" during ELD represented one of at least two possible ways that his classmate's behavior might be framed, or interpreted, by all participants in the event. The first frame would characterize the "good student" as one who demonstrated competence

by “speaking English,” and who demonstrated compliance by “being good.” With its references to “English” and “being good,” this frame had particular social power within the institution of the school as suggested in the written products of the children discussed earlier in this chapter, as well as in the discourse of restrictive language policies. An alternate frame, invoked by José Luis, was one of second language acquisition theory, as instantiated in the way his teacher spoke metaphorically of a “good student” who was learning a second language in terms of an automobile that required fuel. In this view, a “good student” might not produce English at all times and might engage in what appeared to be off-task if not outright misbehaviors. I argue that, although he may have given it little conscious thought, José Luis was exercising agency in this instance when he decided which frame he believed fit the situation and acted accordingly. As he appropriated the teacher’s metaphorical comparison between “running out of gas” and second language acquisition, he was exercising what Holland and colleagues call “agency through self-directed symbolizations,” following Vygotsky (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain, p. 277).

Whether or not the other children accepted this view of their classmate as a legitimate peripheral participant depended in part on their own experiences as second language learners within the instructional practices established in the classroom. Their understanding and acceptance of the more positive and complex academic identity constructed for their classmate in future situations such as this one also depended in part upon the ways that the child himself responded. Furthermore, their understanding and acceptance of the appropriateness of viewing René as a participant was also likely to be greatly influenced by the teacher’s reaction to José Luis’ statement, given her position of

power in their lives. How then, did the teacher and René exercise agency themselves in this situation?

The Teacher's Responses During the ELD Lesson

In this situation, the teacher could have responded in several ways. She could have sanctioned José Luis for speaking out without permission, as well as for speaking Spanish during ELD time. She could have sanctioned René for playing with objects in his desk and not participating in the lesson activities. In a classroom driven by reductive language ideologies like those embedded in the current policy context which privilege English in a sink-or-swim approach to second language acquisition, such sanctions might have been predictable. If the teacher viewed learning generally and second language acquisition in particular as primarily an adult-novice interaction rather than as the result of social learning that included peers, she might have emphasized compliance with rules for conduct.

Instead, in keeping with the views she espoused during interviews that children would naturally acquire a second language through modeling, exposure and practice, she modeled the Standard English translation of "He don't got no more gas!" rather than explicitly correcting José Luis' speech. In keeping with her positive value of bilingualism, her expressed awareness of the ways in which children draw upon multiple linguistic resources in order to learn, and the bilingual practices she established in her classroom, she responded to the content of his remark "*¡Se le acabó la gasolina!*" in Spanish without comment. With her emphasis on learning as a social activity, demonstrated in explicit comments during interviews as well as in practices where

children had learned how to engage in productive group work and were encouraged to provide each other with supportive feedback, she responded to José Luis' remark without sanctioning his behavior in speaking out without permission, even though she generally required students to bid for the floor through raising their hands.

The teacher's approach to René seemed to be largely one of waiting and watching, allowing him space and time to develop without putting his identity on the line through "calling out" his behavior. She quietly removed the object from his desk without comment, and he in turn became calm. Their nonverbal interactions in this situation were in keeping with my previous observations that their relationship seemed to be one of trust and mutual respect as suggested by the way in which they frequently engaged in friendly teasing and exchanged smiles. These behaviors on the part of the teacher would seem to reflect her ideologies of linguistic expertise. She encouraged René to participate, provided him with modeling and regularly stated her expectation that he try his best, as she told me during an interview in which I asked her to comment on his first and second language development and as I had observed on several occasions. She viewed second language acquisition as a developmental process, and told me that although he was behind expected benchmarks, she believed that René was beginning to make good progress given the right support.

Thus, the teacher appeared to enact her espoused views about second language acquisition and bilingualism in this ELD lesson. She exercised agency in responding to both boys' behaviors in ways that suggested she framed their participation in terms of her own ideologies of linguistic expertise, in contrast with those views embedded in the context of restrictive policies such as Proposition 227.

René's Responses During the ELD Lesson

Right after José Luis' remark, as the teacher turned to look at him, René answered, with a smile, "No, Mrs. Ryan, I haven't run out of gas." The class period was nearly over. As the children continued to recite the technology chant for a few more minutes, he continued his silence, putting his hand over his face as he attempted to mouth the words. However, he removed his hands from his desk, watched as the teacher pointed to the words of the chant on the poster at the front of the room, and sat quietly in his seat.

It may well have been the case that René had difficulties with the language demands of this lesson, or that his behavior was in some way an effort to avoid participation.

Although it was difficult to ascertain his comprehension of the specific vocabulary used in the chant, René did demonstrate receptive understanding as well as the ability and willingness to produce English at several points in the lesson sequence, as when he told the teacher, "I haven't run out of gas." This observation alone would not support the conclusion that he resisted learning English, which was the primary purpose of these oral language activities after all. Instead, his behaviors suggest that he very much wanted to participate, although he found the activity itself embarrassing or difficult in some way, as indicated by the way he covered his mouth, his high level of motor activity, and his comment that the chant was a "baby song."

More than anything, it appeared that the cognitive and physical effort of understanding and accurately pronouncing new vocabulary terms within the tempo of the song, while still trying to appear mature and in control in front of his peers, was taxing

for René. It was also growing late in the morning, and the children had been working diligently as recess finally approached. Perhaps the fatigue and anxiety he appeared to feel in this situation even resulted in him accidentally hurting himself when playing with objects in his desk. It appeared that, despite his statement to the contrary, René had, in fact, "run out of gas."

From Interpersonal to Intrapersonal Speech

I have argued in the sections above that the teacher and José Luis both exercised agency. The teacher exercised agency in the ways she designed instructional practices, such as encouraging students to use both Spanish and English for making meaning, as well as through explicit statements such as "running out of gas." These practices and statements ran counter to the prevailing English-only ideologies of embedded in the policy context. Policies such as Proposition 227 and NCLB also tend to suggest that English can and should be acquired as quickly as possible, primarily through immersion, in contrast to the teacher's more developmental view.

José Luis, who had access to the teacher's ideologies in the form of instructional practices and explicit comments, exercised agency in the way in which he framed René's participation. He employed a metaphor frequently used by his teacher to explain the second language acquisition process to her students. In this way, conceptualizing language ideologies as socially shared cognitions (c.f., van Dijk, 1996) permits us to see that they may become symbolic resources that help agents to direct their own behavior. As Holland and colleagues argue, this process may occur first through interpersonal communication, and later through the use of self-directed symbolizations (c.f., Holland,

Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain, 1998). Holland and colleagues build their argument on Vygostsky's notion of mediation (1978), in which learning occurs first through interpersonal interaction, and later becomes internalized or interpersonal speech that allows for the control over one's own behavior, or the exercise of agency.

What, then, about René himself? In what ways, if any, did he draw upon self-directed symbolizations and exercise agency? After all, he stated that he had not "run out of gas," contradicting José Luis' observation. The examples of his talk and behaviors analyzed below will illustrate that the ways in which children appropriate language ideologies is not a straight-forward or uniform process. Instead, children bring their own histories to bear and respond to multiple facets of a practice or a particular symbolization. Larger institutional structures as well as individual trajectories exert an influence, as the following discussion will indicate.

The way in which René denied that he had "run out of gas" and the way in which he sat up in his seat and paid attention to the chant after the teacher removed an item from his desk suggest that he might have been responding primarily to what he perceived as possible behavioral sanctions. In this way, it might be said he was responding largely to the "being good" aspect of the "good student" identity indicated in the children's writing as previously discussed. His teacher told me during our interview that René received counseling for impulse control, commenting that "the little voice in his brain that should be telling him not to do this never speaks." René's behavior had received a great deal of attention from the school staff and his peers alike.

Indeed, during an individual interview in June, René talked to me about his perception of his own development. I asked René to tell me whether he had been learning

in Spanish or English, or both, prior to third grade. He commented that he had been in bilingual classes, but also offered that before, "*hablaba feo* (I spoke ugly)." I knew from my interview with his teacher that René had been receiving speech therapy in Spanish for some time, although I did not know the specific diagnosis. I asked him to explain what he meant, and he said that each year he had learned how to talk "*mejor* (better)." When I asked him to explain how he had accomplished this, he stated: "*Antes, me portaba mal. Ahora me porto bien*. (Before, I misbehaved. Now I behave)." He credited this change to the fact that he had a behavior contract in the classroom and was receiving prizes from the speech teacher in exchange for a good record.

Apparently the "little voice in his brain," in the words of his teacher, had begun to speak, and to René this change in conduct was associated in some causal way with his ability to speak "*mejor* (better)." Possibly this change resulted from the fact that his attentiveness during speech therapy led him to receive the benefits of that assistance.

My visit to the classroom during ELD time the day after the technology chant lesson would suggest that the "little voice in his brain" might also have begun to speak to him with regard to participating in oral language activities in English: he was anything but a silent participant that day. When I arrived that morning, the children were working in small groups practicing the technology chant. René was highly engaged with another student in reciting the technology chant to each other. His enthusiasm was palpable. Toward the end of the class period, he approached me and asked me to listen to him recite the chant, which I did, multiple times. At recess time, the teacher expressed her amazement to me over this episode, calling it a "breakthrough." She later recalled that

morning during our individual interview two months later: “He [René] was one of those kids who never wanted to speak. You saw the magic moment.”

Certainly, what his teacher called the “magic moment” for René was influenced by numerous factors. He may have felt more comfortable during the small group interaction instead of participating in a whole class activity, for example. Perhaps having had more time to practice the chant led him to have more confidence as well as to articulate the words more quickly. The results of his speech therapy sessions outside of class may have given him greater fluency and confidence when speaking in the classroom.

However, it is also possible that René’s experience on the morning in which José Luis labeled his behavior as “running out of gas” contributed to René’s sense of himself as a legitimate participant in the class, one who might be seen by others as a “good student.” He might have responded primarily to what he perceived as behavior-related aspects of this “good student” identity, rather than to the explanation José Luis offered which framed René’s behavior in terms of second language acquisition theory. Regardless of his own interpretation of the linguistic issues involved, through controlling his own behavior during class, it might also be argued that René was able to participate for a longer period of time and thus had the opportunities to practice he needed in order to produce oral English. In this way, the construction of a more positive academic identity for René may have supported his English language development by helping him see himself as a “good student.”

No one interaction in the classroom, however, pivotal, will produce the kind of “magic moments” described in this example by the teacher. However, the accumulation

of such instances in which children's participation is framed in ways that highlight their identities as "good students" may well contribute to their identity construction.

Conclusion

The ways in which the third-grade bilingual teacher viewed second language acquisition became available to her students through explicit statements as well as instructional practices. Her statements in turn served as a symbolic resource that enabled children to construct more complex and more positive academic identities than those embedded in the current policy context through a process of mediation. Taken together over time, the instructional practices she created as well as the instantiation of her views about language in explicit statements or metaphors, likely contributed to the students' recognition of their own and their classmates' positive academic identities even as the children were in the initial stages of English language acquisition.

The identities, or "figured worlds" represented by what it meant to be a "good student" were highly salient to the children, as was the larger social world represented by learning English. Through a new understanding of linguistic expertise as a developmental process, children were able to exercise agency in recognizing themselves or others as "good students" and potentially, as speakers of English.

However, the academic identities constructed for and by children were also influenced by larger institutional and social structures. As Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain (1998) observe, "Even in the intimate venue of inner speaking and the imagination, however, the signs and tools of self-formation are themselves likely to be inscribed with social position" (p. 282).

In the following chapter an examination of the talk of the fourth-grade children and their teacher around the authority of texts used in the classroom highlights this social positioning.

CHAPTER VIII

ZONES OF CONTACT:

CREATING A SPACE FOR AUTHORING IDENTITIES AT SCHOOL

This chapter continues the investigation of the final two research questions guiding this study: How were views about language enacted within and shaped by classroom practice? How did these views and practices contribute to the construction of children's identities at school? The attention here is focused on relationships among agency, language, power and identity through an examination of instructional practices and classroom discourse as the fourth-grade students and their teacher prepared for and performed in a school-wide holiday performance.

I will argue here that the fourth-grade teacher, through an enactment of her own sometimes conflicting ideologies of linguistic expertise, used her authority to teach and enforce Standard English norms while also promoting a more sociolinguistic understanding of communicative competence among the students. In turn, through the stances they were able to adopt vis-à-vis the text, children had the opportunity to exercise agency in authoring new identities for themselves and their peers, within a school-wide audience as well as in the classroom.

First, however, I will situate this section within key concepts informing the analysis. The discussion of the theoretical framework is followed by a statement of the rationale for adopting performance as a lens for selecting the data to be examined here. The next two sections include data presentation, analysis and discussion. The first of these sections focuses on interaction within the classroom, while the second locates the

classroom interaction within the context of the school community as a whole. The chapter concludes with observations about ways in which bringing language use to the foreground provided a space in which children might begin to exercise agency through recognizing more complex, bilingual, bi-dialectical academic identities than those constructed for them within the current policy context.

Theoretical Frameworks for Examining Agency, Language, Power and Identity

In the previous chapter, I argued that children were able to appropriate aspects of their teacher's developmental and bilingual views of linguistic expertise that challenged dominant discourses embedded in the current policy context. The discussion highlighted ways in which these views mediated talk and action within the classroom and provided for the exercise of agency as individual children came to be recognized as legitimate participants, or "good students," during ELD instruction. The argument was grounded a language socialization paradigm, in which children acquire expertise and co-construct identities through interaction with mentors in what Vygotsky termed a zone of proximal development.

However, González (2005) cautions that it is necessary to take asymmetries of power inherent within adult-child interaction into account when studying these co-constructions. Holland and colleagues (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain, 1998) observe that mentors might be harmful as well as helpful, shaping behavior toward oppressive social ends rather than liberatory ones. Furthermore, as Cahnmann (2003) argues, in order to disrupt hegemonic processes of standardization and subordination,

educators who work with bilingual Latino populations must "examine their own language biases and change their role from that of 'language police' to 'linguist'" (p. 187).

The analyses and discussions presented in this chapter bring two additional conceptual frameworks to bear in light of these concerns. The first is Bakhtin's (1981) notion of "self-authoring," described by Holland and colleagues (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain, 1998) as the "orchestration of voices" (p. 178) or discourses perceived by an individual. These potentially conflicting voices and the identities they index must be put together and answered in some way within what Holland and colleagues call a "space of authoring" (p. 63).

The second concept, Pratt's (1991) notion of "contact zones," calls attention to interactions among groups as well as individuals within contested spaces. Bringing these two perspectives to the analysis of enacted views about language enables me to foreground ways in which the fourth-grade teacher used her authority in the classroom at times as "language police" and at times as "linguist," grounded in her own expressed dilemmas regarding language teaching as discussed in Chapter Five. I argue that within this struggle, the teacher created occasional spaces of authoring in which children had what González (2005) described as "ideological spaces for trying on and trying out multidiscursive practices" (p. 170). In order to fully examine these spaces, it was necessary to look beyond the classroom at opportunities provided for "trying on and trying out" these practices within "contact zones" in the school community as a whole.

The Performance Lens

During three of the four group interviews that I conducted, individuals and then entire groups of children spontaneously burst into renditions of songs or poems in English. I was treated to the recitation of a poem about the telephone by the third grade girls and a chant regarding use of the computer by the third grade boys. The fourth grade boys recited several poems and engaged in a spirited *a capella* rendition of Woody Guthrie's *This Land Is Your Land*.

The first of these episodes began when I asked a group of third grade girls during an interview what they thought life would be like in fourth grade:

Nancy: *Dijeron que vamos a leer puro en inglés y hablar puro en inglés*. (They say we are going to read only in English and speak only in English.)
Jaraset: *Sí, en cuarto, quinto, y sexto*… (Yes, in fourth, fifth and sixth grades…)
[overlapping talk]
CF: *¿Qué piensan de esto ustedes? ¿Están listas para esto?* (What do all of you think about this? Are you ready for this?)
Jaraset: [pause] *Pues, yo no hablo inglés mucho pero yo sé un poema que grabamos toda la clase*. (Well, I don't speak much English, but I know a poem that our whole class recorded.)
[overlapping talk; the girls excitedly join in as Jaraset begins to recite the poem]

In the beginning, I primarily regarded these impromptu performances as charming, but not particularly relevant to an examination of agency, identity and power in children's views about language. I spent many years as a classroom teacher working with children of the same age group, and remember well their enjoyment of poems and songs. In addition, because the students in my classes had been from similar ethno-linguistic backgrounds as the children in this study, I was also familiar with the pride that many appeared to feel at being able to recite "the whole thing" in English.

Although the children's interest in poems and songs made sense to me from my teaching experience, I wasn't sure what to make of it in terms of my research questions: after all, weren't children merely learning to "mouth the words," to adopt prepackaged identities that conformed to institutional norms? Pedagogical practices such as memorization and recitation have served as a means of indoctrinating children of less powerful groups into dominant discourses as part of a process that Freire (1970) termed "cultural invasion." I also suspected that if I asked them, most of the children were bound to tell me how much they enjoyed this aspect of their school experiences. The children's likely enthusiasm for memorizing and reciting poems would only reinforce their identities as schooled subjects and add little to understanding the dynamics of language and power in a child's developing sense of self.

However, I could not avoid noticing the emergence of performance as a theme within the data over time. The performance of chants, poems and role-plays was a frequent instructional practice in both classrooms. An examination of routine instructional practices and performance events provides complementary lenses on identity construction. Bucholz (2004) argues that "practice emphasizes the dailiness of social activity, while performance highlights deliberateness." Thus, the performance lens provides an opportunity to examine views about language in action as children and teachers encountered, talked about and took stances in relationship to texts that were legitimated and accorded power within the institution of the school.

Deconstructing a Performance

Because the ways in which teachers use their authority influences a child's perceptions of self and others, it is important to examine the interplay between the teacher's ideologies and practices. In this section, I narrate a series of events in the fourth-grade classroom as the children prepared for a performance. The narration is followed by discussion that pays attention to the instructional moves the teacher made, the ways in which these practices suggest enactment of her own views about language, and the academic identities constructed for and by children in the process.

Setting the Stage: Making Purposes Explicit

In early December, the class began practicing in the afternoons for a performance in the school holiday program before the winter break. They were to present a Reader's Theater version of *'Twas The Night Before Christmas* for the school during the day and for families and the community in the evening. I observed several of their rehearsals in the classroom, recording field notes as well as audio and videotapes at different points in time. I also observed and videotaped the performance they gave for the school in the auditorium two weeks later.

The children's enthusiasm during these sessions was evident: while most students who often spoke during class discussion appeared to enjoy the chance to perform, the engagement of some who were typically reluctant participants was particularly noticeable. For example, the teacher gave children the opportunity to select stanzas to read and act out in small groups. Paolo, a child who frequently seemed to fidget and daydream in class (according to my interview with the teacher as well as my own

observations) was one of the first to volunteer. Because he was a beginning English learner who also appeared to be hesitant to produce oral English in the classroom, the fact that he volunteered so quickly for this activity was notable. He selected a stanza on his own, and one of the girls volunteered to read with him. Paolo's engagement and persistence in grappling with the English text were noticeably different than his behaviors during previous observations of "regular" classroom activities.

The teacher and students created small props to be used during the reading, such as a silhouette of Santa's sleigh and reindeer flying across the moon, attached to a thin pole and moved across the stage at the appropriate moment. They also used crepe paper designed to look like bricks in order to create a chimney (to which the teacher and several children often referred using the Spanish term "*chimenea*") from which Santa would emerge. Eva, the girl whose metaphor of Spanish and English as "best friends" opens Chapter Six of this study, was chosen for role of Santa. One boy questioned this selection during a rehearsal, asking how the audience would know it was Santa given that "Santa is a boy, isn't he?" The teacher answered that because Eva would be dressed as Santa, the audience would be able to identify her character.

Indexing a Range of Identities

The teacher began the first rehearsal by telling the children they would need to read with lots of expression in order to engage the audience. She pantomimed how the first graders, for example, might be distractedly looking out the windows or making faces at each other. Her actions and the dramatic expressiveness of her voice made the children laugh. In this way she set expectations for the type of reading that they would be required

to do in an engaging fashion, one that played on their desire to be the "big kids" and mitigated somewhat the fear of performing in front of an audience.

As she instructed the students on preparing for the performance, the teacher told them how they should practice and why:

The teacher: You need to practice this weekend. Let me tell you why. [Pause]. You have to **e-nun-ci-ate** these words very clearly and with expression. This is a performance. [Pause]. This is a performance. Do singers get on stage and say…"blah, blah, blah" [looking downward, swinging side to side, and mumbling]? No! They make all these faces, and their eyes get big, right? And they do all kinds of things with their bodies….Yah? They're **per-form-ers**! You are going to be performers, kids.

She continued describing how they should practice a short time later:

The teacher: Sometime this weekend when you practice, I want you to practice by yourself, because you're gonna look really weird. This is what I want you to do [exaggerating movements of eyes and mouth as she speaks]. Don't let anybody see you doing that! [the children and their teacher laugh.] Especially not your younger brothers and sisters. Especially not your older brothers and sisters! But you need to do that.

In these segments, the teacher explicitly set the children's participation in the reader's theater apart from other school activities by labeling it as a "performance," and evoked different identities for the children. By appealing to their interest in and knowledge of singers, she may have referenced emerging preadolescent identities for some: many girls in both classrooms were avid fans of the Mexican pop group, *Rebelde,* whose posters and stickers adorned their notebooks. For others, the connection with singers may have elicited recollection of music that they heard within their families, ranging from the tradition of *música ranchera* that several boys talked about during my individual interviews with them, to the "oldies" radio channel that Debbie listened to with her mother. The teacher then cast them as "performers," an identity bringing still

different potential connections with the children's experiences. When the teacher stated that they were going to be performers, for example, Xochitl commented that she already was a "performer" in her *Ballet Folklorico* group.

Responding to Miscues

As they practiced their lines, individual children occasionally had difficulty decoding some of the unfamiliar vocabulary within the clause structure of a poem written in nineteenth-century English. The rhyming structure and rhythm appeared to give them some clues to the pronunciation. The fact that a great many children in the class were already familiar with the content of the poem, including key lines that several had heard throughout their elementary school years, likely helped them make meaning. Through reading and discussing the poem aloud with the children several times as they prepared for the performances, the teacher modeled the Standard English pronunciation of vocabulary items and helped the students understand what was happening within the verse structure of the poem. Over time, as the class practiced she began to selectively correct children's pronunciation or their prosody when the performance date neared.

One word that caused particular difficulty was the plant name "thistle," a term uncommonly heard in everyday speech and which contains a consonant digraph (th) not present in Spanish. The boys who selected this line read the digraph as /t/, which one of the girls corrected. The teacher, however, did not intervene on the pronunciation of "thistle" aside from modeling it herself during choral readings, and the children's pronunciation of the term did not change the meaning of the verse, which was easily comprehensible to the audience.

Other common miscues that children produced involved dropping inflected endings and skipping over words as they tried to read too quickly. These were the type of miscues that the teacher did frequently correct. For instance, when Lisette dropped the "ing" ending as she read aloud, the teacher reminded her: "Read what's there, OK? When it says 'pawing,' say 'pawing,' OK, *m'ija* (literally, "my daughter")?" Typically these corrections were more central to the meaning of the poem, or otherwise represented linguistic constructions with which the children had more familiarity. The means to correcting such errors when reading a script was simply to "read what's there," rather than requiring a change to the self in some way, a change to one's own way of speaking.

Through the use of the Spanish term of endearment, *m'ija,* the teacher further signals respect for the child and mitigates the force of the evaluation, contextualizing it within familiar adult-child interactions in the children's experiences at home. The use of *m'ija* and *m'ijo* was something that I noted frequently in her interactions with the children across settings. González (2001, p. 56) notes that this construction evokes what she calls a "multifaceted prism of meaning in Spanish" for a child, linking speaker and hearer, including individuals who are not members of the same family.

In general, the teacher's attitude toward errors within the performance might be summarized in the following statement she made to the children during rehearsal:

The teacher: In a performance, when you make a mistake, you just keep on going. Sometimes the audience won't even know.

While she provided modeling and then held the children accountable for those errors they could reasonably be expected to correct, it was the creation of an experience

for the audience that ultimately counted. Part of the experience for the audience lay in the confidence on the part of the performer to continue in the face of occasional mistakes.

Identity as Performance: "This Isn't You!"

During the first rehearsal that I observed, an interaction occurred between teacher and students that brought together salient connections between performance, language use and identity construction. Ramón, Francisco and Cesar, three boys from the group who had recently "transitioned" to English, volunteered to read the section of the poem in which Santa urges his reindeer on in the night. As they began to read, their voices were quiet and hesitant, barely audible within the classroom, and they read haltingly with little discernable expression. Some of the children began to fidget, waiting for them to finish.

The teacher stopped the group after they finished their stanza:

The teacher: You've got the one part of the whole poem that is actually Santa's words. It has got to be [pause] **electric**! [The teacher's voice rises and she makes an upward sweep with both arms]. Electric! [Several children laugh at her expressiveness]. I want the preschoolers to start **cheering** when you say that. "Now, Dasher….!" [Spoken loudly and with great expression]

As their teacher spoke, the children paid close attention. When she modeled the way the boys should deliver their line and described the way the preschoolers would cheer, several children looked at each other, smiling at the effect this would have.

Addressing the boys who were going to speak Santa's words, the teacher concluded her pep talk:

The teacher: You're **per-form-ing**! This isn't really **you**! This is a performance. **You** don't go around saying…[pauses then speaks in dramatic voice] "Now Dasher! Now Prancer!" [pauses then adopts a conversational tone] Well, Ramón, yes, Cesar, yes [As she addresses them, suggesting that they do in fact "go around"

> speaking in such a manner, the boys begin to laugh, along with several other children], Francisco?…no… But this is a **performance**, kids!

By the end of her commentary, several of the children were laughing so heartily, including the three boys involved, that they can be seen doubling over and heard beginning to cough and snort on the videotape. Through simultaneously rejecting and invoking the identity of Santa for the boys, of a pot-bellied white-bearded Anglo speaker of nineteenth-century formal English verse, the teacher in a sense created a space of authoring in which they, too, could both resist and assume this identity. She did this by first telling the boys that adopting this way of speaking and the mannerisms it entailed was not synonymous with their own identities. In saying, "This isn't you!" the teacher broke an association of language use with the self, and invited them to take a more critical stance vis-à-vis the text.

Often, teachers will tell children to imagine that they "are" a particular character when enacting a role. In this case, the teacher emphasized the opposite expectation, perhaps in recognition of the boys' possible rejection of the language and mannerisms of the character. At the same time, it could be interpreted that by saying, "This isn't you!," the teacher was indicating that three young Mexican American boys whose halting English was laced with Spanish inflections did somehow not have the right to enact the identity of Santa.

However, she followed her initial observation of "This isn't you!" by playfully retracting the statement, at least as far as Ramón and Cesar, who happened to be somewhat more outspoken in the classroom than Francisco, were concerned. Thus, the boys were also able to assert legitimate ownership of the language of the poem, if they

chose, by performing it. The word, in their mouths, might be half someone else's, following Bakhtin (1981). However, although the teacher required that they "read what's there" on the page, they were also free to populate the words they read with their own accents and intentions as they recited for their classmates and families, perhaps imaging themselves singing a *corrido* or *The Crawdad Song*.

In this way the boys were free to perform without having to either lay claim to or resist association with the identity created through the poet's use of language: they were, after all, playing a role.

Language Ideologies and Identities in the Rehearsal

The ways in which the teacher structured the performance activity and responded to the children's participation were consonant with many of the statements she made during our interview, as discussed in Chapter Five. She corrected certain miscues in the students' oral reading while ignoring others, for example, in keeping with her statement that she let knowledge of her students as well as the communicative purpose of the situation guide her decisions in this area. She emphasized clear enunciation of the lines spoken by the children and precision in their reading, much the same way as she described language use in her own home as a child and early school experiences. However, she situated these uses within a larger communicative purpose, which was for the entertainment of the younger children at school. In doing so, she also drew upon children's growing linguistic competence and provided a position of power for them in English as performers: particularly for the students in her class who were acquiring English, this potentially enabled them to counteract the ways in which some described

feeling relatively powerless, like "babies" in the words of one girl, at other times when speaking English with peers.

At times, the teacher reinforced the authority of the text by reminding children to "read what's there" and acting at times as the "language police." On the other hand, she also acted as "linguist." In keeping with her emphasis on adjusting discourse register to purpose, the teacher required the children to use Standard English in the presentation before the school and to read the author's words to the best of their abilities. However, she pointed out that this use of language was required for the purpose of creating an aesthetic experience. She and the children used both Spanish and English as well as contact varieties of each as they engaged in discussion. In this way, she demonstrated by example that English, Spanish, and what some children referred to as "Spanglish" could all be part of academic discourse.

Even as she enforced the authority of the text, the teacher encouraged the children to break the rules in other ways. After all, Santa could be a Mexican American girl wearing a fake beard who popped out of a paper *chimenea*. She referenced multiple voices and identities, from *Ballet Folklorico* to popular singers to family ties through the ways in which she connected children's experiences to the performance event, and used linguistic constructions in Spanish such as "*m'ija.*" She helped children create a space of authoring in which they could fashion characters out of these many voices while still attending to the English text.

Finally, the teacher used humor born of her knowledge of and sensitivity toward her students. By combining this sense of playfulness with shifts in her own language use and discourse registers, the teacher both signaled to the children and explicitly stated that,

in giving a performance, they could at the same time enact and maintain distance from a given role or identity by adopting a more critical stance.

Enacting an academic identity in this setting, then, involved becoming aware of the ways in which language was used and drawing upon that understanding in order to perform, to act in the world. The teacher did draw attention to and emphasize the linguistic features of Standard English in her classroom, and she did at times correct children's oral language production.

However, changing the way one spoke was much like choosing the appropriate clothing for a given role during a performance or activity during daily life. In her classroom, multiple languages and language varieties were heard in discourse and represented in print: Spanish, contact varieties of Spanish and English, vernacular dialects of English, and Standard English. Enacting an academic identity did not necessitate adopting particular uses of language, including the use of Standard English, as emblematic of the self or at the exclusion of other ways of speaking.

The Promise and the Pitfalls of Performances

Performing chants and poems in English gave bilingual students an opportunity to practice the sounds and structures of a new language, as well as to acquire vocabulary. The resulting feelings of self-efficacy were evident, for example, in the way children spontaneously shared their performances with me during group interviews, as described in the opening of this chapter. As Jaraset, a beginning English learner, stated in the interview segment cited earlier, she may not yet speak much English, but she could recite an entire poem. Through these performances, children who were often not yet able to

express themselves fluently in English were nonetheless able to participate in the official academic and social life of the school from a position of power – even "electrifying" their young audiences.

As powerful as these performance opportunities were for children, engaging their feelings of competence as well as their aesthetic enjoyment of poems and songs, what about the content of the texts, the words they were asked to speak? What about the teacher's selection of a traditional Anglo-American poem in this case, icon of holiday celebrations that are themselves contested within public schools at the present historical moment?

The Complex Uses of Power: Beyond the Classroom

In addition to a teacher's power to evaluate students' language production, she also has the authority to select many of the texts used in the classroom, as well as the ways in which the children engage with them. The selection of texts and the manner of engagement then link children's classroom experiences with multiple worlds beyond, presenting opportunities for critique or for reproducing dominant discourses.

In the example analyzed above, the teacher selected a traditional Anglo-American holiday poem. However, the activity of performing for an audience itself provided an opportunity for children to speak from identities of power within the school culture. The holiday poem itself was only one of many texts used in the fourth-grade classroom, as well as within larger venues of the school community itself. It is within the context of these other textual experiences that I situate the fourth-grade children's enactment of *'Twas the Night Before Christmas* and argue that it provided them with more than an

introduction to the cultural tastes of a politically dominant group. For within the school-wide performance itself, as well as in the classroom, other textual voices were heard and contested, as the following sections will illustrate.

Controversies Surrounding the Holiday Program

In fact, the holiday performance itself was the subject of some debate among the staff. One teacher in whose classroom I had previously supervised student teachers talked to me about the controversy while I waited for the fourth-grade class on the playground before school during a visit shortly before the performance. According to this teacher, some of her colleagues felt that the religious overtones of the program with its references to Christmas were problematic, while others believed that the holiday observance was congruent with both religious and cultural norms within the predominately Mexican American community. Many teachers in the latter group felt the holiday program was an important link between school and home, pointing out that the annual performance was always well-attended by enthusiastic families. Still others, perhaps responding to the increasingly strong accountability pressures being felt at the school, believed that preparation for the program took up too much instructional time. The principal apparently took the position that the participation of each class was voluntary, but also approved of the use of instructional time for rehearsals as well as for the school performance, and arranged for the custodial overtime and other structural supports required for the evening performances.

Not all classrooms took part in performing, the bilingual third-grade class participating in this study among them. I did not talk to the third-grade teacher about this

decision. Nor did I discuss with the fourth-grade teacher the rationale for her participation or the selection of the particular poem her class performed. However, I knew that the fourth-grade teacher regularly used a variety of poems and songs in her classroom written in multiple languages and dialects, as previously described, and which were drawn from a range of cultural perspectives. Often these poems and songs contained a social message, such as *This Land Is Your Land*. They were treated not as extra time fillers or only as an aesthetic experience: rather, they were texts that provided an opportunity for discussion of important themes for which the teacher supplied historical information.

The Performance: A Multiplicity of Voices

On the day of the school performance, I accompanied the fourth-grade class to the cafeteria and videotaped from a seat in the back of the cafeteria behind several of the upper grade students. I also took notes in my field journal. From where I sat, I could observe the overall reactions of the collective group of students and teachers as the event unfolded. It began with the performance of a song in Spanish about *los tres reyes magos* (the three kings) by the bilingual kindergarten class, featuring the brother of one of the fourth-grade students in the lead role. Many of the children throughout the audience knew this song and began spontaneously singing along loudly and clapping. A rendition of *Away in A Manger* by a second grade English only class followed. Their teacher encouraged those in the audience who knew the words to sing along: her request was met with some polite singing and applause at the end of the song. Next was a group of bilingual first graders, dressed in costume, singing *El Burrito de Belén* (*The Donkey of Bethlehem*). This song, along with the spirited performance of the children, some of

whom began dancing and swaying on stage, was quite a crowd-pleaser. As the audience began singing along, I overheard some of the upper-grade students near me talking in Spanish about having heard this song the weekend before on television. The teacher of the newcomer class, who also sponsored the school *Ballet Folklorico* troupe, jumped to her feet and began clapping and dancing in the aisles. She was soon accompanied by a parent and even by the principal for a time. At that point the entire audience erupted into cheers, and soon was rhythmically keeping the pace with their applause, which continued for quite some time after the song ended. Next, the children in the audience swayed to *I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing* as performed by a group of bilingual second graders, holding two fingers in the air in the style of a television commercial currently airing which used that song.

This atmosphere continued as the program progressed, with each group presenting a song and the audience responding with varying levels of enthusiasm. I wondered how the fourth-grade students would fare in this environment, with their careful enunciation of a long and complex poem in English and remembering the teacher's words about making their performance "electric." When it was their turn, the audience was quiet, seemingly captivated. Some children in the crowd pointed to the movement of the moon and Santa's reindeer across the stage, or whispered to each other as they signaled out friends or siblings among the fourth-grade students taking their turns to recite. The audience burst into applause when Eva, decked out in red suit and white beard, emerged from the *chimenea* in a crashing of torn paper, and roared as she jiggled the pillow "belly" tied under her costume in mock laughter. Although it was difficult to hear some of the children's lines within the crowded cafeteria, the collective effect was a huge success and

the children's bows were met with loud applause from the assembled children and teachers. The program concluded with a western swing *Reindeer Boogie* by another fourth grade class, complete with a hot rod built from a large cardboard box that circled the dancers onstage, driven by a girl wearing a t-shirt emblazoned with "New York City" in glittering letters.

In the holiday program performance narrated above, children had the opportunity to try on new identities as performers on stage as well as within the audience in the context of songs or poems that were both familiar and new, from varied cultural traditions and in both Spanish and English. As a result, the use of both languages was normalized within the official life of the school, in contrast with the perceptions voiced by many children that Spanish was only "for home." Although the shared experience created was no doubt engaging and probably even memorable for the students, the content of the holiday songs and poems did not in itself present an opportunity for them to create new understandings.

However, other events that I had the opportunity to witness within the cafeteria did provide opportunities not only for new learning, but also for critique. A brief description of one such event provided in the next section will illustrate ways in which attention to language use provided an opportunity for discussion of larger social relations of power.

The "Teach-In" for Immigrants' Rights

On May 1, 2006, thousands of supporters of immigrant rights across the nation took to the streets across the United States, and a boycott of work and school was called

for in the Spanish-language media as well as by several local organizations. Many students at Westside were absent that day, the highest proportion of any site in the district. The upper grade teachers and the principal held what the fourth-grade teacher referred to as a "teach-in" in the cafeteria that afternoon for the students who were at school. I attended and videotaped this assembly.

The event began with a talk by the principal in which she shared the history of her own migrant family who worked in the fields, and of the importance they had placed on education. As she spoke, although she delivered her talk in English, the principal employed phrases and vocabulary in Spanish. A fifth-grade student read a poem he had written in English that encouraged the audience to stand up for their beliefs.

Susan, the fourth-grade teacher participating in this study, read aloud a bilingual poem written by a local Chicano poet and community college professor to his own students on the meaning of the May 1 boycotts. This poet had worked on several occasions as an artist-in-residence at the school, and was known to several of the students. As she read the poem aloud, she pointed to the text enlarged on an overhead transparency. The poem itself was written bilingually, using both Spanish and English, and included the lexical borrowings and syntactic features of a language variety that might be termed Chicano English (Fought, 2003). As Susan read aloud, another teacher facilitated discussion of questions raised by the children. One boy asked why the poet at times wrote in Spanish. The teacher, a European-American, stated that the poet was addressing what she called "the Latino population right here." However, she added that "We all use Spanish words and English words."

Susan then taught the group the lyrics to Woody Guthrie's *Deportee* using the overhead projector, and played a version recently recorded by Los Super Seven, a Grammy-award winning Mexican American musical group. She talked about the songwriter and explained the history behind the song, relating it to the present day controversies surrounding immigration before the children joined in singing along. The teach-in concluded with more songs in Spanish and English, including *Huelga en General*, popular during the United Farm Worker struggles of the 1960s.

Thus, the teachers and principal at this school provided an opportunity for young children to hear counter-discourses about immigration compared to those presented in the media with regard to the May 1 demonstrations. Addressing these boycotts through the "teach-in" assembly called into question power dynamics in the world beyond the school and added to the children's understanding of immigration, a topic that touched their lives, in historical context.

The use of Spanish, English and contact varieties of each was integral to the content of the teach-in, but also became the subject of explicit discussion at times, such as when a student asked about language use within the bilingual poem. Through these opportunities, the teachers clearly situated the current anti-immigrant discourse in historical context and drew attention to the way in which it was currently aimed at a particular group, at Spanish-speaking Latinos within the immigrant population. At the same time, the use of songs such as *Deportee* in English indexed the solidarity of at least some European-American historical voices. The positive valoration of Spanish and bilingualism among European-American members of the staff also represented this

possibility, such as when the teacher responded to a student's question regarding language use in the poem.

Cafeteria as Contact Zone

In some ways, the cafeteria served as a type of "contact zone," described by Pratt (1991) as "social spaces where cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of power." Pratt contrasts the notion of "contact zones" with what she argues is the assumption of a "unified and homogenous social world" underlying theories of language as code and competence. She relates these assumptions of uniformity to the role of language in constructing the modern nation-state, or what Anderson (1991) calls "imagined communities," in which one language, modeled on idealized native-speaker monolingual norms and controlled by elites through the spread of and access to literacy, represents one nation.

Building on Pratt's concept of contact zones, Bizzell (1994) suggests that curriculum be organized around "moments when different groups within the society contend for the power to interpret what is going on" (p. 167). Pratt and Bizzell write about college classrooms in which critique is explicit and occurs within situations of contact between groups with differing degrees of power in the wider society. The children in this study were predominately Mexican-origin students from a low-income community, and the purpose of most gatherings in the cafeteria was not that of social critique. Indeed, for the most part, these functions revolved around traditional school activities such as holiday programs and back-to-school night.

Conclusion

In these examples, children who were in the beginning stages of proficiency in English language development had the opportunity to be viewed as powerful and competent members of the school community through performing songs and poems in English. In this way, they were able to "try on" identities indexed through the texts they performed while also acquiring the surface features of Standard English. Paolo, for example, was reluctant to practice speaking English in the class. And yet he was able to perform in front of a school-wide audience and receive applause.

The experience of a child like Paolo contrasts with the potential impact on children of the current policy context. When home languages are restricted in the school and tight accountability policies accentuate a push to English proficiency, bilingual children's status relative to dominant societal language norms becomes the primary marker of their academic identities. Bilingual children are officially recognized by the school primarily as "English learners" until such time as they are designated "English proficient" and subsumed within the "mainstream" student population, within the dominant discourses of policies such as Proposition 227 and NCLB.

As discussed in Chapter Two, explicit attention to the second language learning needs of children from homes where a language other than English is spoken can be beneficial. Such identification can trigger specialized services and hold schools accountable for the success of all children. However, this focus on English language proficiency can also deprive bilingual children of access to the curriculum through delaying content area instruction (Adam, 2004) or opportunities to participate in the full life of the school, particularly as they reach middle grades (Valdés, 2001).

In the cases presented in this chapter, both Spanish and English were publicly used by adult members of the school community as well as by children in public gatherings. In addition, the use of code switching and contact language varieties occurred in these settings. In this way, the fourth-grade teacher as well as other members of the school staff further normalized bilingual and bi-dialectical language practices within the school's official spaces, extending their uses to significant topics.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

The primary goal of this study was to better understand relationships among agency, power and identity in the talk of bilingual Mexican American children and their teachers through an examination of the participants' views, or ideologies, about language. For, as González (1999) observes, "it is through and by language and discursive practices that self-hoods are constructed, identities are forged, and social processes are enacted" (p. 433).

Within the current policy context, bilingual children are identified primarily with regard to their status as English learners, with material as well as social consequences. This identification may result in assistance that helps students learn both language and content (c.f., Adam, 2004). On the other hand, children learning English as a second language may be deprived of access to curriculum until such time as they achieve full proficiency in the language (c.f., Valdés, 2000). Given tensions within conceptualizations of "academic language" (Valdés, 2004), depending upon how teachers view the teaching of academic English bilingual students may be given opportunities to add this variety to their linguistic repertoires. On the other hand, children may be faced with unrealistic demands for rapid acquisition of what a teacher considers to be Standard English, or the language of textbooks (Wolfram, Adger & Christian, 1999).

Overall findings from this study suggest that when teachers challenged theories of linguistic expertise and authority embedded in restrictive policy contexts, children were able to exercise agency in constructing more positive academic identities. In this chapter,

these findings are summarized for each of the research questions that guided the study, followed by observations regarding the usefulness of examining language ideologies within a model of agency in identity construction. Implications for research and practice are discussed, informed by revisiting the voices of the children themselves.

Summary of Findings

Data were collected through group and individual interviews as well as through participant observation in a bilingual third-grade and a mainstream English fourth-grade classroom at an urban public school near the U.S.-Mexico border. A summary of findings for each of the four specific research questions follows.

1. What views about language were held by the teachers?

Both teachers were themselves bilingual to varying degrees, and valued bilingualism for their students. Each of them had experienced the loss of Spanish within her own Mexican-heritage family, and expressed the importance of maintaining Spanish to maintain and deepen family ties as well as to have opportunities for social or economic advancement.

Yet each emphasized what she believed was the critical importance of teaching the type of English needed for academic success within the current sociopolitical context. Both teachers grappled in particular with whether and how to correct errors made by their students in oral language production toward the norms of Standard English, invoking prescriptive language ideologies at times. The conflict each identified between serving what Cahnmann (2003) refers to as “language police” and “linguist” was heightened by

each teacher's views about the nature of linguistic expertise, informed by second language acquisition and sociolinguistic theories. The third-grade teacher believed that her students were overly afraid to make mistakes, and that this fear was inhibiting their acquisition of English. The fourth-grade teacher spoke of helping her students learn to adjust their language use according to context and purpose, recognizing when formal academic English or home languages and language varieties were appropriate. Both teachers expressed concern that their students needed sufficient time and opportunities to practice within a low-risk environment, and that these factors were in short supply given accountability demands. They also emphasized the importance of language acquisition not for its own sake, but as part of learning academic content and also of acting in the world.

Both teachers recognized linkages among language, power and identity in their own lives as well as those of their students. The third-grade teacher, a woman of European-Mexican heritage, stated that often people did not expect her to speak Spanish because she did not physically appear to be "Mexican." Yet she also spoke of what she called a growing social climate of linguistic "discrimination" based on accent for those whose appearance or ways of speaking might cause them to be considered "Mexican." The fourth-grade teacher, an English-dominant daughter of Mexican immigrants, spoke of her own feelings of insecurity when speaking Spanish, and her desire to improve her skills in order to demonstrate respect to the families of her students. In addition, she spoke about the power that the ability to clearly articulate claims and ideas had not only in academic but also political settings as a way of engaging in social action.

2. What views about language were held by the children?

All nine children who were individually interviewed expressed the value of learning English, in keeping with their parents' wishes as well as for the construction of a successful academic identity at school. However, all of these same children also indicated positive views about bilingualism. The children talked about both instrumental and social benefits for maintaining or improving their Spanish during interviews. Pragmatically, all nine stated that being bilingual would better help them reach future career goals. All nine children interviewed were also concerned with maintaining family ties and helping others, and indicated their belief that bilingualism was important for these reasons as well.

Nonetheless, four of the children individually interviewed indicated that they doubted they would in fact remain bilingual, and the responses of these children suggest that they had begun to accept the hegemony of English in the wider society as a taken-for-granted aspect of their schooling within the structure of the transitional bilingual program.

The children's overall responses during group and individual interviews suggested that they appeared to view linguistic expertise as mastery of a code, whether English or Spanish. Comments made by five girls from the fourth-grade classroom during a group interview, for example, suggested that they appeared to place value on equal mastery of Spanish and English. However, two of the five commented that they were already speaking more English than Spanish. Observations of these five girls' participation during the group interview as well as within their classroom further confirmed that while they explicitly valued bilingualism in interview statements, in fact

they gave more value in practice to speaking English than to Spanish. In particular, two girls with greater fluency in English negatively evaluated the language production of classmates. In one case, a girl recalled teasing classmates, saying "Ha, ha! You don't speak English!" At another point during the group interview, one girl claimed that she spoke more English than Spanish, a claim that was challenged by a peer within the group who had greater English proficiency. In this way, despite the values they expressed for bilingualism, the girls in this interview group enacted what might be described as symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1991) through negatively evaluating the English language skills of their classmates and devaluing their skills in Spanish.

In addition, all nine children who were individually interviewed negatively evaluated bilingual practices in which languages were mixed, which children referred to as "Spanglish." These same children also stated, however, that making mistakes was an expected aspect of second language acquisition. Overall, the nine children interviewed appeared to hold the belief that teachers had the duty as well as the right to correct their mistakes when speaking, even if at times such correction might result in embarrassment.

In general, children reported that they experienced changing relationships among language, identity and power as they acquired English. All but one of the nine children individually interviewed indicated that their identities as family translators provided them with positions of power at home and in the outside world. At other times, when communicating with English-speaking peers or adults at school or in the community, these same eight children reported frustration when their relative lack of proficiency in the language left them feeling at a disadvantage. The same phenomenon occurred for three of the children when speaking Spanish with Mexican nationals. These feelings of

vulnerability occurred at the same time that children participating in this study were developing increased cognitive, physical and emotional maturity as they reached middle childhood. One girl spoke of feeling "mad" at herself in such situations, turning her emotions inward.

3. How were these views enacted within and shaped by classroom language practices?

The teachers' views were enacted primarily through the instructional practices they created in their classrooms, as well as through explicit or metaphorical statements they made regarding their views about language use. Each of the two teachers encouraged students to draw upon all of their linguistic resources, whether in Spanish or English or "both," including during periods officially devoted to English language development (ELD) or English language arts instruction. In keeping with their beliefs that children needed opportunities to practice in a low-risk environment, both teachers provided opportunities for small-group interaction as well as for whole class teacher-student discourse. They both sought to maximize these opportunities for children to acquire Standard English while according explicit positive valuation of bilingualism within the constraints of the transitional bilingual program and the accountability context with its focus on standardized testing.

The teachers' practices and statements were also shaped by their perceptions of the children's own beliefs about and experiences with language. The third-grade teacher, who argued that her students were overly afraid of making a mistake, often restated their attempts at speaking in Standard English without explicit evaluation. She often employed metaphors to help the children understand her developmental theory of second language

acquisition, likening the process to learning to walk, and the fatigue that sometimes resulted to "running out of gas." Given her sociolinguistic views of communicative competence, the fourth-grade teacher sought to draw children's attention to the ways that language was used in different settings or texts. She stated the goal of helping her students, who were either bilingual or bi-dialectical, draw upon their own knowledge of code switching. She employed a wide range of literature and song lyrics written bilingually in Spanish and English or incorporating vernacular dialects, according these the same legitimacy as Anglo-American texts that were traditionally part of the school curriculum. The teacher further encouraged children to adopt stances toward texts in which they drew upon their own experiences as well as the language use of the author.

The ways in which children enacted their views about bilingualism, language expertise and the relationships among language, power and identity varied across settings and individuals. However, a few generalizations can be made. Overall, within group and individual interviews as well as in writing samples, children indicated a general belief that in order to be a "good student" it was necessary to speak English correctly. However, the majority of bilingual children used Spanish, English and "Spanglish" in both official and unofficial settings during my observations. Individual children at times displayed reluctance to participate during English language activities. However, participation varied greatly depending upon the type of activity in which they engaged and the specific demands of the lesson. In one example, a boy expressed a dislike of an activity that he perceived to be "babyish," for example. On the other hand, the majority of children in both classrooms participated enthusiastically in opportunities to perform songs or poems in English in front of peer audiences.

The ways in which children participated in classroom activities, then, appeared to be shaped at least in part by their experience with practices such as allowing for the use of both Spanish and English, as well as Spanglish, during instruction, in contrast to stated beliefs that that the "good student" speaks primarily English and speaks it correctly. The experience of performing plays and poems for real audiences appeared to mitigate the reluctance of at least some students to engage in the oral English language activities observed. In addition, the teachers' practices of responding to student oral language production with explicit but non-evaluative feedback possibly contributed to the willingness of at least two individual children to engage in classroom discourse in English during these observed activities.

4. How did these views and practices contribute to the construction of children's identities at school?

A principal finding of this study is that the practice of encouraging children to draw upon their knowledge of Spanish, English or Spanglish interactively as a resource for making meaning in each classroom provided children with opportunities to participate in a range of instructional activities. In this way, all could potentially be recognized as "good students," regardless of the language of instruction.

In addition, when children were provided opportunities to participate in the life of the classroom and the school through the collaborative performance of songs or poems in English, they were able to establish more powerful identities in relationship to their peers. These performances contrasted with ways in which individual children expressed feeling infantilized within informal interactions with more fluent speakers.

Finally, by using Spanish, English, and bilingual practices such as Spanglish themselves the teachers and school staff normalized a bilingual, bi-dialectical identity. Their use of both languages in within official instruction and performance spaces, as well as informally, contrasted with circulating models of academic identity in the policy context. These models narrowly focus on English proficiency alone by constructing bilingual children primarily as "English learners."

The two teachers' classroom practices were informed by their views about the positive value of bilingualism. These practices were also informed by each teacher's views about linguistic expertise, which drew upon second language acquisition and sociolinguistic theories.

The nine children interviewed wanted to learn English, and also wanted to remain bilingual or to improve their skills in Spanish. Four of these students expressed doubt that they would be able to remain bilingual. Nonetheless, as one child explicitly stated during an individual interview, despite these circulating models of the "good student" as a speaker of "good English," bilingualism and practices such as Spanglish were in fact in evidence throughout the school and thus could constitute part of a successful academic identity.

Children were able to draw upon their teacher's views of linguistic expertise and recognize themselves or their classmates as successful students within classroom activities, as demonstrated through the participation of two focal students during an English language development lesson examined in this study. The appropriation of their teacher's views occurred through the children's experiences with classroom practices as well as through explicit statements or metaphors employed by the teacher to explain

language-learning behaviors. The ways in which the second teacher drew explicit attention to linguistic features of texts used in the classroom provided an opportunity for children to develop awareness of relationships among language use, audience and purpose in writing. By choosing texts that incorporated vernacular dialects of English as well as bilingual texts written in English and Spanish, this teacher accorded legitimacy to multiple language varieties. Finally, by referencing children's own experiences in relationship to these texts, the teacher encouraged them to take active stances in which they could adopt a space of authoring (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain, 1998) and accept or reject identification with the texts.

A Model for Examining Agency Within the Context of Restrictive Language Policies

This study was motivated by concern over the impact of the current restrictive policy context, with its emphasis on rapid acquisition of English and focus on standardized testing, on the academic identity construction of bilingual school age children. A site was selected in which the explicit values of bilingualism were promoted. These values were expressed to the extent feasible within the parameters of California's Proposition 227 which restricts bilingual education, as well as given specific community demographics which made implementation of a dual language program impractical.

The site was also selected because of its record of academic achievement within the parameters of the federal *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) legislation. Although the achievement of the individual children participating in this study was not examined, in the year following this study, the school met Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives under NCLB. That is to say, English learners as a group met NCLB benchmarks in both

English language development and academic achievement. This subgroup included all the children from both classrooms who participated in this study.

The two teachers were chosen on the basis of their success with bilingual students, as well as because of their commitment to educational equity. In this way, I had hoped to find opportunities to examine the workings of agency on the part of both children and teachers within these restrictive contexts. Specifically, I had hoped to discover whether and how children might come to construct academic identities that valued their own bilingualism in addition to supporting the acquisition of advanced literacy in English necessary for future educational opportunities.

Drawing upon and adapting elements of the model developed by Holland and colleagues (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain, 1998) which posits that identification with given figured worlds occurs through the co-development of salience and expertise proved to be useful in understanding the ways in which children and teachers exercised agency within these contexts. Conceptualizing "salience" as the values accorded to a particular language by participants, and hence to the "figured world" it represented, illuminated underlying identity models and the desires of the participants to engage them.

The identity models represented by "English" for the children, for example, were highly salient: overall, the children interviewed knew that learning English was important to their families for instrumental reasons, and their comments suggest that they perceived the privileged institutional status of English within the school and larger society. Generally speaking, third and fourth grade children appeared to believe that this identity model could include them, and that it would bring the benefits it appeared to promise,

although some had begun to observe that learning English on the part of their older siblings also created friction at home when it meant that they no longer spoke Spanish.

It appeared through the explicit statements made by children during interviews that "Spanish" represented a powerful identity model for specific individuals as well, not only in the third-grade bilingual classroom but also in the fourth-grade mainstream English classroom which included many "post transition" bilingual students. This positive valuation was based on individual children's desires to be able to communicate with family members, often on both sides of the border. The positive regard for bilingualism evident in both group and individual interviews also appeared to be rooted in children's perception that being able to communicate in Spanish would help them economically in the future as well as to help their communities in an altruistic fashion. Two of nine children individually interviewed talked about Spanish within their future academic identity models, as well, either through studying Spanish in high school or college, or as part of a future career.

However, the positive regard for bilingualism explicitly stated by children during group and individual interviews was at times contradicted by other comments they made, and was not always evident in observed interactions. For example, one girl reported teasing a classmate who did not speak English as proficiently as she did. During a group interview, one girl negatively evaluated the English language skills of another participant. In contrast, none of the children reported negatively commenting on the Spanish language skills of their classmates, nor did I observe any such interactions. This finding suggests that while children explicitly valued bilingualism, they also were beginning to enact the hegemony of English within the wider society at times.

The salience of both English and Spanish and the identity possibilities each language represented to the children was likely influenced by their experiences at home and in the community, although I did not examine these directly and am basing this conclusion on the reports of the children themselves. However, based on my observations of classroom interaction and interviews, I propose that children's stated positive regard for bilingualism was also based on the expressed language ideologies of both teachers, as well, instantiated through instructional practices as well as through explicit statements and the teachers' own language use. Although the design of the transitional bilingual program underlined the diminished status of Spanish in the United States in a way that was obvious to the children, the teachers and school staff mitigated this impact to at least some degree and represented alternative possibilities.

With an idea of the "salience" represented by English and Spanish to the children, conceptualizing "expertise" in the model of Holland and colleagues proved to be complicated. At first, I considered expertise in terms of language proficiency. It was not difficult to understand, for example, that a child's relative lack of "expertise" in English put her at a disadvantage in communicating with peers and adults and might lead to lack of identification with an English-speaking world, or require a great deal of agentive energy as well as opportunities to learn. The same would hold true in Spanish, as at least three children interviewed individually came to discover that the variety of Spanish that they spoke was often stigmatized both by Mexican nationals. In addition, during a group interview one girl described the experience of family members with an emphasis on so-called "Standard Spanish" within U.S. secondary schools.

However, upon further analysis, it became clear that "linguistic expertise" became far more than language proficiency. Instead, as I began to consider children's views about bilingualism and about how languages were learned, I discovered that "linguistic expertise" needed a broader definition. Expertise in fact appeared to be related at least in part to the understanding of how languages are acquired. Children appeared to assume that they would somehow acquire English through osmosis, for example, or through the process of maturation and attending school; a view that is consonant with what proponents of initiatives such as Proposition 227 would have us believe, in the face of contrary evidence from educational and linguistic research.

Likewise, those who wished to remain bilingual had little notion of how this accomplishment would actually occur. In fact, during group and individual interviews, some children talked about the push toward English monolingualism among older siblings. In addition, group and individual interview statements indicated that overall, children did not have opportunities for extensive and appropriate Spanish language and literacy acquisition after third grade. At some point in time, individual children would likely discover that in fact, they did not acquire English through osmosis. They would likely find that remaining bilingual or improving their Spanish skills might require access to further instruction or literacy of some type. In addition, establishing successful identities in upper grades would likely entail learning to value the importance of bilingual and bi-dialectical discourse within academic settings. The salience of either language, and the worlds each represented, might well come to diminish, along with the children's agency and desire to engage in learning to take up these identities.

In this context, the teachers' more sophisticated understandings of language came into play. In their views about the nature of linguistic expertise, the teachers drew upon second language acquisition and sociolinguistic theories. The third grade teacher, for example, helped students understand a more developmental perspective on second language acquisition. The fourth-grade teacher drew children's attention to multiple textual voices, and the possibility of using both English and Spanish as well as Spanglish in academic discourse, even though she was charged with English-only instruction.

The concept of ideologies about language as socially shared cognitions (van Dijk, 1996) that mediate identity construction through a variety of heuristic processes (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998; Martínez-Roldán & Malavé, 2004) helped illuminate ways in which children were able to access the views of their teachers through participation in instructional practices as well as via explicit statement or the use of metaphors. Although the teachers' theories of second language acquisition and sociolinguistic competence might not properly be termed "ideologies," the neutral sense of that term could include them; what is more, within the current political climate, such views take on the weight of an ideology or a counter-discourse to prevailing views of language acquisition through "submersion" and an insistence on "back to the basics" prescriptivist teaching of grammar, for example.

It is in this sense, that of teaching "against the grain," that the teachers exercised agency as well, within the constraints of the policy context in which they found themselves. By their daily examples of language use, the instructional practices they created, and the texts they chose, they demonstrated the values of bilingualism and bi-dialectical language practices for their students. The teachers provided multiple

opportunities for children to experience the power and joy of language for a variety of purposes and audiences, in both English and Spanish. Furthermore, they engaged bilingual children not only as language learners, but also as scientists, artists, inventors, community activists and poets. By giving of their time to engage in serious dialogue with me during the course of this research about language issues, as well as by opening their classrooms and lives to this study, these teachers demonstrated their commitment to reflective practice in the interest of educational equity. They represent the finest qualities of teachers who make a positive difference in the lives of bilingual children.

Thus, in the classrooms of these two exceptional teachers, it was possible to examine the workings of agency as they and their students maintained explicit positive values of bilingualism and respect for language variation, even as they also enacted at times the larger societal push toward English. In this way, teachers and children affirmed the possibility of successful bilingual academic and social identities, although the institutional structure of the transitional bilingual education program provided the opportunity for children to develop the necessary skills only in part. In the following section, I discuss the strengths and limitations of this study, including the conceptual framework and the methodologies employed as well as the choice of the setting and participants.

Implications of the Study

Implications for Research

I chose to highlight agency in the discussion above in order to draw attention to the possibilities the findings of this study represent for informing educational practice as

well as theory, given the restrictive policy contexts in which most bilingual children currently attend school.

The findings also provide an opportunity to revisit concepts regarding power and identity. As I argued above, teachers and children in this study both enacted the hegemony of English and explicitly valued bilingualism at differing times. The actions of the teachers in this regard were reminiscent of the authentic caring described by Valenzuela (1999) within a subtractive school environment. The ways in which each teacher described her concerns over whether and how to correct students' oral language production in English echoed the findings of Cahnmann (2003). Accounts such as these contribute to literature that theorizes educational practice as struggle (Remillard & Cahnmann, 2005), a theory of practice which affirms the identities of bilingual children (Cummins, 2001) even within institutions of power such as schools.

However, as Eagleton (1989) observes, children make the best theorists. Previous and contemporary literature on student accommodation and resistance (e.g., Carter, 2005; Foley, 1990; Willis, 1977) has largely overlooked children of the age group included in this study. Nonetheless, the antecedents of resistance might be detected in the way students recognized each other as "speaking too much Spanish" or as "English guys," for example. However, ideologies such as these, expressed or enacted within the classroom or during interviews, were emergent and changeable: a student might appear to resist engagement in English instruction on one day and participate with gusto on the next, as was the case of René described in Chapter Seven. Furthermore, the appearance of "resistance" itself might be explained by lack of language proficiency or by a child's desire to appear more mature in front of peers. Lack of participation did not necessarily

imply rejection of the identity symbolized by the use of English itself. Nor did speaking English necessarily entail uncomplicated assimilation. For example, individual children such as Xochitl, who engaged in Spanish lessons with her younger sister, not only explicitly valued bilingualism but also were actively seeking to maintain or learn the language outside of school. Finally, the study of children provides an opportunity to examine concepts of identity construction within schools not only as an enactment or performance of situated identity (e.g., Bucholz, 2004) but also as an aspect of social, emotional, cognitive and physical maturation (e.g., Cole & Cole, 2001). As González (2001) observes, children's utterances are formed within specific socio-historic contexts, but do not yet have the weight of lived experience. Their talk bears traces of larger discourses, but these are emergent and transitory. For this reason, the construct of language ideologies was a useful lens into children's building and enactment of identities, particularly given the salience of language in the lives of immigrant children (Falicov, 2002; Suárez-Orozco, 2000).

Methodologically, the combination of individual and group interviews and observation of classroom discourse provided a useful way to triangulate assumptions about language ideologies. It was possible to examine views about language expressed by participants within an interview setting with statements and behaviors that occurred during classroom discourse or informal interactions at the school site. Because interviews are co-constructions, influenced by the perceptions participants hold of interviewer's expectations, this cross-checking was an important way of validating working theories. This validation is particularly necessary when interviewing children, given the status difference between child and adult. Within a cross-cultural setting in which the

interviewer represents dominant societal groups and the children are from less powerful groups, triangulation is even more essential. The use of group interviews with children was also important in this regard, where the children in a sense "outnumbered" the interviewer. In addition, these group interviews provided insight into children's own co-constructed interpretations, as they negotiated meaning and power among themselves. The combination of classroom observation and interview data also provided the opportunity to cross-check interpretations made about classroom behaviors and statements on the part of children and teachers, as well, rather than trying to infer ideological assumptions.

However, the study was limited in specific ways that would be useful to explore further. First of all, the influence of family language ideologies and language socialization practices is critical to understanding children's views about language, and these practices had to be assumed from self-reported data on the part of the children or through third-hand information provided by teachers. Combining a study of this type with ethnographic research in the children's homes would possibly challenge or further support the conclusions reached here.

While I tried to mitigate my appearance as a teacher and actively sought to promote positive values of bilingualism, I may also have influenced the participants to express similar positive values by virtue of my status as a white adult "outsider." Similar research studies conducted by Latino/a "insiders," including studies of children's language ideologies within informal out-of-school settings, might yield new insights that challenge or confirm the findings of this study.

As a single researcher conducting a time-bound study, I was limited in the type and number of questions asked or variables that could be explored. Although the theoretical sample that was chosen for this study enabled me to examine the workings of agency within restrictive contexts, more systematic exploration of language ideologies among bilingual children could identify variation within groups that might yield different insights. For example, I did not systematically examine variation in children's views by gender or by generation of immigration within a relatively homogeneous Mexican American population in a border community. Research within communities of the new Latino diaspora, in which bilingual children from a variety of locations find themselves within heterogeneous settings far from their countries of origin, would also provide an interesting contrast given the need to learn more about educational opportunities for these children. In addition, longitudinal research such as that being conducted by Moll and colleagues (Moll, 2002, 2004) would provide opportunities to extend or challenge the findings of this study.

Finally, although the selection of the setting and participants provided an opportunity to examine the possibilities for agency in a "best-case" scenario within a restrictive context, such a selection also limits the generalizability of the study in several important ways. As I have argued, the actions of the teachers, informed by their understandings and beliefs about language, provided alternative bilingual figured worlds and identities for children that challenged the assumptions embedded in policy discourse. Their effective instructional practices supported children's linguistic and academic development, as demonstrated by the overall achievement profile of the school. Furthermore, the larger school staff and the District itself supported these beliefs and

practices. This support occurred at the level of the institution, as demonstrated by the District's continued commitment to bilingual education within the parameters of Proposition 227. The school staff as a whole validated bilingualism and connections with the community in the form of school-wide assemblies using both languages as well as through after school clubs such as *Ballet Folklorico*, for example.

Without the presence of these exceptional teachers, and within a less supportive school-wide and District context, the results of this study would likely be very different. Nonetheless, the findings of this study can inform practice.

Implications for Practice and Professional Development

The instructional practices used by the teachers were not explicitly examined here as pedagogical strategies. However, lessons can be learned from their effective practices. Both teachers engaged children in rich content-based English Language Development (ELD) activities, in keeping with recent thinking about second language teaching (Gibbons, 2002; Díaz-Rico & Weed, 2002). They drew children's attention to and taught explicit features of language use within multilingual and multi-dialectical literature and song lyrics, teaching what Delpit (1995) calls the "codes of power" but also affirming the legitimacy of language variation, including within written texts.

The correction of children's errors in producing oral and written English is an area of particular concern among educators at present (Cahnmann, 2003). The topic of error correction takes on added weight given the importance of gate-keeping achievement and exit exams, as well as in light of linguistic discrimination in the larger society (Lippi-Green, 1997, 2004). Both teachers provided feedback on children's language production

in order to teach Standard English conventions, but in ways that did not impact children's motivation to participate, in keeping with current research suggestions (Gibbons, 2002; Scarcella, 2003). In these ways, they acted, in Cahmann's words, as "linguists," more than as "language police."

The findings of this study suggest that school age bilingual children are fully capable of engaging in meta-discourse about language. Further opportunities to engage children, too, as "linguists" would complement the types of practices described above. Fecho (2003), for example, asked his mostly African American high school students in an urban setting to collect samples of community language use, which were then analyzed in class as a way of teaching language conventions and language variation. Such an activity might build on the awareness children in this study demonstrated of Spanglish, for example, and provide an opportunity for them to recognize its regularities and legitimacy, as well as to learn more explicitly about code switching as a linguistic phenomenon.

What kind of teacher education and professional development do teachers need in order to support the design and implementation of such practices? As Fillmore and Snow (1999) among others argue, teachers need a strong grounding in linguistics, including sociolinguistics. How and when this knowledge is best developed is still an empirical question. Preservice teacher education in educational linguistics is critical, as well as information for inservice teachers that builds on their existing knowledge. However, knowledge alone does not translate smoothly to instruction. Practitioner research may help inform the field, such as that conducted by Fecho (2003), particularly when it occurs and is disseminated in teacher learning communities as well as in books or other publications. By participating in such learning communities, teachers have the

opportunity to test ideas through collaborative inquiry over time. Ideally, these opportunities could exist through professional development organizations and university-based graduate education. By involving educational leaders in this practitioner research, such collaborative inquiry might be better institutionalized and maintained in practice.

At the District and school site level, the results of this study overall suggest that when a dual language program is not feasible given population demographics, opportunities for children to construct both academic skills and positive identities as students can be exploited within alternative bilingual approaches. The teachers in this study engaged in many practices similar to those documented within research on language ideologies in dual language settings (e.g., González, 2005). The children in dual language settings often expressed similar conflicting values of bilingualism documented in this study (e.g., Martínez-Roldán & Malavé, 2004). In this sense, the transitional bilingual approach would seem to be preferable to no bilingual program at all. However, it is important to keep the findings of seminal biliteracy research in mind. Children who are able to maintain and develop their primary language academically outperform those who do not have this opportunity (c.f., Krashen & Biber, 1988; Slavin & Cheung, 2005; Thomas & Collier, 2002). In the long run, although the current political climate makes implementation of such programs difficult, developmental bilingual approaches in which children continue to receive instruction in their first language throughout elementary school years as they simultaneously acquire English, are a better investment. In developmental programs, not only might bilingual children acquire a solid foundation of skills in both languages, but also come to construct positive academic identities to support continued achievement over time.

Imagining Multilingual Futures

Yet it is critical to keep the purposes of future research and improved practice in mind. To what end are we working to improve educational outcomes for students such as the bilingual Mexican American children in this study? Are we working primarily to better teach children the features of "academic" or Standard English? That fact that bilingual children need such instruction is not in question here, nor the very real technical challenges involved. Learning academic English is essential if bilingual children are to access educational opportunities that will be critical to their life chances in this country.

However, educational practitioners and researchers alike construct imagined worlds through the products of their work, and the identities thus implied have consequences that matter. What possible lives do the children who participate in our studies or lessons envision?

In concluding this study, I turn to the voices of the children who participated and whose interviews are cited in Chapter Five. Will they see learning English as a process of forgetting Spanish, and both as a result of going to school? In the words of Nancy, "*Vas a estar en esta escuela, y después vas a otras y hablas puro inglés y se te va a olvidar el español.*" ("You'll go to this school, and then to others, and you will speak only English and forget Spanish.") Will they develop new hybrid linguistic identities, or will they reject affiliation with linguistic identities at all? Sammy, for example, stated that in the future, he would "speak English with people who speak English, and Spanish with people who speak Spanish," but would not call himself "bilingual." What might be lost or gained through this process of non-identification?

Or, like Eva, will they imagine their languages as "best friends?" As I first examined the metaphor she used, I was initially struck by its positive affective imagery. To have a best friend was to share secrets and laughter, to have someone to count on in the world. A best friend might protect you when the chips were down, and was someone for whom you would fight if it came to that. Throughout life, our friends help us know who we are as we make our way through multiple worlds.

However, from my vantage point as an adult, I knew that a large part of the experience of childhood friendships, felt acutely at age nine, is their capricious quality. Today's best friend could be tomorrow's sworn enemy. And beyond the fragile emotional nature of childhood friendships lay the minefields of circumstance, of factors beyond our control. Friends move away, they sometimes grow sick and die, or we may simply drift apart on the changing currents of everyday life.

If Spanish and English are viewed principally as linguistic codes, as separate and separable objects, the foundation has been laid for leaving one language behind. And given the social and political power of English in the world around them, bilingual Mexican American children are in this way ideologically prepared to reproduce the existing linguistic order as they identify themselves or are identified in terms of language proficiency. The foregrounding of language as code lends itself to an emphasis on language as a social marker, used within institutional contexts such as the school to differentiate between groups and among individuals within them.

However, the metaphor of "best friends" also draws attention to the way that language creates and maintains identities in relationship to the important people in a child's life. Uricoli (1985), in differentiating between an emphasis on "bilingualism as

code" and "bilingualism as practice," observes that in bilingual situations, "what actually comes into contact are not codes per se, but speakers whose practices and identities vary" (p. 363).

With a child's metaphor, then, we are reminded that there is much at stake in the way that we think and talk about a language, because ultimately, we are thinking and talking about its speakers. In listening to the children, we can be reminded of the hope that exists for a future in which speaking multiple languages is an asset because it expands rather than contracts possibilities; a future in which by being bilingual, we can collectively have not only "twice as many friends" but also help "twice as many people."

There is much work to be done in creating such a future. With words, we might be able to reclaim "Border Field State Park" as "Friendship Park" once more, but it will take more than words to transform a forgotten patch of coastal dunes into a place where families from both sides of the border can come to recreate in peace on a Saturday afternoon. It will take more than words to transform economic and political inequities, and to dismantle the very real fence being constructed to separate two countries by force.

Yet just as childhood disputes often begin with "fighting words," the way we talk about language matters. By working to change the tenor of civil discourse around languages and bilingualism, as educators and researchers we might help create the conditions in which the work of social transformation can begin. It is my hope that this study and the voices of the children may contribute to that larger conversation.

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