AUTONOMOUS FEARLESS USE OF LANGUAGE: UNDERSTANDING NON-FICTION ENGLISH TEXT WITH FIFTH-GRADE BILINGUALS THROUGH CULTURALLY SUSTAINING PEDAGOGY

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the remarkable educators who have influenced my life's path, as well as to my cherished family.

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Describing this as a solo achievement would be a significant understatement. At this moment, I wish to express my deep gratitude to those who have made this journey possible. First and foremost, my gratitude goes to "El divino creador" – [the divine creator]. Next, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my committee members, Dr. Torres Elías, Dr. Anderson, and Dr. Stewart. They have been exceptional role models and mentors, and I have truly valued the learning experience with them. My hope is that others on a similar path are as fortunate as I have been in having such a dedicated team of collaborators who generously provided their advice and guidance.

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ABSTRACT

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AUTONOMOUS FEARLESS USE OF LANGUAGE: UNDERSTANDING NON-FICTION

ENGLISH TEXT WITH FIFTH-GRADE BILINGUALS THROUGH CULTURALLY

SUSTAINING PEDAGOGY

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At schools in the Unites States, English-centric hegemonic policies often hinder emergent bilingual students from fully applying their linguistic skills to read non-fiction texts. This phenomenon necessitates investigation into how culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP) can be utilized to support fifth-grade bilingual students' understanding of non-fiction texts in English. This qualitative descriptive study documents the process of five participants utilizing their entire linguistic repertoire, engaging in translanguaging practices while experiencing CSP instruction to enhance comprehension of non-fiction texts. The research questions guiding this study are: How do emergent fifth-grade bilingual students use language when reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English? How does culturally sustaining instruction relate to the students' use of language while reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English? Five important themes were identified, representing features appearing to support emergent bilingual (EB) students' understanding of non-fiction texts. These features included translanguaging inquiries during reading discussions, adeptly integrated linguistic translanguaging in written practices, validation of autonomous flexible translanguaging, demonstration of self-identity and belonging, and the promotion of school community and diversity.

Keywords: Emergent bilinguals, translanguaging, culturally relevant pedagogy, culturally sustaining pedagogy

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INTRODUCTION

To be successful in fifth grade, students need substantial practice reading a variety of non-fiction texts, such as informational books, newspapers, and articles that they can connect to real-life experiences (Song & Buchanan, 2019). In addition, students need a great deal of practice with expository and narrative texts (Song & Buchanan, 2019). Students in the United States developing as emergent bilinguals (EBs) face challenges when reading non-fiction books in English due to language policies, perspectives, and instructional practices that give priority to the English language, and often require strict separation of language use (García et al., 2017). For instance, understanding specific text contexts and the author's purposes could be difficult for a bilingual student who is learning English and may have different life experiences.

It is essential to allow emerging bilingual students to fully utilize their linguistic repertoire when comprehending non-fiction texts (García et al., 2017). While there have been multiple studies on reading comprehension of non-fiction texts among bilingual students, there is still a need for more comprehensive research and a greater emphasis on this area within the upper elementary levels (Canagarajah, 2011; Cano & Ruiz, 2020; Graham, 2012). In contrast, exhaustive research has been conducted on non-fiction texts in middle grades and high school.

Silvia Graham (2012) studied the role of the first language in second-language comprehension. Graham concluded that for all participants, their first language facilitated the reading process in the second language (Graham, 2012). However, due to the strict hegemonic norms of only English in schools, students are often not able to use their entire linguistic repertoire (García & Wei, 2014). This can happen even in bilingual education programs. While society is multilingual, some schools continue to employ a monolingual approach when teaching

bilingual students. The term *hegemony* is used to describe situations where one language is considered superior, and other languages are viewed as inferior. Hegemony is also the term used when one language is deemed superior while others are denigrated for a variety of reasons, including social standing, purported richness, economic utility, etc. (Mrak, 2011).

When bilingual students read non-fiction books in English, they often demonstrate challenges using language and context comprehension. Individuals exhibit difficulties because they need to comprehend terms or possess a prior understanding of the subject. EBs have diverse experiences in the United States in addition to experiences in their own country (García & Wei, 2014). Culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP) is a practice that helps close the cultural gap (Paris, 2012). Students can connect new knowledge with previous knowledge using what they already know from their own culture. CSP connects learning to students' cultures, languages, and life experiences meaningfully (Paris et al., 2017). CSP may be a helpful tactic to assist academic comprehension for EBs.

Non-fiction books provide information and facts about the world (Song & Buchanan, 2019). These non-fiction books could be related to any part of the curricular areas, such as science or social studies. Positively experiencing non-fiction books is crucial for students' engagement and academic achievement, especially for at-risk EBs in public low-income schools (Song & Buchanan, 2019).

As a bilingual reading teacher working at a low-income school who believes that social interactions are essential, I am using a constructivist approach in research. Therefore, supporting EB students motivates me to embark on this study which was conducted in the same school I teach as part of a daily instructional practice pull-out in small groups. According to García (2009) the term EB is appropriate to describe students learning a new language. Students who

acquire a second language do not lose their knowledge in their native tongue; instead, they use it and adapt it to help them understand the new language more clearly. Some words in English, which constitute students' second language (L2), especially academic terminology in L2, can pose challenges for EBs. However, the utilization of students' complete linguistic repertoire, as advocated by García et al. (2017), can be instrumental. In this manner, EBs may gain the ability to decipher the meanings of academic terms often encountered in non-fiction books, thereby enhancing their comprehension of literary concepts, and promoting their success.

In this study, a small group of EB students, to whom I provide literacy instruction on a daily basis, participated in a research study to explore how they understand non-fiction texts. All the activities included in this study are part of their regular instruction and centered on CSP. As part of their regular learning experiences, students write or create artifacts in response to reading discussions before, during, and after reading non-fiction texts in English. During sharing or writing time, students in my class are encouraged to use their entire linguistic repertoire to describe what they learned from the reading experiences, and to make meaning from the text during authentic literacy interactions,

Literacy goes beyond learning to read and write; it is a complex process. Gee (1996, 2013) explains that literacy involves complex social relationships, and is influenced by various social, cultural, political, and economic factors. The goal for bilingual students in the school where I teach is to achieve biliteracy in both languages. Through translanguaging and theory practices (García et al., 2007), students can make meaning to develop a new language considering their socio-cultural backgrounds and becoming biliterate.

Literacy is an act of knowing; students are considered subjects in the reading process rather than the educator's objects of action (Freire et al., 2018). Teaching and learning for equity

and justice is not an easy task. It takes compassion, empathy, and courage to deliver instruction, disrupting what middle-class norms have already established (Milner, 2020). Unfortunately, the majority groups that make these norms have the political power to define what students need to learn in school. Currently, in Texas, our daily reality is that minority students are still disadvantaged in many ways. Educators can make a difference by disrupting these norms for EBs and minority groups that do not have the power to advocate for equity in the education system (Milner, 2020).

Many EB students do not have the chance to continue to develop their first language in school (García et al., 2017). Consequently, they could lose their cultural identity. CSP protects students' language, culture, and identity and strengthens social interactions in a positive environment (Paris et al., 2017). Educators can empower children and support their language development by honoring their linguistic knowledge and supporting their needs through culturally sustaining teaching. CSP is generally defined as a theoretical model that focuses on fostering and sustaining linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the school's social transformation (Paris et al., 2017). Recent research on CSP demonstrates that CSP can be an asset to instruction and sustain the cultural capital students bring to the classroom. For instance, research highlights texture teaching, a form of CSP, as an excellent framework for supporting classroom culture and instructing students in the non-fiction literary genre (Germán, 2021). Given the importance of CSP and of reading non-fiction texts for the success of EBs, additional information about students participating in CSP while reading non-fiction books/texts in English would be helpful to educators.

This chapter presents an overview of the study, organized into the following sections: background, problem statement, the purpose of the study, research questions, definitions of

terms, significance, and summary. This research study provides more information to

professionals in the educational community about how bilingual students use their linguistic

repertoire when reading non-fiction texts through culturally sustaining practices.

<div align="center">**Background**</div>

It is important that educators provide opportunities for EB students to use authentic non-

fiction texts/books that are relevant to the student's stories and experiences. CSP supports the use

of the students' language, culture, and identity and strengthens social interactions in a positive

environment (Paris et al., 2017). CSP supports the creation of a safe space where interactive

speaking, reading, writing, and listening opportunities occur (Paris & Alim, 2017).

Translanguaging Opportunities

Translanguaging means using the EBs' entire linguistic repertoire and cognitive resources

to make sense of the academic content delivered in language students are just starting to learn,

according to García (2009). Paris et al. (2017) describes in their book an example of using

translanguage through a CSP lens (Bucholtz et al., 2017). Mary Bucholtz is the author of this

chapter, and she describes a case study about Isabel and how (by using translanguage) she could

make meaning of her schoolwork.

In their case study, Bucholtz et al. (2017) relates an account of how a student named

Isabel decided to present her linguistic autobiography by communicating efficiently in an oral

presentation using both languages English and Spanish, Spanglish, while sharing her cultural

identity (Bucholtz et al., 2017). According to Bucholtz et al., when students use Spanglish, they

use their entire linguistic repertoire to combine elements of Spanish and English, creating a

unique way of speaking. Although Spanglish might sound like a negative connotation, Bucholtz

and colleagues used this term to describe the mix of both languages. My perspective does not match Bucholtz et al.'s because I see what Isabel did through a lens of translanguaging.

In my opinion, Isabel is using her entire linguistic repertoire to make meaning. According to García et al. (2017), Spanglish is a form of translanguaging. In addition, Spanglish is a term used to define the ability to use named languages without social and political language boundaries (García et al., 2017). For example, Isabel felt comfortable using translanguaging when speaking, because she identified better with this unique mix of named languages. Her use of translanguaging represents part of who she is and allows her identity to shine through. Language is intertwined with a person's identity (Anzaldúa, 1987). As an example, an individual growing up in a bilingual environment often has their identity molded by their capacity to converse in two languages. These languages become integral to their being, impacting their cultural ties, means of self-expression, and even their feeling of inclusion within their local community.

With the use of translanguaging, students experience other types of language situations in which they support not just themselves, but their families and communities (García & Wei, 2014). As a result, EBs feel they need to help others by facilitating communication, and they become language brokers. A language broker, by definition, according to Orellana (2009), is a young bilingual individual who frequently provides interpretation and translation services for family and community members. Students in the classroom bridge home and academic languages, taking advantage of the opportunity to use their entire repertoire (García et al., 2017) to make meaning out of what they listen, speak, read, and write to be successful in the learning process.

Facilitating Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies Opportunities

CSP is an intentional approach to instruction and school environmental systems focusing on students' strengths. CSP makes learning meaningful through targeted connections to students' cultures, languages, and life experiences (Paris et al., 2017). CSP also provides an environment where home and school literacies integrate. Regardless of the cultural and linguistic backgrounds, socio-economic status, and experiences of students, they feel welcome and valued in the classroom (Canagarajah, 2011). CSP builds on the assets students bring by validating their cultural and linguistic knowledge as part of their identities and capitalizes on them. CSP uses the students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds as the basis for their learning, while supporting the maintenance and perpetuation of students' cultures.

The result of CSP toward learning is additive rather than subtractive. CSP critically enriches learners' strengths rather than highlighting their deficiencies (Paris et al., 2017). Woodley and Brown (2016) explained that CSP encourages the participation of students of diverse origins and linguistic abilities. CSP supports a learning environment that fosters respect for each individual, including their family and culture (Paris & Alim, 2017).

Furthermore, research about CSP in the classroom has shown different ways to apply this practice when working with young students. As a bilingual reading facilitator, my students' interests vary, but they have a common denominator: Spanish. EBs can discuss a story using translanguaging to understand the meaning of the books they are reading. Books serve as tools for students to read words; through them, students understand the world (Freire & Macedo, 2016) and make meaning of their surroundings. This facilitates the comprehension and interpretation of any text, including non-fiction books, as students can utilize their complete linguistic repertoire when speaking and writing about a story.

Furthermore, supporting CSP practices in a low-income school community implies sustaining an intentional approach toward instruction. In other words, carefully planned instruction must occur for students to learn a specific skill. Modeling, working together with the student and allowing the student to work independently or with a peer while validating what students have to offer (Machado, 2017) is essential. However, learning is meaningful through targeted connections to students' cultures, languages, and experiences. Therefore, we must also consider the students' sociocultural background knowledge and experiences (Paris et al., 2017). For instance, understanding the students' experiences with translanguaging will support their identity growth (Anzaldúa, 1987).

Finally, I believe that incorporating CSP activities with my EB groups is worth the time and effort that I put into planning teaching and learning interactions. I plan carefully because I understand that sometimes students hesitate to read due to background knowledge or unfamiliar concepts and words. Therefore, giving students a supportive space to interact with peers before, during, and after reading might aid in acquiring the abilities required for reading and understanding non-fiction texts.

Problem Statement

EB students in the United States are often not supported by schools' restricted English hegemonic policies to read non-fiction literature using their entire linguistic repertoire (García & Wei, 2018). In multilingual classrooms, EBs are challenged with understanding (García & Wei, 2018) non-fiction books/texts. CSP is a promising practice for EBs (Paris & Alim, 2017). Therefore, we need to research how CSP instruction helps EBs use of language before, during, and after reading non-fiction text in English.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to describe how fifth-grade EB students participating in culturally sustaining instruction use language before, during, and after reading non-fiction books/texts in English.

Reading non-fiction books/texts supports the literacy development of all students (Song & Buchanan, 2019). EB students have opportunities to employ their entire linguistic repertoire when reading and writing about non-fiction books (García et al., 2017). Furthermore, EB students benefit from culturally sustaining instruction (Paris et al., 2017). Therefore, a detailed description of students who experienced culturally sustaining instruction while reading non-fiction books/texts provides important information for educators, leaders, and researchers about supporting EBs in schools.

Finally, as a result of this study, educators could be encouraged to support the use of the full linguistic repertoire of EBs when they are reading and writing non-fiction text in English. In addition, using CSP practices in the classroom promotes critical thinking, cultural interactions, and linguistic diversity, which shows how the educator values the assets students bring.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study are:

1. How do emergent fifth-grade bilingual students use language when reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English?

2. How does culturally sustaining instruction relate to the students' use of language while reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English?

Rationale and Significance

The study provides information about the EB students' use of their full linguistic repertoire when reading non-fiction books and writing about non-fiction books (Canagarajah, 2011; Cano & Ruiz, 2020; Graham, 2012). This study contributes to understanding translanguage theory (García & Wei, 2014) through the lens of CSP (Paris & Alim, 2017) with EB students focusing on comprehension of non-fiction books or texts in English.

This qualitative study describes how CSP can be used to support fifth-grade bilingual students' understanding of non-fiction texts. This study is crucial because young adolescents' early exposure to non-fiction reading and instruction has a significant impact on their academic performance and, ultimately, their quality of life (Song & Buchanan, 2019). The participants in this study were fifth-grade EB elementary school students who participated in their usual instructional plan as part of the class learning process. Students were encouraged to use their entire linguistic repertoire while they are experiencing carefully planned CSP instruction on required educational content to help their reading comprehension of non-fiction books.

Definition of Terms

Emergent bilinguals is a more appropriate positive term for students who speak languages other than English and are acquiring a second language at school (García & Wei, 2014).

Translanguaging is a term that refers to EBs when they use their entire linguistic repertoire and cognitive resources to make sense of the academic content delivered in a language students are just beginning to learn (García, 2009).

Culturally relevant pedagogy is a foundational theory that affirms students' backgrounds, validating their culture and cultural knowledge while including other students' cultures (Ladson-Billings, 2014).

Culturally sustaining pedagogy is a way of teaching used to support and enrich the cultural practices of minority communities in a safe space that connects home and school (Paris et al., 2017).

Summary

This chapter describes a study that focus on how fifth-grade EB students, use language before, during, and after reading non-fiction books/texts in English while participating in culturally sustaining instruction. EB fifth-grade students engaged in culturally sustaining instruction were participants in this descriptive qualitative research study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction to Theoretical Framework

The purpose of this chapter is to present the theoretical framework for this study and to

provide a review of the pertinent research. The two theories that guide the theoretical framework

of this study are translanguaging (García & Wei, 2014) and CSP (Paris & Alim, 2017). In

addition, an in-depth review of the use of non-fiction texts with bilingual students is presented.

This review includes the use of non-fiction texts across content areas, non-fiction texts studies

related to culturally sustaining practices, and their relationship.

A Metaphor for the Theoretical Stance of This Study

When EB students interact with non-fiction texts, they access their experiences,

knowledge, and linguistic repertoire. Culturally sustaining practices in the classroom allow

students to use these resources in a synergetic way that can facilitate comprehension. Educators

who value students' cultures are cultivators of minds, values, and culture and help students

preserve their linguistic, cultural, and heritage values (Paris & Alim, 2017). Inclusive schools

encourage and support the development of the whole child at home, in the community, and in the

classroom.

Therefore, the theoretical stance for this study focuses on CSP and translanguaging.

Figure 1 shows a drawing representing the theoretical perspectives supporting emergent bilingual

students' interactions with non-fiction texts. I will describe this theoretical lens using the

metaphor of a beanie hat or sombrero "tejido" [fabric] in Spanish. This beanie hat is made with

intertwined knitting of different elements that together form the understanding of non-fiction

texts. The use of color codes in Figure 1 is essential for explaining and describing how

everything integrates into a child's mind, as depicted in Figure 1 by using the metaphor of a beanie to describe this lens. This hat is created through the intricate stitching of various components that together comprise the comprehension of nonfiction literacy. In Figure 1, I used color codes to demonstrate how everything fits together in a child's mind. The red color shows the Spanish language, which is the students' mother tongue in this study. Then, blue symbolizes the English language as their second language. When students use their whole linguistic repertoire to make meaning, the color purple is used, meaning translanguaging. The yellow color represents the students' background knowledge, and the green symbolizes bridges connecting reading, writing, CSP, and child experiences. The black diagonal marks and horizontal lines represent non-fiction texts. Lastly, the turquoise color shows the goal at the top of the hat describing literacy comprehension of non-fiction books. The sequence of this hat is like a ladder, starting at the bottom and ending at the top. However, it is a continuous cycle because it is ongoing in every section of the hat and inside the student's mind. Inclusive schools encourage and support the development of the whole child at home, in the community, and in the classroom.

Figure 1 is the original art created by me, the researcher of the study, inspired by the metaphor for the theoretical stance that underpins this qualitative study.

Figure 1

Theoretical Perspectives Supporting Non-Fiction Texts

Translanguaging Theory

Overview of the Theory

Translanguage theory addresses the needs of bilingual students by looking beyond programs and named languages, and centering on students' linguistic strengths. According to García and Wei (2014), translanguage theory consists of two independent linguistic systems working together as one integrated system. Translanguage theory is effective for emerging bilingual learners because it includes a dynamic approach in which students learn through social interactions and from which children make meaning (García & Wei, 2014). In the next section, I will summarize the development of this theory to justify why I understand this theory as key in the theoretical framework of this study.

Development of the Theory

The concept of translanguaging began as a name for describing a particular linguistic practice. According to Wei (2018), was not intended to represent a theoretical idea but a label for a specific linguistic practice. In the 1980s, translanguaging as a field of study originated in Bangor, Wales (an old city in the United Kingdom). Its foundation is François Grosjean's contention that bilinguals are not essentially two monolinguals in one (Wei, 2018). According to Wei (2018), Cen Williams and his colleagues' research that Welsh and English languages could be taught together in a single lesson. Then, explained that moving away from monolingual instructional techniques and favoring teaching bilingual children through bilingual instructional strategies that combine the use of two or more languages was a better way to support bilingual students. Later, Wei (2018) stated that bilinguals have a single unitary language system that enables them to naturally employ all of the language's elements.

Subsequently, Dr. Ofelia García continued to further develop the theory of translanguaging along with other colleagues. They describe the teaching of translanguaging as the fluid language use (García et al., 2017) of named languages to make meaning. Ofelia García et al. (2017) explains that all subject areas benefit from translanguaging because it supports language and content development for EBs in all subjects. García and Wei (2014) describe translanguaging pedagogy as the best way to achieve teaching biliteracy in the classroom because it encourages dynamic bilingualism. Dynamic bilingualism alludes to the manner in which bilinguals utilize each of their linguistic resources smoothly to make meaning and communicate in multiple contexts (García, 2009). Nevertheless, biliteracy was first characterized by early researchers like Goodman to describe how a person reads and writes in two languages (Escamilla et al., 2014).

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However, Fishman (1980) define biliteracy as the ability to read and write fluently in two languages. Gee (1996, 2013) explains that reading and writing are just the beginning of literacy; it encompasses much more because it involves complicated social relationships and is influenced by various social, cultural, political, and economic issues. The goal for bilingual students is to achieve biliteracy in both languages. Educators that understand the theory of translanguaging and foster this practice in their classrooms are able to create spaces where students can make meaning while continuing to develop their linguistic proficiency (García et al., 2017).

Translanguaging is a regular practice in bilingual communities; readers use their entire linguistic repertoire to find meaning and engage with the text (García, 2020). The use of translanguaging in the biliteracy classroom allows students to orchestrate all their multilingual/ multimodal resources while reading. Viewing translanguage through a literacy lens means stepping away from English or Spanish because the reader uses the named languages through their one linguistic repertoire. Moreover, translanguaging theory should be used strategically for instruction and assessment, thus valuing biliteracy as an asset, not a hindrance (Escamilla et al., 2014).

Translanguaging in the Classroom

Using translanguaging, students can communicate in class using their entire linguistic repertoire to make meaning, negotiate, and acquire new knowledge (Wei, 2018). Translanguaging supports the use of the EBs full linguistic repertoire and cognitive resources to make sense of the academic content delivered in a language the students are just starting to learn. According to García (2009), emergent bilingual is a good term to describe children who are learning a new language because it highlights the strengths and potential of students.

EBs learn a new language; they do not forget what they already know in their home language. Instead, they leverage and adapt to understand the target language. Students might even recognize some words, especially academic ones with Latin bases, for example, precipitation and evaporation. They use languages together rather than keeping them separate (García et al., 2017) to make meaning of what they are listening to, speaking, reading, or writing. Students show higher motivation to participate in reading throughout classroom literacy activities as they recognize the value of translanguaging and translation abilities in creating meaning with text (Cano & Ruiz, 2020).

Students use translanguage during class discussions or in small groups to understand content in the classroom. However, using translanguaging in writing requires further research. According to Canagarajah (2011), more studies on translanguaging in writing are required. There is, however, a strong opinion among some scholars that translanguaging is not permitted in writing. For example, Canagarajah explains that translanguage in writing will not show the gestures, tone, and contextual details that oral language will. Therefore, when using translanguage in writing, it could be hard to determine if the student uses translanguage for meaning making. In addition, Canagarajah explains that some scholars consider literacy to be a culture or institution, implying the use of a single dialect as the only one deemed appropriate for writing, referred to as 'grapholect,' meaning a written dialect of a language.

On the other hand, Rowe (2018) states how important it is for bilingual students to be able to use their full linguistic repertoires freely when writing and recording their stories. According to Rowe (2018), instructors should assist students in developing multimodal, dual-language, or multi-language texts. Educators can motivate students to create and record texts in two or more of their native languages using technology and multimodal tools. García (2020) also

highlights the way in which bilingual readers modify and activate the monolingual text's ostensibly static linguistic elements by bringing their complete selves, their language, with its multilingualism and multimodalities, as well as their emotions, and lives into the text.

Thus, based on some of these theories, writing could be perceived as primarily an evaluative, more formal activity for assessing student performance. Therefore, educators are often cautious about using translanguaging for writing, and may use translanguaging often as a natural way to leverage learning during conversation (Cummins, 2017). Furthermore, according to Canagarajah (2011), the prevalence of "independent literacy" contributes to the ban on translanguaging in writing. Street's (1984) argument is that the world views texts as static elements that can be deduced through independent reading. Then, in-person discussions to negotiate written words' meanings are assumed unnecessary.

However, in Canagarajah's (2011) study, he demonstrated that some phrases lose power when translated and could take away value from the student's voice. There is a need to study, and learn more about translanguaging through students' writing. However, based on the ongoing research on translanguaging, educators should encourage EBs to use translanguaging in all classroom activities because this will support their identity, culture, cognitive development, and value their voices (Canagarajah, 2011).

Finally, according to García et al. (2017), educators should integrate translanguaging principles in the classroom. For example, the teacher may take a translanguaging stance, and make changes to develop learning objectives at the start of each lesson considering translanguaging principles. By utilizing a translanguaging stance in writing, teachers can take action to improve student understanding.

The Four Principles of Translanguaging

The first principle is to use a richer or extended repertoire describing linguistic features with more complex socio-cultural histories that will benefit students. Instructors that involve families in the classroom, show that they value the language and cultures of their students (Cano & Ruiz, 2020; Wei, 2018). In addition, educators can set an example for translanguaging through their own behavior and by using many dual-language texts in the classroom (Rowe, 2018).

The second principle is unitary repertoire pedagogy (García & Wei, 2014). This principle integrates new language features, causing speakers to develop ownership. It does not separate language repertoire because it is dynamic. It has been proven false that language is rigidly segregated within our brains (García & Wei, 2014). Instead, the person who speaks more than one language has a linguistic repertoire that consists of everything they are familiar with, regardless of the named language. EBs utilize their full repertoire to interpret their environment.

Third, the principle of always-available means that students are always present and available (García & Wei, 2014). It engages students with their meaning-making inquiry and with their interactions with others. In addition, the educator can provide a safe environment for students in which a bilingual audience will feel confident and free of judgment to present their work.

The fourth principle is that monolinguals use their complete repertoire in terms of learning and assessment (García & Wei, 2014). However, schools provide unequal access for bilingual students. Due to the existing monolingual hegemony in school assessment, bilingual students' test scores are often categorized as inferior, as standardized test scores tend to be lower. Additionally, the limited availability of bilingual books in schools poses a challenge. Nevertheless, students adapt by utilizing translanguaging.

Implications for Teaching

 An implication for teachers aiming to support translanguaging in the classroom (García et al., 2017) is the necessity to emphasize the expansion and co-creation of students' knowledge, such as fostering a democratic classroom where students' voices hold significance. Another implication is the requirement to establish a flexible, student-centered environment conducive to constructive learning.

In addition, using meaningful materials with which students can relate to is essential. Before addressing students, educators need to choose their words carefully when referring to students learning a new language. For example, labeling students as English as a Second Language (ESL) or Limited English Proficient (LEP) carries a negative connotation. The term Emergent Bilingual (EB) was established as a positive framework.

Standardized assessments are ultimately not suitable for evaluating language proficiency, which is why bilingual students often perform below expectations in test results (García & Wei, 2014). However, emergent bilingual teachers who take these implications into account can significantly impact student learning by supporting language acquisition, increasing knowledge, and fostering scientific discovery.

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

CSP supports and enriches strengths (Paris & Alim, 2017). Furthermore, CSP provides a safe space for learning, and connects home and school. CSP emphasizes the need to validate the cultural background of children, and acknowledges the importance of sustaining their cultural and linguistic identities during the academic years.

CSP is an example of education for beneficial social transformation and revitalization, working to preserve and promote linguistic, literary, and cultural diversity. In addition, CSP

considers dynamic cultural dexterity crucial. Furthermore, CSP highlights that learning should lead to a product that is additive rather than subtractive, that is whole and not broken, and that critically enriches strengths rather than filling in gaps (Paris, 2012).

The foundation of CSP is underpinned by decades of pedagogical research that demonstrate that the school environment can be a culturally sustainable, and safe place that supports the linguistic, and culturally diverse aspects of the democratic mission of education (Paris, 2012). The next section describes the origins and development of the CSP theory.

Development of Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

In 1990, the beginning of what scholars considered the golden age of investigative resource pedagogy, Ladson-Billings' new research study trends were exciting and innovative (Ladson-Billings, 2014). Ladson-Billings' (2014) research concerned students of color who were marginalized because of race, ethnicity, and language inequalities.

Paris and Ball created CSP following the publication of *Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP)* (Ladson-Billings, 2014). In this article, the author conceptualized a theory encouraging teachers to support students in sharing their experiences and cultures traditionally been excluded from mainstream settings. CRP focuses on affirming students' backgrounds, validating their culture and cultural knowledge, and including other students' cultures (Ladson-Billings, 2014).

Gloria Ladson-Billings (2014) developed three interacting and interconnected elements to teach African American students. The first element is high academic standards that focus on the students' total intellectual growth holistically. The second element focuses on cultural competence and inclusion, utilizing students' culture while supporting navigation through other cultures. This validates student contributions in the classroom. The third element is the critical or

sociopolitical consciousness aspect of teaching, where students critically examine issues around them. Culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) involves the three elements above, keeping in mind at the same time the essential instructional relationships between educators and their pupils. These relationships need to be authentic, based on trust, validate students' knowledge, and create a safe space for students to learn and share with other students. Ladson-Billings' (2014) theory has been widely cited in many spaces and by several scholars (Paris, 2012; Yang, 2008).

Another relevant theory, which underpins CSP, is funds of knowledge. Gonzalez and colleagues (2005) developed their theoretical framework to describe the culturally collected skills and knowledge necessary for interpersonal daily functioning and well-being. In 2005, Gonzalez et al. conducted ethnographic research in the homes of Mexican American communities. Through their research, the researchers demonstrated together that teachers and students could successfully apply funds of knowledge and skills into formal classroom learning. This theory integrates and extends knowledge from home, community, and education to support overall student success.

An additional example of ways in which educators can integrate the students' culture to school practice is the work of Alim and Pennycook (2007), with hip-hop culture. The author draws an ideological distinction between a curriculum based on the cultural-linguistic reality of students and one that is culturally appropriate, responsive, and relevant. In addition, Alim used terms to describe classroom practices incorporating language and culture of students to reinforce and teach classroom academic content (Alim & Pennycook, 2007). Ladson-Billings (1995) created the foundation for the importance of considering student's cultural identity for instruction. However, the words "relevance" or "responsiveness" do not support the cultural maintenance and practice that was promoted by Ladson-Billings. Culturally relevant instruction

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can be responsive without ensuing students' cultures remain present in their identities, and

consequently, in our classrooms and communities (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003). Paris and Alim

(2017), in order to represent this new perspective, coined this new term calling it "sustaining"

instead of "relevant." Paris revitalized the maintenance and practice parts of Ladson-Billing's

(1995, 2014) research. Based on Paris (2012), CSP responds to necessary terminology, practice,

and stance change.

Lastly, in "Culturally Relevant Pedagogy 2.0: a.k.a. the Remix," Ladson-Billings (2014)

refers to CSP as "the remix" or "culturally relevant pedagogy 2.0". In this article, the author

promotes research and exploration of literature as a way to advance or extend the original goals

of critically engaging in the cultural landscapes of classrooms and teacher education programs.

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy and Literacy

Students need to read texts in that frame world around them in relevant scenarios

(McNair & Edwards, 2021). Advocating for students involves learning to "disrupt" or change

existing norms through movement while being emancipatory and fair (Milner, 2020). Paris

(2012) encourages disrupting racism by having open conversations in literacy and recognizing

students' native languages and English language skills. For example, hip hop, poetry, social

media, and street art are considered part of literacy, embracing uniqueness and sustaining

practices and belief systems. These practices promote critical centering on dynamic community

languages, valued practices, and knowledge of communities of color (Alim & Paris, 2017). Some

examples of communities of color considered in this literature are Indigenous, Black, Latinx,

Asian, Pacific Islander, and other youth representing cultures of color.

Additionally, according to Alim and Paris (2017), CSP in literacy includes diverse

elements to achieve justice in a changing pluralist world, cultural pluralism, and cultural

equality. Essential literacy elements existing across culturally sustaining instruction include *critical lens*, *value of heritage and culture*, and *community practice*s. These elements are key factors in the success of CSP.

A critical lens on dynamic community languages is essential for CSP literacy. We first critique ourselves, reflecting on what we want to sustain through literacy and the dynamic aspect of our equally important present or future (Paris & Alim, 2017). Next, literacy instruction needs to be modeled, encouraging students to learn and monitoring progress differently, allowing them to use creativity to incorporate who they are and what they bring to school (Machado, 2017).

Paris (2012) explains that in order to value heritage and culture in literacy through a CSP lens, it is critical to build trusting relationships with students and know their culture. However, knowing all of their students' cultures could be challenging for a classroom teacher. Findings of a research study conducted by Puzio et al. (2017) about CSP highlight the challenges teachers face when learning about the backgrounds of each student. Puzio et al. (2017) resolve this issue by explaining that teachers might consider deliberately drawing from contrasting worldviews instead of knowing all of their student's cultures.

The final key element in CSP is community practices beyond prevalent narratives (which schools primarily promote) by teaching and demonstrating the value of diverse communities and customs in education (Paris & Alim, 2017). In addition, community practices promote a judge-free environment for students to share their ideas with other students. Paris and Alim (2017) believe that to reach equity and access, educators can focus dynamic practices to be inclusive of students and communities of color in a critical, additive, and expansive vision of schooling.

With all the aspects mentioned above, the pupil socially constructs their learning through a critical lens which liberates them from oppression, manifesting social justice. Ultimately,

developing a culturally sustainable literacy practice focuses on collaborative, community-based critical learning while preserving youth and community identities. Ideally, practitioners are doing all this with love and respect to reach equity and access.

Theories of translanguaging and CSP share several similarities. Primarily, these theoretical frameworks rely on the social context for meaning making, as outlined by Damico et al. (2014), and offer commonalities that can be beneficial for emerging bilingual students. Damico's et al.'s theory (2014) holds particular significance because it allows students to utilize their entire linguistic repertoire within a social context of creating meaning when reading a text. This approach provides students with a risk-free environment in which to engage in discussions related to instructional topics, drawing upon their full range of linguistic and experiential knowledge.

Additionally, as Rosenblatt (1969, 1978) emphasized, students actively construct meaning through the interaction between the reader and the text. Readers imbue verbal symbols on a page with personal significance, making each reading experience unique to the individual. It is crucial for students to be able to identify with the content they encounter in books. This concept is rooted in the premise that students must see themselves reflected in the literature, a concept articulated in the essay "Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors" explained by McNair and Edwards (2021). This realization requires deeper investigation of CSP.

In CSP, learning is additive and dynamic. Learning goes beyond reading and writing, CSP focuses on the idea that the cultural knowledge students bring to school needs to be valued, but more importantly *sustained* (Paris et al., 2017). The premise of CSP is that culture needs to be maintained by providing students with a deep understanding of identity and social belonging (Anzaldúa, 1987). Nevertheless, without a doubt, the most significant connection between CSP

and other theoretical perspectives such as translanguaging (García & Wei, 2014) is the value of language for making meaning.

An important connection between CSP, bilingual education, and bilingual literacy is the premise of creating a flexible classroom environment. When students have opportunities to use meaningful materials they can relate to, students liberate their thoughts and voices that may have been constrained or repressed in school. Therefore, Germán (2021) encourages educators to create classroom environments rich in flexible opportunities to support ownership of student learning through book discussions and the co-creation of assessments and projects with students.

Introduction to the Body of Research of Non-Fiction Texts

Several researchers have conducted reviews of literature about the relationship between non-fiction texts, and translanguaging (Machado, 2017; Savage & Savage, 1996; Troyan et al., 2021). In addition, other researchers have investigated the relationship between non-fiction texts and or CSP (Kganetso et al., 2023; Paris, 2012; Puzio et al., 2017; Román et al., 2022). Some studies focused broadly on culturally sustaining practices (Machado, 2017; Paris, 2012; Román et al., 2022; Troyan et al., 2021), while others (Kganetso et al., 2023) focused research investigations and data collection on ESL/Bilingual students or non-fiction texts in other countries in comparison to modern practices locally.

This section of the literature review aims to provide a summary of the research on emergent bilingual fifth-grade students and their use of non-fiction texts. To create this literature review, I synthesized available research and categorized it among suggestions for implementing language support or culturally sustaining practices used during class discussions. The literature review includes the following sections that form the body of research, ESL/Bilingual students,

and Non-Fiction Texts, Non-Fiction Texts Across Content Areas, and Non-Fiction Texts Studies Related to CSPs.

Non-Fiction Texts

First, as students read non-fiction books, they experience challenges using language and context comprehension. Pupils struggle while attempting to understand unfamiliar words due to lack of background knowledge on the topic. Non-fiction texts/books are texts that provide information and facts about the world (Song & Buchanan, 2019). These non-fiction books could be related to any part of the curricular areas, such as science or social studies. Experiencing non-fiction books positively and flexibly is crucial for students' engagement and academic achievement, especially for EBs in public low-income schools (Song & Buchanan, 2019).

Existing Studies of ESL/Bilingual Students and Non-Fiction Texts

Many studies show how EBs understand non-fiction texts across grade levels. I began my search using key terms related to the topic of ESL/bilingual learners linked to nonfiction texts, translanguaging, and CSP. Some studies stood out among the available literature, such as an article involving second graders that engaged students' families or a fourth and fifth-grade study using students' narratives. The following section will describe existing studies on elementary students and non-fiction texts.

Studies in the Elementary Grades

Several studies for EBs have taken place, starting with Giacona (2007) and recently with Kelly (2020). These studies inform the relationship between non-fiction or informational texts and ESL/Bilingual students. This section will focus only on elementary school research studies in different grade levels from first to fifth.

A few researchers have conducted reviews of literature about the relationship between non-fiction texts, translanguage, and CSP. Some studies focused broadly on culturally sustaining practices (Machado, 2017; Paris, 2012; Román et al., 2022; Troyan et al., 2021), while others (Kganetso et al., 2023) focused their studies on ESL/Bilingual students and writing about non-fiction texts in possibly other countries.

A relevant study titled Learning Nonfiction in an ESL Class: The Interaction of Situated Practice and Teacher Scaffolding in a Genre Study (Ranker, 2009) focuses on first-grade teachers combining expert instruction and collaborative experiences to explore nonfiction animal curriculum units in class for seven weeks. At the first-grade level, students benefited from explicit instruction and practice from teacher guidance. In this study, Ranker (2009), the researcher explains that using this non-fiction genre significantly correlates to how elements of non-fiction texts are conceptualized toward students' engagement.

Among several studies focusing on second-grade students, one by Song and Buchanan (2019) stood out because the researchers engaged EBs and their families to participate in reading non-fiction books/texts at school and at home. Inspired by Freire and Macedo (2016), the investigators captured the attention of students by helping them to engage with non-fiction books, exploring and extending literary confidence in the real world, while involving their siblings and parents. Results from this study showed that EBs skills improved significantly, even without online tools, and that parents collaborated with their children using literate behaviors.

Kelly (2020) explored the conversations of bilingual third-grade students in small group discussions after reading an informational text. After students read five books that matched their reading levels, and five complex texts that were a year above, they discussed the texts. The findings indicated twenty-five percent of student discourse is directly connected to written

material, and students need additional support to read successfully at grade level (Kelly, 2020). Conversations were focused on the discussion of words, visuals, and ideas, but the discussion topic was infrequently advanced when students debated the material.

In addition, Cano and Ruiz (2020), studied emergent fourth-grade bilinguals working together to translate narrative content for deeper understanding. Students showed higher motivation to participate in reading throughout classroom literacy activities as they recognized the value of translation abilities to creating meaning with text. The results of this exploratory investigation, which include preliminary evidence of students' forming bilingual identities of competence, indicated more research on explicit collaborative translation is necessary to add to enhance knowledge regarding translanguaging practices in bilingual classrooms.

More research is needed in the area of comprehension of nonfiction books by fourth and fifth-grade bilingual children. Silvia Graham (2012) examined how a student's first language influences their second language. According to Graham (2012), further research is required for Spanish-speaking bilingual upper elementary students when it comes to reading informational texts in their second language.

During this study, Graham collected quantitative and qualitative data in named languages (Spanish and English) to understand specific language skills cross-linguistically. Graham sought insight into how the mother tongue helps L2 readers' reading and comprehension processes. According to Graham's analysis, fourth or fifth-grade participants expressed that reading in the second language was easier, when they were able to use their first language (Graham, 2012). Jennings and Greenberg (2009) conducted a study with fifth graders participants that focused on raising cultural consciousness through children's literature. The purpose of this study was to help understand how children create meaning, as they interact with a small discussion group to debate

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works of literature and share opinions with classmates. This researcher investigated how multicultural literature might affect students' perceptions of themselves and the world. The children's voices were used to help instructors and facilitators lead small strategic groups of students on literature discussions. Jennings and Greenberg used cultural features of the stories to support and increase the students' understanding of the diversity of people around them (Jennings & Greengberg, 2009). The study also showed how teachers and facilitators belonging to the dominant culture, might further their education to act as "cultural mediators" in classroom, and other educational settings that continue to grow more culturally diverse.

The article "A Formative Study: Inquiry and Informational Text with Fifth-Grade Bilinguals" by Moses (2014) describes a 6-week study implementing inquiry with informational texts. The goals of the study were oriented towards reading and writing engagement, building content knowledge, and academic vocabulary in English through informational texts. Instructional interventions were put in place, including reading, writing, and research skills. The study focused on intervention responses analyzed based on data collected from student surveys and teacher reflections. By modeling the inquiry process when using informational texts, the researcher sought to increase peer interactions and feedback from fifth graders participants. Results revealed that in certain instances, the teacher had to reteach, posing precise and in-depth queries (some of which lacked an answer and were based on the Socratic method). Moses (2014) saw several students copying material directly from the text, which presented another difficulty, and required reteaching the synthesizing and summarizing concepts.

Studies in the Middle Grades

Additional studies related to bilingual or ESL students have been conducted at the middle school level. The majority of these studies have focused on students' academic success in

their literacy skills. For example, they have explored how students make meaning using strategies and code-switching (Derrick, 2015) or how they align with curriculum standards like the Common Core State Standards. The primary objective of studies focuses on investigation of how students enhance text comprehension by utilizing various linguistic and cultural resources. In a case study, bilingual interventions (Fite, 2017) were implemented to support students' success. Results provided evidence that by the end of the intervention, the students had improved generalized reading skills.

Giacona (2007) published an article that examined five EBs who had been enrolled in ESL programs for seven or more years but had not yet met the exit requirements due to failing the state test. This study employed narratives to gain insights into the experiences and perspectives of its participants. The five narratives included four story elements: parental participation, inconsistent bilingual/ESL programs, development of cognitive academic language proficiency, and emotions. Table 1 displays several studies related to ESL/bilingual students and their interaction with non-fiction texts in elementary school and middle grades.

Table 1

Some Studies of ESL/Bilingual Students and Non-Fiction Texts

School grades	Studies related to ESL/Bilingual students
1st-grade	Ranker, 2009
2nd-grade	Choi et al., 2022; Song and Buchanan, 2019
3rd-grade	Kelly, 2020
4th-grade	Cano and Ruiz, 2020; Graham, 2012
5th-grade	Graham, 2012; Jennings and Greenberg, 2009; Moses, 2014
Middle grades	Derrick, 2015; Fite, 2017; Giacona, 2007

Non-Fiction Texts Across Content Areas

Most non-fiction studies across content areas address the need to understand the readers' comprehension of texts, as well as the methods readers employ to interpret those texts (Davis et al., 2017; Symons, 2017; Wolff et al., 2013). According to Davis and colleagues (2017), the use of think-aloud techniques to achieve meaning-making procedures are beneficial for the comprehension of nonfiction books. The results of this study offer suggestions related to peer discussions and indicate a need for future studies on how young adolescents understand and gain knowledge from expository literature in the field of science.

Furthermore, Symons (2017) conducted a case study on science core subjects, investigating how support for emerging fourth-grade bilinguals can be found in evidence. This support can be provided by paying special attention to language elements commonly found in informative science texts. The study illustrates how a teacher can facilitate discussions about phrases in science texts that signal authors' degrees of doubt and enhance students' evaluation of evidence through the use of functional grammar metalanguage. An analysis of the instructional discourse highlights potential issues with this approach, as author-expressed levels of doubt do not automatically determine the strength of the evidence. Evaluating the relevance of the evidence to the claim is necessary for assessing its strength.

Moreover, middle school students can find nonfiction science texts difficult to understand (Wolff et al., 2013). Science instruction for EBs can be connected to cognates because there are similar academic terms in Spanish and English. For example, evaporation in English and "evaporación" in Spanish. According to preliminary findings, this approach is effective, inspires students, and may significantly improve their understanding of science texts. Wolff et al. (2013)

published an article explaining the Readorium software development process, an interactive web-based product created to help students understand science content.

Other studies point to the advantage of using social perspectives to expand on current knowledge about how readers interact with non-fiction texts (Knudson, 2018). According to Knudson (2018), the introduction of sociological theories highlights the importance of non-fiction collections in promoting social change at the individual and group levels. However, social change is inclusive to all school populations. While most researchers focused on the core subjects, others investigate special populations such as gifted students (Job & Coleman, 2016) or children with autism spectrum disorder (Davidson & Ellis Weismer, 2018) from culturally and linguistically diverse and economically disadvantaged families. Job & Coleman (2016) explore the new standards-based emphasis on reading nonfiction and the skills built by students' reading nonfiction. The authors place a strong emphasis on reading nonfiction books to develop a variety of analytical skills.

According to research, talented students, children, with autism, and children from varied cultural and linguistic origins may find nonfiction texts more engaging to their interests than fiction, and a support with comprehension skills (Davidson & Ellis Weismer, 2018; Job & Coleman, 2016). The study shows that when paired with scientific inquiry, nonfiction can reinforce past knowledge and enable students to learn how to classify and synthesize information.

A research study by Park (2010) studied a schoolbook club program for girls. The study included ethnographic methods and found that peer groups, social connections, and family networks were noted as crucial elements in student motivation to read non-fiction texts. Table 2 shows several studies on non-fiction texts across content areas.

Table 2

Studies on Non-Fiction Texts Across Content Areas

Content areas*	Studies
Science	Davis et al., 2017; Symons, 2017; Wolff et al., 2013
Social	Knudson, 2018
Gifted and Talented	Job and Coleman, 2016
Sped/Autism	Davidson and Ellis Weismer, 2018
Book Clubs	Park, 2010

* Content areas include interests related to school populations

Non-Fiction Texts Studies Related to Culturally Sustaining Practices

Culturally sustaining practices that support non-fiction texts in the classroom environment evolve as an ongoing cycle. Instruction using the CSP practices of respect allows students to share lived experiences honoring their diversity and identity (Paris & Alim, 2017). In addition, CSP validates students' language allowing translanguaging and community involvement. As a result of this practice, students achieved literacy growth. Figure 2 is the original art I created inspired by the continuum cycle of CSP.

Figure 2

Culturally Sustaining Practices That Support Non-Fiction Texts
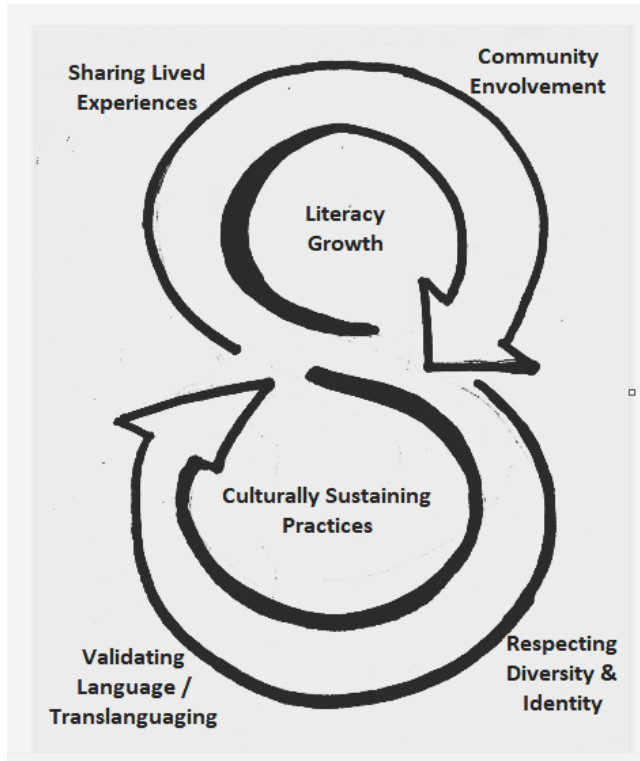
The need to share our experiences begins early and is supported by oral language communication. Many studies have noticed the connection between life experiences, language, respect for diversity, identity understanding, and literacy growth (Hà, & Đặng, 2022; Kganetso et al., 2023; Puzio et al., 2017). According to a study by Hà and Đặng (2022), non-fiction books support young readers' understanding of identity and cultural diversity. Authentic images engage children with the text content and writing styles, motivating students to write their own non-fiction stories (Hà, & Đặng, 2022; Kganetso et al., 2023).

Kganetso (2023) explored the writing of culturally sustaining informational texts with an ethnic group native to Southern Africa. This study investigated two types of historically significant informative texts that are procedural, instructional, and explanatory, created by students in Botswana. The genre elements used in the writing samples collected were the focus of the content analysis. The results showed that after completing the unit, children added more traits that were unique to each genre. Despite English being the primary language of teaching, many students wrote their texts in the Setswana language or code-meshed Setswana and English in the post-assessment. As a culturally sustaining practice, the researchers allowed the participants to create informational texts while considering students' culture and life experiences, achieving successful results in students' cognitive development (Kganetso et al., 2023). Although some recent studies successfully explored the role of CSP in instruction, others have uncovered implementation challenges associated with applications.

Creative Failures in CSP is an article by Puzio, Newcomer, Pratt, McNeely, Jacobs, and Hooker (2017) that describes the challenges of teachers while implementing CSP practices. Implementing CSP requires time, reflection, and, above all, good student relationships. To achieve CSP successfully, a partnership with students, their families, and the community is critical (Puzio et al., 2017).

Written by Paris (2012), the article CSP: A Needed Change in Stance, Terminology, and Practice, describes the origins of CSP seventeen years ago, when Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) published the landmark article "Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy." According to Paris (2012), the phrase "culturally sustaining" means that instruction must be more than just relevant. The author's explanation reveals deep insight and understanding of Gloria Ladson-Billings' (1995) Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. According to Paris, it is essential to be sensitive

to young people's cultural experiences and practices (Paris, 2012; Román et al., 2022). CSP supports young people in maintaining their communities' linguistic and cultural diversity while providing access to dominant cultural diversity.

Inspired by Paris (2012) and Ladson-Billings (1995), Román (2022) and colleagues wrote an article about the Latinx population that explores CSP implementation within Latinx communities. To engage these groups, the study examined environmental education programs with Latinx children in the United States that specifically use culturally sustaining methods (Román et al., 2022). These frameworks go beyond simple categorical notions of "*Latinidad*" in environmental education, and toward an in-depth understanding of what it means to identify and promote environmental literacy in these varied groups.

Language plays a vital role in our identity, which is essential for students to be successful cognitively. Several studies explained the importance of integrating language skills during classroom instruction (Machado, 2017; Troyan et al., 2021). According to Troyan (2021) and colleagues, the teacher's capacity to integrate language and content received a great deal of attention in research on teacher expertise in immersion education. An example of this integration is the use of translanguaging by African American students. The focus of the study was to use translanguaging design to implement systemic functional linguistic (SFL) knowledge (Troyan et al., 2021). Machado's (2017) study provides evidence that teachers support and maintain the various literacy practices of young students. Theoretical and empirical research in the areas of biliteracy, translanguaging, and culturally sustaining education were utilized in this study. According to Machado (2017), the study's findings demonstrated that students performed significantly better when comparing languages and literacy practices, hybridizing literacy

practices, and using children's linguistic and cultural vocabularies. Table 3 illustrates research studies related to culturally sustaining practices with non-fiction texts.

Table 3

Research Studies Related to Culturally Sustaining Practices With Non-Fiction Texts

Study participants	Studies related to culturally sustaining practices
Primary school Asian students	Hà, & Đặng, 2022
Ethnic group native to Southern Africa	Kganetso et al., 2023
Teachers and students' narratives	Puzio et al., 2017
Latinx small group	Román et al., 2022
African American students	Troyan et al., 2021
ESL/Bilingual elementary children	Machado, 2017

Summary

This chapter presented the theoretical framework for the current study and provided an in-depth summary of the existing literature about emergent bilingual students and non-fiction texts. It also addressed culturally sustaining instruction for EBs. The literature review included studies to address a variety of methods and instructional practices which were researched to investigate culturally sustaining practices for EBs and their use during reading non-fiction texts.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The previous chapter provided a theoretical framework and summary of existing research related to the current study. A comprehensive literature review included CSP, benefits of reading non-fiction texts for EBs, and research studies related to both of these topics. This chapter describes the methodology used in the study.

The purpose of my research is to describe how fifth-grade emergent bilingual students participating in culturally sustaining instruction use language before, during, and after reading non-fiction books/texts in English (Paris & Alim, 2017). Furthermore, this qualitative study describes culturally sustaining instructional best practices for fifth-grade bilinguals on an elementary campus.

Research questions guiding the study were: How do emergent fifth-grade bilingual students use language when reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English? How does culturally sustaining instruction relate to students' use of language while reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English?

Language and sociocultural preferences shed light into students' choices and ideas (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In order to answer these questions, a descriptive qualitative study design was utilized to understand in detail how emergent bilingual students participating in culturally sustaining instruction use language when reading and writing non-fiction texts/books in the English language. The planning, methods, and results of this study are influenced by my teaching experiences, and philosophical presumptions (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Rationale for Qualitative Research Design

This qualitative research study focuses on a phenomenon in an educational scenario. The focal point of investigation is how fifth graders use language when reading and writing non-fiction texts in English before, during, and after culturally sustaining instruction. The natural setting is the classroom, where a descriptive research design is recommended for language studies (Merriam, 1998; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Miles et al., 2020). Qualitative research usually takes place in small groups where participant choices purposely lead to answering the research questions (Saldaña, 2014). For example, in this study, students were working in small groups facilitated by the teacher, me, in order to help understand language use practices when participants read or write about non-fiction texts in English. The researcher used qualitative methods to describe procedures, to observe and gather data, and analyze or report outcomes.

A qualitative research approach allows exploration in detail specifically how emergent bilingual students use language during engagement in genuine interactions with non-fiction texts. The information gathered from activities in an authentic learning settings allowed me to observe, gather detailed information, and conduct an in-depth analysis supporting complex understanding of this phenomenon.

Rationale for Descriptive Design

The chosen methodological framework for this research is a descriptive qualitative study (Creswell, 2015; Creswell & Poth, 2018) informed by a social constructivism interpretative framework. A descriptive research design is best for describing observable behaviors and experiences of individual learners in language acquisition (Miles et al., 2020).

For this descriptive qualitative research study, the researcher set specific boundaries to observe a small group of bilingual fifth-grade students with language usage before, during, and

after reading non-fiction texts within the context of CSP (Creswell, 2015). In the first week, focus was primarily on observing language during reading, while in the second week, attention shifted to examining language usage during writing. As a qualitative researcher, my personal aim is to comprehensively understand and interpret the students' experiences with depth and detail (Miles et al., 2020).

Upcoming sections will provide insights into my role as a researcher, the study's context, the participants involved, the data collection methods employed, observations conducted, student-teacher conferences, the collection of artifacts, and the outlined plans for data analysis.

Positionality

My theoretical approach resonates with language, sociocultural and constructivist theories. I prefer descriptive research studies and recognize that the interpretation of information is shaped by our own personal, cultural, and historical experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). As the classroom teacher students participating in the study, I built rapport between participants through a positive relationship that was open, respectful, sympathetic, and caring. In my practice as an educator-researcher, I maintained a learner-focused attitude. As a bilingual individual, I closely examined a fifth-grade bilingual small group to observe, describe, and understand the phenomenon in a natural environment (Fairclough, 1998). While positioning myself in the research, I acknowledged how participants interpreted understanding of non-fiction text.

Creswell and Poth (2018) explained that the researcher's beliefs guided their actions toward the study in qualitative research design. I seek an understanding of the world around me, looking for complex views instead of simple ideas. My goal as a researcher was to address the process (Creswell & Poth, 2018) of social interactions among the participants. As a researcher, I

characteristically indicate my philosophical assumptions and interpretive framework in alignment with social constructivism.

Dual language beliefs guide my actions as a researcher, and because of my cultural background as a Puerto Rican, I bring a different view to this research. As a Latinx woman, mother, wife, educator, and graduate student, I understand sacrifices parents make for high quality education and future family successes. My parents modeled examples of the importance of knowledge and supported my growth. I was the first of four children from a mother born in New York and a dad born in Puerto Rico but raised in Chicago and influenced by the culture.

For my father, growing up in Chicago was challenging due to the disparities in racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. Segregated schools were a common part of society as was marginalization due to darker skin color. My father's siblings had lighter skin, so they went to a different school. He never understood this discrepancy or the perceived differences. As an educator, I am motivated to improve conditions so that other children will hopefully never experience the injustice my dad and others experienced due to historical discrimination.

Nevertheless, my parents sacrificed themselves to give us an outstanding bilingual education because they understood the importance of speaking two languages and the implications of bilingualism for our future. As a result, I grew up as a simultaneous emergent bilingual student. As a child, I participated in Spanish and English interactions at home because my parents were both raised on the mainland. Both languages were supported in conversation.

I started my teaching career as a teacher's instructional assistant approximately two decades ago. A semester later, I obtained a temporary permit to be a teacher. I became the second family member to receive a college diploma. Feeling grateful for the support from my family, I began teaching kindergarten children on the island of Puerto Rico how to read and write. Then, I

received my regular teaching license and began studying to validate my teaching certification in Texas. I moved to Texas with the desire and willingness to help other children.

Moving to Texas began a different life with opportunities for my family which provided a way for me to continue studying. That passion for what I do motivated me to teach in a low-economic Title 1 school while continuing to grow professionally. I am a bilingual teacher constantly looking for ways to continue learning and supporting my students' academic growth. My life experience, linguistic expertise, constructivist approach, and background position me to understand this special demographic and to support their voice in a global modern community.

Research Context

The school district where this study took place is committed to providing quality education since it was founded in 1882. The district is located about 25 miles North of Dallas and Fort Worth; it encompassed approximately 85 square miles and contained all or parts of 18 cities, communities, or major developments. The district's mission statement is 'Empowering lifelong learners to be engaged citizens who positively impact their local and global community.' The bilingual education program provided by the district is called Dual Language. In this dual language model, the languages of English and Spanish are used for instruction. The program goal is for the students to become bilingual and biliterate. The district provides both one-way and two-way dual language versions. Both dual language methods foster cross-cultural competence, excellent academic achievement, and the development of bilingualism and biliteracy.

Bilingual teachers in this public school district are certified by the state of Texas. They are fluent and biliterate in English and Spanish. On average, the bilingual teachers in this school district have ten years of experience.

Access to Research Site

The research setting in this study was my own classroom in an elementary school in North Texas. The state of Texas identified the school campus as a low-economic-status elementary school receiving Title I federal funds. The demographics of the school campus is Hispanic 63.7%, White 22%, and African American 10.8%. The school has approximately 580 students as of the 2020–2021 academic year, with 66% of kids thought to be at risk of dropping out of school. Bilingual and English language programs represent 45% of student enrollment.

The study took place in a classroom located on the lower floor of Lexicon Elementary School. This room was tornado-safe; it had no windows, and two doors. The principal door connected to the fifth and fourth-grade hallway, and a middle door connected to a computer lab. Fifth-grade students' classrooms were across the hallway, which made it very convenient and accessible for students to gather in small groups. All data was collected during regular instruction and normal classroom hours. This study used pseudonyms to protect students' identities and ensure confidentiality.

Research Sample

The emerging bilingual fifth graders participating in the study were a small group of five students (four boys and one girl) who received daily literacy instruction. A sample criteria approach was deemed most appropriate for this study (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam, 1998; Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). In addition, because research considered participants' heritage language (Spanish) to foster understanding, participants needed to be EBs.

Several factors influenced selection of the sample. First, the fifth-grade participants had Spanish as their first language and were enrolled in a bilingual program, which provided them with instruction in both Spanish and English. Second, students were already involved in small

bilingual literacy instructional groups, and this study was integrated into a daily instructional plan. Pupils were recommended for supplemental instruction by a teacher to enhance English literacy skills. Students were avid readers who benefited from intensive support and carefully sequenced leveled books (Fountas, 2021) to further advance specific targeted literacy skills. Lastly, the researcher had prior teaching experience with this specific group.

Participant Selection

I employed a convenience sampling technique to select student participants, following the criteria outlined by Bloomberg and Volpe (2018). Potential participants were chosen based on specific criteria established by the author for purposes of the current study. The first criterion stipulated that participants had to be EBs. This ensured the sample focused on students with a specific language background. The second criterion allowed participation to be open and optional for all students whose first or heritage language was Spanish. This criterion broadened inclusivity by welcoming students with Spanish language backgrounds to participate. The third criterion was my qualification as a teacher for this population. My expertise in teaching EBs supported effective delivery of instruction with the selected participants.

The study, conducted in May 2023, spanned a two-week period, and involved my regular fifth-grade bilingual instructional students, whom I had been working with as part of my standard educational practices since the beginning of the school year. All students in my small group were invited to and participated in the study. Participants were children between ten and eleven years old. The group consisted of four boys and one girl of Hispanic heritage (Hornberger & Cummins, 2003). The sample consisted of five Hispanic bilinguals receiving literacy instruction as part of the students' daily instructional plan. I created lesson plans focusing on culturally sustaining instruction to support students understanding of non-fiction text in English.

During the lessons, they were encouraged to access background knowledge, combining prior history with new experiences in a context related to non-fiction English texts. For the purposes of confidentiality in this research, names of participants or places are pseudonymous to preserve confidentiality (Joyner et al., 2018).

Procedures for Participant Recruitment

For this qualitative study, recruited students were five Spanish-speaking students currently enrolled in the 5th-grade bilingual small group class roster. A letter describing the research study in Spanish and English was sent home in the students' communication folders. This letter had contact information for individuals interested in more information and the research location. I then contacted each parent who returned the letter of interest via phone to address any questions related to the study, including voluntary nature of the study and that there would be no penalty for students whose parents chose for them not to participate. The consent letters were returned by the students in their communication folders by the parents who chose their child to participate.

Data was collected due to students providing properly signed informed consent and assent forms. Letters of consent from parents, recruitment letters, and assent forms were provided in both languages. Letters related to study approval, along with informed consent, can be found in the Appendix section.

The consent letter summarized the research study and the criteria used by the subject to determine his/her eligibility. For example, emergent bilingual students, grade level, and age. In addition, the time or other commitment required of the participants included the instruction frequency and duration as a normal education practice. I listed my contact information and that of my Texas Woman's University Dissertation Chair on both the letter of consent sent to the

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parents of minor participants and the letter of consent sent to the participants. Additionally, the letter specified the research location of the classroom located on the school's lower floor, which was a tornado-safe place.

Research Design

This section describes the research design, which includes systematic documentation of students' responses to existing educational practices related to how fifth-grade emergent bilingual students used language before, during, and after reading non-fiction books/texts. Each data source for the study, including student artifacts, was part of the regular classroom instruction. The distinguishing characteristic of participants was the extensive documentation of their response to the instruction. The following data was collected during two weeks of daily 60–70-minute small group instruction.

Data Sources and Collection Procedures

Rationale for Data Collection Sources

I collected data through a combination of lesson plans, teacher observational field notes, conferences with students, and analysis of students' artifacts. I consistently documented detailed observations of language use on a daily basis. This approach was essential in the context of this qualitative descriptive design study, which specifically investigated how students employ language when reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English.

Therefore, descriptive, and detailed information to support in-depth analysis of language use was needed. The data gathered for this study was treated methodically based on past examples (Seliger & Shohamy, 1995). As a result of this careful data collection, I was able to focus on the specific language use practices of participants each day. This data collection

provided accurate information to answer the research questions. I collected data in the form of class artifacts, lesson plans, teacher observational notes, and conferring notes.

Data Sources

In the next section, I describe the plan for utilization of different sources in regard to data collection. Data sources consisted of lesson plans, observational field notes, conferring with students, and photos or scans of students' artifacts.

Lesson Plans/Curriculum Documents. All curriculum and planning documents were collected and entered into the data management system. This included lesson plans and copies of the texts of the book children read. Detailed lesson plans were located in Appendix B.

Teacher Observational Notes/Field Notes. Next, I regularly observed student language use and documented how they responded before, during, and after instruction with non-fiction texts. The observations were labeled "field notes" (Merriam, 2015; Miles et al., 2020) which described how students learned using language strengths or translanguaging, cultural experiences, and background knowledge in relation to answering research questions. As students engaged in instruction, I recorded my own voice and listened to the audio later to recall details from what I heard of students' discussions or interactions. This method proved useful, along with a notebook where I wrote bullet points of student behaviors and language as they talked, read, and wrote (Miles et al., 2020).

During the school day, observations were a routine part of instruction and documentation of student progress. After school each day, I listened to recorded audio voice and added specific information relevant to the research questions to the field notes for the participating students. The names of the study participants were removed from their field notes before they were entered into the data management system, ATLAS.ti.

Student Conferences. As part of our regular 60–70-minute instructional practices, I often held conferences with students to discuss their work. These conferences involved asking questions, clarifying misconceptions, and providing constructive or affirmative feedback on writing or reading. During conferencing sessions, I posed open-ended questions (Seliger & Shohamy, 1995) to encourage students to express themselves freely and in a less formal manner. Such as: Why is Bren Bataclan giving away paintings? How do you think Bren is earning money now? and What is the main goal?

Short conferences, lasting 15 to 20 minutes, were a regular part of classroom routines for all students. While I held conferences with certain students, others engaged in independent reading and writing as part of our standard curriculum. During sessions, I took meticulous notes and concurrently recorded my voice to describe students' quotes and the responses of participants during their conferences, which constituted an integral part of the data collection process. After students shared their thoughts, I requested a brief pause to record my voice, capturing their remarks for future reference, analysis, and reflection. Before the notes were entered into the data management system, the names of study participants were carefully removed.

In addition, during the first week, I conferenced with students about reading goals, asked questions to monitor understanding of texts, and wrote notes about students' language practices (before, during, and after reading the text). As a researcher, my aim was to understand students' learning process of the biography text genre.

During the second week, as part of the students' conference time, they discussed their experiences with expository non-fiction texts, shared their writing samples, and reflected on ways to enhance their literacy skills. Each student had a total of seven 15-minute conferences, with the exception of Michael and Willy, who had eight 20-minute conferences. The extended

duration for Michael and Willy was necessary because they required additional support to address issues related to English letter-sound relationships. I diligently documented conferences, which focused on students' writing practices before, during, and after their engagement with the text. The purpose was to gain a comprehensive understanding of how students learned the expository text genre and the author's intent.

Finally, we ended the conferring process by stating a plan for the next conferring day. Eventually, I uploaded conferring notes to ATLAS.ti to better inform my data coding process.

Photos or Scans of Artifacts. As students engaged in normal classroom instruction, photos were often taken to document the learning process and celebrate student growth. For the purpose of this research study, photos or scans of artifacts were taken to document students' language use while reading non-fiction books/texts. Students' artifacts provided crucial data sources for my qualitative research study. Only the work of the students participating in the study is present in any photos used for the study. No photographs of children participants were taken. A digital camera was used only for the study. It was not hooked up to Wi-Fi. Photos were then uploaded to my laptop and password-protected prior to transfer to the data management system.

In addition, each student provided five artifacts corresponding to a written response after reading to check for concept understanding, patterns, and more. The first artifact was a short-written response about their learning from the biography genre utilized during instructional practices. The second artifact was an autobiography of the participants. The third artifact was students' notes of unfamiliar words.

Students created the fourth artifact when they read the non-fiction text of the expository type in the second week. Children wrote to construct a paragraph describing ideas about what they thought was the author's message in the text, integrating their own experiences. The last

artifact was a painting created by students with a note at the bottom that showed students' voices related to their learning experience throughout the study. Students had the opportunity to collaborate and share ideas or connections socially. I observed, made notes, and conferred with students while they created artifacts or afterward.

Research Timeline

Saldaña (2011) explained that a qualitative researcher sets time limits and budget limits. Therefore, my study consisted of 60-70 minutes of instruction per day, five times per week, including 15-20 minutes of conferring with students individually within the time of instruction. Time was restricted due to scheduling, and students already had a structured routine and a risk-free predictable environment to support maximum achievement. In addition, building trust with the students and being familiar with the groups' dynamics was beneficial to understanding the student's learning process. The study lasted for a total of two weeks.

During the first week of the study, I delivered the lesson and wrote more notes to analyze later to while making revisions for the second week. Then, I implemented revised instruction and adjusted as needed. A plan for organizing student conferences was essential. First, I needed to be structured to focus on one observational feature at a time. To limit and focus my observational field notes, I planned during the first week and made observational field notes about the reading process. In the second week, my notes were about the writing process. Lastly, artifacts were short written responses about what they learned during instructional practices, representing student experiences, and learning growth.

The study was held in the month of May 2023 and was completed in two weeks. The structured data plan timeline is explained in this section, as shown below in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Data Collection Timeline

Data Collection Timeline

First Week — **Biography Genre** — Second Week — **Author's Purpose**

Focus on oral discussions and reading practices according to lesson plans.

Students conferences about reading goals, language use, and next steps.

Focus on writing practices and student explanations related to writing according to lesson plans.

Students conferences about the writing process, language use throughout writing, and next steps.

Instruction

The instruction occurred as part of the student's existing daily instructional plan. Students met with me for up to five times per week for 60-70 minutes. During this time, we developed language practices to improve students' reading levels and non-fiction text understanding.

The texts used during the study were part of the LLI curriculum from Fountas and Pinnell. The LLI curriculum stands for Leveled Literacy Intervention, created by Fountas & Pinnell. This curriculum helps advance literacy skill of students still developing proficiency in reading. I used most of the texts from this curriculum and LLI lessons adapted by the publisher for emergent bilingual needs. Fountas and Pinnell (2021) supported the integration of other materials, explaining that the reader's goal is to use all sources of information simultaneously.

Therefore, integrating TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills Standards), the ELPS (English Language Proficiency Standards), Translanguaging practices, and Culturally

Sustaining practices such as choice, validation of student language and background knowledge was what worked best for my students. Lesson plans were systematic and explicit, using the SIOP template, which was ideal for bilingual students' comprehension, displaying the standards, objectives, and lesson cycle. Instructional lesson plans can be found in Appendix B.

In the beginning, students chose from pre-selected books to read based on their interests, encompassing different genres such as biography, expository, and narrative. Students needed ample practice with expository or narrative texts (Song & Buchanan, 2019), which is why they were included in the text selection. Lessons could be extended for a day or two, depending on students' needs, and extra time was provided for activities or artifacts. Conferring with students was integrated during the lesson, giving students the opportunity to express their thinking and justify ideas or language usage. This extension also applied to complex non-fiction texts that might have taken longer to read, understand, or explore, broadening their knowledge by researching online topics related to the text on a website.

In addition, I initially explained the lesson objectives, followed by the presentation of the leveled texts for students to choose a text of their preference. Then, I began with a selected word study which was generated in collaboration with students and related to the chosen text. Next, I explained the lesson's goals, and I modeled the day's mini lesson for the students to observe (I do). Then, during the instruction, I proceeded with guided practice (we do). Lastly, after the instruction, students practiced the skills independently (you do), and I conferred with them while they worked independently. At the end of the lesson, students shared, reflected, had an informal evaluation, or created an artifact. The following Table 4 explains the pacing of the instruction lesson sequence.

Table 4

Instruction Lesson Sequence Pacing

Instruction lesson sequence	Pacing
Warm-Up/Word Study/Vocabulary	10-15 minutes
Presentation/Modeling (I DO)/ Mini Lesson	10 minutes
Guided Practice (We DO) /Active Engagement	15 minutes
Independent Practice (You DO)/Conferring/Small group work	15-20 minutes
Assessment (Formative Evaluation) Reflections/Closure/ Share/Feedback/Extend/Reteach	10 minutes

Data Management System

Because the volume and complexity of data collection was substantial (Creswell, 2015), I used the ATLAS.ti program and a password-protected Google Drive to gather data throughout. ATLAS.ti was used as a data management and analysis tool. All data was handled and processed through ATLAS.ti software while secured against unauthorized access. All data was encrypted, managed, and stored by SOC-compliant data center providers with all relevant ISO certifications, including, but not limited to, ISO 27001 and ISO 27018.

I organized data in Google Drive and ATLAS.ti, by establishing a labeling system. Employing the data management approach (Creswell & Poth, 2018), I ensured data security with passwords while maintaining my access. The password-protected Google folder facilitated a thorough data examination. I set up the data in Google Drive spreadsheets, utilized pseudonyms for the study participants, and securely stored the hard copy document that links their names to the pseudonyms in a separate locked filing cabinet. Additionally, materials such as field notes,

observations, conferences with students, and artifacts were kept confidentially in password-protected Google folders or locked file cabinets, categorized by week and participants.

Data Analysis

Once the research began, I began gathering data and making notes. Then, I coded data as I gathered it, categorizing according to participants' responses. Additionally, I divided information into emerging categories, such as language practices, translanguaging, culturally sustaining practices, and others, as necessary. This initial data analysis was supported by meticulous research notes, the observations of the phenomena, and the student conferences.

The data analysis consisted of first-cycle coding and second-cycle coding. I employed initial coding or open coding, where I generated initial codes to categorize data into broad concepts. This helped to identify patterns and gain a preliminary understanding of data in the first cycle (Saldaña, 2011). This provided insight into the mechanisms of my study. During the second coding cycle, I began to understand context in which language occurs before, during, and after reading non-fiction text, and identified patterns to form themes using process coding.

I utilized triangulation (Saldaña, 2011) as illustrated on Figure 4 to verify results, which validated my findings by demonstrating that at least three independent measures concurred or, at the very least, did not contradict final conclusions. Additionally, I used the triangulation data analysis process described by Saldaña (2011) to understand the phenomena.

Figure 4

Data Triangulation
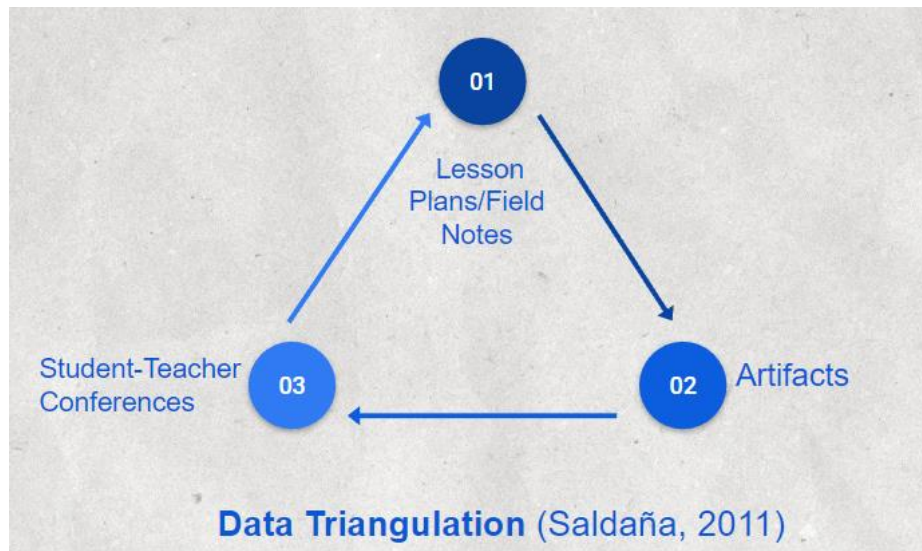
Furthermore, I sought validity by triangulating data from three distinct sources: lesson

plans/observational field notes, artifacts, and conferences. I carefully observed and listened to

students as they discussed topics related to non-fiction texts, culture, and personal experiences.

Following discussions, I engaged in individual conferences with students to explore how they

constructed meaning in the writing process. To ensure comprehensive documentation of our

interactions, I maintained a daily practice of recording detailed descriptions during and after each

study session. This process involved not only capturing our conversations but also dedicating

time after each class to review my notes.

In addition, I collected students' writing responses and artifacts related to their reading

experiences, which served as essential data for analysis. The primary objective was to identify

recurring patterns and insights that could inform the direction of my study. To gain a deeper

understanding of the results, I conducted an analysis of students' conference responses alongside

transcripts of notes, both during and after our conversations. This comprehensive approach

allowed consideration of various aspects in reference to data and coding processes, providing valuable insights (Miles et al., 2020).

As I gathered data, I deeply engaged with it, aiming to identify any immediate insights and to maintain ongoing reflection throughout the study. This active approach aligns with the recommendation of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2011), who suggest that researchers should initiate the coding process as data is collected, rather than waiting. By doing so, the vast amount of information is streamlined into more digestible and meaningful segments, making the subsequent analysis more manageable.

I utilized a table to organize the study data, encompassing students' language and cultural practices in reading non-fiction texts, writing, and various aspects, including their emotions. To establish these initial codes, I began by creating paper copies of all the data, including lesson plans, transcripts of field notes, student artifacts, and records of teacher-student conferences. Next, I conducted a comprehensive review of all data collection materials, ensuring codes were aligned to help answer research questions. Specifically, I examined how students use language in reading and writing, and how culturally sustaining practices assist in comprehending non-fiction texts in English. This is why, for instance, some codes were described as culturally sustaining practices, including the ways in which students interacted with lessons, peers, and me. Each interaction was unique, and I identified instances when students made autonomous choices that shaped their own learning, among other practices.

Throughout this process, I made notes in the margins of the paper copies and highlighted elements that drew my attention, as suggested by Miles et al. (2020), thus enhancing familiarity with the data. Additionally, I identified patterns throughout the data, becoming well-acquainted with them, ultimately leading to the creation of these initial 28 codes."

This comprehensive review encompassed reading and review of lesson plans, field notes, artifacts, and transcripts from conferences with students (which were systematically organized). For example, artifacts were categorized by students and arranged chronologically, beginning with the writing samples from the first week and concluding with the painting artifacts in the last week. The primary goal was to develop a thorough understanding of the content.

Table 5 provides a visual representation of the preliminary findings of the study. It illustrates the initial set of 28 codes that have been derived from the data analysis. I printed this table in color and laminated it to create a comprehensive and user-friendly codebook for the first cycle of coding, ensuring consistency and transparency in my analysis. The codes are organized by color, and I assigned numbers for easy reference to quotes in the data. This color and number system serves as the foundational framework for understanding and interpreting the multifaceted aspects of the research.

Table 5

Organizing Data: Initial Codes

Coding Groups (28 codes)	
Groups of codes by categories	
Row 1	Row 2
1-Oral Language development: self-corrections	15-Non-fiction text: interpretation
2-Oral language development: learning	16-Oral language: applying/learning new vocabulary
3-Oral language: language fillers or discourse markers	17-Oral language: expressions/feelings
4-Features of primary language: reading/writing	18-Oral language: fluency/ clear message
5-Translanguaging practices: reading/writing	19-Written language: vocabulary acquisition (applying new vocabulary)
6-Written language expressions: voice (expressions/ feelings)	20-Written sentence development: sentence structure
7-Written sentence development communicates a clear message	21-Rubric score level 2
8-Written sentence development: exhibit self-corrections	22-Rubric score level 3
9-Cultural practices: interactions/collaboration	23-Cultural practices: connections/reflections
10-Cultural practices: sharing experiences/ideas (self, family & community)	24-Cultural practices: clarification/help seeking
11-Cultural practices: identity / belonging / uniqueness	25-Cultural practices: validating choice
12-Cultural practices: diversity appreciation	26-Cultural practices: use of slangs
13-Non-fiction text: lesson understanding	27-Non-fiction structure awareness
14-Non-fiction text: misconceptions	28-Non-fiction text: details/quoting/text reference

First Cycle

The coding process began after I collected the first week of data by establishing codes for the study data in the first coding cycle. These codes added symbolic meaning to specific portions of the data (Miles et al., 2020). I used the initial codes to categorize similar data related to the research questions of my study for easy access. As a qualitative researcher, I considered patterns as representations of predictable human behaviors and actions (Miles et al., 2020; Saldaña, 2011). The data consisted of lesson plans, conferences with the students, student artifacts, and observational field notes.

I developed a color and number system to highlight my conceptual frameworks and research questions in the first coding cycle, as illustrated in Table 5. This study's conceptual framework focused on Translanguaging and CSP theories, and the research questions:

-How do emergent fifth-grade bilingual students use language when reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English?

-How does culturally sustaining instruction relate to students' use of language while reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English?

To enhance the organization and clarity of my study data, I implemented a color-coding system. Within this system, I designated blue to signify English reading language, with dark blue denoting writing. Red was employed to trace elements of the primary language, which manifested in both reading and writing concerning non-fiction texts. Furthermore, I utilized purple to represent translanguaging, reflecting the amalgamation of named languages. The color green was exclusively allocated for aspects linked to culturally sustaining practices.

In addition, I expanded my coding to encompass all relevant data, which included not only verbal expressions, but also non-verbal cues and contextual information related to non-fiction texts. This expansion was represented by the color yellow. I conscientiously refined the coding system, eventually grouping codes into more specific categories. This refinement resulted in a more manageable set of 14 distinct codes within the ATLAS.ti software, as visually illustrated in Figure 5.

Furthermore, ATLAS.ti organized code distribution by documents, allowing me to identify frequently repeated codes. The code distribution on the right side of Figure 5 illustrates codes used during student conferences. This process enabled me to effectively manage and organize the coding process, making it easier to sort, categorize, and retrieve coded segments. It also facilitated a more focused analysis of participants' actions and interactions within the study's rich dataset, promoting coherence.

Figure 5

Grouping Initial Codes
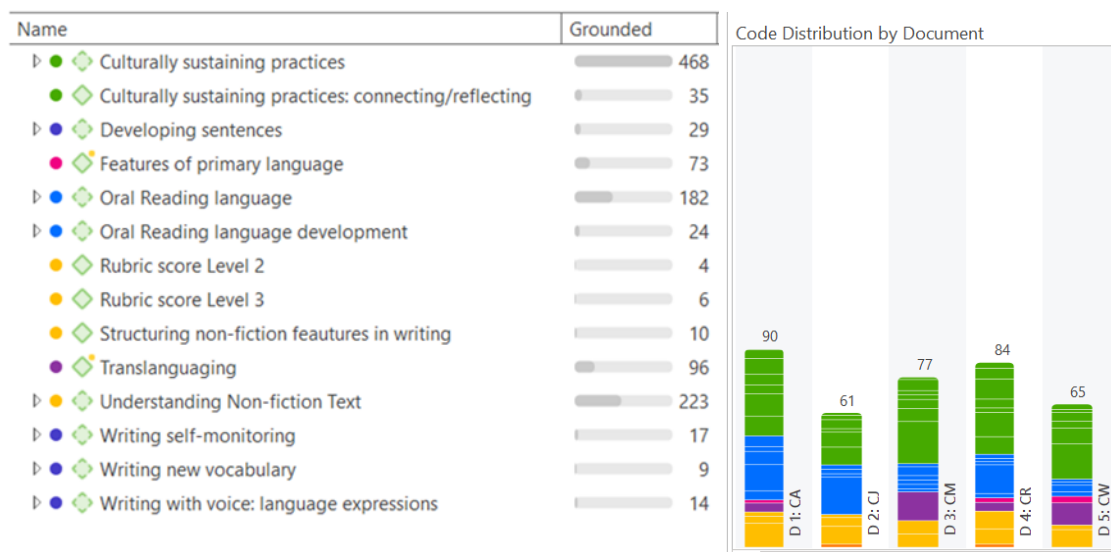
I employed initial or open coding during the first cycle. Code definitions were created by handling the process codes in manageable chunks. Definitions of the codes were established by collecting information from the transcripts of conferences. Data was compared to the codes at various points throughout the study to confirm the intended definition for a particular code meaning was not altered (Creswell, 2015).

I created a table to specify the definitions of the codes to apply them consistently, as recommended by Miles et al.(2020). Subsequently, I further split them into significant units to distinguish between comparable codes.

In addition, I took notes to enhance my comprehension and guide my forth coming actions. Figure 6 exemplifies the coding cycle starting with the first cycle, then second cycle, and lastly, dividing the data by themes.

Figure 6

Data Analysis Coding Cycle
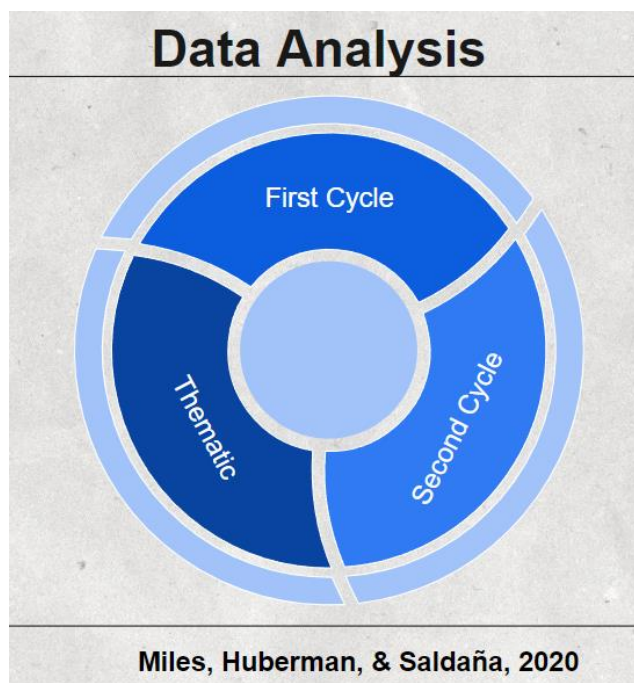
As I examined the data, it became apparent that some codes were overly broad, while others were excessively specific. In this instance, I reexamined data, selecting specific words, phrases, or quotes and employing color-coded labels for coding purposes. In response to this realization, I revisited research questions to guide the process of code refinement. Progressively, I constructed another table, regrouping codes that specifically documented the coding system, and condensed information into five categories as illustrated in Table 6 below.

Table 6

Grouping Codes into Categories

Language	Practices
Language flexibility practices (R & W)	Students culturally sustaining practices
Language autonomy practices (R & W)	Non-fiction text: interpretation, structure awareness, and understanding
Validating language/ Translanguaging	

Moreover, I initiated the search for discernible patterns, recurring themes, and emerging trends within the data. I frequently revisited previous tables, contemplating ways to improve the organization. For example, I separated non-fiction text as a distinct group initially, but I later realized it was more integrated into language practices and culturally sustaining practices. This shift in thinking marked a transition from process coding to a more analytical approach in the second coding cycle.

Second Cycle

The creation of themes occurred during the second cycle of coding. I used process coding to analyze my second cycle. As described by Miles et al.(2020), process coding is applied to represent both observable and conceptual actions within the data and utilizes gerunds ("-ing" words). These typical behaviors and patterns help validate the information gathered from observations, as outlined by Miles (2020). Process coding was the selected technique for the second coding cycle because my study's questions involve answering "how" EBs practice language and culturally sustaining instruction. The specific sequence of process coding allowed me to group similar codes into more manageable clusters, topics, or concepts. This process resulted in smaller more significant data components which were simpler to interpret.

I coded students' transcripts and conferring field notes using Saldaña's (2011) method for first-cycle coding of process codes. After creating the process codes, I began the second coding cycle by classifying the codes. I then developed themes from the categories, bringing organization and context to my study questions. Table 7 provides a visual representation of the meticulous organization of grouped themes, offering valuable insights into the underlying structure of the data and the relationships between language practices and culturally sustaining practices. In this table, I presented the themes that resulted from the data analysis, with the central column displaying the codes I consolidated from the initial cycle into my final fifth themes, and the rightmost column showing the count of data entries for each code groups.

Table 7

Second Cycle Coding

Response to research questions	Themes	Code groups	Number of entries
RQ1 Language Practices	Translanguaging inquiry reading discussions	Oral language flexibility: negotiating word meaning, text structure awareness, applying context cues, language fillers and flexibility	206
		Oral language autonomy: expressions/feelings, fluency goals development, participating/collaborating with peers	96
		Non-fiction text: interpretation	63
	Fluidly integrated linguistic written resources and vocabulary	Written language flexibility: applying new vocabulary, exhibit self-corrections	82
		Written language autonomy: applying note taking techniques, self-corrections, and self-monitoring development	46
		Written language: expressing voice	14
		Non-fiction text: features in writing, structure awareness, details/quoting/text reference	10
RQ2 Culturally Sustaining Instructional Practices	Validation of autonomous flexible translanguaging	Validating language/translanguaging choice, slang, interactions: clarifying/help seeking, and sharing experiences, (self/family/community).	269
	Demonstration of self-identity and belonging	Cultural sustaining practices: choice, identity, belonging, uniqueness, collaborating with peers	136
	School Community and Diversity	Cultural sustaining practices: connections/reflections (Rubric score 2)	39 229

Response to research questions	Themes	Code groups	Number of entries
		Non-fiction text: lesson understanding (Rubric score 3), structure awareness	

Additionally, I constantly referred back to the research questions, dissecting them into categories to ensure my data answered these questions. ATLAS.ti, a program for organizing, analyzing, and visualizing qualitative data, was used to input codes and their definitions from students' artifacts, my observational field notes, and conference transcripts. I categorized materials by topic, identifying developing trends and themes to support data organization and analysis.

In this qualitative research, the second coding cycle goes beyond the initial phase to reveal meaningful patterns and themes in the data. This approach provides deeper insights into the research questions, with a specific focus on how emergent bilingual fifth graders utilize their language practices. The example below highlights the use of translanguaging in culturally sustaining instructional contexts to extract meaning from non-fiction texts. Figure 7 illustrates an example of second-cycle coding using the ATLAS.ti data system.

Figure 7

Example of Second Cycle Coding
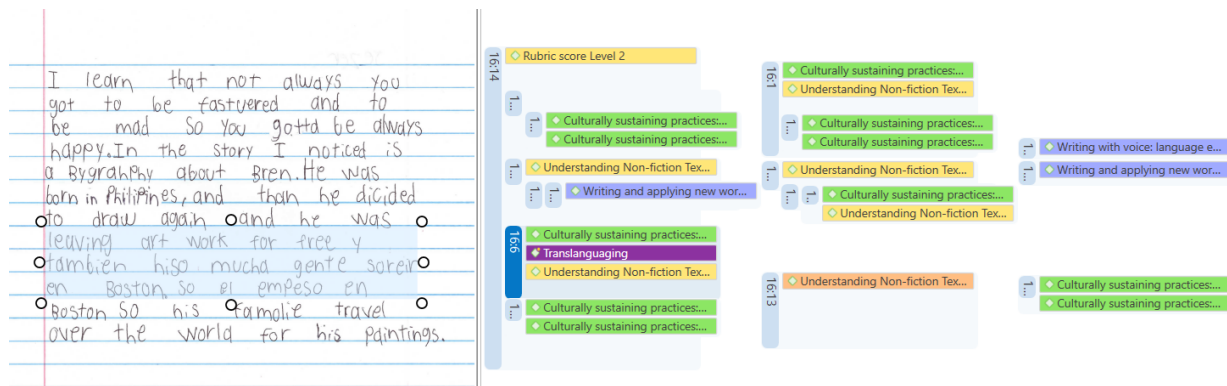
I observed distinct patterns while using ATLAS.ti. Students exhibited multiple code patterns related to language development through reading and writing about non-fiction texts.

These patterns included translanguaging during inquiry discussions. Before and during reading, students were actively negotiating the meaning of words and accessing knowledge of text features. After reading, students autonomously applied context cues, set goals independently, engaged in independent rereading, and actively participated in collaborative discussions. Furthermore, before and during the writing process, students had validation for flexible use of written language by fluidly integrated linguistic resources and vocabulary, applying note-taking techniques. After writing, they engaged in self-monitoring, revising, and self-correcting errors. Additionally, students consistently expressed their voices in their writing.

In the context of CSP, I identified three major patterns related to the second research question. The first pattern was related to students' autonomous use of translanguaging. They consistently exhibited this autonomy in various dimensions, including goal setting, discussions, conferences, and written language. One common practice among students was translanguaging,

which they frequently employed to enhance their understanding of non-fiction text contexts in English.

The second pattern involved students' demonstration of self-identity and a sense of belonging. Throughout the study, students consistently exhibited behaviors that reflected their strengthening sense of identity and their promotion of a sense of belonging within the learning environment.

The third pattern was related to school community and diversity. The data revealed that culturally sustaining practices within the school community often led to a deeper appreciation for diversity among the students. This appreciation extended beyond their individual learning experiences to encompass the broader school community.

A visual representation of the thematic coding for this study can be found in Figure 8, where it displays the five themes that resulted from the data analysis.

Figure 8

Visual Representation of Themes Derived From the Study
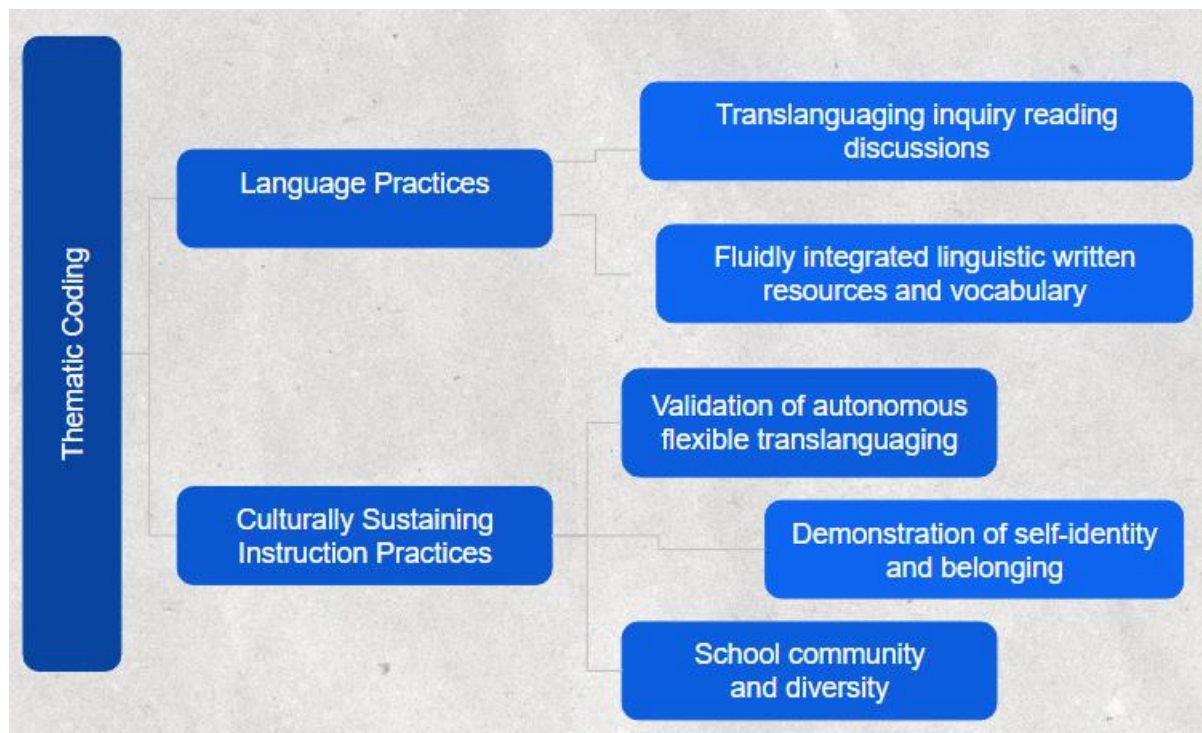
Trustworthiness

This section outlines how I maximized credibility during the study. The report of the findings highlighted the connection between the data and the theoretical framework, which consisted of two key theories: Translanguaging and a CSP lens. When examining multiple data sources through theories, I found alignment philosophically that supported my findings.

As depicted in Figure 9, several factors contributed to the trustworthiness of this study, including triangulation, peer reviews, confirmability, reliability, credibility, and transferability (Saldaña, 2011).

Figure 9

Trustworthiness Process
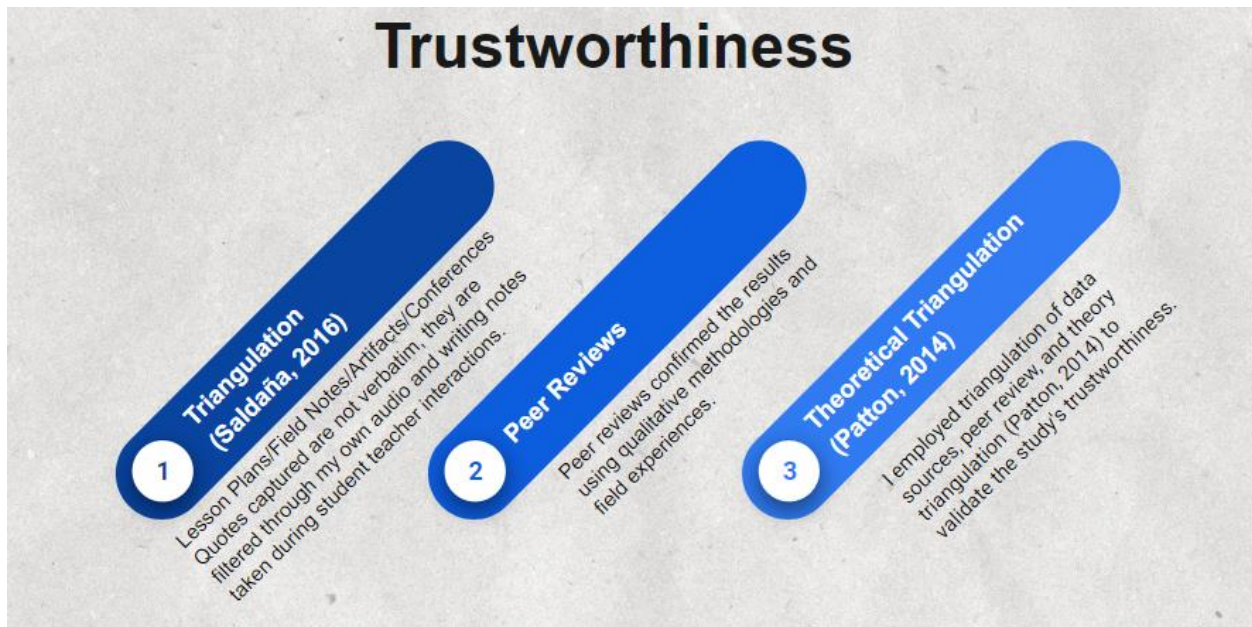
First, I employed triangulation of data sources, peer review, and theory triangulation (Patton, 2014) to validate the study's trustworthiness. Various qualitative data sources were utilized, including lesson plans, observational field notes, artifacts, and student conferences. The students' quotes captured and shared throughout the study are not verbatim, they are filtered through my own audio and writing notes taken during student teacher interactions.

Peer reviews confirmed results using qualitative methodologies and field experiences. To demonstrate trustworthiness in my study process, a fellow doctoral student, who was in the final stages of defending her dissertation, assisted as my peer reviewer since she was familiar with my research topic.

Lastly, the collected data represented participants' second language and socio-cultural behavioral patterns, supporting the credibility and reliability of the study's results (Patton, 2014; Seliger & Shohamy, 1995). Additionally, I employed triangulation to justify my instructional

choices and outcomes, including theoretical triangulation to examine data from various theoretical angles (Patton, 2014).

Summary

This study used a descriptive qualitative methodology to understand how fifth-grade EBs participate in culturally sustaining instruction used language before, during, and after reading non-fiction text. The study provides information related to students' use of language while reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English. The information gathered in this study is valuable for educators, leaders, and researchers who are supporting EBs in school. This chapter described the methodology that was used in my study in detail.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to describe how fifth-grade emergent bilingual students participated in culturally sustaining instruction language use before, during, and after reading non-fiction books/texts in English. The current study was guided by the following research questions: How do emergent fifth-grade bilingual students use language when reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English? How does culturally sustaining instruction relate to the students' use of language while reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English?

In this chapter, I provide a comprehensive overview of the language behaviors and cultural backgrounds of the participants. The researcher describes how students utilize language before, during, and after reading and writing practices in the context of culturally sustaining instruction. Moreover, the author describes language practices through culturally sustaining lens practice findings. Additionally, the study explores language through the lens of culturally sustaining practices and roles in fostering academic success for fifth-grade EBs.

The data collection for this study commenced with lesson plans, observational field notes, documenting the language usage of fifth-grade bilingual students before, during and after reading, and writing activities centered on non-fiction texts in English. However, a more comprehensive examination of language use occurred during individual conferences with the students, leading to a deeper understanding of specific language strengths and needs in reading and writing tasks. The combination of observational field notes, individual conferences, and collected artifacts served as the foundation for data triangulation in this study. The systematic observation and analysis of language used by students was conducted in two distinct phases: oral language during the first week and written language, particularly in the context of non-fiction

text, during the second week. Additionally, final analysis explored the interactions between culturally sustaining instruction and the language practices of the students as they engage in reading and writing tasks involving non-fiction text in English.

The findings derived from collected data provided insight into how this specific group of five emergent bilingual students (consisting of four boys and one girl) used language while participating in culturally sustaining instruction literacy lessons and interacting with non-fiction texts in English.

Participant Overview

During the period of data collection, which involved the participation of students in the study, the researcher had an opportunity to observe aspects related to the students' cultural backgrounds, distinct personalities, and English language acquisition. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the study, I will provide an overview of the participants. This section will summarize the cultural backgrounds and language usage patterns of the participants.

Ara

Ara was the only female participant. Born in Texas, with parents are from Guanajuato, Mexico, this student's parents only speak Spanish. She is the oldest of three siblings. She expressed during a writing artifact that she "likes animals, and Social Studies because she enjoys finding things about her past and likes weird things." Ara's self-portrait in full color is shown below in Figure 10.

Figure 10

Ara's Self Portrait

During the two weeks of the study, oral discussions and writing in class, Ara frequently used translanguaging and the Spanish language to express herself. She often exhibited features of primary language support in her writing. Ara successfully met her goal of reading with expression and fluency. Subsequently, she set a new goal of finding evidence in the text. Ara sometimes required additional time to think, using oral expressions such as "hmm" or "so." Ara was quiet and enjoyed reading silently due to her inherent shyness paired with her introspective nature.

Jan

Jan was born and raised in Texas, both of his parents are bilingual, but they mostly spoke English at home. During a class discussion, Jan shared that his father originated from Mexico, whereas his mother was from a different country. He shared that his mother's country's national flag incorporated the colors of the Mexican flag, including the addition of the color blue. Jan expressed during discussions his preference for sports, stating, "I liked sports because it was fun,

and my dad made me like the sports." He demonstrated a sense of identity awareness and took pride in mentioning what made him unique, such as his long hair, his love for painting with his father, and his passion for baseball and soccer. Jan's self-portrait in black and white is shown below in Figure 11.

Figure 11

Jan's Self Portrait

Jan was actively involved in both collaborative and independent reading activities. He consistently exhibited strong comprehension skills, providing accurate responses to open-comprehension questions during text discussions. Additionally, he effectively collaborated with his peers and enjoyed friendly competition with some of them. Jan employed strategies such as highlighting tape to navigate difficult words in the text. Although he initially faced challenges articulating some ideas in English using discourse markers such as "like" and "stuff" or expressions like "Hmm" while he thought during open small group discussions, he quickly self-corrected and successfully communicated his thoughts. This ability to self-correct was also

evident in his oral and written tasks. While Jan exhibited some characteristics of primary

language support in his writing, there was no evidence of translanguaging in his work.

Michael

Michael was born in Monterrey, Mexico. He lived with two brothers and his dad, who

only spoke Spanish. In written language, Michael explained, "my mom is the one that I haven't

seen for 6 years but I have family in Mexico and Texas". He enjoyed playing with toys on the

dirt, as well as playing baseball and basketball. Michael's goal was to become a professional

basketball player with the intention of financially supporting his family in Mexico. Michael's

self-portrait is shown below in Figure 12.

Figure 12

Michael's Self Portrait

During oral reading in English, Michael frequently exhibited mispronunciations and

omissions of words within sentences, which seem to adversely impact his comprehension of the

text. As a consequence, his learning goal for reading was to develop his English letter sound

relationships, and on increasing the capacity to discern and manipulate individual phonemes within words. Additionally, he wanted to enhance his language repertoire, particularly in relation to what he referred to as "tricky words," which required increased exposure to a diverse range of vocabulary terms. Michael was still developing oral language, yet he wanted to be heard by peers and was not afraid of sharing his thoughts. When speaking and writing, he used slang words like "no más," [no more] "lonches," [packed lunches or snacks] and "apá," [daddy] and he employed translanguaging to express his ideas.

Ralph

Ralph was born in Texas, and he lived with two siblings and both of his parents, who came from Guatemala. Spanish was the dominant language used at home because his parents were learning English and attended night classes to improve their language skills. In one of his writings, Ralph expressed through conversations that what made him special was playing soccer with his friends and enjoying drawing with his brother. Ralph's self-portrait illustration in full color is shown below in Figure 13.

Figure 13

Ralph's Self Portrait

Ralph demonstrated strong determination in improving his reading skills and had a competitive spirit. He tended to complete tasks quickly but sometimes needed to review them later due to missing information or other factors. Additionally, he often engaged in friendly competition with his peers Jan and Michael. I gently reminded him to read at his own pace and to respect the ideas and comments of others. Ralph actively participated in answering comprehension questions with minimal hesitation. I often had to explain terms that were unknown to him. In his oral communication, he occasionally incorporated translanguaging, while in writing, he frequently drew upon elements of his primary language to express ideas and also employed some translanguaging in written sentences.

Willy

Willy was born in Mexico City; he was the oldest in his family. He lived with a sister, baby brother, grandmother, and both parents, who only spoke Spanish at home. He felt proud of himself because he wrote, "ago mi tarea todos los dias y ayudo a mis padres" [I do homework every day and help my parents]. Willy displayed a remarkably positive attitude toward learning, which could be attributed to his calm and composed temperament. He aspired to pursue a career as a soccer player in the future and asserted his proficiency in sports, particularly soccer, as well as in mathematics and reading. Willy's self-portrait is shown below in Figure 14.

Figure 14

Willy's Self Portrait

Willy frequently integrated Spanish into his spoken discussions and written communication as a means to express his thoughts. When communicating in English, he employed translanguaging in both oral and written tasks. While he preferred writing in Spanish, he often demonstrated characteristics of relying on his primary language when writing in English. Often, Willy encountered difficulties when reading words that contained digraphs, and I consistently noticed a recurring tendency to omit challenging words during oral reading. He used a low and hesitant voice during these instances when confronting difficult words or phrases.

Language Practices Findings

Translanguaging Inquiry Reading Discussions

Throughout the reading process, various language practices were employed, enhancing the overall experience, and understanding. One significant finding was that students used translanguaging to facilitate discussions before, during, and after reading non-fiction texts in English. For instance, prior to and during reading, students demonstrated practices such as word study, addressing unfamiliar vocabulary, utilizing text features, and employing context cues for effective text comprehension.

After reading, students continued to apply various practices by engaging in inquiry discussions. You can find detailed descriptions related to translanguaging inquiry discussions of non-fiction texts in English in Figure 15 below. Further information regarding the writing findings will be provided later in this chapter.

Figure 15

Language Practices Findings Related to Reading
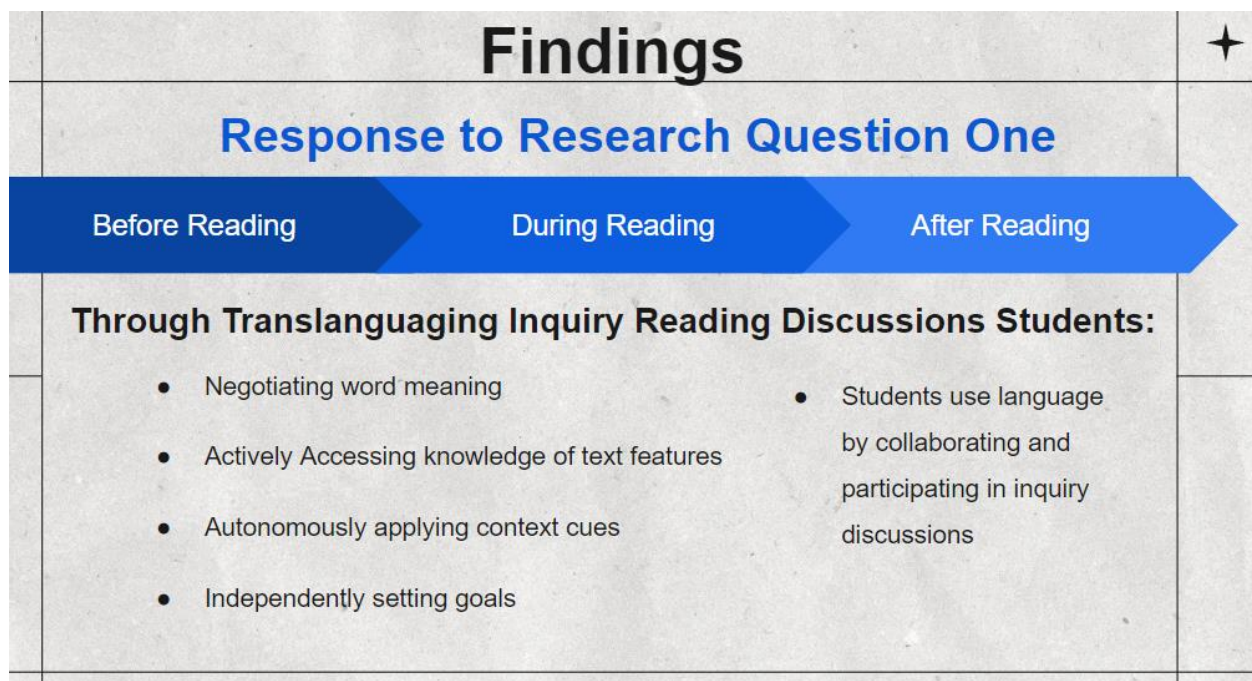
This study provides a comprehensive view of how this group of emergent fifth-grade bilingual students used language when reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English. This section provides a detailed description of the findings during group discussions using translanguaging interactions that occurred before, during, and after reading. These findings are pertinent to the first question of the study: How do emergent fifth-grade bilingual students use language when reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English?

Before and During Reading Non-Fiction Text in English

The findings regarding students' language use before and during reading nonfiction texts included the study of words, the use of text features, the application of context cues, and a focus on oral reading fluency. As for the language use of emergent bilingual students after reading nonfiction texts in English, it encompassed independent rereading and active engagement in inquiry discussions. Below, I will provide detailed descriptions of each finding, illustrating them with examples.

Negotiating the Meaning of Words. Before reading any text, we spent 10-15 minutes each day negotiating the meanings of unfamiliar words in the text upcoming sections. To keep track of these words, students used highlighting tape to mark unfamiliar words in the text, making it easier to locate, negotiate their meaning with peers and understand them. Students began to use word study techniques independently. For instance, on the seventh day of the study, Ralph asked if he could use highlighter tape while reading because it helped him see words more clearly. Moreover, students relied on each other's background knowledge, word knowledge, and online word searches to grasp and negotiate an approximation of the meanings of these words. In the first week, discussions were conducted orally, while in the second week, students first wrote down their unknown words and then had a conference with me. Table 8 below presents the challenging words that were discussed during the study by the participants.

Table 8

Participants' Unfamiliar Terms

Participants	Text- "Bren Bataclan Smile Artist"	Text- "Dinner in India"
Ara	Filipino, amazement, feedback	sacred
Jan	lush, vendor	paddies, masalas
Michael	optimistic, Eiffel	sacred, unique
Ralph	propped	graffiti, drunk
Willy	nevertheless, random, worthwhile, stalker	masalas

During the initial week, students participated actively in oral classroom discussions, sharing words they were not familiar with, posing and responding to questions. In the subsequent week, the emphasis transitioned to written communication. The following paragraphs will delve into greater detail concerning the participants' observations and findings related to the unfamiliar words outlined in Table 8.

Ara faced difficulties with five words prior to engaging in reading, as indicated in Table 8. Interestingly, while other words took precedence, the class unintentionally skipped discussing the word "Filipino." Nevertheless, as class discussions progressed, all students collaborated to unravel the meanings of the rest of those words. For example, when Michael collaborated with Ara figuring out the word "amazement," he drew upon his background knowledge and adeptly connected it to the word "amazing," utilizing his phonological system unconsciously to establish links between similar words. In addition, he also used his entire linguistic repertoire or translanguaging (García, 2009) in his interaction "Eso suena como the word amazing." [That sounds like the word amazing]. As a result, he successfully comprehended its meaning,

displaying the application of cognates, which are words that share etymological relationships in terms of their morphology and phonology (Johnson, 2010; Smith, 2005).

On the other hand, Ralph contributed his insights to the word "feedback," drawing from his prior knowledge and comparing the word's meaning to his experiences, "It's when someone tells you how you did something and might give you a suggestion, like when teachers tell us how we did on a test." Students were given the option of using either a traditional or a digital dictionary for word searches. However, the unanimous preference was to conduct online searches rather than using a paper dictionary. Ara, for instance, used a digital dictionary to clarify the term "sacred," explaining, "Hmm... Sacred, which means related to God or specific respect."

Jan frequently figured out most of the words and consistently interacted with all of his classmates during the process of deciphering unfamiliar words, thereby demonstrating a higher level of vocabulary proficiency. The clarity of his interactions and the fluency with which he approached the task set him apart from his peers. Jan demonstrated to be eager to participate in class discussions, and in deciphering the meanings of words by effectively using strategies like text features and context cues, among others.

Actively Accessing Knowledge of Text Features. Before and during reading, I observed that students actively accessed knowledge of text features such as headings, pictures, and bold print, among others. The elements contribute to the presentation of information in a text, ultimately enhancing overall comprehension for readers. In addition, important text features were crucial in the study because they supported readers to comprehend the content effectively. An example was Jan who demonstrated skillful use of text features. Jan provided several examples throughout instruction of using text features when he looked at the text illustrations and

explained connections or ideas: "a vendor is a person who sells things in the street, like lemonade, and not in a mall like Galeria Mall in Dallas, where you find stores like Gucci and Louis Vuitton." While Jan was speaking, he had his text opened on page 6 where there is an illustration of a street in Philippines surrounded by vendors. "When I look at a drawing, one eye looks smaller than the other, one goes to one side showing personality." Jan was referring to the illustration and caption on page 9 of the text when he was expressing his thoughts.

An illustration of how text features provide support is evident when we consider Willy's reading experience. Before reading, Willy frequently encountered more unfamiliar words that needed discussion compared to his classmates, as demonstrated in Table 8. However, he effectively addressed this challenge by cultivating the ability to make accurate predictions through active use of his knowledge of text features, especially illustrations and captions. For example, before reading the section named "News and Paintings Travel the World" in the text "Bren Bataclan Smile Artist" on page 13, I asked students to observe the page. The text displayed an illustration of a map at the top of the page and at the bottom, a smiling woman holding a picture painted by Bren. I then asked the students if, before reading the section, they had any ideas about what it was going to be about. Ara said, "I guess that Bren have travel the world" and then Willy said "Talks about los lugares donde están sus pinturas" [Talks about the places where his paintings are found]. He explained, using translanguaging, that page 13 talked about the places where their paintings are located.

He consistently was making use of text features, with a special focus on visual aids like illustrations. During classroom discussions, his peers played a significant role in assisting him, which further deepened his understanding of the text. This collaborative learning approach

together with the utilization of text features, significantly boosted comprehension of the material and provided the foundation for deeper understanding in reference to the assigned text.

Autonomously Applying Context Cues. Context cues involve skillfully applying pertinent details from the text to facilitate the comprehension of other concepts or information presented within the same text (Johnson, 2022). Jan used context cues when he expressed, "the word that was hard for me was "lush," which after rereading the paragraph, he came up with a great approximation, saying that the word describes the forest. Jan employed contextual cues from the nearby paragraph to aid his comprehension of the term "lush." After re-reading the paragraph, he made an educated guess based on the context, concluding that the word pertained to the forest. This highlights the effective utilization of context cues to enhance understanding and deduce the meaning of an unfamiliar word.

Additionally, students like Ralph and Michael provided great approximations, when explaining words like "lush" expressing that might be something like water, while Jan searched for the word and discovered that the definition was not water, but rather a large area with abundant greenery. Moreover, group discussions about the unknown words revealed that students were helping each other learn. Some students knew most of the words and shared their meanings with the group like Jan, which made a significant difference as they were supporting each other in their language learning process.

Ralph indicated that he was struggling with three words from the text initially, but as we progressed, it became evident that he faced additional challenges. Specifically, during collaborative discussions, it was apparent that he had difficulty with multiple meaning words related to context cues. Jan and Michael supported him during the discussions, but he struggled when finding word meanings on his own. For instance, he misunderstood the word "drunk,"

thinking it referred to someone consuming alcohol "borracho," [drunk] but later realized it meant drinking soup from a bowl in the paragraph's context. I explained that words can have different meanings based on their usage in a sentence, emphasizing the importance of context cues. The definition of multiple meaning words includes varying applications based on background.

During our verbal exchanges, Ralph inquired about unfamiliar terms, such as "stalker," "gummy candy," and "graffiti," among others. These uncertainties seemed to create confusion at times, but through collaborative discussions with peers and me, Ralph along with other classmates, managed to clarify these uncertainties related to context cues, and background knowledge. A specific incident unfolded during a reading session when Ralph encountered the term "stalker." Michael provided an example of how he used context cues throughout discussions, and after rereading a section of the text, he explained this in a discussion with Ralph and other students: "Es cuando una persona mala te está siguiendo y te va a hacer algo malo." [It is when a bad person is following you and is going to do something bad to you]. I responded in Spanish to Michael, "Tiene algo que ver, es cuando una persona te está mirando, observando, te está siguiendo, se esconde para mirarte, no necesariamente para hacerte algo malo." I explained to Michael that his response was partly right. It is when someone is watching you, observing you, following you, hiding to look at you, not necessarily to do something bad to you. "Ralph then posed a question to the group, "Was Bren a stalker?" Jan responded to Ralph, saying, "No, not a stalker!" Ara contributed to the discussion by stating, "He was a stalker!"

Later, I instructed the students to revisit page 10 and reread the second paragraph for context. To facilitate their comprehension, I personally read the second paragraph aloud. Then, I asked Ralph if he now understood the word "stalker." Ralph's response was, "OH! He was a stalker but in a positive way"

Ralph had a different level of familiarity with specific cultural elements and background information compared to his peers. His curiosity led to inquiries during discussions, such as when we were discussing the term "graffiti." I elaborate on this aspect of language when connecting it to culturally sustaining instruction later in this chapter. It is worth mentioning that Ralph enjoyed being noticed and actively participating, always having something to share. During a conference, he indicated that when I speak in Spanish to explain concepts, it helps him understand better. We were able to clarify these confusions and turn these experiences into learning opportunities for everyone.

Independently Setting Learning Goals for English Letter Sound Relationships. Some students, such as Michael and Willy, were actively working on enhancing their reading English letter sound relationships. Michael's specific oral fluency goal involved developing appropriate intonation and rhythm when reading aloud. The use of translanguaging among the students in this study occurred naturally and effortlessly throughout the entire course of the research, as evidenced throughout the entire course of the research.

During a classroom discussion about challenging words encountered by Michael, he expressed: "I do not know the meaning of optimist." I then asked the students to share their thoughts or definitions related to the word "optimistic," and they provided different responses. Ara mentioned it meant positive or "positivismo" using translanguaging to express her ideas. Jan described it as a confident and helpful person, and Willy said it was like being in a good mood. However, Ralph was unsure and thought it meant "scared." I clarified that "optimism" describes a cheerful person who consistently believes in positive outcomes. The students shared examples of optimism, including one who related it to Jan's mother's positive attitude according to Jan's

experience in a soccer game. To ensure the students understood the word's meaning, I emphasized the value of being optimistic in various situations.

Michael faced challenges in decoding graphemes within words, which affected his decoding and word meaning. For instance, during a conferring session, when he read aloud, he pronounced "Philippines" as "/Phil//e//pines/ consistently." Jan, his partner, interacted by pronouncing the word with the correct pronunciation to support Michael. This prompted me to offer a sound letter mini-lesson and explain the concept using translanguaging.

Jan and Michael often collaborated, an example of this collaboration when Jan shared his background knowledge of the word "Eiffel" that Michael was unfamiliar with, and expressing excitement while using translanguaging, saying, "¡Yo sé! [I know!] Eiffel is the name of a famous tower in France." Sometimes, Michael did not understand some words, but was not afraid to ask. An example of this need arose when I used the term "unique" during self-portrait instructions. Michael interrupted, and asked, "What is that?" Consequently, I switched to Spanish to explain and rephrase the instructions using simpler vocabulary, and he understood afterward with the support of home language clarification.

Similarly, to Michael, Willy was actively engaged in improving decoding graphemes and meaning, and vocabulary to enhance his reading skills. However, he frequently encountered difficulties when reading words with digraphs such as /ch/, /sp/, /th/, and /wh/. Additionally, compound words and homophones presented challenges for him during the study. When he encountered these words in the text, I noticed that he tended to either skip them or read them in a whispering voice. For instance, words like "graphic," "spoil," "nevertheless," "worthwhile," "pail," and "pale" initially posed challenges for Willy. However, after some one-on-one time during conferring, he began to grasp these concepts and master different applications.

To provide additional support for Willy and Michael in terms of letter sound relationships, they received extra time (approximately ten to twelve minutes more) during conferencing sessions, resulting in a total of eight conferences. The other students received seven conferences, varying in duration from ten to fifteen minutes. I found that this additional time significantly improved their understanding of non-fiction texts in English.

My last example of independently setting goals occurred during a conference with Ara. I approached her and asked if she thought she had reached her goal. She responded, "I think I reached my goal, which is to read with expression and fluency." I then asked if she had an idea for a new goal, and she independently said, 'Finding evidence of things in the story could be my new goal. This demonstrates that students can independently set reading goals because they understand the importance of goal setting in developing their reading abilities.

After Reading Non-Fiction Text in English

The five students consistently engaged in post-reading discussions where they reflect on their learning experiences. These interactions primarily involved interpreting the information they had gathered, although they occasionally digressed from the main topic, they were still making meaning. For example, during their reading of the "Bren Bataclan Smile Artist," Ralph remarked, "Imagine discovering a painting in Texas." Jan quickly responded with enthusiasm, "That's going to make me rich!" Ralph chimed in, "I'll bring it along and show you all." Jan humorously wrapped up the conversation, highlighting Ralph's potential future riches.

Collaboratively Participating in Inquiry Discussions. Furthermore, the integration of inquiry, specifically open-ended questions, and incorporating translanguaging before, during and after reading fostered collaborative practices within the group of emerging bilinguals in this

study. The fifth-grade participants were actively engaged in seemingly fearless interactive discussions aimed at understanding the content of non-fiction texts.

The fallowing example illustrates the use of inquiry to support understanding not only after reading but also before and during reading sections of the text. In addition, students' unique oral expressions are shown. Before reading a section for example while reading "Bren Bataclan Smile Artist" the section title: "News and Paintings Travel the World," I would ask students: "Does anyone have a notion about what this section it might cover?" This interaction led to discussions among students: Ara said: "I guess that Bren have travel the world." Then Willy reacted by saying, "Talks about los lugares donde están sus pinturas." [Talks about the places where his paintings are located]. Willy used translanguaging to express that Bren discusses the places where his paintings are located. Then Ralph asked a clarifying question to his peers, "Places where paintings have been found?" Jan agreed with Ralph, saying, "Yes, what Ralph said!" and Michael responded with excitement, "Yes, hasta Hawaii!" [Yes, all the way to Hawaii!]. This expression demonstrated enthusiasm, and he used translanguaging to convey the meaning by saying "Yes, including Hawaii!"

I also employed questions to assess the grasp of concepts. For instance, I would prompt students to raise their thumbs if they encountered compound words in the section or lower them if they did not. This helped as a formative assessment to determine whether further instruction or reteaching was necessary. In this instance, I had to provide additional teaching on compound words using examples, as only Ralph and Jan indicated thumbs down, implying they had not identified any compound words, which was correct. However, other students mimicked their response, not due to observation of the text but because they were following Ralph and Jan's actions.

The next example was shown during a collaborative discussion about explaining why Bren Bataclan decided to change the message of the note he placed with his paintings, and he also changed something else. I asked students what was that other change? Then I said in Spanish "¿Qué más cambió? ¿Alguien quiere explicarme?*"* [What else changed? Can someone explain?] Then Ralph said, "He painted cats because he loves cats." Jan reacted by saying "No, but he was not painting dogs and he started painting dogs after people were requesting him to paint dogs." This example shows how Jan clarified how Bren changed in the story from painting cats to painting dogs by people's request. This clarification supported Ralph's understanding related to how the character changed throughout the text and what he changes was painting dogs.

Another common type of inquiry originated from students, directed either toward me or among themselves. This illustrates that during their discussions, they actively seek clarification. For example, while reading 'Dinner in India,' Ralph asked me, 'Have you tried Indian food, Mrs. Ramos?' I replied affirmatively, mentioning that my neighbors were from India and had occasionally shared their traditional food with my family. I then turned the question back to Ralph, asking if he had tried Indian food. Ralph seemed excited and happy as he responded, 'Oh! I tried Indian rice; it's spicy, and oh, it's so good! They had it in a big bucket, it's brown, and it has vegetables; oh, it was so good!'

Jan chimed in, saying, 'A BIG bucket! Wow!' I continued the conversation, saying, 'Yes! Rice is the best because it has cashews and, as Ralph said, it's very spicy. Have you guys tried anything sweet?' Jan, who had been looking at the page in the text with desserts, remarked, 'Look at those bracelets on page 23.' I asked him, 'What are you saying? Do you think they look like gummy candy?' Jan replied, 'Yeah,' and Ralph added, 'But they are big ones.

On another occasion, students were discussing why people in India do not eat cows. Michael was explaining that he agrees with not eating cows but said, "No, nomás me gusta el bistek*,"* which translates to "I only like beefsteak." I asked him if he knew that beefsteak comes from cows, and Michael reacted by putting on a sad face and saying, "Ah!" This prompted others to join the discussion. Jan said, "I think it is good for people to eat hamburgers." Then Willy added, "Sin las vacas no hay hamburguesas ni leche," [Without cows, there are no hamburgers or milk]. Ralph mentioned, "I like la lengua de vaca," [I enjoy cow tongue]. Lastly, Ara contributed by saying, "I like milk; they are not sacred, although I respect them."

After finishing reading the text 'Dinner in India,' I added that things change over time; for instance, India currently has the world's largest population, but the text was published ten years ago, which is why it mentioned them as the second most populous country. I emphasized the importance of sometimes researching more about the text. Subsequently, the students began to investigate more information related to the text on the web.

This seemed to increase language flexibility and students' understanding of non-fiction texts and improved their capacity to ask questions and seek clarification on unfamiliar concepts or vocabulary they encountered while reading. Their active engagement prior to, and during reading led to the acquisition of new vocabulary, thereby enhancing their understanding of the content. Moreover, this active participation promoted attentive listening and valuable contributions to discussions, effectively showing students' proficiency in language and communication.

Fluidly Integrated Linguistic Written Resources and Vocabulary

Language practices play a significant role in shaping the final composition of the second language (L2) during the writing process. Within the context of composing texts about non-

fiction topics in English, a variety of linguistic practices were employed to enhance students' development of L2 and their comprehension. This involved integrating culturally sustaining instruction and utilizing the students' entire linguistic repertoire to construct meaning.

By providing systematic guidance for each lesson, students were guided through different stages, which included language components and activities both before and during the writing process, as well as those occurring afterward. The goal was to encourage comprehensive engagement with non-fiction content while addressing diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Lastly, lessons explored how students expressed their voices through writing examples, highlighting their language practices throughout the writing journey. Figure 16 provides a visual representation of the language practices findings related to writing in this study, enhancing understanding.

Figure 16

Language Practices Findings Related to Writing
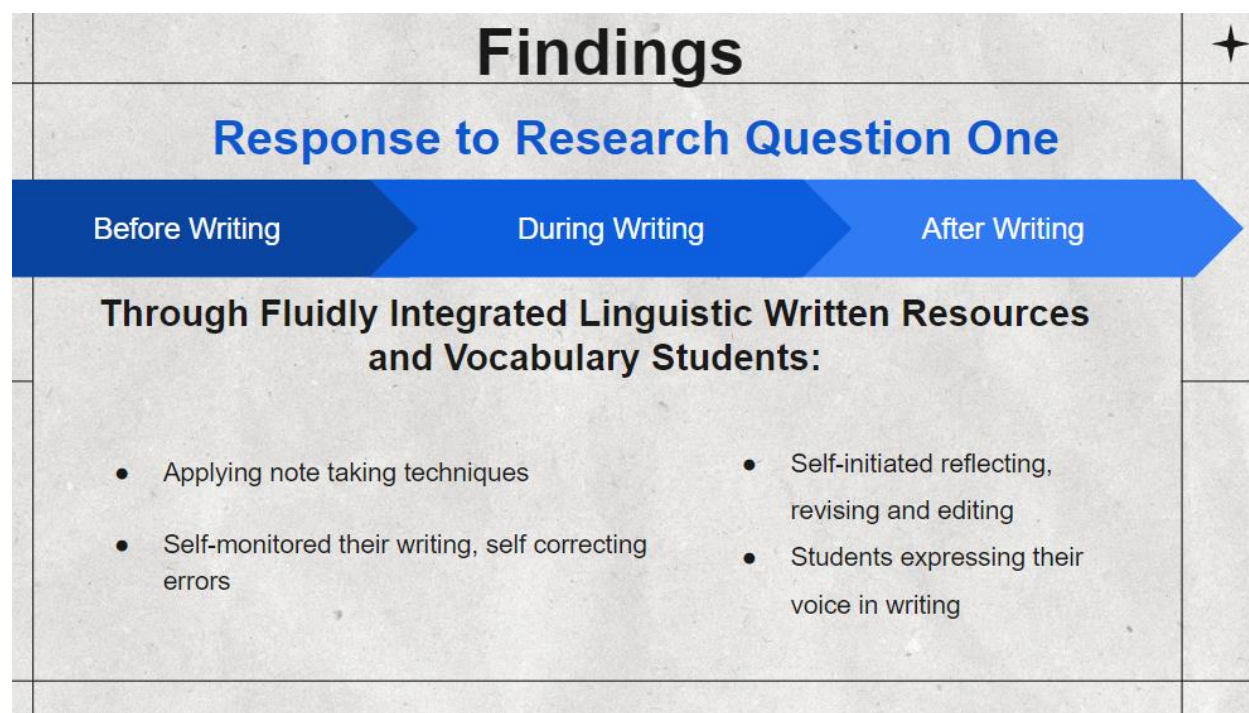
Prior to commencing the writing process, I employed clear language to explain the writing instructions, simultaneously sharing the writing rubric with students to ensure their clear understanding of the criteria. Additionally, students were afforded the opportunity to articulate their ideas, share them among peers, and employ notetaking and annotation techniques to underline important information or to jot down queries for clarification.

Before and During Writing About Non-Fiction Text in English

This next section will present the findings of how emergent bilingual fifth-grade students applied language before and during writing. They used note taking or composed notes or texts about non-fiction topics in English. The findings also include students using acquired vocabulary words into their writing, followed by self-corrections in writing. Additional findings after writing include reflecting revising, editing on writing, and expressing voice.
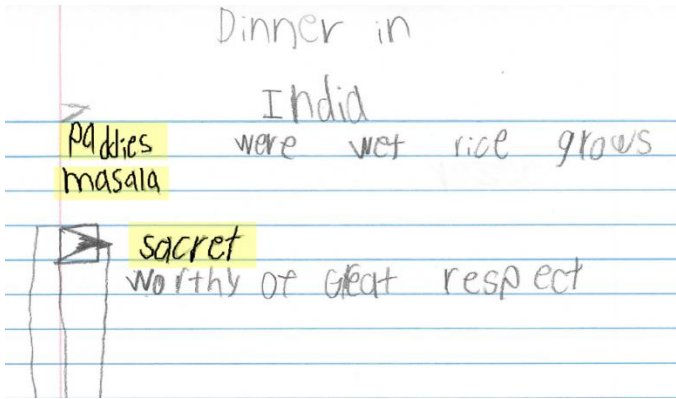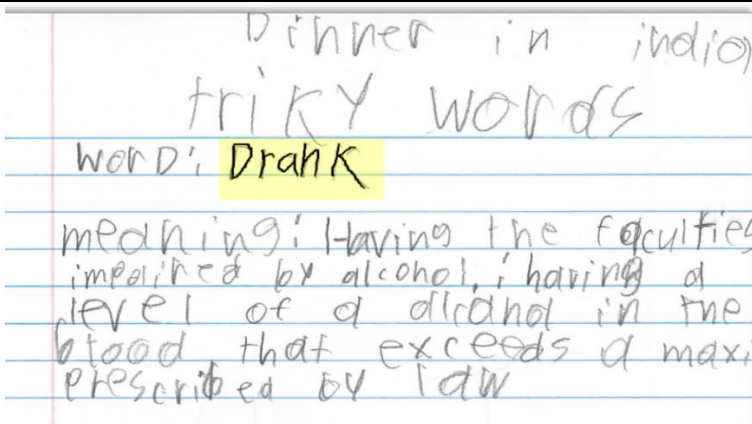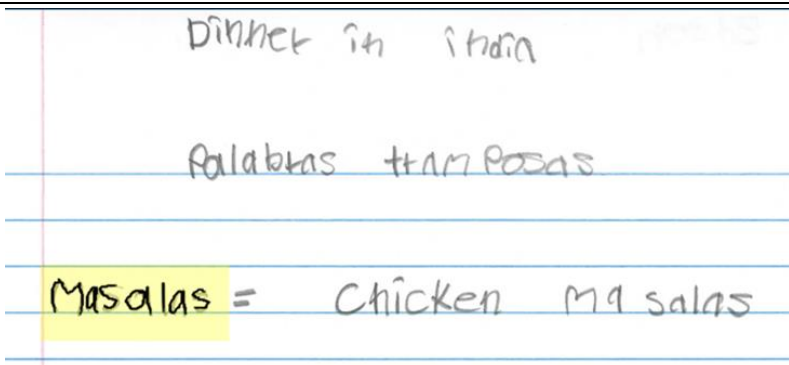
Prior to commencing the writing process, I would employ clear and adaptable language to explain the writing instructions, simultaneously sharing the writing rubric with students to ensure their comprehensive understanding of the criteria. Additionally, students were afforded the opportunity to articulate their ideas, share them among peers, and employ notetaking and annotation techniques to underline pivotal information or to jot down queries for clarification.

Applied Note Taking Techniques. Notably, students were taking notes frequently reflecting language practices, a phenomenon exemplified during the second week of the study where the focus shifted towards written language. During this period, students noted down words they were not familiar with (highlighted in yellow), as indicated in Figure 17. For example, Michael wrote three words demonstrating the unfamiliar word along with the definitions he discovered. On the other hand, Ralph's word explanation did not align with the actual context of

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the non-fiction text "Dinner in India." He encountered challenges in understanding the meaning of the word he had written down, which required additional assistance in interpreting context cues, as the word was intended to describe someone drinking a bowl of soup, not someone who had alcohol in their blood. The last example was from Willy, who, like Michael, could not understand the meaning of the word 'masalas.' However, he used translanguaging to describe the unfamiliar word, explaining that 'palabras tramposas' [tricky words]. Those words are shown in Figure 17 below.

Figure 17

Displaying Several Written Notes of Unfamiliar Words

Michael

Ralph

Willy

It is essential to acknowledge that language practices exhibited by emergent bilingual students when engaging with non-fiction texts are influenced by factors such as their language proficiency levels, cultural backgrounds, and prior experiences. In my capacity as a researcher, I not only observed but also supported these language practices, aiming to nurture students' holistic reading comprehension and language development. This endeavor encompassed diverse teaching elements like sound letter relationship, diagraphs, homophones, compound words, sentence structure, and context cues, all tailored to address the students' needs.

During the writing phase, students had access to essential resources such as text, Chromebooks, and other reference materials. These resources enabled students to express their ideas, self-correct their writing samples, and revisit sources, as necessary.

Fluidly Integrated Linguistic Resources and Vocabulary. To effectively convey their thoughts, students were encouraged to embrace translanguaging, allowing them to integrate elements from their native languages into their writing. Additionally, they were prompted to incorporate learned vocabulary relevant to the non-fiction subject matter, thereby enhancing the depth and precision of their compositions. Figure 18 provides an illustration of how Ara and Michael integrated linguistic resources and new vocabulary into their writing. For example, Ara incorporated the word "optimistic" into her writing and even interpreted the word flexibly by writing it as "optimistico," [optimistic] applying it to describe an optimistic person. In addition, the word "sacred" showing how fluid her linguistic practices in her writing were, indicating her acquisition of academic vocabulary. Similarly, Michael integrated four words from the non-fiction text into his writing, including "tali meal," "believes," "flatbreads," and "sagradas," [sacred] demonstrating the flexible use of written language and the integration of new vocabulary words. Translanguaging was used frequently in writing by most of the participants,

showing fearless use of language. Michael enriched his writing by seamlessly incorporating new

words learned from the non-fiction texts Bren Bataclan Smile Artist and Dinner in India.

Figure 18

Integration of Newly Acquired English Vocabulary in Writing

Título Bren bataclan Smile Artist
Bren Bataclan is ~~Afomos~~ Artist
that lost his Job the Job
he had was doing Cartoon's
In the Computer. he got deprest
and he wasent Optimistic. He Said
Im not like this. Jow dont be like
this. hes struced a proget
to make people happy. I lyn
que Sonrie en momentos dificile
Se Optimistico.
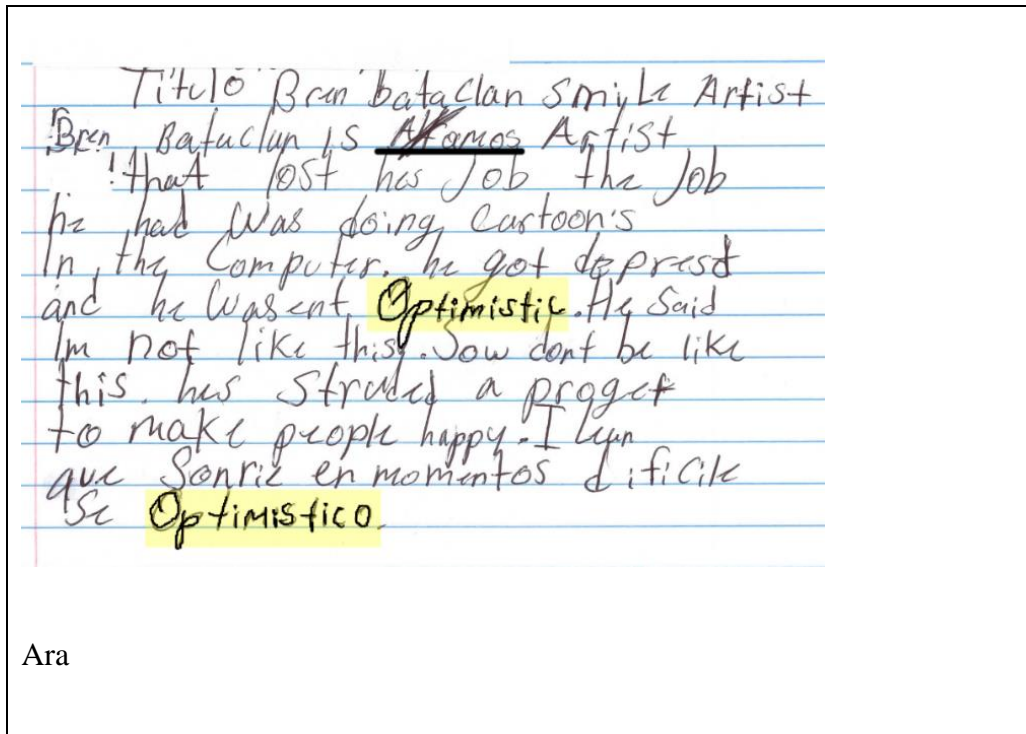
Ara

I learn that not always you got to be fastyered and to be mad so you gotta be always happy. In the story I noticed is a ==Bygrahphy== about Bren. He was born in ==Philipines==, and than he dicided to draw again and he was leaving art work for free y tambien hiso mucha gente soreir en Boston. So el empeso en Boston so his famolie travel over the world for his paintings.

I think that the author wrote this book to identify foods on the ==tali meal== and ==belives==. The flat bread evidence, however, most homres in in indidl don't have ovens, so idians make a type of bread —called ==flatbreads==— that can be cooked on a stove, pg8.
They dont's eat meat cause cause the cow's are like ==sagradas==, they only eat chicken, lanb, or fish curry.

Michael

Words or phrases highlighted in yellow demonstrate the application of new vocabulary in students' writing.

Self-Monitored Their Writing and Self-Corrected Errors. Students demonstrated their ability to elaborate on concepts and skillfully organize ideas, along with instances of self-

monitoring their writing and self-correction, as shown in Figure 19 below. Examples illustrating

self-corrections can be observed in Jan's written notes, where I highlighted errors like the word

"Paddy" which the student crossed (to the left) or self-corrections (over the initial spelled word)

to the right) in yellow indicating linguistic approximations.

Additionally, in Ara's writing, there is evidence that she initially wrote a word and then

scratched it out, attempting to write "a famous" over the scratch. This reflects translanguaging

practices, as demonstrated by underlined phrases or sentences. Furthermore, the inclusion of

supporting evidence enhances the emphasis on these self-correction practices. Figure 19

illustrates examples of Jan and Ara's self-corrections, as shown below.

Figure 19

Students' Self-Corrections
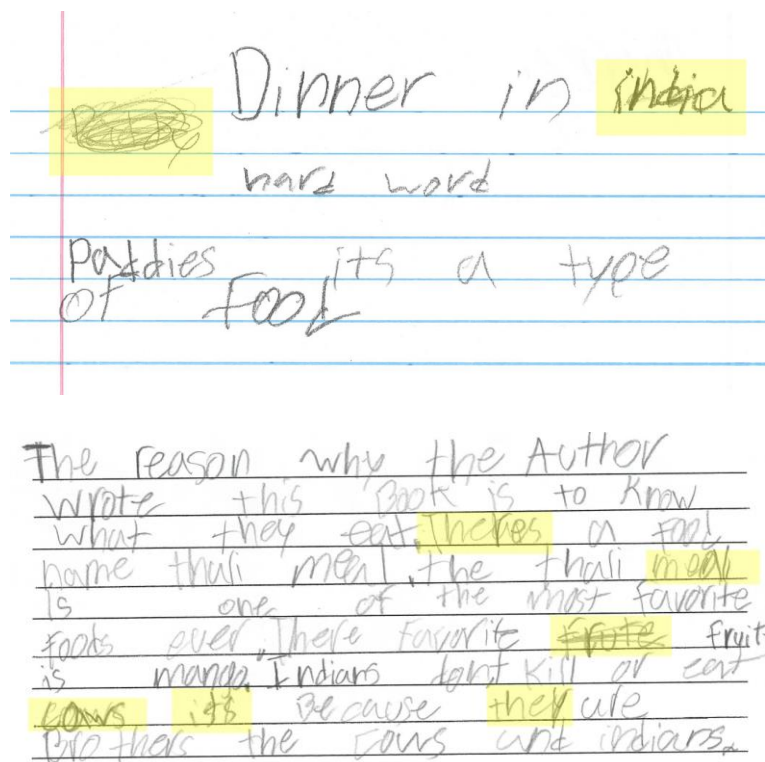
Jan

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> Título Bren bataclan Smyle Artist
> Bren Bataclan is Afamos Artist
> that lost his Job the Job
> he had was doing Cartoon's
> In the Computer. he got deprest
> and he wasent Optimistic. He Said
> Im not like this. Jow dont be like
> this. his Strated a proget
> to make people happy. I am
> que Sonriz en momentos dificile
> Se Optimistico.

Ara

The students' proficiency in comprehending non-fiction text structures is demonstrated through the systematic organization of their writing, which includes the incorporation of several elements of non-fiction texts in their writing. For example, in Figure 19 above, Ara includes the word 'Título' [title] in her writing. Additionally, I underlined her use of translanguaging in her writing because she used it to convey her ideas and integrate newly acquired vocabulary. Translanguage is a big component for students to communicate and make meaning.

The act of self-monitoring and subsequently rectifying any misconceptions or misunderstandings underscores their metacognitive awareness. Students also appear to have confidence in making approximations that aid them in learning new concepts. Typically, they self-correct these written approximations when explaining their writing orally, seeking to understand the intended message of the text.

After Writing About Non-Fiction Text in English

This next section will present and discuss the findings of how EBs fifth grade students use language after writing about non-fiction texts. They self-initiated the practice of reflecting, revising, and editing their writing. In addition, they express voice in their writing.

Self-Initiated Reflecting, Revising, and Editing. After composing their written responses on non-fiction texts in English, students engaged in a series of activities. These activities encompassed revising their work, participating in conferences to receive feedback, or asking peers for support to clarify their written ideas. Once they have clarified their ideas, students return to their writing to revise and edit it, culminating in a reflective phase.

As an example of the revising process, I will describe when Ralph posed an open question during revision: "How do you spell watch? Like if you are watching?" Jan responded promptly by spelling out "w-a-t-c-h," to which Ralph initially attempted "w-a-c-t-h." However, after the correction, Jan asserted, "No, no, I said w-a-t-c-h." Then Ralph exclaimed, "Got it!" and Jan responded with excitement, saying, "Yes!"

Finally, students engage in a reflection on their writing process, using language to extend their learning beyond the classroom. Prior to commencing the writing process, I shared and explained the writing rubrics with students to ensure their comprehensive understanding of the criteria. The rubrics are shown in Table 9.

Table 9

Writing Rubrics

First Week Rubric*				Second Week Rubric		
	Level 1 Beginning	**Level 2** Developing	**Level 3** Meets Standard		**Level 1** Beginning	**Level 2** Developing	**Level 3** Meets Standard
Understanding Genre of Biography	-The student is able to explain orally what he learned from the text with teacher support. -The student can write a paragraph, around one sentence, describing what they learned in the story. **Teacher prompting was necessary.**	-The student is able to explain orally what he learned from the text. -The student can write a paragraph, around 1-2 sentences, describing what they learned in the story. -Did not Include the title of the story or supporting details to express ideas.	-The student is able to explain orally what he learned from the text. -The student can write a paragraph, around 3-5 sentences, describing what they learned in the story. -Including the title of the story and supporting details to express ideas.	**Understanding** Author's Purpose	-The student is able to explain the author's purpose with teacher support orally. -The student can write a paragraph, around one sentence, describing the author's purpose. **Teacher prompting was necessary.**	-The student is able to explain the author's purpose orally. -The student can write a paragraph, around 1-2 sentences, describing the author's purpose. -Did not Include the title of the story or supporting details to express ideas.	-The student is able to explain orally what he thinks is the author's purpose. -The student can write a paragraph, around 3-5 sentences, describing what the author's purpose is. -Including the title of the story and supporting details to express ideas.

* Rubrics with a larger font size can be found in the Lesson Plans section within Appendix B

According to the lesson plans (found in Appendix B) during the first week of the study, students aimed to demonstrate their understanding of the biography genre through their writing. In the second week, the focus shifted to their comprehension of the author's purpose, following the criteria outlined in Table 9. Throughout the study, students seamlessly integrated academic language and specialized terms into their written work, showcasing their advancing language proficiency.

Moreover, Willy and Jan reflected on their initial writing samples and understood why they were assessed at proficiency level two, in accordance with the rubric's instructions to include more details in their writing. Willy's third sample has a helpful illustration that adds detail to his writing. In addition, he explained what he wrote orally during conference time using Spanish to share his ideas. "Si, porque como, como el autor esta como diciéndome que tipo de cosas comen como diferentes tipos de chiles, comen cocos, mangos y también que ponían el arroz, el rice en el medio del plato y todas las comidas tenían arroz. Aprendí que las vacas, ellos

las tratan como si fueran parte de la familia." [Yes, because the author is kind of telling me what kinds of things they eat, like different types of peppers, coconuts, mangoes, and also that they put rice in the middle of the plate, and all their meals had rice. I learned that cows treat them as part of their family]. This need for additional details in their writing led to Willy's autonomous and fearless use of translanguaging, which is highlighted in yellow in his writing showed in Figure 20 below.

Figure 20

Willy's Initial vs. Third Written Sample

Translanguaging evidence highlighted in yellow.

Translanguaging evidence highlighted in yellow.
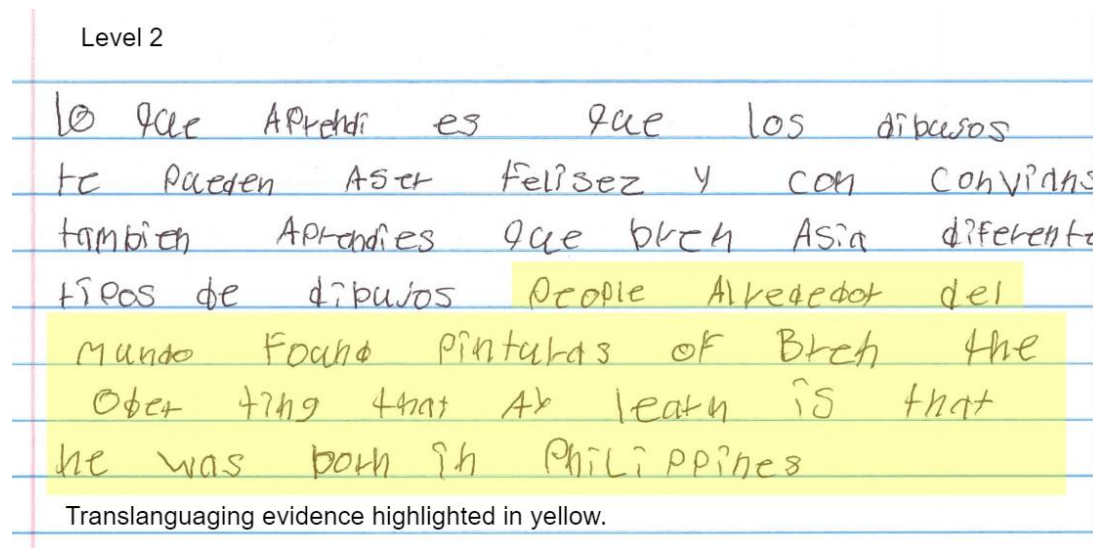
the Author wrote this text to explain
what dose People eat and do in India,
in india People eat lime, coconuts, Aples,
and su Favorito is the mangos they
even haf diferent fire of chiles. los chiles
Son the Secound Favorito. when they eat
they Pat Rice in the centet to be
Speciel so the wrote this text to
explain what do they eat, do, on Page 4
the text Shows How siembran el rice

In contrast, Jan was the only student who did not show evidence of translanguaging in his writing. However, he frequently expressed his interpretation of the story (highlighted in yellow), as shown in Figure 21 below. This figure provides an example of Jan's initial sample, and his third written sample which achieved a level 3 aided by his oral explanation.

Figure 21

Jan's Initial vs. Third Written Sample

However, in their third writing sample, both Willy and Jan achieved a level three, as a result of learning from their prior experiences, effectively incorporating more details into their writing, and oral explanations during conferences. During conference time both students explained in detail their writing samples and their oral explanation complemented their writing. For example, in Jan's third writing sample (as shown in Figure 21), he wrote, 'cows and Indians are brothers.' Later, when he explained it orally, he said, 'The cows are like family to the people in India.' I observed that his written expression was complemented by his oral explanation in a clear manner.

Students Expressing Their Voice in Writing. In the context of these fifth-grade students, expressing their voice in writing means they have a distinct and personal way of conveying thoughts, ideas, personality, and emotions through their written work. It encompasses their individuality and life experiences.

The students demonstrate their multimodal literacy by incorporating visuals, graphical symbols such as arrows, hearts, or musical notes, conversation or speech bubbles, and labels into their written responses, thereby enhancing the depth of the text. Examples of Jan and Ralph expressing their voice in writing (highlighted in yellow) are presented in Figure 22 below.

Figure 22

Jan and Ralph Showing Voice Through Writing

The word bubble in the illustration represents Jan's thoughts, specifically about baseball.

Hi My name is **Jan** My Birthday is March 2 2012. i was Born in Texas. I like sport Because its fun and my dat Make me Like the sports. What i want to do in the Fueture is to make a shoes store or make it as a BaseBall playe

Ralph illustrates his love for traveling, movies, and music.

The place and Birth of day Texas, June 27 2012. Hi my name is Ralph

And what makes me special about me is soccer, with my friends, and like to draw with my brother.

What I like to do with my famaiy is travell like colorado and we like to watch movies with them. In the fatere I want to be a singer.

Additionally, Jan's and Ralph's written work reflects their unique self-expression and distinctive points of view, demonstrating their engagement and sense of ownership (Ralph- "my brother"). It's important to note that the language practices of these five emergent bilingual students during non-fiction writing are influenced by their language proficiency, cultural backgrounds, and prior experiences. I will delve more deeply into the students' use of voice during the discussion of culturally sustaining practices, integrating it into the broader discourse on culturally sustaining instruction.

Culturally Sustaining Instruction Practices

The fifth-grade students in this group share a common cultural background deeply rooted in their Latinx heritage, hailing from countries such as Mexico, Guatemala, and various parts of Latin America, all bound together by their use of the Spanish language. However, their individual experiences, family histories, values, and traditions may diverge significantly. This study underscores that these shared cultural threads significantly contribute to the students' comprehension of non-fiction texts.

In the upcoming section, I will provide a weekly overview of the objectives and instructional patterns employed in teaching emergent bilingual fifth-grade students. In addition, I will explain the findings that were language validation, culturally sustaining practices fostering experiences, and diversity appreciation.

Culturally Sustaining Instruction Overview

In this section, I am providing an overview of the culturally sustaining teaching and learning interactions that took place during the two weeks of the study. My goal in doing so is to provide context for the findings pertinent to the second research question. The question guiding this part of the study was: How does culturally sustaining instruction relate to the students' use of language while reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English?

First Week Focus

Prior to reading "Bren Bataclan Smile Artist" and "Dinner in India," I designed a lesson plan following culturally sustaining practices to validate choice, experiences, and appreciate diversity. The text "Bren Bataclan Smile Artist" by Lea Lewis was a story about a young Filipino artist who overcame challenges and made a difference in society with his paintings all

around the world. "Dinner in India" by Sunita Apte explored the cultures and traditions of India through its food.

Utilizing the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) lesson template, served as a comprehensive framework to assist me in creating effective and inclusive lessons for EBs. Developed by Echevarria, Vogt, and Short (2008), the SIOP model strives to enhance language acquisition and content comprehension. The goal is to do this simultaneously by seamlessly incorporating language development strategies into subject-based instruction.

At the beginning of the study, I started lessons by initiating brief conversations that resonated with students' personal experiences. The first question was: What makes you smile? Their enthusiastic responses unveiled their individual experiences. For example, Jan stated, "Art makes me smile," Ralph conveyed, "Watching a funny video makes me smile," Michael expressed in Spanish, "Carros me hacen sonreir" [cars make me smile], Ara shared, "Mi perrito, Max makes me smile" [My doggy Max makes me smile] she used translanguaging to express that her little dog, Max makes her smile, and Willy added, "What makes me smile every day is my dog because I pet him every day." This activity marked the beginning step, fostering inclusivity and introducing them to non-fiction texts content.

The goals for this week were focused on students understanding the biography genre and engaging actively in discussions with their peers. These conversations and contributions will encompass their learning journeys, viewpoints, thoughts, and emotions. In addition, I strived to foster connections between languages, encouraging the use of translanguaging throughout the learning experience. Moreover, I recognized and valued each individual's perspectives and voices.
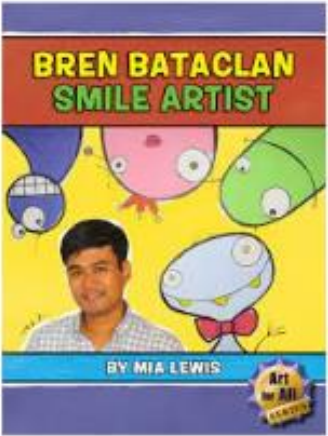
Subsequently, each week I offered students choices by presenting two book options as shown in the lesson plans. For this inaugural week, the choices were "Who is Cesar?" and "Bren Bataclan Smile Artist." I requested students to explain their preferences by writing them down on a digital table shown in Figure 23. Among these choices, the majority of students agreed on "Bren Bataclan Smile Artist." I confirmed their book selection after we decided to vote because I felt it was essential that everyone have a voice in the decision-making process. All students reached a consensus in choosing "Bren Bataclan Smile Artist" as the text for our first week.

Offering students choices is a culturally supportive teaching approach that encourages them to connect with the content of the text. This choice empowers the class because students take ownership of the selected text, giving it relevance. Their voices are valued, and they can express their text preferences both verbally and in writing, as depicted in Figure 23. Furthermore, this visual representation also shows how students skillfully employ their language choices to effectively communicate their ideas.

Figure 23

Week One Text Selection

Write your name under your choice of text, and explain why you picked option 1 or option 2.

OPTION 1	OPTION 2
BREN BATACLAN SMILE ARTIST BY MIA LEWIS Art for All	Who is Cesar? By: Margarita Ramos-Rivera
Jan I like this book because I like art and drawings about dogs.	Ralph my idea is that this book is the best because it is from you ms.RAMOS and you made it with your hands. And because of the interesting person and suffering with his family and that is why I LIKE books because my choice is that I love dogs because I have a dog. AND I love pets 🐶🐶🐶. puppies
Michael: I like this book because me gusta dibujar y los dibujos si son buenos me hacen sonreir.	
Ara	Willy I chose this book because I like people that help animals like dogs y did not choose the other book because I don like people drawing pictures.
Me gusta este libro porque me gusta sonreír y como a la gente tambien. Pero no la gente que me hace enojar. Y no me gusta entrenar perros.	

The class voted, and we all decided to pick **"Bren Bataclan Smile Artist"**.

Following that, I introduced the text, seeking challenging words to enhance reading comprehension while addressing related questions. Then, I delivered a concise lesson centered on compound words. In the first week, we explored the concept of "optimistic" using real-life examples relevant to students' backgrounds and experiences. Later, students interpreted the new term and applied it to their own lives. For instance, Jan explained that his mother is consistently optimistic. The students engaged in both collective and independent reading sessions, followed by discussions to enhance comprehension among their peers. In the midst of these tasks, I initiated individual discussions with every student and held conferences.

Toward the end of the week, students crafted responses about their learning from the biography genre, producing their first two writing samples. Throughout this initial week, students demonstrated cultural connections, diverse perspectives, collaborative learning, and open dialogue. Initially, I aimed to conclude each class with fist bumps and smiles promoting a safe environment. Midway through the week, I observed a positive shift in students' motivation, as they began to exhibit more optimism and kindness toward each other, inspired by the example from the text.

Second Week Focus

During the second week, I engaged in conversations with the students, much like the previous week. They eagerly shared the answer to the question "What makes you happy?" For instance, Willy mentioned his family, emphasizing their support and care. The discussion gained momentum as Willy elaborated on his family, including the presence of his grandmother living with them. This led Ralph to inquire about Willy's grandparents, initiating discussions on family dynamics. Ralph also shared his family composition, humorously referring to a "pet" cockroach. Additionally, he expressed joy in playing Nintendo Switch. Willy and Ralph compared their
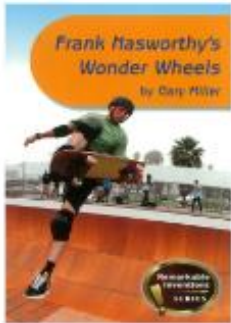
differing rules for gaming. In the middle of this exchange, I reminded the students about the diverse nature of family setups, and rules. Ara initially hesitated to share but eventually stated that her dog, named Angel, brings her happiness.

I presented two non-fiction books for the week: 'Frank Nasworthy's Wonder Wheels,' a narrative, and 'Dinner in India,' an expository text. After explaining the distinction between narrative and expository texts, the students unanimously selected 'Dinner in India,' as shown in Figure 24.

Figure 24

Week Two Text Selection

Write your name under your choice of text, and explain why you picked option 1 or option 2.

OPTION 1	OPTION 2
Frank Hasworthy's Wonder Wheels by Gary Miller	*Dinner in India*
	RALPH I picked this book because i like food and if i was in india you comería todo lo que está en india a. And i like pan me gusta y que no matan las vacas eso es bueno para las vacas. And eso is porque I like este libro 🍽 **WILLY** i choose this book because i like to read people right about their food in india También porque me gusta comer . Ara Me gusta este libro porque yo quiero ir a india y porque quiero probar la comida. Jan i want this book because its food nad i want to learn about food in other countries Michael i want to read this book cause i want to learn about this Indian culture.

This time it was a unanimous vote and everyone decided to read "**Dinner in India**".

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During this second week, the students understood the author's purpose and shared information through group learning activities. As part of this week's focus, I highlighted the importance of the word "sacred," encouraging thinking, self-reflection, student independence, celebrations, and participation in school activities.

Throughout the week, students independently read and discussed their readings with peers to improve understanding. In the middle of these activities, I had individual conversations with each student and held meetings to provide personalized guidance. As the week ended, students wrote reflections on what they learned from the authors' purpose, creating their final two writing samples. Significantly, the last writing sample was a note placed under an artwork they made, symbolizing what they learned throughout the two-week study. Together, we celebrated the students' meaningful connections and achievements.

Language Practices Through Culturally Sustaining Lens Findings

In this section, I will explain findings related to my second question: How does culturally sustaining instruction relate to the students' use of language while reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English? Overall findings highlight the connections between the students' language, literacy development and cultural background. These findings are aligned closely with the scholarly work of Ladson-Billings (2014) and Paris (2012), who stress the vital significance of immersing students in culturally relevant texts and materials.

I will begin by discussing the vital role of language validation, including translanguaging practices during our lessons. Then, I will explore how culturally sustaining practices fostered emergent bilingual experiences, extending beyond literacy. In addition, my findings over diversity appreciation with students and school community. Finally, I will elucidate how both

language and culturally sustaining practices contribute to academic success. Figure 25 illustrates the findings related to the second question of the study.

Figure 25

Overview of Findings Connecting Language and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy
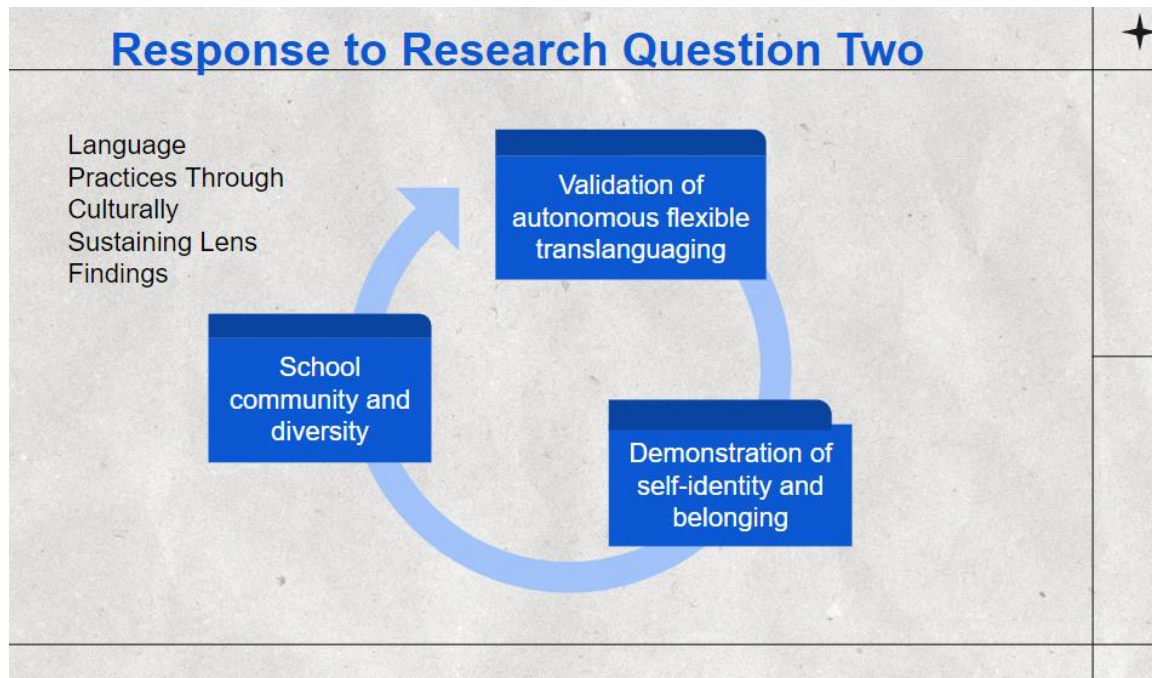
Validation of Autonomous Flexible Translanguage

Fifth-grade emergent students experienced autonomous use of translanguaging throughout the entire study, as they were encouraged to use their preferred way of expression to communicate their ideas- Spanish, English, or translanguaging - while reading non-fiction texts. This recognition and value of language choices fostered a positive language identity within a risk-free environment, ultimately enhancing students' overall language development.

In this study, various approaches were employed to foster autonomous use of translanguage among fifth-grade students, encompassing a wide range of communication forms,

including both informal (oral) and formal (written) modes. These practices also play a pivotal role in shaping their identities and interactions within the school community environment. Oral language and reading fluency served as essential tools for comprehending non-fiction texts in English while also validating students' autonomous interactions and collaborations.

Flexibly Negotiated Oral Language

Oral language is often more flexible, informal, spontaneous, and immediate, emerging in real-time interactions and involving everyday conversational language. I observed that when students engaged in oral language, I could identify potential self-corrections, expressions, and the readers' understanding of word meanings in the text. Additionally, the use of translanguaging during oral discussions was frequently preferred by fifth-grade emergent bilingual participants. Students who felt confident expressing themselves in English shared their thoughts using translanguaging.

Moreover, in situations where students found themselves uncertain or contemplating their thoughts, they tended to employ language fillers, also known as discourse markers. These fillers were frequently unintentional and were used subconsciously to fill pauses or gaps as students constructed their core message. Such filler words or discourse markers were most prominently noticeable during spoken communication.

For instance, words such as "like," "pos," [well] "stuff," "so," "hmm" and repetition of words like "because, because they say" or "y luego [and then], y luego [and then]" were common occurrences when students did not know what to say or were thinking, to avoid prolonged silence during class discussions or when conferring. Throughout this study, nearly every student employed a few of these words, which some students like Jan and Michael used more frequently than others. This informal language, along with the use of slang, was predominantly observed

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during oral discussions or individual conferencing sessions. Examples of slang words used in this study included phrases like "no mas," [no more] "apá," [daddy in Mexican culture] "pos," [well] the word "pos" [well] is also a language filler "lonches,"[packed lunches or snacks] and "las figuras de monitos," referring to cartoon drawings.

Linguistic Expression in Written Form

Another finding of the study was that language validation in writing promoted a positive language identity, which boosted confidence, and fostered meaningful language development. During writing, several elements were evident such as improved efficiency in the construction of clear sentences, including occasional self-corrections, application of new words in written language, and the development of a unique voice and expression. An example of a clear and structured sentence with self-correction is shown in Figure 21. In Jan's first sample, during his first sentence, he clarified his statement by self-correcting the word "fisst" to "first." Then, he self-corrected the word "Afeer" to "After," resulting in a clear paragraph. While features of his primary language were evident, as seen in the word learned which he wrote as "leared," he was making productive attempts. In addition, examples of written language applying new vocabulary acquisition are shown on Figure 18.

During writing, voice and expression are exemplified in both the students' biography artifact, and their last artifact, which was a painting accompanied by a written note. Some biography artifacts were depicted in Figure 22. For instance, in Ara's last artifact, which was a painting she demonstrated voice and expression when she painted a house that reminds her of houses in Mexico from "telenovelas" and she wrote on her note, "Everything will be okay...take/me with you" expressing a message of hope as shown on Figure 26. Lastly, in Jan's

last artifact he painted a smiley face and wrote a note that said "this painting is yours if you promise to smile more often," he showed hope too but in his own artistic and unique way.

Figure 26

Ara's and Jan's Last Artifact Samples
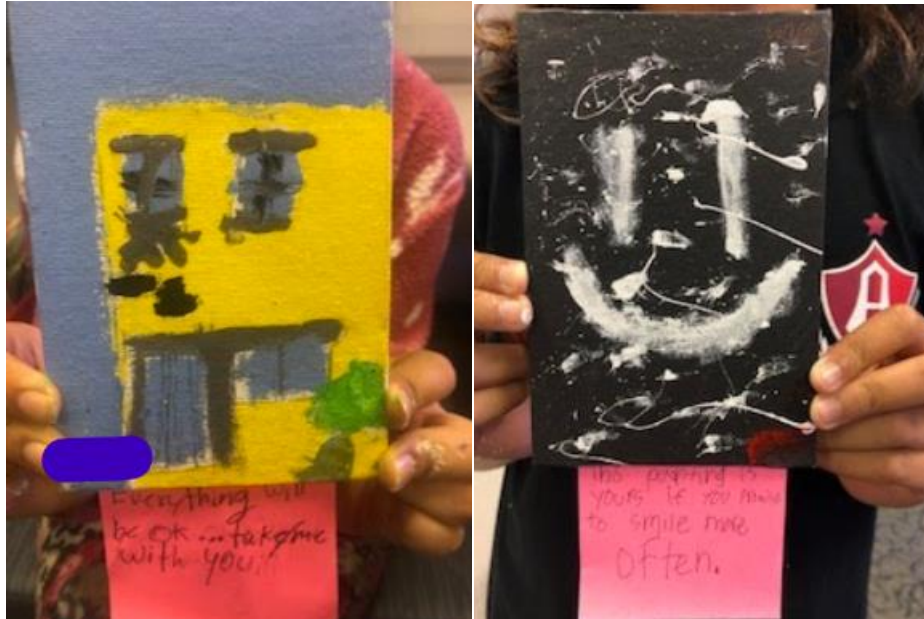
Furthermore, written language served as an indicator of a student's awareness of non-fiction text structures and understanding of text features, regardless of their language preference. In contrast to spoken conversations, written texts can be revisited, shared, and preserved over time, contributing to a more formal and enduring exchange of information. An illustration of this concept can be found in Ralph's third writing sample, depicted below in Figure 27.

Figure 27

Ralph Third Writing Sample

A picture of the thali meal

In the book Dinner in india. I think the auther wrote this book so that when people read it all around the world. They can go try the indian food.

One reason to show that I prove evidence is, in the book were it says "In a thali meal, all dirrient dishes for the meal are placed in little bowls and served on a tray".

And that is the evidence and reason that the outhor wrote this book called... Dinner in indie

He initiated his work with a clear heading at the top, followed by a visual representation of the topic. Furthermore, Ralph thoughtfully organized his writing into paragraphs, presenting claims and providing textual evidence to support and justify his ideas.

Culturally sustaining content was incorporated by transcending the boundaries of literacy, not only through the selection of non-fiction texts at the beginning of each week that resonated with students' cultural backgrounds and experiences but also by giving them a voice in their

learning process. This approach helped students see themselves reflected in the reading materials, fostering engagement, and validating their cultural and linguistic identities. Therefore, engaging students with culturally relevant texts and materials fostered connections between language and literacy development and their cultural backgrounds.

Language flexibility is a critical finding in this study because it influences students' comprehension and expression in reading and writing. Being bilingual represents a valuable resource for students' literacy development. Additionally, translanguaging practices allow students to utilize their entire linguistic repertoire. This often was shown when students seamlessly switched between named languages, typically their home language, and the language of instruction. This dynamic interaction between languages enhanced their reading and writing experiences.

Autonomous Use of Translanguaging

Integrating heteroglossic language practices with culturally sustaining methods empowered students to express their ideas using their entire linguistic repertoire. For instance, in this study, students were given the autonomy to employ translanguaging as necessary for articulating ideas, concepts, or feelings. The data indicates that students utilized translanguaging more frequently during oral discussions or conferencing than in their writing. Notably, Willy and Ara used translanguaging more frequently in their writing, while Michael and Ralph displayed greater confidence and autonomy when using translanguaging during discussions. Additionally, I observed Jan employing translanguaging during discussions with peers who demonstrated language flexibility more often than others.

Promoting the use of translanguaging in this study was an intriguing aspect because I observed that it enabled students to feel comfortable using both their native language and English

during classroom reading activities. This encouragement allowed students to access their entire linguistic repertoire, as needed. For instance, students could present their artifacts using translanguaging practices, which enabled them to express their comprehension of non-fiction texts. Additionally, I modeled and celebrated linguistic diversity, and encouraged students to take pride in their language skills and their ability to use multiple languages.

I promoted translanguaging practices when writing about non-fiction texts and found that students composed in both named languages, accommodating their language proficiency and comfort levels. This approach validated their multilingualism and provided a flexible means of expression for effective communication. In addition, validation through writing acknowledges students' bilingualism as an asset. Encouraging students to employ their entire linguistic repertoire validates their language proficiency and reinforces that their languages are worthy of expression. This approach empowers students to communicate effectively while embracing their linguistic diversity and further validates their cultural and linguistic funds of knowledge.

Through the integration of these practices, fifth-grade EB students were able to use translanguaging while talking, reading, and writing about non-fiction texts. In addition, students presented artifacts in the language of their choice, which bolstered self-confidence and identity through multilingual expression. Translanguaging nurtured language development, cultural appreciation, and a sense of belonging for this group of emergent bilingual students, while enhancing their reading experiences and overall language proficiency.

Demonstration of Self-Identity and Belonging

In this section I will describe how some fifth graders showed their unique identity, and sense of belonging in relation to their home and school cultural environment. Emphasizing students' native languages and cultural expressions in language learning fosters a sense of

belonging and validates their individual and collective identities. This affirmation extends to both oral and written language, where incorporating cultural values and traditions in language materials strengthens students' connection to their heritage and enhances their sense of identity and belonging. In the study all students showed identity and belonging in different ways, their biography artifact a glance shown in the second written sample (biography artifact).

Examples of identity and belonging were shown in the fourth artifact during conferring. Ara created a painting of a yellow house (Illustrated in Figure 28) to represent her family's connection to Guanajuato, Mexico, where colorful houses are common. She explained that she picked the yellow one because it reminds me of "novelas" where they put colorful houses in the stories. Ara strongly identifies with "novelas" which are often television soap operas or dramas. On the other hand, Jan's artifact and explanation were different. Jan expressed, "All I did was put black and then add a white smiling face to make people believe that there's still happiness in the dark and to be optimistic."

Michael integrated knowledge from both non-fiction texts, as shown in his explanation of the artifact: "I made a painting from Mexico because my parents and I... I was born there. I made a temple because in Dinner in India, they show you a lot of culture. Like cows es como sagrada, so I made a temple porque antes los Mexicanos peleaban por ella, es importante para los Mexicanos." Michael uses translanguaging to express that since cows are considered sacred, he made a temple because Mexicans used to fight for it, and it is important to Mexicans. Michael's painting is the left side painting shown from a distance in Figure 28

Then, Ralph not only explained the meaning of his painting but also the materials he used and why he used them, integrating what he had learned from non-fiction texts. Ralph explained, "Because they are so beautiful, and because in the first book, I liked all the colors that Bren

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showed. In Guatemala's culture, they have all those colors, but instead of paint, they use some type of mud or something like that to make the color." Additionally, he connected his learning to previous experiences, saying, "I also watch videos of this artist guy called ZHC, and he makes cool art, customizes things, and gives to charity." After this student-teacher conference, I had curiosity over who was this artist that had inspired Ralph, and looked up who ZHC was discovering new learning from Ralph's experience. Ralph's painting is the right-side painting shown from a distance which a lady is holding in Figure 28.

The last example regarding this finding is Willy's artifact which he explained as follows: Willy explained using Spanish and translanguaging "En la pintura dibujé la bandera de México donde nací porque es importante porque expreso de que parte soy y donde nací. Quiero que sepan que no importa de qué país eres, como algunas veces los niños se burlan del país que eres." [In the painting, I drew the flag of Mexico, where I was born, because it is important to express where I'm from and where I was born. I want you to know that it doesn't matter which country you're from, as sometimes children make fun of the country you come from].

Willy explained that he included the flag of Mexico, his country of birth, in the painting. He emphasized its importance to him because he wants people to understand that regardless of one's country of origin, sometimes children may tease others based on their nationality. I asked him in Spanish why he believed that one's country of origin did not matter. He referenced the text "Dinner in India," and I requested further explanation. Willy explained in Spanish while referring to a section of the test "Dinner in India"

> Como esta familia de India…Como si un niño se ríe porque los de la India no tienen
>
> sillas, y comen en el suelo, es su costumbre y después se ríen, pero tal vez a los de la
>
> India les importa poquito lo que piensen de ellos. Yo pienso lo mismo…Si, yo soy

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orgulloso de ser Mexicano y por eso hice mi bandera. [Like this family from India... Just

as if a child laughs because the people from India don't have chairs and eat on the floor,

it's their custom, and then they laugh, but maybe the people from India care very little

about what others think of them. I think the same way... Yes, I am proud to be Mexican,

and that's why I made my flag]. (See Figure 28)

Students shared experiences, ideas, identity, belonging, and uniqueness. They were

learning from each other, and I was learning from them too.

Social Interaction Dynamics

Learning goes beyond reading and writing skills, it includes the validation of the choices

students make as well as social interactions. These experiences are essential for language and

literacy development. In this study students had the opportunity to discuss non-fiction text

sections during social interactions dynamics. Culturally sustaining instruction connected

students' life experiences to knowledge. An example of a cultural and background information

exchange was observed on the third day of the study. The discussion revolved around the topic

of cultural connections and similarities between different countries, particularly Mexico and the

United States.

I initiated a class discussion by asking if anyone has noticed any connections or

similarities with other countries after reading a certain page of the non-fiction text "Bren

Bataclan Smile Artist." Michael responded by mentioning that in Mexico, they have "fiestas"

[parties] where people get loud and have a good time. Ralph brings up Guatemala and notes that

they also have "fiestas" [parties] where people get loud, decorate roads with flowers, play music,

and use many colorful decorations.

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Jan shared that their family is from Mexico, but he is from Texas. Jan also mentioned that in Mexico, people often use red and green colors for events like Cinco de Mayo [May fifth], whereas their mom uses blue alongside those colors. Willy contributes by saying that in Mexico, it is always loud, and there are always many children playing outside. Ara agreed with the idea of lively parties in Mexico and mentioned that people are indeed loud during such events. Michael revealed that both their parents are from Mexico, and they have seen many colorful things there.

Michael also mentioned seeing graffiti close to the train and later Jan connected the class discussion to a game called "Subway Surfers." Ralph followed up with curiosity about the graffiti, asking for more details about it. The discussion touched on cultural aspects such as festive traditions, color symbolism in different celebrations, and the liveliness of gatherings in Mexico and its neighboring regions. The class discussion about the word 'graffiti' unfolded as follows:

"¿Cuáles grafitis?"[Which graffiti?] asked Ralph, to which Michael replied, "They are called street art." Jan clarified without hesitation, using translanguaging, "¡Es illegal!" [It's illegal!] . Then, Michael added to Jan's comment, saying, "Aquí y en México es illegal," [Here and in Mexico it is illegal], using translanguaging. He then asked Ralph, "Have you seen them, Ralph?" Ralph responded, "I am from Guatemala; I have not been to Mexico." Jan then attempted to give Ralph examples of common things that resonate with them, such as video games, to explain the word "graffiti." Jan asked Ralph a question, saying, "But... have you seen things like paintings on trains? Like... have you played Subway Surfers? You know how the kid in the game paints graffiti..." However, Ralph was still seeking the meaning of the word, asking, "What is graffiti?" Jan then explained in simple terms, "It's like a painting on the wall, but it's

illegal." Ralph then asked, "Why is it illegal?" Jan responded, "Because you are drawing on somebody's property." Michael joined the conversation and expressed, "Aha!" affirming by moving his head back and forth with expression. Ralph now seemed to be understanding the word, and he asked his peers, "Can you draw on your own property?" Michael and Jan responded, "Yeah!" affirming by moving their heads back and forth and using hand gestures to express their agreement.

This interaction above represents a casual conversation among students, with some clarification provided for Ralph when discussing the term "graffiti." Furthermore, the students' interaction went beyond making connections; it also served as an illustration of cultural comparisons. During these social interactions students compared and contrasted cultural practices, traditions, and historical events discussed in non-fiction texts with their own cultural backgrounds; they learned from each other and gained a deeper understanding of the non-fiction text.

School Community and Diversity

Towards the end of this study, students came together as a cohesive team, showing respect and appreciation for each other and for the various cultures depicted in non-fiction texts. One example of this appreciation was expressed by Jan after reading both texts. He stated, "I would like to know more about people around the world, and that's why I liked Dinner in India better."

Culturally sustaining practices not only improved students' writing skills but also cultivated a sense of pride and ownership of their cultural identities, which contributes to academic success. Another example comes from Ralph's conference time when he commented on the text "Dinner in India": Ralph expressed, "The author made this book for people from

different countries so that if they get this book, they can read about it, and they will say... WOW! That's interesting."

Lastly, it's worth noting that not only did students learn from the non-fiction texts, but they also learned from each other, fostering a rich environment of mutual learning and cultural exchange. Several members of the school community discovered artifacts created by fifth-grade students in various locations around the school, including hallways, near vending machines, and throughout the building. The study brought smiles to many school community members, as illustrated in Figure 28. This serves as an example of how this study engaged the school community in the reading process.

Once school members picked up these artifacts and read the attached notes, they expressed curiosity about the non-fiction texts featured in our project. For instance, a lady on the right side was so delighted when she found a painting that she entered our classroom and felt inspired to read the text about "Bren Bataclan, the Smile Artist." Others also stopped by our classroom, intrigued by the fascinating artifacts, and began asking questions about the non-fiction texts.

The students were delighted to witness the positive response from the school community as a result of their efforts to spread smiles throughout the school. They were truly making a difference in someone else's life and bringing smiles to faces that had not been smiling before. This engagement not only enriched the students' reading experiences but also nurtured a sense of connection within the school community as shown in Figure 28.

Figure 28

School Community Reaction to Fifth Graders Final Artifact
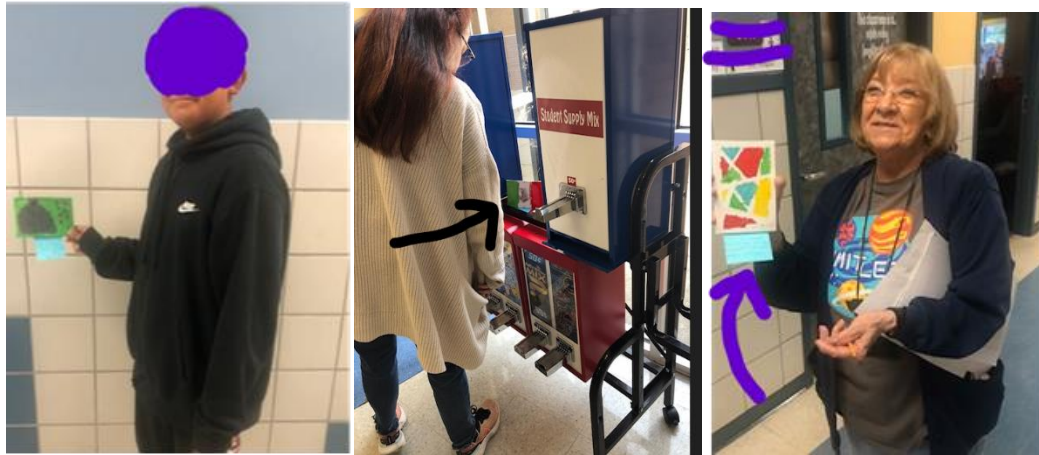
Striving to Attain Academic Success

In this study, both language practices and culturally sustaining practices contribute to affirming students' cultural identities and language development, with the potential to significantly improve both oral and written language abilities. This was achieved by recognizing and incorporating students' native languages alongside the target language, thereby promoting bilingualism for academic success.

To promote culturally sustaining practices through reading non-fiction texts with fifth-grade emergent students, I concluded my study with a Cultural Celebration. I created opportunities to celebrate and share students' culturally sustaining writing with the larger school community, such as through multicultural events or exhibitions. Several teachers who observed the students' final activities provided positive feedback and validation for their efforts in culturally sustaining writing. They acknowledged the value of their cultural contributions to the school community, leaving the students with a sense of pride and ownership in their learning.

Summary of Findings

This research study had a specific focus on observing and analyzing the language use of fifth-grade bilingual students during their engagement in reading and writing activities related to non-fiction texts in English. This chapter provided an explanation of all the findings that addressed the research questions: How do emergent fifth-grade bilingual students use language when reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English? How does culturally sustaining instruction relate to the students' use of language while reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English?

The findings related to the first question, which examined the language practices of fifth-grade bilingual students when reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English, were categorized into two aspects: language practices during reading and writing.

In the context of reading practices, I discovered that students engaged in translanguaging inquiry during their reading discussions. More specifically, before and during reading non-fiction texts in English, I observed that students actively negotiated word meanings, utilized their knowledge of text features, autonomously applied contextual cues, and independently set learning goals. After reading, the findings indicated that students actively participated in collaborative inquiry discussions.

When it comes to writing, I observed that students adeptly integrated linguistic translanguaging practices, resources, and vocabulary with confidence. What struck me most was how they seamlessly incorporated newly acquired vocabulary into their writing. This occurred both before and during the writing process, where students applied note-taking techniques, integrated linguistic resources and vocabulary. Additionally, they demonstrated self-monitoring and self-correction skills when writing. After completing their writing, I found that students-

initiated reflection, revision, and editing processes, allowing them to express their unique voices through their written work.

The findings for the second question regarding how culturally sustaining instruction relates to fifth-grade bilingual students' use of language while reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English yielded three major findings: validation of autonomous flexible translanguaging, demonstration of self-identity and belonging, and school community and diversity.

The language validation findings were related to students' flexibility negotiated oral language, linguistic expression in the written form, and autonomous use of translanguaging throughout reading and writing. In the context of culturally sustaining practices of EBs, the findings encompassed social interaction dynamics, demonstration of self-identity, and belonging. Including findings on school community and diversity through culturally sustaining practices of EBs. Lastly, I explained how culturally sustaining practices and EBs development strive to attain academic success.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss findings, implications, and provide conclusions. The intent of the current study is to describe how fifth-grade emergent bilingual students participating in culturally sustaining instruction use language before, during, and after reading non-fiction books/texts in English. This investigation was guided by the following research questions: How do emergent fifth-grade bilingual students use language when reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English? How does culturally sustaining instruction relate to student usage of language while reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English? Chapter 5 explores the language practices of fifth-grade emergent bilingual students involved in culturally sustaining instruction, commencing with a review of the methodology, and finally summarizing research findings through discussion of data analysis.

Review of the Methodology

To address research questions, we employed a descriptive qualitative study design to gain a comprehensive understanding of how emergent bilingual students engage with language while reading and writing non-fiction texts in English within the context of culturally sustaining instruction. The planning, methods, and results of this study were guided specifically by my teaching experiences and philosophical presumptions (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The chosen methodological framework was a descriptive qualitative study based on the social constructivist or interpretative framework (Creswell, 2015; Creswell & Poth, 2018). A descriptive research design is ideal for capturing observable behaviors and experiences in individual language acquisition (Miles et al., 2020).

For this descriptive qualitative research study, I established parameters to observe a small group of bilingual fifth-grade students and their language usage before, during, and after reading non-fiction texts in the context of CSP (Creswell, 2015). As a qualitative researcher, I comprehensively interpreted student experiences in detail while collecting information (Miles et al., 2020).

Summary of the Findings

In this study, data collection began with detailed observational field notes. These observations focused on language usage of fifth-grade bilingual students while they received culturally sustaining instruction, engaging in reading and writing practices centered around non-fiction texts in English. To gain deeper understanding of students' language strengths and needs, individual conferences were conducted, providing valuable insights. A combination of these observations and collected artifacts served as the foundation for data triangulation.

The systematic analysis of data took place in two distinct phases. During the first week, the emphasis was on oral language, while the second week focused more on written language, particularly in the context of non-fiction texts. The resulting findings offer valuable insights into how this specific group of five emergent bilingual students utilizes language during culturally sustaining instruction literacy lessons and their interactions with English non-fiction texts.

Additionally, the analysis seeks to explore the intricate relationship between culturally sustaining instruction and the language practices of students as they navigate reading and writing tasks involving English non-fiction texts. This comprehensive examination aims to effectively address research questions, shedding light on complex dynamics between instructional practices and language utilization in the context of engaging with non-fiction texts.

Research questions were addressed through systematic moment-by-moment observation and analysis of participants' actions during reading and writing events. The study provides insights into the usage of a full linguistic repertoire by emergent bilingual students when reading non-fiction books and writing in response (Canagarajah, 2011; Cano & Ruiz, 2020; Graham, 2012).

This study contributes to understanding Translanguaging Theory (García & Wei, 2014) by demonstrating how students fluidly integrate linguistic written resources and vocabulary. Furthermore, it explores CSP (Paris & Alim, 2017) through the lens of emergent bilingual students, focusing on comprehension of non-fiction books and texts in English.

Discussion of the Findings

The specific findings of this study pertaining to the first research question revealed the language practices of emergent fifth-grade bilingual participants when reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English. The literacy findings were multifaceted, encompassing language practices in both reading and writing. In this chapter, the researcher discusses specific findings related to both the first and second research questions. These language results were drawn from interactive discussions that incorporated translanguaging during both reading and (most notably) writing. Furthermore, validation of autonomous and flexible use of translanguaging reflects students' self-identity and sense of belonging within the school dynamics.

Language Practices Findings

Through this study, I discovered the importance of students using translanguaging practices when examining texts before, during, and after reading (García & Wei, 2014). Allowing an opportunity to investigate each text has been shown to be beneficial because it enables word study, text feature usage, connections to the context through context cues, and

improved comprehension of text meanings. Before, during, and after students completed reading non-fiction texts, they employed translanguaging inquiry discussions to better understand the passage in English. In addition, students fluidly integrated linguistic written resources and vocabulary throughout writing.

Language Practices Throughout Reading

Before and during reading, it is essential that students take closer look at the text to identify unfamiliar words. In the first week, students actively participated in oral classroom discussions, sharing unfamiliar words, and interacting through questions and responses. In contrast, during the second week focus shifted to written communication.

Students utilized highlighting tape to negotiate word meanings in the text before reading, relying on shared knowledge and online resources to understand vocabulary. Students were connecting previous knowledge and background information to figure out unknown words. For example, all students encounter unfamiliar words and use different techniques to understand applications in texts. However, Jan displayed exceptional language skills by independently deciphering unfamiliar words often. He actively engaged with classmates during this process, and demonstrated a high level of vocabulary proficiency through effective use of strategies such as context cues, and text features. This unique characteristic distinguished him among his peers.

This practice of figuring out words enables students to gain a better grasp of passages and read aloud more fluently as they became familiar with vocabulary embedded in a variety of texts. Additionally, students relied on text features for support in better understanding the overall text.

In addition, students actively accessed knowledge of text features often to understand big ideas and overarching themes in the text. Text features that included headings, pictures, and bold print played a critical role in presenting information within a text, significantly enhancing overall

comprehension for readers. This concept is exemplified by Jan's example of using text features through reading discussions to understand non-fiction text.

Furthermore, in Chapter 4, visual elements such as illustrations and captions significantly enhanced Willy's reading experience, facilitating precise predictions, and encouraging collaborative learning with his peers through the use of translanguaging practices. This ultimately resulted in a substantial improvement in his content comprehension.

In addition, while reading, students could identify unfamiliar words, as discussed earlier, and connect them to the text's content. This process provided an opportunity to deduce and negotiate the meanings of new words that they may not recognize by practicing contextual cues.

Students were autonomously applying context cues as a common practice that involved using information from the text to understand unfamiliar words or concepts. Jan effectively used context cues to deduce the meaning of words by considering the surrounding paragraph, and using translanguaging which improved his overall comprehension.

On the other hand, Ralph often demonstrated a need to understand words in context during oral discussions, particularly when dealing with multiple-meaning words and context cues. Initially, when the study began, my first impression was that Ralph was seeking attention or trying to be humorous. However, after observing a recurrent pattern, I realized he was having difficulty with context cues and understanding some words. Nonetheless, the collaboration of peers, translanguaging practices, and allocating sufficient time for understanding challenging words proved to be crucial during this study for the students to achieve success.

In this study, students were independently setting learning goals for example: English letter sound relationships as a practice that students performed after reading or during conferencing time. Students practiced reading with expression, intonation, and fluency to

comprehend the text. Occasionally, students noticed that they missed a word, or that something did not sound right, or added or omitted a word when reading. Students often took the initiative to go back and self-correct. When students reread independently, they often did so to clarify concepts, find textual evidence, or engage in discussions in various ways.

After students read a non-fiction text in English, they actively engaged in collaborative inquiry discussions. Furthermore, the incorporation of inquiry (especially through the use of open-ended questions), in conjunction with translanguaging practices (before, during, and after reading)fostered linguistic flexibility among the cohort of emerging bilinguals in this study.

This discovery proved significant due to the depth of conversations and discussions students engaged in, both among themselves and with the researcher. Culturally sustaining practices emphasize not only valuing but also preserving cultural knowledge students bring with them to the educational process (Paris et al., 2017). In the context of this study, the fifth-grade participants' collaborative involvement in discussions to construct meaning was evident through interactive conversations that highlighted each student's individual identity and uniqueness.

In Kelly's (2020) study, they explored third-grade students' conversations in small group discussions after reading informational texts, which were more superficial. In contrast, the group of EBs from fifth grade in the current study demonstrated deeper discussions that supported each other's learning. This alignment with CSP principles underscores the significance of conversations in the educational context.

Language Practices Throughout Writing

Before and during writing about non-fiction text in English, the researcher confirmed that students fluidly integrated linguistic written resources and vocabulary. They frequently practiced notetaking, incorporated acquired vocabulary into writing samples, and often engaged in self-

corrections. However, students faced challenges in understanding unfamiliar words, primarily because of a lack of background knowledge on the topic.

In the study, (both before and during writing practices) the researcher observed that students were skilled at applied note taking techniques using translanguaging to document challenging words and decipher meanings. They utilized various resources, including multimedia searches, dictionaries, and peer discussions while independently negotiating the meanings of these words. However, it was challenging when a single word had multiple meanings depending on the context of the text. Non-fiction texts, as defined by Song and Buchanan (2019), provide exposure to unfamiliar content and facts about the world. In this context, the challenges faced by students transformed into valuable learning opportunities, as they learned from each other.

Consistently, what stood out throughout the study was a seamless integration of translanguaging, linguistic resources, and vocabulary in students' writing. Each student produced five written samples, showcasing how emerging bilinguals in this research not only incorporated new words into informal spoken conversations but also in formal written compositions. Students fearlessly harnessed language, utilizing translanguaging to express ideas in written form. When students effectively employ new words to convey ideas in writing, it signifies a successful integration of additional words into academic vocabulary.

Moreover, on certain occasions, after finishing written artifacts, students were given the opportunity to reflect on the writing process. This reflection supported self-monitoring work and making corrections, (as demonstrated in Figure 19 in Chapter 4 where the corrected portions are highlighted in yellow). Subsequently, when they wrote about non-fiction texts in English, students frequently engaged in the practice of reflection, revision, and editing. A confirmed connection existed between students' language use during self-monitoring and seeking

clarification about meaning when uncertain. Participants often turned to the Spanish language or translanguaging for clarification, among themselves and in interactions with the researcher. This reflected willingness to express thoughts in writing and demonstrate risk-taking or courage.

Fifth-grade EBs engaged in post-writing practices, which included self-initiated reflection, revision, and editing during the course of this research study. Typically, during revision of written responses to non-fiction texts, students participated in conferences to receive feedback and sought peer support to clarify ideas using translanguaging practices. This process encompassed both revising and editing work and concluded with a reflective phase.

In Chapter 4, the researcher provided several examples that visually illustrate students' writing progress, comparing initial work with a third version (as shown in Figures 20 and 21). This research shares similarities with Moses' study (2014), where the author focused on building content knowledge and academic vocabulary. However, it differs significantly in that students were copying materials directly from the text. In contrast, in the present project students used the text exclusively to support claims by providing text evidence rather than copying from the text. Finally, students reflected on writing processes, using translanguaging to enhance learning, with a particular emphasis on understanding the writing criteria explained through rubrics (Table 9).

The research indicated that fifth-grade students express their voice in writing by conveying distinct thoughts, ideas, personality, and emotions influenced by individuality and life experiences. In addition, participants demonstrate this through multimodal literacy, incorporating visuals and graphical symbols, enhancing the depth of written work, and reflecting a unique self-expression and perspective. The use of voice in writing is influenced by factors such as language proficiency, cultural backgrounds, and prior experiences. Figure 22 illuminates this concept

(with Jan and Ralph's written sections highlighted in yellow) demonstrating how the students expressed unique voices through writing and illustrations.

Cultural Sustaining Instruction Practices

Fifth-grade students in this group shared a common Latinx cultural background, united by Spanish language use, even though individual experiences, family histories, values, and traditions may vary. This shared cultural foundation significantly influences comprehension of non-fiction texts. This section provides an overview of the instructional patterns used to teach students and explore how culturally sustaining instruction relates to language use in reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English.

Language Practices Through Culturally Sustaining Lens Findings

Validation of Autonomous Flexible Translanguaging. The findings related to the second research question can be categorized into three major components exploring how culturally sustaining instruction is connected to students' language validation for flexible language use while reading and writing about non-fiction texts in English. The first component addresses how students validate autonomous and flexible translanguaging. The second component focuses on students' demonstration of self-identity and a sense of belonging (Paris & Alim, 2017). The third component delves into how school communities and diversity contribute to student academic success.

The findings suggest this factor is achieved through flexible negotiation of oral and written language, autonomous use of translanguaging, social interaction dynamics demonstrating self-identity and belonging, and promotion of cultural exchange within a school community. All components contribute to the pursuit of academic success paired with literary proficiency.

In this study, fifth-grade emergent students were encouraged to use the preferred language of Spanish, English, or translanguaging while reading non-fiction texts. This practice fostered a positive language identity and enhanced overall language development. The study revealed that when students have validation for flexible use of language, they are fearless communicators when seeking clarification. Encompassing both oral and written skills, proficiency includes interconnected use of translanguaging throughout literacy.

When language practices are integrated with culturally sustaining instruction, students gain the ability to express themselves using their entire linguistic repertoire, a practice known as translanguaging in literacy (García & Wei, 2014). For example, in this research, students were granted the freedom and autonomy to employ translanguaging when expressing thoughts during discussions or reflections. The data collected indicates students used translanguaging frequently during oral discussions or conferences as compared to written work. However, evidence shows the majority of students used translanguaging in at least one or two writing samples, demonstrating that through the practice of translanguaging, students effectively convey thoughts and ideas, thus showcasing learning while gaining knowledge.

Demonstration of Self-Identity and Belonging. As demonstrated in this study, promoted experiences such as social interaction dynamics, strengthening students' sense of belonging and identity in a safe, risk-free environment. This environment is open to embracing diversity and culturally sustaining practices to strive toward academic success for career/college readiness.
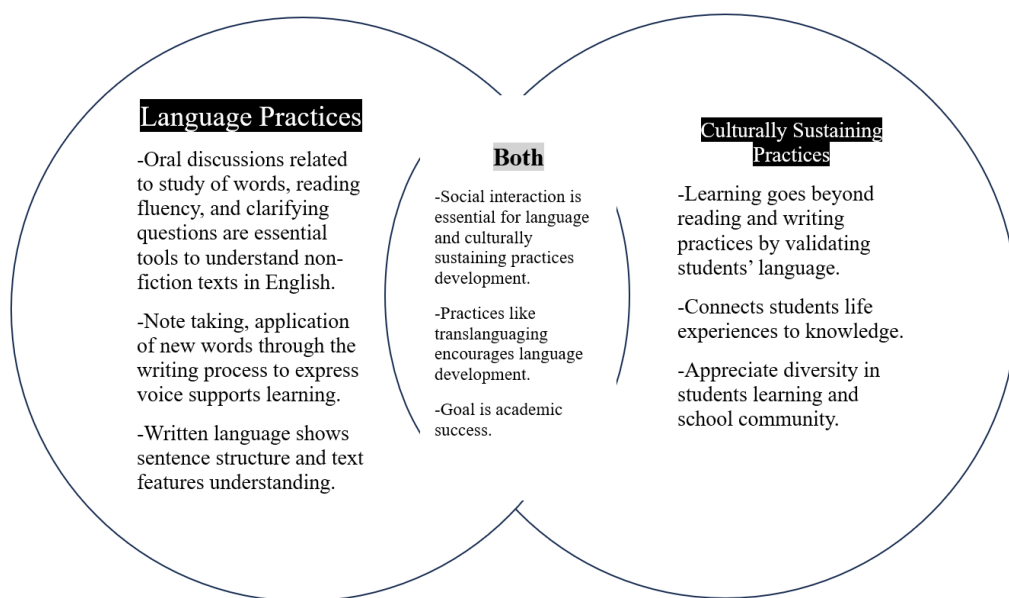
In addition, Figure 29 visually represents a comparison of the connections between language practices and the implementation of culturally sustaining instruction throughout the course of this study. Language is vital for conveying knowledge and transmitting cultural values,

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experiences, or identities. Ladson-Billings (1995) emphasizes the importance of recognizing and affirming students' cultural identities and languages in education. Connecting students' life experiences to knowledge and appreciating diversity within a school community influences learning processes while fostering and sustaining students' cultural experiences (Paris & Alim, 2017). This, in turn, enhances learner-centered outcomes, particularly for diverse student populations like EBs.

Figure 29 below illustrates the relationship between language practices and culturally sustaining instruction.

Figure 29

Language Practices and Culturally Sustaining Instruction

Language Practices

-Oral discussions related to study of words, reading fluency, and clarifying questions are essential tools to understand non-fiction texts in English.

-Note taking, application of new words through the writing process to express voice supports learning.

-Written language shows sentence structure and text features understanding.

Both

-Social interaction is essential for language and culturally sustaining practices development.

-Practices like translanguaging encourages language development.

-Goal is academic success.

Culturally Sustaining Practices

-Learning goes beyond reading and writing practices by validating students' language.

-Connects students life experiences to knowledge.

-Appreciate diversity in students learning and school community.

EBs demonstrated an appreciation for cultural diversity, fostering connections within the school community and instilling a sense of pride and ownership. According to Knudson (2018), reading non-fiction books developed analytical thinking, and the use of social perspectives

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expanded students' current knowledge. Findings indicate students expressed uniqueness and voice. As students interacted with the broader school community, they felt a sense of belonging and learning was enhanced through extension of cultural practices.

Implications for Practice

The results in this research closely mirror the scholarly contributions of Ladson-Billings (2014) and Paris (2012), which emphasize the crucial importance of involving students in culturally pertinent texts and resources. These findings underscore the connections between language, the development of literacy skills, and students' cultural backgrounds.

Additional research is crucial because early exposure of young adolescents to non-fiction reading, and instructional methods significantly influences academic performance and overall quality of life (Song & Buchanan, 2019). Encouraging use of translanguaging and culturally sustaining instruction is important in helping EBs understand non-fiction texts in English.

The current research study will significantly impact domains of literacy, language, and culture for two primary reasons. First, the results underscore how students autonomously and flexibly employ translanguaging in writing, seamlessly blending linguistic written sources and vocabulary. Row (2018) stressed the significance of bilingual students having freedom to fully utilize linguistic resources when crafting and documenting their narratives. Additionally, Canagarajah (2006) illustrated that certain expressions lose potency when translated, which could potentially diminish the voices of students. He highlighted that there is still a wealth of unexplored territory in understanding how translanguaging operates within students' writing.

The results confirmed a direct relationship between culturally sustaining instruction and the associated benefits it brings in terms of language and literacy, especially regarding the comprehension of non-fiction texts in English. This finding challenges the notion presented by

deficit models, which suggests that bilingual students encounter difficulties in grasping non-fiction texts in English. This contribution aligns with the research conducted by Nell Duke (2000), who authored a scholarly article addressing the shortage of informational text in classroom contexts and activities, particularly for first-grade elementary school students. The current study builds upon Duke's work, with a specific focus on fifth-grade students.

Educators

When considering the broader implications for colleagues and educators, I identified a few essential factors for consideration when delivering instruction. The first factor is: students learn best when they have autonomous use of language. Collaboratively participating in inquiry discussions through language flexibility supported students' understanding of non-fiction text in English. Students significantly benefit from flexibility of using their entire linguistic repertoire during language discussions. In doing so, they learn not only from the teacher, but also from peers. Furthermore, students encounter and process unfamiliar words in unique ways, potentially employing translanguaging techniques (García & Wei, 2014).

When students have autonomy to use language, particularly during conferences with the teacher, understanding of the story improves along with better support. Allowing students to utilize their full linguistic repertoire in the classroom increases chances for success. The manner in which students employ language repertoires is crucial for a comprehensive examination of the writing process and for engaging in self-reflective practices. This study includes evidence that emergent bilingual students' use of autonomous flexible translanguaging supports development of written resources and vocabulary.

The second factor involved supporting students with the validation of flexible translanguage and empowering informed choices, not only in language usage but also in

selecting texts that piqued interest and resonated with them. CSP, as emphasized by Paris and Alim (2017), underscores the importance of validating students' language and choices, connecting life experiences with new knowledge.

Students' text choices differed from initial expectations. In the first week, I anticipated they would select option 2, 'Who is Cesar,' since it directly related to the Hispanic cultural backgrounds of most students. However, surprisingly, they opted for 'Bren Bataclan Smile Artist' instead, showing a greater interest in learning about the biography of a man from the Philippines, rather than Cesar Millan, who hails from Mexico. Figures 11 and 12 provide insights into students' responses regarding text selections during the two weeks of the study, and the reasons behind their choices.

Then, when students chose the text "Dinner in India," it was a unanimous decision that I had not anticipated. Initially, I expected the small group of participants, mostly boys, to choose the text featuring a guy skateboarding on the cover, which was "Frank Nasworthy's Wonder Wheels." However, they surprised me by selecting "Dinner in India," demonstrating curiosity about what people eat in India. This led me to reflect that this group of students has an interest in diversity and is willing to explore other cultures.

The last factor to consider when delivering instruction aligns with the first significant finding described in this chapter: the 'autonomous use of students' translanguage.' This is because children expressed themselves, showcasing unique personalities and perspectives on various text practices and learning experiences. The use of translanguage and culturally sustaining practices are intertwined to support learning success. In essence, encouragement is important when sharing their voices, a concept I like to refer to as 'AirVoice.'

I created the term 'AirVoice' to refer to a language feature that facilitates the effortless exchange of perspectives between individuals, much like the 'AirDrop' feature on our phones enables simple file sharing across various operating systems. The introduction of 'AirVoice' in the classroom ignited the enthusiasm of Generation Z and Alpha, our present-day elementary school students, who have a natural affinity for technology. It encourages them to express their viewpoints and opinions freely, without fear of judgment.

In addition, fostering students' curiosity for learning, enhancing social interactions, development of culturally sustaining practices, and validation of language choices are all important factors. Through "AirVoice," students feel empowered to openly discuss ideas, seek clarification, engage in collaborative meaning-making from non-fiction reading texts, and promote literacy growth while collaboratively participating in class discussions.

Policy Makers

The implications for policymakers in the field of education are closely tied to the concepts of "autonomous use of student translanguage" and "AirVoice." Instead of solely focusing on the quantity of books, it is crucial to prioritize quality and enable students to play an active role in selecting educational materials. Textbooks should align with students' needs, language practices, cultural backgrounds, and identities. Wei (2018) stated that for effective discussions, meaning making, and negotiation of unfamiliar words while acquiring new knowledge through reading or writing, students need to feel they are in a risk-free environment where they can make mistakes and, from there, reflect and self-correct.

Recognizing students comprehend better when engaged in discussions leads me to the realization that language flexibility is crucial for learning new knowledge.

Organizing community book clubs presents an exciting opportunity for students to read and discuss non-fiction texts that showcase diverse cultural perspectives and experiences.

Supporting heritage languages is integral to CSP. I align with García's argument that policies and practices promoting the continued use of heritage languages are crucial for preserving culture and fostering identity development (García, 2009). We need policies that support CSP for all bilingual students through a curriculum that embraces cultural diversity.

Limitations and Recommendations for Further Research

This study was done at the end of the school year, the school as a whole had activities that could interrupt the classroom routines. Activities such as special projects, parades, graduations, early dismissal, and other tasks involving students. Those activities could be distracting for some students. However, students' behavior and engagement were not significantly impacted by those activities during literacy class. For future researchers, I would recommend conducting studies in the beginning of the school year (Fall) not Spring to minimize distraction risks.

Future studies could focus on cultivating independent readers by incorporating concepts such as "autonomous use of translanguaging," "fluidly integrating linguistic resources and vocabulary in writing," and "AirVoice" into classroom practices. Equally essential is the celebration of students' achievements by educators, administrators, and community leaders, as these milestones contribute to personal growth and self-esteem.

Conclusion

This study employed a descriptive qualitative methodology to investigate how fifth-grade EBs engaged with language before, during, and after reading non-fiction texts within a culturally sustaining instructional framework. The results yielded insights into how students utilized

language while reading and writing about non-fiction materials in English. The information gleaned from the data holds significant value for educators, school leaders, and researchers who are dedicated to supporting EBs in educational settings.

To foster independent readers, it is vital to integrate the principles of "autonomous utilization of translanguaging, seamless integration of linguistic written resources and vocabulary," and "AirVoice" into classroom strategies. Moreover, it is crucial for educators, administrators, and community leaders to honor and commemorate students' accomplishments, as achievements are instrumental in nurturing development and ameliorating self-esteem.

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APPENDIX A

INTERNAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

Texas Woman's University
Institutional Review Board (IRB)
irb@twu.edu
https://www.twu.edu/institutional-review-board-irb/

May 12, 2023

Margarita Ramos-Rivera
Literacy and Learning

Re: Exempt - IRB-FY2023-257 Non-Fiction English Text Study with Fifth-grade Bilinguals

Dear Margarita Ramos-Rivera,

The above referenced study has been reviewed by the TWU IRB - Denton operating under FWA00000178 and was determined to be exempt on May 12, 2023. If you are using a signed informed consent form, the approved form has been stamped by the IRB and uploaded to the Attachments tab under the Study Details section. This stamped version of the consent must be used when enrolling subjects in your study.

Note that any modifications to this study must be submitted for IRB review prior to their implementation, including the submission of any agency approval letters, changes in research personnel, and any changes in study procedures or instruments. Additionally, the IRB must be notified immediately of any adverse events or unanticipated problems. All modification requests, incident reports, and requests to close the file must be submitted through Cayuse.

On May 11, 2024, this approval will expire and the study must be renewed or closed. A reminder will be sent 45 days prior to this date.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please email your IRB analyst at irb@twu.edu or refer to the IRB website.
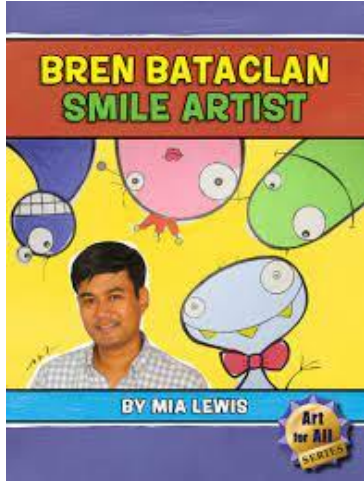
Sincerely,

TWU IRB - Denton

APPENDIX B

INSTRUCTIONAL LESSON PLANS

Key words or phrases used in the lesson	
Transl= Translanguaging (strategy practice)	**T**=Teacher
CSP = Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (strategy practice)	**S**=Students

Teacher: Bilingual Reading- Ramos	Date: Week 1	Grade: Fifth-grade Bilingual Group 1

OPTION 1	**OPTION 2**
Text Title: Bren Bataclan, Smile Artist	Text Title: Who is Cesar?
Text Genre: Non-fiction: Biography	Text Genre: Non-fiction: Biography

Unit/Theme: Unit 2- Analyzing author's purpose and author's craft moves

Standards

TEKS

(5.3) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Theme and Genre. Students *analyze, make inferences, and draw conclusions* about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

(5.7)-A) Identify the literary language and devices used in biographies and autobiographies, including how authors present major events in a person's life.

(5.17) Writing. Students write about their own experiences

(5.10) Author's purpose and craft: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts. (A) Explain the author's purpose and message within a text.

(5.11) Composition: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple text-writing processes.

ELPS

(2C) I'll listen closely to what my teacher and classmates say to learn new words, expressions, and language patterns.

(3G) I'll share my opinions, ideas, and feelings about my learning in class discussions.

(4E) I'll read selections about this subject that are adjusted to my level, but I'll work to need those adjustments less and less.

(5F) When I write, I'll use many different sentence patterns, sentence lengths, and connecting words that combine phrases, clauses, and sentences.

Content Objective(s): Students can understand the genre of biography and share experiences with peers.	**Language Objective(s)**: Students can speak to a partner about their learning, opinions, ideas, and feelings.

Socio-Cultural Objective(s):
 	
 Encourage cross-linguistic connections and translanguaging before, during, and after each lesson.
 	
 Present social and academic language as equals, respecting our opinions and voice
	Key Vocabulary:
	 Option 1:
	    Optimistic
	   -Compound words:
	        Skyscrapers
	        notebook
	 Option 2:
	 tradition
	 *In addition to other words that will be co-created with students (CSP)

Supplementary Materials:

Anchor Charts Highlighting tape
Paper, pencil, and other crafting materials   Visual aids

Warm-Up/Word Study/Vocabulary

T-¡Hola! Hi students…How are you? Let's start by sharing something that makes you smile. Students take turns to share, Turn & talk to your friend. Partner B will listen first, and then Partner A will talk. Then you switch. (Transl.)

T-This week, I have two great biography books. Who knows what is the genre of biography and what that means? We have three goals: a content goal, a language goal, and -a cultural goal. Discuss displayed goals with students. (CSP)

S- Students will answer

The teacher will clarify and explain that a biography/biografía text describes the life of someone and explains why that person is important to society. (Transl.)

T-Today, you will choose between two biography options that I brought; I will give you both to take a quick pick on both, and when you decide, please put your text choice on top of the other. Explain why you picked the text. (CSP)

S-Students show their choice (CSP)

T- Students for this week will read three sections of the text daily.

T- Now, I will ask you to preview three sections of the text, looking for unfamiliar or tricky words that are hard to read (Pass on the highlighting tape for them to mark those words in the text).

T- Now is the time to share what we discover. Students, please share the words with a partner and ask their partner if they know the meaning of that word or phrase in Spanish or English. (Transl.)

S- Students will share with partners.

The teacher will discuss students' findings and clarify if needed.

----Days 2 & 3---

Option 1:

T- I will ask you a question, did you notice the word **optimistic** in the text on page 8?

T- Then, I need to explain the word "optimistic" is an adjective that describes a person who is cheerful and always thinks that everything will be fine. However, the word "optimist" is a noun; it means "a person who is optimistic." Optimum means "the best."

T- Are you optimistic? Turn & talk to your friend. Partner A will listen first, and then Partner B will talk. Then you switch.

Option 2:

T- I will ask you a question, did you notice the word **tradition** in the text on page 2?

T- Then, I need to explain the word "**tradition**," but first of all…Did you notice that is in bold letters? What does that mean? What is a Glossary? Let students answer and then clarify or explain what the word tradition means, which is the transmission of customs or beliefs from generation to generation or the fact of being passed on in this way. (Option 2) (CSP)

T- What kind of traditions/tradiciones do you celebrate? Turn & talk to your friend. Partner A will listen first, and then Partner B will talk. Then you switch. (Transl.)

The teacher will review previous learning and clarify misconceptions using Transl. and other language resources.

S- (Students' responses may vary, allowing thinking time may help).

 Presentation/Modeling/Mini lesson

Days 1-3, 4-Review
Today, I will teach you that after reading a text, you will learn something from the book or a section of the book. The teacher will model reading a section of the text and thinking aloud…What is something new that I learned from this book? What did it remind me of? Answer the question for students to see the mental process of thinking aloud. (CSP)

Guided Practice/Active Engagement

Days 1-3, 4- Review
Now, you will think aloud with a partner, and I will guide you through the thinking process. What did you learn after reading the section of the text? Show charts and visual aids to

students. Allow students to practice at least 2 days a week. (CSP)

Independent Practice (You DO)/Conferring/Small group work

Days 1-3- The student is able to explain orally what he learned from the text and practice independent reading. The teacher will be conferring with students.

Review of multisyllabic homophones- review if students need help understanding homophones such as: peddle/pedal, principal/principle, aloud/allowed. Clarify if needed using homophone teaching cards to support individual needs. (Transl.)

Assessment (Formative Evaluation)

Day 4-The student is able to explain orally what he learned from the text. -The student

can write a paragraph, around 3-5 sentences, describing what they learned in the story.

-Including the title of the story and supporting details to express ideas. The teacher will be conferring with students.

Assessment Rubric (Integration of process application assessment).

	Level 1 **Beginning**	**Level 2** **Developing**	**Level 3** **Meets Standard**
Understanding Genre of Biography	-The student is able to explain orally what he learned from the text with teacher support. -The student can write a paragraph, around one sentence, describing what they learned in the story. Teacher prompting was necessary.	-The student is able to explain orally what he learned from the text. -The student can write a paragraph, around 1-2 sentences, describing what they learned in the story. -Did not Include the title of the story or supporting details to express ideas.	-The student is able to explain orally what he learned from the text. -The student can write a paragraph, around 3-5 sentences, describing what they learned in the story. -Including the title of the story and supporting details to express ideas.

Reflections/Closure/ Share/Feedback/Extend/Reteach

Days 1- 4-Allow students to share what they learn from the text, some book connections to their life, and explain why.
Celebrate with students' growth and encourage students to keep on growing by reading and sharing thoughts or personal notes. The teacher should reflect on what things were meaningful to students and what she would do differently after the lesson. Also, after checking all informal assessment results, consider which students need intervention or reteaching. (CSP)
Day 5- Extensions: Search online for the biographies of text characters or more details and create your own autobiography. Model and show an example.

Teacher Reflections: (Modify as necessary any day)

Modify Lessons for Different Language Proficiency Levels

Offer various formats for books and written materials, including Braille, large print, audio formats, and digital text.

The teacher will write notes.

SIOP® Lesson Plan Template

Instructional Lesson Plans

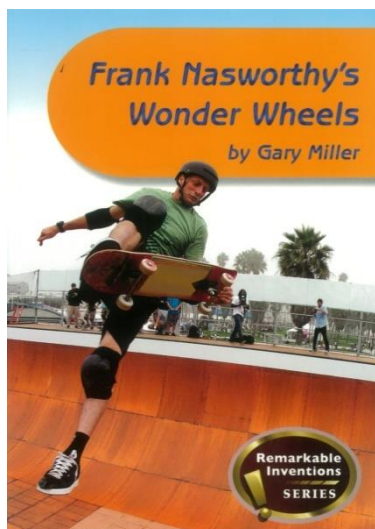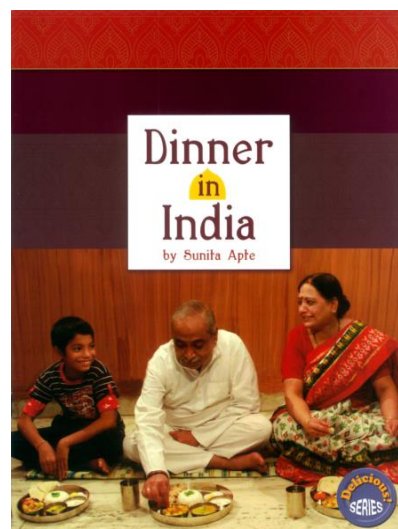| Key words or phrases used in the lesson |
|---|
| **Transl=** Translanguaging (strategy practice) **T**=Teacher
CSP = Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (strategy practice) **S**=Students |

Teacher: Bilingual Reading-Ramos	Date: Week 2	Grade: Fifth-grade Bilingual Group 1

OPTION 1	OPTION 2
Text Title: **Frank Nasworthy's Wonder Wheels**	Text Title: **Dinner in India**

Text Genre: **Narrative Non-fiction**	Text Genre: Non-fiction: **Expository**

Unit/Theme: Unit 2- Analyzing author's purpose and author's craft moves

Standards

TEKS

(5.3) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Theme and Genre. Students analyze, make inferences, and draw conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

(5.17) Writing. Students write about their own experiences

(5.10) Author's purpose and craft: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts. (A) Explain the author's purpose and message within a text.

(5.11) Composition: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple text-writing processes.

ELPS

(2C) I'll listen closely to what my teacher and classmates say to learn new words, expressions, and language patterns.

(3E) Cross-curricular second language acquisition/speaking. I can share information in cooperative learning interactions.

(3G) I'll share my opinions, ideas, and feelings about my learning in class discussions.

(3J) I'll talk about things I read or see in class to improve my English and knowledge of the subject.

(4E) I'll read selections about this subject that are adjusted to my level, but I'll work to need those adjustments less and less.

(5F) When I write, I'll use many different sentence patterns, sentence lengths, and connecting words that combine phrases, clauses, and sentences.

Content Objective(s): **Days 1-4** Students can understand the author's purpose or message.	Language Objective(s): **Days 1-4** I can share information in cooperative learning interactions.

Socio-Cultural Objective(s): Days 1-4
 	
 Encourage cross-linguistic connections and translanguaging before, during, and after each lesson.
 	
 Present social and academic language as equals, respecting our opinions and voice
	Key Vocabulary:
	
	 Option 1:
	   skate parks
	  -Compound words:
	        skateboard
	        sidewalk
	 Option 2:
	
	   sacred
	
	 *In addition to other words that will be co-created with students (CSP)

LESSON SEQUENCE:

Warm-Up/Word Study/Vocabulary

T-¡Hola! Hi students…How are you? Let's start by sharing something that makes you smile.

- Students take turns to share, Turn & talk to their friend. Partner B will listen first and then

Partner A will talk. Then you switch. (Transl.)

T-This week, I have two great books. Who knows what the genre is of **expository and**

narrative and what does that mean? We have three goals: a content goal, a language goal, and

-a cultural goal. Discuss displayed goals with students.

S- Students will answer

The teacher will clarify and explain that an **expository** text has an educational purpose,

clear and concise language, the presence of factual and organized information, and the use

of reliable sources. In addition, a **narrative** text uses a story structure that includes story

elements such as setting, characters, conflict, plot (rising action, climax, falling action), and
resolution.

T-Today, you will choose between the **expository** or **narrative** options that I brought; I

will give you both to take a quick pick on both and when you decide, please put your text

choice on top of the other. Explain why you picked the text. (CSP)

S-Students show their choice

T- Students for this week will read three sections of the text daily.

T- Now, I will ask you to preview three sections of the text, looking for unfamiliar or tricky

 words that are hard to read (Pass on the highlighting tape for them to mark those words

in the text).

T- Now is the time to share what we discover. Students, please share the words with a partner
and ask their partner if they know the meaning of that word or phrase in Spanish or English.
(Transl.)

S- Students will share with partners. (CSP)

The teacher will discuss students' findings and clarify if needed.

----Days 2 & 3--

Option 1:

T- I will ask you a question, did you notice the words **skate parks** in the text? Can you find
page number 16?

T- Then, I need to explain what the words "**skate parks**" means, but first of all…Did you

notice that it is in bold letters? What does that mean? What is a Glossary? Let students

answer and then clarify or explain what the word means. Connect students' background

experience and let them share what this text reminds them of. (CSP)

T- What kind of games do you play at home/community/country? Turn & talk to your

friend. Partner A will listen first, and then Partner B will talk. Then you switch. (CSP)

Option 2:

T- I will ask you a question, did you notice the word **sacred** in the text on page 12?

T- Then, I need to explain the word "**sacred**" is an adjective that describes something that is considered to be holy and deserving of respect, especially because of a connection

with a god. (CSP) In this story, the word "sacred" describes the cows. What does that mean?

T- Are cows sacred to you? Turn & talk to your friend. Partner A will listen first, and then

Partner B will talk. Then you switch. Explain the relationship with your meal traditions and

culture.

(CSP)The teacher will review previous learning and clarify misconceptions using Transl.

and other language resources.

S- (Students' responses may vary, allowing thinking time may help)

Presentation/Modeling/Mini lesson

Days 1-3, 4-Review
Today, I will teach you that after reading a text, you will learn something from the book or
a section of the book. The author always wants the reader to take away a lesson from the text. I
will model reading a section of the text and thinking aloud…What is a message that the author
wants me to catch from this book? Answer the question for students to see the mental
process of thinking aloud. Explain to students that the author's purpose is the WHY…
Why did the author write the text? Why did he include certain information? Why was a certain
organizational pattern used? Use language to describe the author's purpose besides
 the typical PIE. Words such as: suggest/sugerir, criticize/criticar, and convince/convenser,
among others. (Transl.)

Today, I will teach you that after reading a text, you will learn something from the book or a section of the book. The teacher will model reading a section of the text and thinking aloud…

What is the lesson that the author wants me to understand from this book? Answer the

question for students to see the mental process of thinking aloud.

Show students the Charts on the wall and visuals about the author's purpose.

Encourage students to use their entire vocabulary and repertoire.

Guided Practice/Active Engagement
Days 1-3, 4- Review

Now, you will think aloud with a partner, and I will guide you through the thinking process.
Why do you think the author wrote this text? Show charts and visual aids to students.
Allow students to practice at least 2 days a week.

Independent Practice (You DO)/Conferring/Small group work

Review if students need help with consonant diagraphs such as /ch/, /sh/, and/ph/
Ask students if they notice something about those sounds.
Clarify sounds if needed using Elkonin boxes to support individual phonics needs.

Days 1- 3- The student is able to explain orally what the author's purpose is and practice
independent reading. The teacher will be conferring with students.
Assessment (Formative Evaluation)

Day 4-The student is able to explain orally what he thinks is the author's purpose in the text.

-The student can write a paragraph, around 3-5 sentences, describing what the author's purpose
is. Let's evaluate!

-Open questions to help you write: What did you learn from the text? Do you agree with the

author's message? Yes, no, and explain why or why not. -Preguntas abiertas para ayudarte

a escribir: ¿Qué aprendiste del texto? ¿Estás de acuerdo con el mensaje del autor?

Sí, No, y explique por qué o por qué no. (Transl.)

Assessment Rubric (Integration of process application assessment)

	Level 1 **Beginning**	Level 2 **Developing**	Level 3 **Meets Standard**
Understanding Author's Purpose	-The student is able to explain the author's purpose with teacher support orally. -The student can write a paragraph, around one sentence, describing the author's purpose. Teacher prompting was necessary.	-The student is able to explain the author's purpose orally. -The student can write a paragraph, around 1-2 sentences, describing the author's purpose. -Did not Include the title of the story or supporting details to express ideas.	-The student is able to explain orally what he thinks is the author's purpose in the text. -The student can write a paragraph, around 3-5 sentences, describing what the author's purpose is. -Including the title of the story and supporting details to express ideas.

Reflections/Closure/ Share/Feedback/Extend/Reteach

Days 1- 4-Allow students to share about the author's purpose. Celebrate with students' growth and encourage students to keep on growing by reading and sharing thoughts or personal notes. The teacher should reflect on what things were meaningful to students and what she would do differently after the lesson. In addition, after checking all informal assessment results, consider which students need intervention or reteaching.

Day 5- Extensions: Search online for more information about the author's purpose, cultures, traditions, and things that make you smile. Create a painting connecting your learning and

personal experiences from both textbooks. In addition, you will add a sticky note to your

creation with a message and present it. Lastly, we will leave it somewhere around the school building for someone to find it. Just like what Bren did spreading smiles, and kindness.

Teacher Reflections: (Modify as necessary any day)

Modify Lessons for Different Language Proficiency Levels

Offer various formats for books and written materials, including Braille, large print, audio formats, and digital text.

The teacher will write notes.

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