

THE RICH LANGUAGING PRACTICES OF SIMULTANEOUS BILINGUAL CHILDREN:
LINGUISTIC ABILITY, AGENCY, AND FLEXIBILITY

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ABSTRACT

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There is a lack of research on bilingualism and biliteracy, specifically on simultaneous bilingual children. This study seeks to provide research on the literacy practices of simultaneous bilingual prekindergarten and kindergarten children as they begin their formal schooling. The study focused on their language competencies in English and Spanish, how they used their receptive and productive language in different spaces and with different people, and how their language abilities were evident in their school writing. I selected four students from the same elementary school for this study. I collected the following data over a 4-month period: a report of each student's Home Language Survey, each student's IDEA Language Proficiency Test results (IPT) rating the student's oral proficiency level in both English and Spanish, parent and teacher interviews, field notes from observing students at school, student writing conferences, and artifacts (including students' writing samples). The data were analyzed using a grounded theory method. I used the software NVIVO 12 to compile and process the codes, consolidating them into three main themes that represented the participants' bilingual identities: bilingual ability, bilingual agency, and bilingual flexibility. Their languages interacted as one system in the process of meaning making, demonstrating their bilingualism. Unfortunately, in our current education system these children are often approached as two monolinguals in one with regard to their literacy instruction and learning. However, there is ongoing research in the area of bilingual education that provides insight on how we can best support these children in their

bilingual and biliterate development. This research supports a holistic view of bilingualism which enables teachers to understand the importance of allowing bilingual children to use their broad range of linguistic resources to make meaning and assist them in their cognitive development (Gort, 2019).

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the past two decades, as a bilingual educator, I have had the opportunity to teach a wide range of bilingual students. In my teaching experiences, I have noted changes in how my pre-kindergarten and elementary bilingual students use Spanish and English. The students who spoke Spanish that I received in my kindergarten classroom twenty years ago, spoke no English or very little English when they first came to me. However, more recently, I had been receiving more and more students in my pre-kindergarten classroom who showed proficiency in both languages (English and Spanish) or spoke and understood some English in addition to being fluent in Spanish.

According to Bauer and Gort (2012), emergent bilinguals are children who are learning two or more languages at an early age, which includes simultaneous bilinguals who are acquiring two languages at the same time from birth. Escamilla (2006) stated that most emergent bilinguals or English Language Learners (ELLs) who were born in the United States are more likely to be simultaneous bilinguals because they are in homes where two languages are used, or they attend pre-schools where they are instructed in English, so they are acquiring two languages at the same time. It is interesting to note that according to Capps, Fix, Ost, Passel, and Herwanton (2005), 77% of ELLs in kindergarten through fifth grade and 56% in sixth through twelfth grades were born in the United States. Soltero-González and Butvilofsky (2016) observed that given the statistics, approximately 77% of the emergent bilingual kindergarten

through fifth graders were born here in the US, and these children have most likely been acquiring their home language and English simultaneously from a young age, which would make them simultaneous bilinguals. Also, my coursework at Texas Woman's University, particularly courses in bilingual education, made me more cognizant of and intrigued by the emergent linguistic practices of my 4-year-old Spanish speaking students. For example, one of my students flowed seamlessly from English to Spanish as he interacted with both his English and Spanish speaking peers. I later learned that both of his parents were bilingual, and that he had been exposed to both English and Spanish at home since birth. Another student, whom I had assumed only spoke Spanish, turned to her English-speaking peer and said something to him in English. The girl and her twin sister had been exposed to English at a very young age through their older school-aged family members.

Grosjean (2010) stated that simultaneous bilinguals acquire two or sometimes even three languages at the same time, from the inception of language onset. He further explained that most linguists agree that up to age 4, children can acquire two or more languages simultaneously. Thus, fascinated by the phenomena I was observing in the classroom and current research in the field of bilingual education, I became interested in exploring the emergent language practices of the 4-year-old simultaneous bilingual children in my class. The aim of the present study was to describe the language practices of four pre-kindergarten and kindergarten simultaneous bilingual students as demonstrated in their written production as they began their formal schooling.

Statement of the Problem

In the current educational climate, monolingual instructional principles continue to dictate classroom instruction within bilingual programs (Cummins, 2007; Escamilla, 2006; García, 2008; García & Kleifgen, 2019). These principles are based on the assumptions that second language and bilingual instruction should focus on the target language (English), the student's native language is considered transitional, and the two languages should also be kept strictly separate (Cummins, 2007; Escamilla, 2006). Separating the languages requires that students learn through and use one language at a time, which involves a dedicated portion of the school day to either Spanish or English or dedicated subjects in either language (Hopewell, 2017). Instruction and all oral communication are to be conducted in the assigned language, even though for speakers of a language other than English, this may result in those students not being able to fully make meaning of the concept being taught (Hopewell, 2017). The assumption is that the native language will interfere with the use of the target language (English) and that students must purposely practice the languages (Cummins, 2007; Hopewell, 2017). In monolingual classrooms, including classrooms that are exclusively using the students' second language, the language-minority student is expected to make meaning using only the sanctioned language of the written text, while more than half of their linguistic and semiotic repertoire is ignored, thereby restricting the student's meaning-making potential (García & Kleifgen, 2019). The notion that instruction should focus on the target language and that the languages should be kept strictly separate is inconsistent with current research that points to the cognitive benefits of building on children's existing language skills and not restricting the use of their full linguistic repertoire (Escamilla, 2006; Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015; Rowe, 2018). Studies that indicate

that emergent bilingual students construct meaning and communicate through the intermingling of their various languages which involves looking at these students through a bilingual lens are not prevalent (Butvilofsky, 2010; Escamilla, 2006; García & Kleifgen, 2019; Hopewell, 2017; Otheguy et al., 2015; Rowe, 2018). Looking at emergent bilingual students through a bilingual lens involves a new framework for understanding how emergent bilinguals use their two languages. Applying a bilingual lens entails considering both languages as part of a whole system in which the development of biliteracy is influenced by the interaction between the individual's two languages, which includes viewing the individual's language practices as interrelated (Butvilofsky, 2010).

Bilingualism is a complex issue; however, educators are encouraged to engage in observing children, describing them fully, reserving judgment and interpretation, and respecting the child as the one who crafts words and worlds (García, 2008). Yet, even though there are an increasing number of studies on bilingualism and biliteracy, we need more studies that show how bilingual children use and develop their languages (Dworin & Moll, 2006). We cannot truly understand bilingual learners by just conducting research from a monolingual perspective without exploring both languages and including the learner's conceptualization of the relationship between their two languages. Looking at emergent bilingual children through a bilingual lens enables me to pay attention to the child's reasoning across languages and the relationship between the languages in the process of making meaning.

Purpose of the Study

In this qualitative study, I used the case study approach to describe the language practices of four simultaneous bilingual children by focusing on their written production. Through this

study, I examined the children's language competencies, usage, and how this was manifested in their writing. The following questions guided my inquiry:

- What are the language competencies of the participating children?
- How do they use their receptive and productive language competencies in different spaces and with different people?
- How are their language abilities and usage evident in their writing/composing?

Significance of the Study

Current research in the field of bilingual education proposes that we look at both languages of emergent bilingual children which implies seeing the languages as part of a whole system, where input from one language is used in the other (García, Johnson, & Seltzer, 2017; Hopewell, 2017; Otheguy et al., 2015). Therefore, understanding how simultaneous bilinguals are using their languages in and out of the classroom provides further insight to the linguistic, cognitive, and academic benefits of learning through two languages. Furthermore, there is still a lack in the body of knowledge that examines how emergent bilingual children use their languages (Dworin & Moll, 2006). Thus, the aim of this research study was to contribute to the literature on bilingualism and biliteracy by examining how pre-kindergarten and kindergarten simultaneous bilinguals use language as they initiate their formal schooling.

Theoretical Framework

A socio-cultural perspective informed the present study. According to the sociocultural perspective, the development of human beings is embedded in a social context. Thus, children have experience with language and literacy before entering school (Vygotsky, 1978). For example, children begin learning a language before formal schooling, including speech,

listening, and writing (visible signs that correlate with oral language and ideas), as well as various forms of print (Dyson, 2006; Dyson & Freedman, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978). Children are often exposed to folktales, poetry from their culture, art, crafts, recipes, fashion, and more when we consider the funds of knowledge in children's homes and communities (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2012; Haneda, 2006; Murillo, 2012). They draw on their linguistic (including culture-specific vernaculars) and textual resources acquired from their primary discourse (initial and fundamental units of socialization) as they attempt to make sense of new information and interact with others (Dyson, 2006; Gee, 2015). Thus, based on the sociocultural perspective of learning, children do not enter school as blank slates, but rather, they have language and literacy experiences through their interactions with others: parents, siblings, extended family, and friends (Moll, 2013; Vygotsky, 1978).

Bilingual Children

Regarding bilingual children, Grosjean (2010) defines bilinguals as those who use two or more languages. Hence, I opted for language use as the defining criterion for bilingualism. The term *emergent bilinguals* is used to describe young children who are speakers of a native language other than English and “who are in the dynamic process of developing bilingual and biliterate competencies” (Reyes, 2006, p. 268). The child's native language is acknowledged and respected while the child becomes competent in both languages. According to Cummins (2007), a student's native language is a cognitive and linguistic tool that, when evoked through bilingual instructional strategies, can function as a conduit to scaffold more proficient performance in the second language. Several researchers advocate for an additive perspective meaning that children's native language should be considered a resource and not a problem and

should be used in aiding children in developing competency in a second language (Martínez, 2010; Reyes, 2006; Sparrow, Butvilofsky, Escamilla, & Hopewell, 2014). García and Kleifgen (2019) further expand on this perspective by speaking of multilinguals' boundless dynamic use of their entire multilingual repertoire, in which the languages are not considered separate entities but rather as a single unit used in the process of meaning making.

Simultaneous bilingualism occurs when a child receives dual language input through parents or other caregivers, thus acquiring two languages over the first few years of their lives (Grosjean, 2010). As a result, children can either become bilingual by acquiring languages at the same time (simultaneously) or by acquiring languages successively (one after the other; Grosjean, 2010). Even though linguists do not agree on the age that separates the two types of acquisition, most agree that up to age 4, children are in a simultaneous acquisition mode; from age 5, they are in successive mode (Grosjean, 2010). Therefore, based on this perspective, this study examined children who are in a simultaneous acquisition mode.

Translanguaging

The current study also applied a bilingual lens known as translanguaging which involved considering the full linguistic repertoire of the child. In translanguaging, the language system of bilinguals is considered a single entity that is used to make meaning of the world around them (García, 2014; García & Kleifgen, 2010, 2019). Otheguy et al. (2015) explain that bilingual children have an internal, undifferentiated, unitary linguistic system that is uniquely configured as an individual language (idiolect). Thus, a child who knows more than one language can use his or her own unique and personal language, a language that is separate from the social and political use of language names, as he or she interacts with others (Otheguy et al., 2015). Swain

(1972) relates that in a bilingual environment, it is evident to an adult that the child receives input from two separate and distinctive languages, each with its own vocabulary. However, as the child acquires language, he or she seems to ignore the boundaries of the two systems. The child forms his or her sentence by grouping, in a structured manner, whatever parts of the languages he has available (he does not differentiate the languages). Hornberger and Link (2012) explain that the bilingual child communicates and makes meaning by using his or her languages as a resource as he or she draws from and intermingles their linguistic features. Hopewell (2017) also discusses applying the input received in one language to another, so there is a reciprocal relationship between the languages. What the child knows and understands in one language reinforces what is known and understood in the other language. According to Pacheco and Miller (2016), the languages of emergent bilinguals are part of one linguistic system that they strategically access and use in context.

Design of the Study

I used the qualitative research approach to describe the language competencies and usage of four simultaneous bilingual pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students as they initiated their formal schooling guided by the following questions:

- What are the language competencies of the participating children?
- How do they use their receptive and productive language competencies in different spaces and with different people?
- How are their language abilities and usage evident in their writing/composing?

According to Creswell (2006), case study research is a qualitative approach that entails the study of a case within a real life, contemporary context or setting. Flick (2014) notes that the

qualitative approach facilitates detailed and specific investigations. A qualitative study also involves the use of a smaller population to investigate a phenomenon in a larger population (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). I chose four student participants for this study.

To describe the language competencies of the four student participants, I gathered home and community information through parent interviews. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. I gathered artifacts such as the students' Home Language Survey, Idea Proficiency Test (IPT: language competency screening in English and Spanish), and field-notes. I collected observational data on the students' language use in the classroom for one of the students, and during the after-school program (in the cafeteria, arts and crafts, music, etc.) for the other three students to describe how the children used their receptive and productive language competencies in different spaces and with different people, and I also interviewed the children's teachers. To describe how the participating students' language competencies and usage manifested in their school writing, I collected writing samples from their respective classroom teachers and conducted writing conferences during the after-school program. I coded the data using NVIVO 12 software and triangulated it.

Operational Definitions

For this study, I used the following terms and definitions relevant to the research purposes.

- **Simultaneous bilinguals:** The term simultaneous bilinguals denotes those who have acquired two languages since infancy, or by age 4, and continue to use both languages. Simultaneous bilinguals acquire two or more languages at the same time at a very early age and receive input in both languages through parents and caregivers

(Bauer & Gort, 2013; Grosjean, 2010; Gross, Buac, & Kaushanskaya, 2014; Lee, 2013; MacLeod & Stoel-Gammon, 2005).

- Sequential bilinguals: The term sequential bilinguals denotes individuals who acquire one language first and then another. Sequential bilinguals acquire another language after age 4, usually after entering school (Bauer & Gort, 2013; Grosjean, 2010; Gross et al., 2014; Lee, 2013; MacLeod & Stoel-Gammon, 2005).
- Bilingual education: The term bilingual education denotes students who receive instruction in their home language while developing proficiency in the target language (Passos DeNicolo, 2016).
- Dual language education: In the United States, dual language denotes a model of bilingual education that promotes bilingualism and biliteracy for minority language speaking and English language speaking students, with no attempt to diminish the minority language over time (Figueroa-Murphy, 2014; Gort, 2006; Quintanar-Sarellana, 2004). The two most common dual language education approaches are the two-way dual language approach and the one-way dual language approach (Figueroa-Murphy, 2014). Two-way dual language “integrates native-English speaking students with minority language speakers with the goals of bilingualism, biliteracy, high academic achievement, and cross-cultural understanding for both groups of students” (Gort, 2006, p. 325). Only the minority language students are enrolled in the one-way dual language program, and they receive instruction in both their native language and English without the intention of diminishing their native language over time (Figueroa-Murphy, 2014).

- Language competency: I use the term language competency to mean speaking, reading, and writing fluently in a language (Quintanar-Sarellana, 2004); however, for this study, it is mainly referring to speaking fluently.
- Language domains: The term language domains involves the semantics, syntax, morphology, phonology, and pragmatics of language (Geytenbeek, 2016).
- Heritage language: The term heritage language denotes the minority language spoken in the home of someone who was born in the US (Gollan, Starr, & Ferreira, 2015; Jegerski & Ponti, 2014). The user usually has a more pragmatic verbal use of the language and merely speaks or understands the language (Thompson, 2015).
- EL/ELL/ELLs: The abbreviations EL, ELL, or ELLs refer to the term English learner, English language learner or English language learners and denote an individual who comes from a home where English is not the dominant language (Aguilar, White, Fragale, & Chan, 2016).
- L1/L2: L1 refers to the first language or native language of the bilingual student, and L2 refers to the student's second language (Gort, 2006).

Summary

In this chapter, I introduced and described the purpose of the study, including the research questions. I also explained the significance of the research and my theoretical framework. Although bilingualism is a universal phenomenon, it has only been moderately examined. Thus, I intend to fill a gap in the body of research by describing the language practices of four pre-kindergarten and kindergarten simultaneous bilingual students at the

beginning of their formal schooling. The following chapter is a review of the literature that discussed relevant studies that contributed to this research study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is to situate this study within the existing literature around the language practices of bilingual children. This chapter builds on the existing literature and includes discussions of previous work. The chapter is divided into four sections that provide the framework for the research questions:

- What are the language competencies of the participating children?
- How do they use their receptive and productive language competencies in different spaces and with different people?
- How are their language abilities and usage evident in their writing/composing?

The sections are divided as follows:

1. Sociocultural theories of language acquisition and development
 - a. Language acquisition and development
 - b. Zone of proximal development
 - c. Gee's perspective on language
 - d. Second language acquisition from a sociocultural lens
2. Emergent Writing
 - a. Sociocultural perspective
 - b. Early development of writing
 - c. Emergent bilingual writing

3. Bilingualism and biliteracy
 - a. Code switching
 - b. Translanguaging
 - c. Purposefully adopting languages
 - d. Home-community language practices
4. Bilingual education and policies
 - a. Transitional bilingual education
 - b. Dual language bilingual education

The section on the sociocultural theories of language acquisition and development provides a framework for how a child develops, internalizes, and uses language in different spaces with different people. The section on emergent writing provides a framework for how children use and manipulate symbols to express themselves through writing. The section on bilingualism and biliteracy provides a framework for the language development and use of bilinguals. Lastly, the section on bilingual education and policies provides a context for school curriculum and policies that influence school standards and curriculum.

Sociocultural Theories of Language Acquisition and Development

There are various theories of how children acquire and develop language. The behaviorist considers language acquisition and development a learned behavior (Tracy & Morrow, 2012). According to the nativist, language is innate (Chomsky, 2002). There are also several researchers that consider language socially and culturally mediated (Cazden, 2011; Gee, 2003, 2015; Genishi & Dyson, 2009; Heath, 1982, 2009; Vygotsky, 1978). A sociocultural lens

allowed for the children in this study to be examined as part of a larger community and the influence of community on language development.

Language Acquisition and Development

According to Vygotsky (1978), language is not only the most important mental tool but also a medium facilitating the acquisition of other mental tools such as focused attention, memory systems, written language, etc. Language is the primary tool through which adults convey information to children (McLeod, 2007). Vygotsky (1978) noted that children develop and internalize language through social interaction with parents and other cultural tutors in their surroundings; then, the internalization of language drives cognitive development as it guides and regulates children's behavior. Children are constantly making meaning as they interact with their surroundings. So, learners acquire the language forms and culturally appropriate uses, first from their family and immediate face-to-face community, then from increasingly diverse communities of practice in written as well as oral modes (Cazden, 2011). In her seminal work *Ways with Words*, an ethnographic study looking at three different communities, Heath (1982, 2009) explained that children are socialized into the language practices of their community, and she demonstrated this as she described how the communities of Trackton, Roadville, and the Town's people differed in their language use and language socialization. Genishi & Dyson (2009) also noted that children's language use mirrors the human relationships and daily experiences that are meaningful to them. According to Gee (2014), we develop our initial sense of self - what he termed our Primary Discourse - through acculturation, which is observation and interaction that is scaffolded and supported by members of the group.

Zone of Proximal Development

Learning takes place in a social context and is guided within the *zone of proximal development* as partners co-construct knowledge through cooperative or collaborative dialogue (McLeod, 2007; Moll, 1990). Vygotsky (1978) noted that the zone of proximal development is the prospective mental development. The zone of proximal development is the distance between the actual developmental level and the level of potential development. It is problem solving with the support of an adult or a more capable peer. There is a dynamic interrelationship between learning and the child's actual developmental level where he can perform independently or show mastery. According to Vygotsky's theory of the zone of proximal development, children first experience and practice skills, including linguistic skills, in a social context with adults or more experienced peers who scaffold their learning until the process becomes internalized.

The sociocultural perspective guided my thinking as to the role of language in the cognitive development of children and how the children in this study acquire and develop their languages. In applying a sociocultural lens, researchers note that learning occurs in a social context as children interact with expert cultural tutors and attempt to make meaning of their surroundings. Learning occurs first through interpersonal actions, then through intrapersonal actions (García et al., 2017). Interpersonal learning occurs as children seek to understand the instructions given by the parent, other adults, or more experienced peers, resulting in cooperative or collaborative dialogue. Intrapersonal learning occurs as children internalize the information, using it to guide or regulate their own behavior.

Gee's Perspective on Language

James Gee (2015) emphasized a sociocultural approach to language and literacy. He introduced the study of language, learning, and literacy in their social, cultural, and political context (Gee, 2015). Gee noted that there are different styles or varieties of a language. Gee called these social languages. We change our style according to the social situation, so language is used within context. Through language we convey our identity and make our actions clear (Gee, 2015).

Thus, according to Gee (1988), the term *language* can be misleading as it often implies that the focus is only on grammatical elements, but it is more than that. Language is saying, doing, and being, and it is understood through important connections not only in what one says but also through one's actions (doing) and identity (being). Gee speaks of primary and secondary discourse systems. The discourse system used by an African American or Hispanic student, for example, has implications as to how the student will decode text, interact with text, and view text in the real world. Discourse involves who we are and how we are perceived by others, negotiating meaning, and context (where we are, what we are doing, and how we say what we say). Gee (1989) also referred to Discourse with a capital D, which is a socially specific way of making meaning. According to Gee (2015), Primary Discourse is our initial source of self. It is our culture, specific vernacular, identity, how we use language, and how we think, act, feel, and interact. Our Primary Discourse can change through our various experiences. We acquire our Primary Discourse through acculturation, which is observation and interaction that is scaffolded and supported by members of the group (Gee, 2014). Gee's perspective allowed me

to be cognizant that children convey their identity through language, and it guided my thinking as I examined how the children used language in different spaces with different people.

Second Language Acquisition from a Sociocultural Lens

According to Krashen (1994), for children to acquire a new language, they must receive comprehensible input ($i+1$). Krashen explained that “ i ” represents the current level of competence, and “ $+1$ ” represents the next level of language competency. Children must be able to understand the input they are receiving to move from their current level of competency to the next level ($i+1$). Krashen notes that during the acquisition of the first language, caretakers use speech in such a way that children understand the information the caretakers are trying to impart. This is referred to as *caretaker speech*. The caretaker uses speech that is more at the child’s level and refers to things that are in the child’s presence so that a connection can be made. During second language acquisition, the child must also receive information that can be readily understood. Visuals such as pictures, charts, and graphs can provide comprehensible input. Gestures can also provide comprehensible input. However, further research suggests that the best kind of comprehensible input is input that can be adjusted through interaction (Ortega, 2013). Amid social interaction, the learner can signal that more help is needed to fully comprehend the message (Ortega, 2013). Children often acquire oral and basic language skills as they interact with speakers (native or more advanced bilinguals) of the second language. Through these interactions, children are subconsciously acquiring language. Therefore, learning occurs in a social context as children interact with experts and attempt to make meaning of their surroundings. According to Cummins (1989), educators can empower children through

approaches that reflect the perspective that learning is an active process that is developed through social interaction.

Moll (2013) referred to a *bilingual zone of proximal development*. He and his research team created an environment in which children were encouraged to draw on their Spanish language resources to comprehend and discuss texts they had read in English. Moll and his team then provided support by building on the students' comments and filling in the gaps in missing story elements when students used English to discuss the texts. The children's learning was mediated through bilingual assistance, resulting in cooperative or collaborative dialogue that enhanced their performance.

Emergent Writing

As stated by Lindfors (2008), there is a continuity between oral and written language. Through her work, she indicates that, for the young child, oral and written language are intricately related. She also noted that there is a spontaneous relationship between talking and writing (drawing) in that spoken words become print. She gives an example of a 5-year-old child talking as he draws a bear, a red bird, and rain saying, "I can do rain, this is rain, rain coming" (Lindfors, 2008, p.15). Lindfors further explained that egocentric speech (audible speech that is used to regulate one's own behavior) helps children solve problems, and that as tasks increase in difficulty, the children's egocentric talk increases. Genishi and Dyson (2009) also noted that for young children, oral language differs from written language because in learning to talk, children spontaneously use words that are used by other people; however, with writing, children must make a conscious decision as to the signs that will best communicate their intentions.

Sociocultural Perspective

From a sociocultural perspective, the development of writing skills is a social process where children learn the historical conventions of writing with the assistance of adults and peers. Through interaction with the world around them, they determine the symbols they will use to express their ideas and thoughts (Dyson, 2006; Genishi & Dyson, 2009; Moll, Sáez, & Dworin, 2001). According to Dyson (2006), in deciding how they will express their ideas and thoughts through writing, children rely on what they have learned through interaction with their cultural tutors.

Early Development of Writing

Before pre-school, children use symbols to represent what they say; they can learn about visual features of print, pretend to write notes and letters, dictate stories they want written, and learn how to write some letters (Clay, 2005). Young children develop writing skills through exploration (Clay, 2005). Furthermore, their writing development is often depicted in a sequential manner, starting with making marks on paper and scribbling, then making letter-like forms and some letter shapes (usually the letters found in their names), followed by writing favorite letters and certain words as they acquire more letters and more words (Clay, 2005; Genishi & Dyson, 2009).

According to Dennis and Votteler (2012), children's knowledge and skills related to writing increases and stabilizes between ages 3 and 5, especially with the assistance of an adult. As children enter school, the intent of a writer's workshop for young children is to create an environment where children can become authors, see themselves as writers, begin to learn the craft of writing, and practice their skills every day (Dennis & Votteler 2012). Writer's workshop

entails engaging young children in writing and purposeful conversations around their writing. For example, children self-select topics that are meaningful to them, then using marks, symbols, or letter-like shapes, they create and share their stories (Dennis & Votteler 2012). The writing takes place in a relaxed social setting in which teachers work one-on-one with children, engaging them in meaningful conversations about their written products which helps the learners develop their writing skills (Dennis & Votteler 2012). Through careful observations and conversations, teachers and caregivers foster children's growth in language, writing, and reading (Clay, 2010). It is important to note that preschool children's emergent writing skills will vary from child to child, so their writing products will also vary (Dennis & Votteler, 2012). Children's oral language becomes their main resource in writing, but at the same time it can be a major challenge because of language variations and school expectations (Dyson, 2006). Hence, children's experience with written language outside of school may greatly vary because of cultural and social meaning in language (Genishi & Dyson, 2009).

Emergent Bilingual Writing

Kenner, Kress, Al-Kharib, Kam and Kuan-Chun Tsai (2004) noted that when it comes to children learning more than one writing system, learning to write occurs in a social context. Children use the different learning experiences from school, home, and community to develop a concept of how the writing system should operate. Children make meaning in context from the information available to them in a socio-cultural setting. For example, in the study done by Kenner et al. (2004) on the ways in which young bilingual children understand how different writing systems work, Sadhana's and Brian's Spanish Saturday schoolteacher taught them the vowels first and explained that "they give sound to words" (p. 134). When Sadhana was given

cardboard letters and asked to put them in order, she asked ABCD (as English) or a, e, i, o, u (giving the vowels the Spanish pronunciation) using the Spanish vowel sounds to distinguish between the two languages. The Spanish teacher later connected the vowels to consonants to form syllables. Brian was forming Spanish words at home but wrote *nenó* instead of *niño* because in Spanish the sound of the *i* vowel is the same as the name of the letter *e* in English. He applied the information learned from his Spanish teacher to his English writing. Moll et al. (2001) established the initial hypothesis that biliteracy to a bilingual child could be based on semantics. To a child, the same meaning requires the same script. Particularly in languages that share the same alphabet with minor variations, a child may not be able to make a visual distinction between the two (Moll et al., 2001). For example, one 5-year-old carefully copied the string of letters she had written in Spanish to represent the text in English for her drawing. After she was asked how she would write her sentence in English, her response to the question had been, *Igualito* (the same; Moll et al., 2001). On the other hand, one young bilingual boy made a visual distinction between the languages by placing the English and Spanish text (letter strings) in different positions, and he also combined the same letters differently for English than he did for Spanish (Moll et al., 2001).

In Bauer's (2019) study of kindergartners writing in a dual language classroom, students were given an opportunity to engage in rich conversation around their emerging literacy skills. The teacher used a buddy system in which she purposefully paired her L1 Spanish students with her L1 English students so they could support each other's writing. The pairs were expected to talk and share in order to build on each other's strengths. Bauer (2019) noted that the children took on a teaching role as they modeled, prompted, and kept each other on track. (The student

taking the teaching role depended on the language being used). They could use their full linguistic repertoires while discussing how they were going to record their thoughts in Spanish.

Bilingualism and Biliteracy

Grosjean (2010) noted that children who acquire two languages simultaneously continue to intrigue researchers, but they are, in fact, far rarer than children who acquire one language and then another sequentially. Grosjean further explained that to acquire two languages simultaneously, the family usually adopts an approach by which the child receives two language inputs. For example, one language may be spoken by the mother, the other by the father. Or one language may be spoken by the parents and the other by a caretaker such as a nanny or daycare employees. According to Escamilla (2006), most emergent bilinguals or ELLs who were born in the United States are more likely to be simultaneous bilinguals because they are in homes where two languages are used, or they attend pre-schools where they are instructed in English while Spanish is spoken at home, so they are acquiring two languages. The term emergent bilingual describes young children who are in the process of developing bilingual and biliterate competencies as they acquire an additional language (Reyes, 2006). Gort (2019) also used the term emergent bilingual to emphasize the child's potential to develop bilingualism through continuous exposure to multiple languages and support when using multiple languages at home, school, and in the community. Gort (2018) noted that the language practices of bilinguals do not develop in a linear way but are complex and dynamic, and their languages are not two independent entities. Bilingual children are constantly moving between two worlds, and studies show that many include English words in sentences written in Spanish and Spanish words in sentences written in English (García, 2009a; Gort, 2012; MacSwan, 2017; Martínez, 2010). The

alternate use of two languages, or code switching (Gort, 2012; Martínez, 2010; MacSwan, 2017), and translanguaging are resources from which bilinguals can draw. For this reason, a monolingual assessment system does not truly reflect a bilingual's learning or knowledge (Escamilla, Butvilofsky, & Hopewell, 2018).

Code Switching

Code switching is rule governed and considered a sophisticated use of language due to the degree of understanding and control of both languages bilingual individuals must have in order to code switch (Gort, 2012; MacSwan, 2017; Martínez, 2010). In her study of strategic code switching and other phenomena of emergent bilingual writing in a dual language first grade class, Gort (2006, 2012) found that the emergent bilingual writers frequently alternated between their two languages in their writing-related talk. According to Gort (2012), this demonstrated the ease with which bilinguals can express their developing linguistic, metalinguistic, and metacognitive skills across two languages, and that students' talk also showed their ability to engage with academic tasks using their developing bilingual skills. She also found that the Spanish-dominant writers integrated their first language while composing in the English classroom (Gort, 2006, 2012). The English-dominant students also drew from their developing bilingualism to support their writing process, mostly using code switching in the Spanish writing workshop.

Martínez (2010) found that one of the key conversational functions for the use of code switching is namely shift of voices. The study indicated that the students used *Spanglish*, a mix of Spanish and English, to change voices for different audiences, which demonstrated significant

audience awareness. Martínez suggested that the students used the skill of audience awareness every day and that hypothetically this skill could be transferred over into their academic writing.

Moll et al. (2001) also observed text produced by two third grade girls where both English and Spanish were used. The researchers examined biliteracy in two case studies on writing as a social practice, one in a kindergarten classroom and the other in a third-grade classroom. In the third-grade case study, Moll et al. examined how writing in two languages was used as a tool for thinking. In this classroom, the students used Spanish to indicate the difference in the characters (one of the characters was Mexican). Quotation marks were used to indicate dialogue and the brief text included issues like religious differences, irrational dislikes, and hostility to others who are different. The bilingual exchanges showed how languages could interconnect and interact with each other, demonstrating a flexibility in the use of the languages.

Researchers found that young children included words from their second language in sentences written in their native language for emphasis. Axelrod (2012) noticed that when 4-year-old Javier included English words in sentences written in Spanish, it appeared to be for emphasis since he often knew the vocabulary in Spanish. Also, according to Sawyer (2016), code switching in private speech (vocalized thought used to regulate one's own behavior) is a more common practice in balanced bilinguals (children who have equal proficiency in both their first language and second language).

Translanguaging

The fractional perspective of bilingualism considers bilinguals as two monolinguals in one person in that bilinguals develop parallel linguistic competence in both languages at the same time (Reyes, 2012). However, Grosjean (2010) believed that bilinguals integrate knowledge from both languages. In the development of his theory of linguistic interdependence, Cummins (1979) argued that the languages support each other in the child's acquisition of language and knowledge. Soltero-González and Butvilofsky (2016) noted that the holistic bilingual view acknowledges a reciprocal relationship between the languages in a bilingual person.

According to García, Sylvan, and Witt (2011), translanguaging includes both code switching and translation, yet it differs from both practices. Translanguaging views the language system of emergent bilinguals as a single interconnected system, which is used to make meaning of the world around them (García, 2014; García & Kleifgen, 2010). According to García et al. (2011), translanguaging blends transculturation and languaging, and they further explain that “the term translanguaging responds to the complex and multidirectional processes in the language practices of people and challenges the view of languages as autonomous and pure, as constructed in Western thought” (García et al., 2011, p.389). Otheguy et al. (2015) also noted that bilingual children have an internal undifferentiated, unitary linguistic system that is uniquely configured as an individual language (idiolect).

Werner Leopold (Grosjean, 2010) documented his English-German bilingual daughter's progress in the two languages. In his scholarly work, he stated that during her first two years, Hildegard combined her two languages into one system: “her speech sounds belonged to a

unified set,” he wrote, “undifferentiated by language” (Grosjean, 2010, p. 180). She also mixed English and German words, he stated, and did not separate the two languages when speaking to monolingual English or German speakers (Grosjean, 2010).

In addition, Swain (1972) reported that in a bilingual environment, it is obvious to an adult that the child receives input from two separate and distinctive languages, each with its own vocabulary. However, as the child acquires language, he or she seems to ignore the boundaries of the two systems. The child forms his or her sentence by grouping, in a structured manner, whatever parts of the languages he or she has available (he or she does not differentiate the languages).

Hornberger and Link (2012) explained that bilingual children communicate and make meaning by using their languages as a resource as they draw from and intermingle their linguistic features. Hopewell (2017) referred to an interrelationship between the languages in which comprehension in one language, promotes comprehension in the other. According to Pacheco and Miller (2016), the languages of emergent bilinguals are part of one linguistic system that they strategically access and use in context.

García et al. (2011) stated that bilinguals are constantly adapting their linguistic resources as they make meaning and communicate with others. For example, Sánchez (2009) noticed that Yadira, a 7-year-old Mayan emergent bilingual girl, used her linguistic repertoire in oral interactions around Spanish text. Sánchez conducted an ethnographic research study of the literacy practices of Mayan children in Yucatan, Mexico. Sánchez shared the literacy practices of two emergent bilingual Mayan 7-year-old children from two different households. In her

study, Sánchez noted that Yadira used both her native Mayan language and Spanish to construct meaning while discussing the Spanish text she was reading with her mother.

Moll et al. (2001) noted that there are many reported cases in early bilingualism in which the children could not distinguish the languages. Furthermore, it is assumed that initially to a bilingual child, languages that share the same alphabet, with minor variations, may not be able to be visually differentiated (Moll et al., 2001). However, Moll et al. (2001) also noted a case where a little boy made a visual distinction between the languages. In the child's written product, he used different letters and word order to differentiate between English and Spanish.

Purposefully Adopting Languages

In Axelrod's research (2012), 4-year-old Estrella made a distinction between English and Spanish as she rarely switched between the two languages but purposefully adopted her languages to that of her audience. She only spoke in Spanish to those people whom she knew spoke Spanish, and as the year progressed and her English developed, she only spoke in Spanish to her teachers and peers, speaking English to visitors (Axelrod, 2012). In the study done by Moll et al. (2001), while observing kindergarteners during their writing, when asked to read what they had written, the children responded in the language they were asked (Moll et al., 2001). In her study, Reyes (2006) shared that 4-year-old Katia and her older sister helped their mother in her little in-home store. Reyes (2006) noticed that Katia purposefully adopted English or Spanish according to the language of the customer. After observing bilingual children in an East London primary school, Murshad (2002) found that most of the children were aware of their audience and purposefully adapted to the language of their audience in order to communicate effectively. Murshad also found that most of the children used their first language when

communicating with their parents but did not use their first language exclusively when communicating with siblings. These studies show that many bilingual children are aware of their audience and are very competent at adapting to the language of their audience in order to effectively convey meaning which demonstrates their bilingual agency.

Home-Community Language Practices

To get a better understanding of the children's biliteracy development, it is important to be aware of the children's home and community literacy practices as this will also help to scaffold learning. According to Reyes (2012), a common criticism of the various terms used to describe language minority students is the deficit implication (e.g., Limited English Proficient) associated with bilingualism. These deficit terms do not acknowledge bilingual and biliterate skills the children are developing and using at home and in the community. Nor do these terms acknowledge bilingualism and biliteracy as part of children's cultural assets that they bring to school (Reyes, 2012). Children have language and literacy experience through their interactions with parents, siblings, extended family, and their community (Moll, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978). Studies show that bilingual children are exposed to specialized knowledge from their communities, parents, and families that should be recognized and used to scaffold learning. For example, children are exposed to knowledge such as how to operate a family business, play a musical instrument, or how to operate different machines (Murillo, 2012; Reyes, 2006; Sánchez, 2009).

Murillo (2012) noted the astonishment of a fourth-grade teacher at the home literacy practices of her bilingual student who was considered at risk of falling behind academically because of her family's income level and the fact that Spanish was the predominant language

spoken at home. This so-called at-risk child was introduced to books at an early age, taken to the public library, told *cuentos* (stories) by her grandmother, and read Bible stories and other books. There are parents that successfully help their children with math homework, science projects, spelling, and reading (Murillo, 2012; Reyes, 2006; Sánchez, 2009).

Several studies (Murillo, 2012; Reyes, 2006; Sánchez, 2009) described the following home literacy practices:

- the use of an extensive calendar system to keep up with family events and important chores;
- an organization system of manila folders for household bills and medical records of each family member;
- family leisure time spent reading newspapers and magazines; and
- the use of the internet and texting.

Murillo (2012) also found an incredible amount of literacy that was taken for granted during the Christmas celebrations of *pidiendo posada*, a reenactment of Mary and Joseph seeking shelter in Bethlehem. Children would learn traditional songs, recite lengthy text from memory, and write letters to *El niño Dios* (baby Jesus). Families passed out the lyrics to traditional songs in Spanish and English. Bilingual children participated in events related to concepts of print awareness, bi-literacy, and numeracy development (Murillo, 2012; Reyes, 2006; Sánchez, 2009). At age 4, Katia participated in transactions that involved both English and Spanish, depending on the language used by the customer, which influenced her bilingual development. She had also become highly aware of numbers and print in both languages as she and her 10-year-old sister helped their mom run a little in-home store (Reyes, 2006).

Bilingual Education and Policy

Researchers in the field of bilingual education note the importance of using children's native language as a resource to effectively communicate their thoughts and ideas, and actively use language in the construction of knowledge (Martínez, 2010; Reyes, 2006; Sparrow et al., 2014). A major concern of August, Shanahan, and Escamilla (2009) in the education of ELLs is the criteria that the National Reading Panel (NRP) uses for organizing and presenting data regarding research on bilingual literacy. The NRP uses a monolingual English lens for language and literacy development in bilinguals, and monolingualism is used as the norm for instruction (August et al., 2009). Therefore, August et al. (2009) argued that by characterizing monolingual instruction as the norm, minority students are entering with a need to learn oral and literacy skills in English. Hence, they are defined as behind their monolingual English peers from the onset, or as needing to catch-up.

Additionally, the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 and its state grant programs created an accountability framework that mainly focused on students' performance on English standardized assessments, and penalized schools and districts if subgroups, such as ELLs, did not demonstrate adequate yearly progress (Pacheco, 2010). The accountability framework has created standardized approaches to teaching reading and learning English (Pacheco, 2010), consequently placing the focus on the assessment.

According to Pacheco (2010), the existing standards movement, which are educational policies that mandate curriculum programs, emphasizes reading approaches, and norm-referenced assessment are preferred in a high-stakes context. According to García et al. (2011),

the existing programs usually do not allow educators to adjust language practices and content to the child to make it meaningful.

As schools throughout the nation have experienced a tremendous growth in their ELL population (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, 2011), there have been heated discussions on the appropriate educational service to provide these students (Figueroa-Murphy, 2014). Escamilla (2006) argued that all languages can be used to build and implement academic programs for bilingual students, and that the development of bilingualism and biliteracy is a desirable development for all students. There are transitional programs that are to provide support for ELLs as they become proficient in English such as English as a Second Language (ESL), Sheltered English, and Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE; García et al., 2011). TBE is briefly discussed below.

Transitional Bilingual Education

The TBE instruction model supports learners whose native language is not English by using both their native language and English in the classroom, so children receive instruction in their primary language while becoming proficient in English during a transitional period (Figueroa-Murphy, 2014; Passos DeNicolo, 2016). According to transfer theory (Cummins, 1981; Krashen, 1996), there is a transfer of skills, knowledge, and processes across languages. Therefore, development of literacy skills in the first language is thought to enhance academic skills in the second language and have shown to be more effective in academic achievement than an all-English model (Passos DeNicolo, 2016). The theoretical framework for TBE is based on the relationship between the home and target languages (Figueroa-Murphy, 2014).

According to Macías (2016), in the United States, the purpose of the Federal National Bilingual Education act authorized in 1968 was to temporarily use two languages, a language the student could understand and English, to effectively teach English to non-English speaking children and youth. According to García et al. (2011), at first, some of these programs had a philosophy of maintaining the home language of the children while developing English. However, in 1972, the reauthorization of the Bilingual Education Act defined the program as transitional, allowing home languages to be used only until the children were proficient in English.

TBE programs are sometimes referred to as *early exit* because they are designed to transition students to all-English instruction within 3 years (García, 2009b). Consequently, early exit TBE programs are considered subtractive because their primary goal is English-language acquisition and not bilingualism (Passos DeNicolo, 2016). Therefore, the first language is subtracted, with the goal being monolingualism. García et al. (2011) explained that an additive bilingual program would be a program in which a second language is added as the child enters school with a first language. The goal is “ultimate attainment” (García et al., 2011, p. 387) of bilingualism.

Dual language

Certain educators and researchers advocate for the dual language model because instruction is provided in students’ primary language and English on a permanent basis (Figueroa-Murphy, 2014; Gort, 2006; Quintanar-Sarellana, 2004). The dual language model is considered an additive form of bilingual education as students continue to receive instruction in

their primary language as they develop proficiency in English, and the use of their primary language does not diminish over time (Passos DeNicolò, 2016).

Dual language provides grade-level content knowledge through the minority language and English to accomplish high academic achievement, bilingualism, biliteracy, and intercultural awareness (Valdez, Freire, & Delavan, 2016; Gort, 2006). The bilingual learners' linguistic and cultural background are resources for learning and are a contribution in their sociocultural and linguistic development (Gort, 2006). The dual language program is also considered a late exit program as the students continue to study in both languages throughout their years at school (Figuerola-Murphy, 2014). Dual language is designed to promote bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism in all children (Figuerola-Murphy, 2014; Gort, 2006; López, 2011). According to Figuerola-Murphy (2014), the two most common dual language education approaches are the two-way dual language approach and the one-way dual language approach.

Two-way dual language integrates native-English speaking students with minority language speakers to achieve bilingualism, biliteracy, high academic achievement, and cross-cultural understanding for both groups (Gort, 2006). In the one-way dual language program, only the minority language students are enrolled, and they receive instruction in both their native language and English without the intention of diminishing their native language over time (Figuerola-Murphy, 2014). According to García et al. (2011), schools started paying more attention to developing the bilingual proficiency of monolingual, language majority students, around the second half of the 20th century, which led to more bilingualism in schools.

Finally, in current work, Gort (2019) has shared the need for bilingual proficiency measures as we continue to develop bilingual education. There is a serious lack of measures that

capture bilingual proficiency while bilingual children engage in language and literacy practices. This would assist educators in designing quality education programs for emergent bilinguals that provide meaningful learning context.

Summary

In this section, I discussed the context for the study, which is divided into four sections: (a) sociocultural theories of language acquisition and development, (b) emergent writing, (c) bilingualism and biliteracy, and (d) bilingual education and policies. Sociocultural theories underscore the importance of social interaction and provide a context for language development. In addition, from a bilingual perspective, the sociocultural lens also emphasizes that the bilingual child's learning is mediated through bilingual assistance. Yet there is room for a greater understanding of this process in a classroom setting, within the general school environment, and in the ways that children learn language from their peers and adults.

Emergent writing shows the importance of children having an opportunity to develop and practice their writing skills and how children use symbols to communicate their thoughts and ideas. Biliteracy underscores how the child uses different learning experiences from school, home, and community to determine and develop concepts of how the writing system should operate. It not only provides insight as to how writing and oral language are intricately connected but also the influence of home and community as the child develops a concept about writing. An examination of bilingualism and biliteracy provides insight as to how bilingual children develop and use language. Examining bilingual policy and education positions this study within the broader socio-political context and provides an insight of historical and political factors that influence how children learn language in the United States.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the present study was to describe the language practices of four simultaneous bilingual children by focusing on their language production. Through this study, I examined the language competencies and language usage of the children and how this was manifested in their writing. This section describes the methodology selected to answer the following research questions:

- What are the language competencies of the participating children?
- How do they use their receptive and productive language competencies in different spaces and with different people?
- How are their language abilities and usage evident in their writing/composing?

First, I describe personal experiences that led to the lens through which I viewed this research.

Background of the Researcher

Past and present life experiences have given me a perspective, interest, and bias concerning the language development and education of emergent bilingual children. Born in Aruba, Dutch Caribbean, which is part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, my official language is Dutch. Most Arubans speak several languages. The language of the people is Papiamentu, which literally means *speaking* or *conversing*. Papiamentu comprises the languages of the Spanish missionaries, Portuguese traders, West African slaves, and Arawak Indians. The language originated and developed during the time of slavery. Because of the opening of an

American oil refinery, and the migration of many from the neighboring English-speaking islands, English was an added language and is widely spoken on the island. Spanish is also spoken because Aruba is just 15 miles off the coast of South America (Venezuela), and the country has historic ties with Venezuela and Colombia. I believe that this rich history and diversity contributed strongly to my belief in tolerance and respect for all cultures.

In Aruba, students are educated in Dutch; however, they are also taught English and Spanish (starting in the fifth grade), and in some cases even French and German. Papiamentu was not taught in school even though it is the language of the people. I spoke a lot of English at home because my mother was an educator, and my father was an avid reader. My home was filled with books, including children's encyclopedias, the works of Dickens, the Brontë sisters, and Caribbean folktales. I also spoke Spanish before entering school because of our historical connection with South America and the fact that most homes in Aruba could access the transmission of the Venezuelan television stations. Their programs were widely viewed because they had much better programs than the sole Aruban television station. I often joke with my children that when I was growing up Superman and Batman spoke Spanish on my television. I took my children to Aruba, and they were amazed to see their favorite cartoons in Spanish. Even though Dutch is the official language of Aruba and children are educated in Dutch, Dutch was not spoken at home by the native Arubans. Papiamentu was the main language of the people, with English and Spanish being spoken in some cases; nevertheless, Dutch words were used in conversations. However, Papiamentu was dispelled by Dutch.

My classmates and I were taught European history, and most of the text was based on the Dutch culture. However, my parents exposed me to local and Caribbean literature. They gave

me a sense of pride in my own Caribbean culture and history, which gave me a sense of self-esteem and identity. My parents helped set the stage for me to become a successful reader. I was read to by my mother, always saw my parents reading, and my parents had an extensive collection of literature. They instilled in me a love for reading. Growing up, I listened to folktales, fables like the Anansi fables (for example, *Shon Anansi* and *Baba Nansi*), and folk songs. I listened to the Dutch, English, Papiamentu, and Spanish spoken around me, and I often intermingled the languages in my daily conversations, which was a widespread occurrence on the island.

Through my personal experience, I am aware of the importance of children's home and community literacy practices in their language and cognitive development (Murillo, 2012; Reyes, 2006; Sánchez, 2009). Even if the languages spoken at home are different from the language at school, the home literacy practice is still impactful and should not be negated. I can also relate to children who belong to marginalized groups in our society and whose language and culture are not valued (Cazden, 2011; Dyson, 2006; Gee, 2001). I understand that children who speak multiple languages use their languages as a resource in making meaning, and they intermingle the linguistic features of the languages (Hornberger & Link, 2012). Thus, the present study that seeks to describe the language practices of four young simultaneous bilingual children is influenced by my personal experiences and the critical lens through which I view my own education.

The Research Design

According to Purcell-Gates (2000), ethnographic and descriptive methodologies allow investigation of insights and new information, demonstrating their value-added nature, and increasing their potential use in education. Purcell-Gates (2000) explained that because of the complexities involved in the complex process of learning, researchers need methodologies that will allow them to search for insights and new information. Complex issues, such as language, and social and cultural resources the learner relies on to interpret instruction and learn, require multiple perspectives and procedures. Thus, the questions that frame the design for this present study required a methodology and approach that granted insight and helped me gather data that effectively described the language practices of simultaneous bilingual children.

In the following section, I discuss the methodology, approach, and strategies I used to answer the research questions. I specifically detail my methods to collect and analyze the data. Additionally, I discuss how I established credibility within the study.

Qualitative Method

Qualitative research differs from quantitative research based on the central idea that guides qualitative research (Flick, 2014). While quantitative research is focused on the why or the cause of events and predicting similar events in the future, qualitative research attempts to understand the phenomena (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The qualitative researcher seeks to understand how individuals construct their world (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Therefore, the research took place in a real-world setting as opposed to a laboratory. The main features of qualitative research are: “the correct choice of appropriate methods and theories; the recognition and analysis of different perspectives; the researcher’s reflections on their research as part of the

process of knowledge and production ('reflexivity'); and the variety of approaches and methods" (Flick, 2014, p. 14-15). With qualitative research, methods can be designed that are open to the complexity of a study's subject, allowing the everyday practices and interactions of individuals to be studied (Flick, 2014). Not enough is known about the complex issues involved in how young simultaneous bilingual children use their languages in the beginning of their formal schooling, which made this subject too complex to limit to an experimental, hypothesis driven approach. The research questions of the present study were designed to understand the phenomena. To answer the research questions of the present study, I chose an approach in which the everyday practices and interactions of the subjects could be studied in a real-world setting, so qualitative methods such as interviews and participant observations were used (Flick, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Furthermore, qualitative research is descriptive (Creswell, 2006), and I answered the research questions by providing rich descriptions of four simultaneous bilingual children and their language practices, focusing on their language production.

Case Study Approach

According to Flick (2014), the case study approach presents the process under study in a very detailed and exact way. Merriam (1988) states that a case study examines a particular phenomenon. In the present study, I examined how four young simultaneous bilingual children used their languages at the beginning of their formal schooling. With the case study method, "the case is examined in depth within its real-life context" (Yin, 2006, p. 111). I used the definition *case* as described by Yin (2006) and Flick (2014) to define my examination of the language practices of the four children. I studied each of their language practices in depth and then constructed rich descriptions of their language practices. I used an instrumental case study

approach, which consisted of four individual cases; each comprised of a child, her parent, and her teacher, to illustrate the larger phenomenon under investigation - simultaneous bilinguals' language practices (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). I believe that each case is instrumental in adding to the knowledge base on how simultaneous bilingual children make meaning and learn (Merriam, 1988). Through each of these individual cases, I provided a rich account of the language practices of the four participating children in order to provide insight and bring about understanding of how young simultaneous bilingual children use their languages at the beginning of their formal schooling, which could in turn affect educational practices. The boundaries of each case consisted of the language practices of the simultaneous bilingual pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Merriam, 1988). I examined what one simultaneous bilingual pre-kindergartener and three simultaneous kindergarteners were doing with their languages (listening/comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing/composing).

Each child was treated as a comprehensive case as I gathered data on how each child was using language in order to learn as much as possible about the language practices of the children. I then compared the data I had gathered on each child in order to complete a cross-case analysis of how the children were using their languages. I sought to establish a range of generality of findings through the cross-case analysis (Merriam, 1988).

The Research Site

The research site was located at an elementary school in a large urban area of North Texas. The school was part of one of the largest school districts in that area. The study took place during the on-site after-school program. However, one of the girls who had been enrolled

in the after-school program dropped out of the program, so her observations were primarily conducted during the school day in her classroom.

The Community

D Magazine (2019) presented the following demographics for this area. The community in which the school was located had a population of 29,381 and had long been a poor and neglected area. However, new developments were bringing substantial investments into the area. New bridges had been constructed, one with an elegant architectural design and the other a pedestrian crossing bridge, physically connecting the area with the rest of the city. The community had a median income of \$31,804 and 40.4% of the residents age 16 and over were unemployed. Of the residents who were employed, 40.1% were blue-collar workers, 36.9% were white-collar workers, and 22.9% were either in the service industry or were farm workers. Also, 30.9% of families lived below the poverty line.

Serve West Dallas (2017), another area magazine, provided the additional information about this area of the city and the students who attend school there. The racial population included 72% Hispanic, 25% African American, and 3% other. Approximately 65% of freshmen attending high school in this area dropped out before entering the 12th grade. About 50% of all students lived below the poverty line, and approximately 86% of all students were economically disadvantaged. Also 67% of the adult population had less than a 12th grade education and of this number 35% had less than a 9th grade education. In addition, only 2% of the adult population had a college education.

The School

The school was a pre-kindergarten through sixth grade school with a population of 450 students. The school's demographics are noted below in Table 3.1. The school had seen an increase in enrollment and had implemented a Montessori track with three classes, with an additional class to follow within a year. The student enrollment is broken down in Table 3.2.

Table 3.1

School Population Statistics

Sub-population	No.	%
Race		
Hispanic	422	93.8
African American	14	3.0
White	2	0.5
Other or not reported	12	2.7
At risk	320	70.9
Economically disadvantaged	439	97.6
Limited English proficient	282	62.6
Special education	42	9.0
Talented and gifted	79	17.5
Mobility rate	50	11.0

Table 3.2

Student Enrollment by Grade Level

Grade	No.	%
Pre-kindergarten	73	16.2
Kindergarten	62	14.8
First	47	10.4
Second	64	14.2
Third	62	14.8

Fourth	53	11.8
Fifth	58	12.9
Sixth	31	6.9

Note. Percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding to nearest tenth of a percent.

The school also offered a one-way dual language program, which was implemented pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. The Montessori program was implemented pre-kindergarten through third grade. The school also provided an after-school program that served pre-kindergarten through sixth grade.

Dual language Program

The school offered a one-way dual language program. Spanish speaking students were provided access to the dual language curriculum as they entered prekindergarten. Dual language is the board-approved bilingual program for the school district and is considered a powerful school reform model for high academic achievement that supports the development of bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism for participating students. The program offered students the opportunity to become bilingual and biliterate. The dual language program provided instruction in English and Spanish. While the school offered one-way dual language, the district offered three programs:

- One-way dual language (pre-kindergarten - fifth)
- Two-way dual language (pre-kindergarten - fifth)
- Secondary dual language (sixth - 12th)

In the two-way dual language model in the district, both English and Spanish speaking students were placed in the same classroom to learn from each other while acquiring a second language. Starting as early as pre-kindergarten, students were given the opportunity to work

side-by-side with students of various cultures and backgrounds while learning to read, write, and speak in both English and Spanish. The two-way dual language model was being offered at 51 elementary campuses, four middle school campuses, and one high school campus. One-way dual language was being offered at 135 elementary campuses. Through this model, English learners developed biliteracy and bilingualism through instruction in both Spanish and English. Pre-kindergarten through first grade students (native Spanish and native English language speakers) are eligible to enroll in the two-way dual language program. The program is sustained as the child moves up grade levels so that the child can continue in the program through 12th grade.

The Montessori Program

The school also offered a Montessori track pre-kindergarten through third grade. Parents were given the option to either enroll their child in the Montessori or traditional track. Both included a bilingual program. The Montessori program was based on the ideologies of Dr. Maria Montessori. The child could develop at his or her own pace. The child used his own abilities, guided by a trained, certified teacher. Materials designed specifically for Montessori were used. The program covered the following areas: language, mathematics, geometry, botany, zoology, practical life, and sensorial education. There was an age span of 3 years in a class. Children could study various subjects individually or in small groups in different parts of the classroom. The program was in select elementary, middle, and high schools. Students could enroll in the program as young as 3 years old. Teachers in the Montessori program underwent 9 months of intensive training.

The After-School Program

At this site, parents could enroll their children in a free on-site after-school program. The program served all grade levels (pre-kindergarten through sixth grade) and was operational between the hours of 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. The after-school program was not a bilingual program, but some of the teachers and staff were bilingual. The program provided homework support and enrichment activities. The program encouraged exploration and creative expression through guided learning using a broad range of resources and manipulatives. Critical thinking was boosted through age-appropriate STEM activities (science, technology, engineering, and math), performance/visual art, and project-based learning experiences (Big Thought, 2020). The children in the after-school program were provided with an additional hot meal during the after-school activities. This additional meal is referred to as *after-school lunch* in this research report to distinguish it from the lunch during the regular school day.

Participant Selection

Marshall and Rossman (2016) explained that researchers choose a sampling frame based on their research purpose. A sampling frame is a small group that represents the population the researcher is interested in studying. The purpose of this study was to describe the language use of simultaneous bilingual pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children. In order to do this, I first obtained a list of the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students registered in the after-school program. I then reviewed the list of students with the assistance of the campus Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) chair to determine which students were exposed to more than one language at home. The LPAC was responsible for:

1. The identification, placement, and assessment of potential ELLs.

2. Linguistic accommodations and assessment decisions.
3. Maintaining updated records on ELLs.

The LPAC chair had a computer-generated list of all the students that had indicated on their Home Language Survey that either a language other than English was spoken at home, or English and additional languages were spoken. The Home Language Survey was given by the school district, and it indicated the languages spoken in the children's homes. All parents completed the Home Language Survey when enrolling their child for the first time, and completion was required by the state. The information provided the LPAC chair with a list of students that needed to take the Idea Proficiency Test (IPT). The IPT is an assessment created to evaluate English language proficiency in children in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. The assessment was administered when the child first enrolled in school. It was only administered if a parent indicated that a language other than English was spoken at home or if languages in addition to English were spoken at home. If the language indicated on the Home Language Survey was either Spanish or English and Spanish, then the district administered the assessment in both English and Spanish. The IPT rated the child's oral language proficiency level as either beginning, early intermediate, intermediate, or advanced. If the assessment was administered in both English and Spanish, then the oral language proficiency level was indicated for each language.

The information from the IPT enabled me to choose a sample representative of simultaneous bilingual pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students. Per district policy, I was restricted to children that were not and have never been my students, so only five children qualified for the study. I explained my research to the mothers of each of the five students and

gave them a consent form. Only four parents consented to participate in the research study. Consequently, all the student participants were girls. Esmeralda later dropped out of the on-site after-school program, but she was permitted to participate in the story time and writing conferences I conducted in the after-school program during the school day in her classroom while she was at literacy stations.

The following are the attributes that were the same for all the participants:

- The student participants were all girls.
- All the parents were born in Mexico.
- All the girls were born in the US.
- All the girls spoke both English and Spanish.
- All the girls attended the same school.
- All the girls worked with the researcher in the after-school program during her story time and writing conference.
- All the girls were in a bilingual program with a bilingual teacher.
- All the girls were in their second year at the school.

Participant information and data collected are noted in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3

Student Participant Information/Data Collected

Data Topic	Participants			
	Karolina	Esmeralda	Jocelyn	Xiomara
Grade/Program	Pre-kindergarten	Kindergarten/	Kindergarten/	Kindergarten/
	4 Bilingual	Bilingual	Bilingual	Bilingual
	Montessori ^a		Montessori ^a	Montessori ^a
Parent	Mom in English	Mom in English	Mom in Spanish	Mom in Spanish
Interview	at School	at School	by Phone	at School
One Interview				
(15-30 minutes)	Montessori	Prekindergarten		
	Bilingual	Teacher		
	Teacher	Assistant		
Teacher	Ms. Mendoza	Ms. García in	Ms. Mendoza in	Ms. Mendoza in
Interview	in English at	English at	English at	English at
One Interview	School ^b	School	School	School
(30-90				
Minutes)				

Data Topic	Participants			
	Karolina	Esmeralda	Jocelyn	Xiomara
Writing	None because of	7	5	9
Samples	4-year-old			
From Class	program			
All in Spanish	only samples			
	from writing			
	conferences			
Work Samples	5	5	5	5
with Researcher				
after-School				
Conferences	6	6	5	6
with Researcher				
after-School (3-5				
minutes each				
after 20-minute				
lesson)				
Observations	5	5	5	5

Data Topic	Participants			
	Karolina	Esmeralda	Jocelyn	Xiomara
	Cafeteria, After-school art class ^c	Bilingual classroom during literacy stations	Story/writing time Cafeteria, After- school music class ^b	Cafeteria, After-school music class ^c
Age of Enrollment	3-years-old	4-years-old	5-years-old ^d	4-years-old
Proficiency Scores (IPT), at Initial Enrollment	Summer 2018 English-Early Intermediate Spanish- Beginning	Summer 2018 English- Intermediate Spanish- Intermediate	Summer 2018 English- Advanced Spanish-Early Advanced	Summer 2018 English- Beginning Spanish- Advanced

^aThe pre-kindergarten 3, pre-kindergarten 4, and kindergarten Bilingual Montessori were grouped together in the same class. ^bMs. Mendoza's interview lasted 90 minutes because she completed a 30-minute interview for each of the three student participants in her class. ^cClass was primarily taught in English. ^dJocelyn started pre-kindergarten at 5 years old

Data Collection

The writing conferences and field notes from my observations during the after-school program and during literacy stations with Esmeralda were the primary sources used in the data collection. In order to triangulate the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), other sources were used as noted in Figure 3.1.

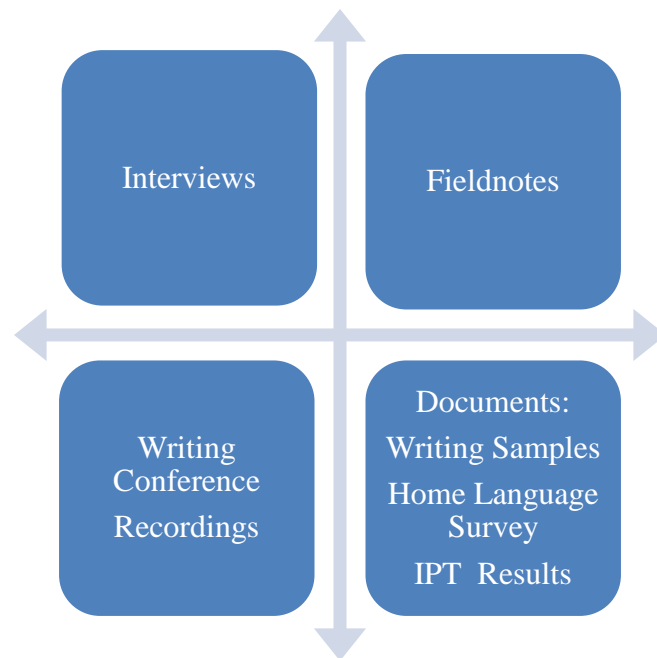


Figure 3.1. Strategies Used for Data Collection

Interviews

According to Marshall and Rossman (2016), interviews are one of the primary strategies used in qualitative research to construct knowledge about the topic. The interview is one method I used to gather data. Merriam (1988) stated that “the interview is a conversation with a purpose” (p. 71-72), and the main purpose of the teacher and parent interviews was to obtain specific information that would provide insight into how the children were using their languages to construct meaning.

I conducted one 30-minute interview with a parent of each of the student participants that was guided by a student information protocol (García et al., 2017), and a parent interview protocol (Axelrod, 2012). The parents chose the language they preferred to be used in the interview. I conducted two of the parent interviews in English and two in Spanish. I conducted one of the parent interviews by phone and the other three were conducted at the school. All the interviews were audio recorded and transcribed in their original language.

The parent interviews granted insight as to how the children were using their languages at home and in their communities. The interviews were open-ended and less structured in order to obtain the perspective of the individuals being interviewed (Merriam, 1988). Each parent interview consisted of questions that provided a background of the languages the child was hearing and speaking at home and in her community (see Appendix F). The interview helped determine if the child was hearing Spanish from one parent and English from another, or English from siblings and Spanish from parents. The interview also helped determine how the child used the languages (English and Spanish) to communicate at home and in her community. I also interviewed the student participants' teachers. Each teacher was interviewed one time for 30 to 35 minutes per student participant to gather information on how the children used the languages in the classroom and to triangulate the data. Thus, Ms. Mendoza's interview lasted approximately 90 minutes because she taught three of the student participants, and each student was discussed separately. The teachers' interviews consisted of questions that provided insight into the languages the children were hearing, speaking, and writing in the classroom and the languages they were hearing and speaking in a more relaxed setting such as on the playground and at lunch (see Appendix I). For example, certain questions addressed how the child used her

languages to communicate with peers. The teachers' interviews were conducted in English and were also recorded and transcribed.

Field Notes/Observation Procedures

I used the observation guide as seen in Figure 3.2 as a guide to reflect on the children's language practices that were readily observable (García et al., 2017). I observed how the four girls were using language, what they were hearing (and from whom), saying (and to whom) and writing in order to observe the proficiency in and between languages (Babino, 2017). I also observed linguistic strategies like code switching, which is unique to bilinguals and mixed dominance, showing strengths in different areas (speaking, writing, or reading) of each language (Babino & Stewart, 2017). Detailed notes were taken in a notebook for each student being observed. I then filled in the observation guide immediately after each session to capture any reflections about how the children were using language. I observed three of the four students during their normal activities in the on-site after-school program (cafeteria, music, and art). I observed one of the students during her classroom literacy stations because she had dropped out of the on-site after-school program.

Observation guide *Karolina* Date: *10-8-19* Week *1*

Day		Mon.	<u>Tues.</u>	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	With whom
Location: <i>Art</i>	Language use						
Student name <i>Karolina</i>	<u>Eng. only</u>	hear	<u>hear</u>	hear	hear	hear	<u>Eng. speaking Child/adult</u>
Comments:		speak	<u>speak</u>	speak	speak	speak	Sp. Speaking child/adult
		write	write	write	write	write	Bil.child/adult
	Sp. only	hear	hear	hear	hear	hear	Eng. speaking Child/adult
		speak	speak	speak	speak	speak	Sp. Speaking child/adult
		write	write	write	write	write	Bil.child/adult
	Both (more Sp. Than Eng.)	hear	hear	hear	hear	hear	Eng. speaking Child/adult
		speak	speak	speak	speak	speak	Sp. Speaking child/adult
		write	write	write	write	write	Bil.child/adult
	Both (more Eng. than Sp.)	hear	hear	hear	hear	hear	Eng. speaking Child/adult
		speak	speak	speak	speak	speak	Sp. Speaking child/adult
		write	write	write	write	write	Bil.child/adult
	Both (about equal use)	hear	hear	hear	hear	hear	Eng. speaking Child/adult
		speak	speak	speak	speak	speak	Sp. Speaking child/adult
		write	write	write	write	write	Bil.child/adult
Observations: What's happening..... <i>Hearing and speaking English. Just one word in Spanish "Sombbrero!" Actually 2 words in Spanish "sombbrero and maracas." see notes in field notes journal.</i>							

Figure 3.2. Observation Guide

Data collection began October 2019 and lasted until the end of January 2020. The children went about their routines in the after-school program as normal. The field notes were in a narrative form, where I noted details of the language used, setting, and actions of the children. I observed and noted whether the children were hearing English or Spanish when communicating with a peer or adult and how the children were responding to the languages heard. For example, I noted if the children communicated in Spanish, English, or both languages and if it depended on the person with whom they were communicating. I noted whether the children were using more Spanish than English, more English than Spanish, or both languages equally. I noted the children's sentences in the language they were using at the time. In summary, I took notes of

everything I observed the children doing with language. Each week I focused on two of the girls. I conducted two observations a week unless there was an extenuating situation (holidays, illness, or unscheduled meetings) that prevented me from doing so. I conducted three observations the next week if I missed a session, thereby focusing on three of the girls instead of two but this only happened on two occasions. I conducted the third observation right before my story time and writing conference on Thursdays, during their time in the cafeteria.

Lastly, during data collection, I noted insights and decisions about the research in progress. For example, during the first week of my observations, I tried to observe a different child each day in order to observe all the girls each week. However, because of professional obligations during the week, I was unable to do so, and I had to devise an alternate plan. I decided to only conduct two observations a week and that I would conduct my observations on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and my story time and writing conferences with the girls on Thursdays.

Writing Conference Recordings

I conducted a weekly story and writing time with at least two of the student participants at a time. I then conferenced with the girls individually. I recorded the student participants' five-minute writing conference with me and collected written products. A total of six writing conferences were held for three of the four girls, collected over a period of four months (I held five conferences for Jocelyn who began three weeks after the other participants due to delays in receiving her signed consent form). Each recorded conference was transcribed. I read three fairy tales told in Spanish and two fiction stories told in English. I also read the English version of the story "Too Many Tamales," a Christmas story that featured a Hispanic family and the

story included some Spanish words. At story time, I first introduced the story and then I read the story to the girls. The girls were allowed to share connections to real life during the read aloud. After reading, we discussed the story details, and then the girls were instructed to write about the story.

During the writing process, the girls were permitted to share their ideas and thoughts with each other, and they could also review the text on their own. I then conferenced with each girl individually about her written product. Each child retold the story in her own words and explained the details of the story she had captured in her drawing, which I wrote verbatim on her written product. I recorded each conference, which usually lasted 3 to 5 minutes.

The observations and recorded writing conferences were completed the last week of January 2020, and the final interview was completed on January 17, 2020. I carefully reviewed and typed the field-notes of each observation on the same day of the observation to be as accurate as possible. I typed the actual notes and included details I remembered but may not have included in my notes.

Documents

Over the course of my research, I collected

- a total of 41 drawing and writing samples from the four students (these documents represented work done with language in the classroom as well as during the after-school program with me, beginning October 1, 2019, through the end of January 2020).
- one Home Language Survey for each child.

- one IPT oral language proficiency screening for each child indicating the child's proficiency level in English and Spanish.

Data Analysis

I began data collection and analysis the first week of October 2019. According to Yin (2006), when using the case study method, data collection and data analysis may need to be done together to quickly clear up any conflicts that may arise while gathering data. Each week the field notes and transcriptions from the writing conferences were entered in NVIVO 12, a qualitative data analysis computer software, and coded. The parent and teacher interviews were also entered and coded. The following codes were created to analyze the data in Figure 3.3 below.

Name	Description
All English	Child hears, speaks, or writes all English
All Spanish	child hears, speaks, or writes all Spanish
Communicates in English with English dominant speakers	Communicates in English with children or adults who are English dominant
Communicates in only English with English monolinguals	Child speaks or writes only in English with an English monolingual
Communicates in only Spanish with Spanish monolinguals	Child speaks or writes only Spanish with Spanish monolinguals
Communicates in Spanish with Spanish dominant speakers	Communicates in Spanish with children or adults who are Spanish dominant
Equal English and Spanish	Child hears, speaks, or writes equal amounts of English and Spanish
Mostly English, some Spanish	Child hears, speaks, or writes mostly English, some Spanish
Mostly Spanish, some English	Child hears, speaks, or writes mostly Spanish, some English
Translanguaging	Child mixes her languages
Translating	Child translates in Spanish for Spanish monolinguals or translates in English for English monolinguals

Figure 3.3. Codes used in data analysis

I had conducted a pilot study at the same school in the spring, and five of the codes were pre-existing based on previous research with bilingual children (Babino & Stewart, 2017). The five pre-existing codes were All English; All Spanish; Equal English and Spanish; Mostly

English, some Spanish; and Mostly Spanish, some English. I added additional codes during the data analysis of the current study such as Translanguaging.

I did not use the computer software to transcribe the writing conferences and interviews. Before entering the information in NVIVO 12, I transcribed the recorded writing conferences and the interviews using mine and the participants' exact words in Spanish or English. I did not correct or edit the grammar used in the conferences and interviews. I created entries using these transcripts. These transcripts were coded line-by-line using the NVIVO 12 software (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Once the process was completed, the software triangulated data collected, so that the data from the different sources corroborated or illuminated the research (Marshall and Rossman, 2016). I developed broad themes for the codes. The broad themes included:

- Translanguaging
- Both English and Spanish Ability
- Awareness of Audience
- Equal use of English and Spanish
- Uses All English or Uses All Spanish

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I was unable to return to the NVIVO lab to further collapse the themes using the software, but I was able to download a summary of the codes as they appeared across the data categories. The results are shown below in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4

Nodes/codes Across the Data Sources

Codes	Files	References
All English	33	181
All Spanish	36	100
Communicates in English with English Dominant Speakers	3	4
Communicates Only in English with English Speakers	1	1
Communicates Only in Spanish with Spanish Speakers	1	1
Communicates in Spanish with Spanish Dominant Speakers	2	3
Communicates in English when spoken to in English	1	1
Communicates in Spanish when spoken to in Spanish	1	1
Equal English and Spanish	20	35
Mostly English some Spanish	8	11
Mostly Spanish some English	5	7
Translanguaging	27	65
Translating	0	0

My advising professor and I took the summary above and the raw data collected and crossed out the code that occurred the least, which was *Translating*. Next, we grouped the following codes under three larger themes: Bilingual Ability, Bilingual Agency, and Bilingual Flexibility.

1. Bilingual Ability: All Spanish, All English, and Equal English and Spanish.
2. Bilingual Agency: Communicates in English with English Dominant Speakers, Communicates in Spanish with Spanish Dominant Speakers, Communicates in English when spoken to in English, Communicates in Spanish when spoken to in Spanish,

Communicates Only in Spanish with Spanish Speakers, and Communicates Only in English with English Speakers.

3. Bilingual Flexibility: English, some Spanish, Mostly Spanish some English, and Translanguaging

The first theme my professor and I developed was bilingual ability, which denoted the skills to communicate in both languages. We compared the second group of codes with raw data and the theme bilingual agency emerged, representing how the children purposefully adopted English or Spanish depending on the audience. We compared the last group of codes with the raw data and chose the theme bilingual flexibility representing translanguaging within a word or sentence.

Credibility of Research

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), credibility and dependability are the criteria for qualitative research. Activities such as prolonged engagement and persistent observation in the field, the triangulation of different methods and data, and peer debriefing are all strategies for increasing credibility (Flick, 2014). To maintain credibility, I spent 4 months in the field and kept detailed field notes and memos, which I reviewed and reflected on at the end of each day. I used different data sources such as observations, recorded interviews, and the student participants' written products and recorded writing conferences to gain different perspectives of how these simultaneous bilingual students used their languages. I also consistently debriefed with my advising professor to disclose my own blind spots and discuss results, issues, or possible findings (Flick, 2014).

I checked dependability through the process of the collection and recording of the raw data, data reduction through summaries, memos, and short descriptions, and process notes

concerning decisions made (Flick, 2014). I constantly questioned whether my findings were based on the data, if the analytical strategies were applied correctly, whether I accounted for alternative explanations, if I could justify inquiry decisions, whether my biases were causing me not to explore any data in my field notes, and if I was using any strategies to increase credibility such as second readers. I used peer debriefing to gain feedback on my data entries and for an objective perspective from another bilingual researcher and teacher who is also a doctoral student. After this peer reviewed the data, the coding I used was confirmed. The peer agreed with the codes I had used for my data analysis when she examined the data in NVIVO and the raw data.

Limitations

According to Marshall and Rossman (2016), all research has limitations. Most of the study took place during the after-school program and not in a typical classroom or during school hours (except for Esmeralda), which prevented me from observing how three of the children used their languages during a normal school day. Even though I was able to observe Esmeralda during the school day in her classroom, I was limited to a specific time of the day and a specific activity. There was the limitation of depending solely on the parents' interviews to gain insight on the children's home and community language use. Another limitation was depending on the children's classroom teachers' interviews for an understanding of how the children used their languages in the classroom and during school hours. At this school, the average classroom consisted of approximately 22 students, which could have limited the teacher's observation of everything the children were doing with language in the classroom, including all the language exchanges that went on in the classroom.

Summary

In this section, I described the methods I used to answer the research questions:

- What are the language competencies of the participating students?
- How do they use their receptive and productive language competencies in different spaces and with different people?
- How are their language abilities and usage evident in their writing/composing?

I grew up in a Dutch colony where the native language was marginalized. Growing up, I was exposed to four languages before beginning my formal schooling. The languages were English, Papiamentu, Spanish, and Dutch. Papiamentu was considered the native language and Dutch the official language.

The research took place during the after-school program in a large inner-city school, located in a low socioeconomic community. Esmeralda, one of the participants, was observed during the day in her classroom, as she had dropped out of the after-school program. While five students were chosen, only four parents signed the consent forms resulting in four female Latina student participants, one pre-kindergartner and three kindergartners. I used the case study method in order to study the phenomena and provide a rich description. The research methods used were observations, interviews (parent and teacher), and writing conferences. The children's writing products were also collected. To establish credibility, I spent four months in the field, took detailed field notes, and recorded interviews and the children's writing conferences. There were limitations as I depended on the teacher interviews to determine language practices at school and parent interviews to determine language practices at home and in the community.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

In the present chapter, I describe my findings based on data collected through observations, interviews, and story time and writing conferences with the four student participants. The focus was to answer the research questions:

- What are the language competencies of the student participants?
- How do they use their receptive and productive language competencies in different spaces and with different people?
- How are their language abilities and usage evident in their writing/composing?

Overall, the findings demonstrated that each student participant

- could converse in both English and Spanish with peers and adults;
- spoke both English and Spanish at home;
- switched back and forth from English to Spanish in different spaces and with different people;
- sometimes mixed English and Spanish within a sentence and even within a word; and
- demonstrated the ability to purposefully choose a language depending on her audience.

Participant Narratives

In this chapter, I will first share narratives of each of the participants and patterns across their individual writing conferences and then discuss the overall themes that cut across the cases: bilingual ability, bilingual agency, and bilingual flexibility. There were four student participants – Karolina, Esmeralda, Jocelyn, and Xiomara. Karolina was the youngest participant and she was in pre-kindergarten. The other three girls were in kindergarten. All four girls were in a bilingual program. Table 4.1 provides an overview of the student participants, including information regarding school experiences and results of the language proficiency test (IPT). Parent and family information, including parent migration histories, siblings, and languages spoken at home, is also provided.

Table 4.1

Student Participant Descriptions

Descriptors	Student Participants			
	Karolina	Esmeralda	Jocelyn	Xiomara
Grade/ Program	Pre-Kindergarten 4 Bilingual Montessori	Kindergarten/ Bilingual	Kindergarten/ Bilingual Montessori	Kindergarten/ Bilingual Montessori
Number of Years in Formal Education	2	3	2	2
Language Proficiency(IPT) Test Results	Early intermediate in English/ Beginning in Spanish	Intermediate proficiency in both English and Spanish	Advanced in English/Early Advance in Spanish	Advance in Spanish/ Beginning in English
Country of Origin for Child	USA	USA	USA	USA

Migration History of Parents	Mom: born in Mexico, came to USA after high school Dad: born in Mexico, came to USA as an adult	Mom: born in Mexico, came to USA at 4 Dad: born in Mexico, came to USA as a child	Mom: born in Mexico, came to USA as an adult Dad: born in Mexico, came to USA as an adult	Mom: born in Mexico, came to USA as an adult Dad: born in Mexico, came to USA as an adult
Siblings	Middle of 3	Youngest of 2	Youngest of 3	Youngest of 3
Languages Spoken at Home	Spanish/English	Spanish/English	Spanish/English	Spanish/English

Karolina: “Mom, she’s my teacher”

During the after-school program, Karolina saw her mother walking through the cafeteria, and she cried out, “Mom!” and then explained, “she’s my teacher.” Petite with black hair, large black eyes, a ready smile, and the most adorable little giggle, Karolina sheepishly peeked from behind her mother’s legs and then giggled when I called her name. She was the youngest participant and the other girls were protective of her. Karolina was curious and observant. She liked to explore, touch, and feel objects in her surroundings. For example, while sitting at the cafeteria table during the after-school program, a first grader had a book, a small container of lip balm, and a recorder on the table. Karolina touched the little container of lip balm and said “tiny.” Then she picked up the recorder and tried to play it. When the first grader saw her looking at the book, she asked, “You want me to read the book?” Karolina nodded yes and smiled.

Home. Karolina was born in the United States and has been in this city all her life. Both her parents are bilingual. Karolina’s mother also happened to be her schoolteacher. Her mother was born and raised in Mexico. She explained that she came to the United States after

completing “elementary, middle, and high school in Mexico.” She attended college here in the United States. “I did Brookhaven college,” she said. “That’s where I learn the language and then I start doing my grade hours and finish my associate.” Karolina had two siblings; she had a 12-year-old sister, who attended the same school as Karolina but was now in middle school, and a 3-year-old sister who was not in school yet. According to her mom, Karolina spoke “both English and Spanish” at home “but my husband, he’ll speak more like in Spanish.” Karolina communicated in both English and Spanish with her friends, her mom explained, but her neighborhood was mainly Spanish. Both Karolina’s mother’s parents and her father’s parents only spoke Spanish, so she communicated with her grandparents in Spanish. Her mother believed that it was important for her to learn English while maintaining and developing Spanish. She said Karolina needed her “mother language,” Spanish, and further explained:

[She needs Spanish] not only to communicate with, like my parents don’t speak English so she needs to and my husband’s parents doesn’t speak English so, she needs that to have that communication with them, but also here you can see like jobs like, I mean like they don’t require it but they ask to be able to speak English and another language.

She also noted that in the United States, English is “the language that everything is mostly in. Like you go to the stores and everything is in English, but I still want her to speak Spanish.” Karolina’s mother believed that it was, therefore, important for Karolina to be bilingual.

School. Karolina was in pre-kindergarten. She was in the bilingual Montessori program. She had been in the program since she was 3 years old. The program allowed the students to be in the same classroom with the same teacher for 3 years. So, Karolina had been with the same teacher since age 3 and if she remained in the program, she would be with the same teacher in kindergarten. The program was also multi-age, which allowed her to be in the same classroom with kindergartners. Her class consisted of 3-year-old, 4-year-old, and 5-year-old children.

Karolina was instructed in both Spanish and English. Her teacher explained, “We speak both languages. You know with the program we do both. We do the reading in Spanish, the language arts in Spanish. The only one that we do in English is math.” She heard both Spanish and English at school and communicated in both languages with adults and her peers. During instruction, she dictated messages and her thoughts in both languages. Karolina scored early intermediate in English and beginning in Spanish on her language proficiency tests.

Language use. Karolina’s teacher explained that when communicating, she switched back and forth between the languages: “She goes back and forth, and it depends on who is she talking to like if that person is speaking to her mainly in English, she would like to respond in English, and it depends on the person.” Karolina also mixed the languages. Her teacher gave an example of her mixing the languages during a math lesson: “She’s counting like in English but then she’ll say something like ‘umm I need to escribirlo en mi cuaderno’ [write it in my notebook].” Karolina also mixed the languages during our story time and writing conferences. For example, during a story time that was being conducted in Spanish, she was asked who the Gingerbread boy was running away from, and she said, “del pony [from the pony].” She used the English word wolf instead of the Spanish word lobo (see Figure 4.1) when retelling the story Los tres cerditos [“The Three Little Pigs”] and the English word gingerbread instead of the Spanish word pan de jengibre when retelling the story El niño de pan de jengibre [“The Gingerbread Boy”].

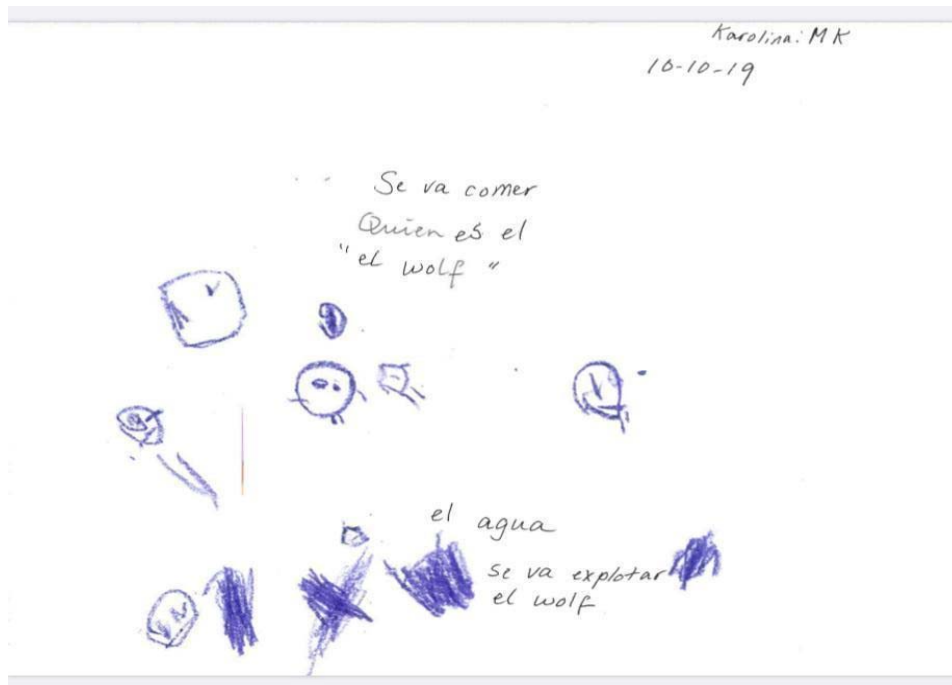


Figure 4.1. Karolina’s story time and writing conference: Los tres cerditos [The Three Little Pigs].

In Figure 4.2, she dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote her words: “Se va comer” [he’s going to eat]. “¿Quién es él?” [who is he] I asked. “El [the] wolf.” “El agua” [the water]. “Se va explotar el the wolf [The wolf is going to explode].”

Summary. Karolina was the youngest participant. Karolina was the middle child, born to Mexican immigrant parents. Her mother was a bilingual teacher as well as Karolina’s classroom teacher. Karolina was exposed to both English and Spanish at home since birth and she had also been enrolled in a bilingual program at school since age 3. Thus, Karolina was a simultaneous bilingual (Grosjean, 2010). She demonstrated the ability to communicate in both English and Spanish. She exhibited the capacity to strategically switch between English and Spanish depending on her audience. She chose language purposefully in order to effectively communicate with her audience, demonstrating bilingual agency. Karolina showed flexibility in

her language use when communicating verbally and during her writing through translanguaging. She incorporated Spanish words in her English sentences and English words in her Spanish sentences. Karolina demonstrated her bilingual identity through her language practices.

Esmeralda: “She’s checking on me”

A little girl came up to me (one of my former students) and began talking to me as I sat beside Esmeralda. Esmeralda quickly let the little girl know that I was there “checking” on her, so the child went back to her literacy station. Esmeralda smiled at me and continued working as if to say *this is my time*. A bit stout, with dark brown hair, a little round face, dark brown eyes, and a mischievous smile, Esmeralda is certainly not shy. She speaks her mind and is self-confident, which I quickly noticed during my observations. For example, when her teacher instructed the class to clean-up and prepare to go to lunch, Esmeralda noticed that some of the children were still at their station while the rest of the class had already lined up. She did not hesitate to ask her teacher, “Why are they still playing?” Regarding her self-confidence, Esmeralda is not easily swayed by the opinions of others. For example, while drawing her picture during one of the story time and writing conferences, Esmeralda showed Xiomara a crayon she was about to use in her picture and said, “este [this one].” Xiomara answered, “no es clarito [it’s not a light color].” Esmeralda simply shrugged her shoulders and used the color anyway.

Home. Both of Esmeralda’s parents are bilingual, and they speak both Spanish and English at home. Her mother was born in Mexico but immigrated to the United States when she was 4 years old, so she was educated in the United States and was enrolled in the bilingual program at her elementary school. Her mother is also a teacher assistant at Esmeralda’s school.

Esmeralda has an older sister and they were both born in the United States and have lived in this city all their lives. Both girls are enrolled at the same school and in the dual language program. Esmeralda's mom says that she speaks to her in both English and Spanish; however, her mom says she responds in English. According to her mother, the girls speak English to each other at home. However, when Esmeralda is around other family members and friends, her mom says that she communicates in both English and Spanish. Both of her grandmothers only speak Spanish, so Esmeralda communicates with them in Spanish. Her mom explained that she believes that it is important that Esmeralda maintains and develops her Spanish language: "That is her culture and her grandmas only speak Spanish. She needs to be able to communicate with them too." Furthermore, it is Esmeralda's mom's opinion that it is important for Esmeralda to develop both her languages (English and Spanish); "She needs to know both languages to be able to communicate with both."

School. Esmeralda was in kindergarten in a one-way dual language classroom. She also attended bilingual pre-kindergarten at this school. When her language abilities were tested during her enrollment using the IPT test, she demonstrated intermediate proficiency in both languages, English and Spanish. Esmeralda also attended the school district's bilingual pre-kindergarten program (half-day) for 3-year-old students at another school. Esmeralda heard and spoke both English and Spanish at school. Her teacher explained that reading, science, and social studies were taught in Spanish, and math was taught in English. The teacher also noted that in the bilingual program there was also the language of the day where English or Spanish were used on certain days for transitional or conversational purposes. She explained that the language of the

day on Mondays, Wednesday, and Fridays was Spanish. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, the language of the day was English. However, mainly Spanish was used for instruction.

Language use. Esmeralda's teacher explained, "She's equally strong in both English and Spanish," but stated that when communicating with her peers, she used mostly English. She said, "She leans towards the English more. It's just her stronger side, so I feel like she just leans towards the English when it comes to conversations or just talking to her peers, she'll go for English." According to her teacher, Esmeralda could read beginning level English and Spanish books. However, her reading was more advanced in Spanish even though she spoke a lot of English, and her writing was more advanced in Spanish. "It's easier for her to kind of like decode how to spell it so she tends to write in Spanish more," said Ms. García. Her teacher also said:

I think she tends to go for the English when it comes to anything else, but academically she's able to be very good in Spanish. Like she knows about rhyming, she knows how to write it out, she knows how to decode words. She's kind of like on level in reading, level B the last time. So, she's pretty good in Spanish.

Esmeralda also mixed the languages when speaking. Her teacher gave the example of her using an English word to name the character instead of using the Spanish word:

We were talking about the Gingerbread Man so instead of saying *El hombre de jengibre* (Spanish) - *oh the Gingerbread Man* (English) - but she understands that the translation is *El hombre de jenjibre* but she tends to mix em' up sometimes.

Also, while retelling a story during our writing conference after a story that was read to her in English, she was asked who all came together for the Thanksgiving lunch. She said her tía [aunt]. When retelling a fairy tale that was read to her in Spanish she noted, "La niña [the girl] is going to go to el casa y el lobo...[the house and the wolf...]." Figure 4.2 shows Esmeralda's writing conference using "Little Red Riding Hood."



Figure 4.2. Esmeralda's story time and writing conference: Caperucita roja [Little Red Riding Hood].

In Figure 4.3, she wrote, “Wo we Wow o no.” She dictated, and I wrote, “El lobo [the wolf] trying to get la niña” [the girl]. “Este es la niña [this is the girl].” “Este es el lobo [this is the wolf].” “El lobo [the wolf] went in there.”

Finally, according to Esmeralda's teacher, Esmeralda had support at home when it came to being bilingual, and therefore, she felt that Esmeralda was strong in Spanish and that “she's picking up the English from the older sibling.” She believed that this gave her a balance in both languages, which enabled her to understand and excel in both languages.

Summary. Esmeralda was in kindergarten. She was the younger of two children. Both of her parents immigrated to the US when they were young children. Esmeralda had been

exposed to English and Spanish in the home since infancy and she also enrolled in a bilingual program when she started school at age three. Therefore, Esmeralda was a simultaneous bilingual (Grosjean, 2010). Esmeralda communicated in both English and Spanish, even though she tended to use English more when communicating with peers and her immediate family. Academically, Esmeralda was more advanced in reading and writing in Spanish than she was in English. Esmeralda demonstrated the capacity to purposefully use English and Spanish according to her audience in order to communicate effectively and maintain family ties. Her grandparents only spoke Spanish, so Esmeralda chose to communicate with them in Spanish. Esmeralda demonstrated flexibility in her verbal language use and during writing through translanguaging. She included English words in her Spanish sentences and Spanish words in her English sentences. Her bilingual identity was evident in her language practices.

Jocelyn: “¿Me vas a llevar?” [Are you going to take me?]

When Jocelyn saw me in the cafeteria, she asked, “¿Cuándo me vas a llevar? [When are you going to take me?]

” She knew that I conducted a story time with the children participating in the study. I told her, “Hoy [Today].” Jocelyn would begin participating in the study that day. Slim, with fair complexion, light brown hair, brown eyes, a petite nose, and a warm smile, Jocelyn was anxious to finally join her friends at story time with me. Jocelyn was the last participant to be added to the research. Jocelyn had a warm and friendly personality. She was usually smiling and listening to one of Xiomara’s stories or laughing when Xiomara was being silly.

Home. Jocelyn was born in the United States. Both her parents were born in Mexico and immigrated to the United States 10 years ago. Jocelyn had two sisters, ages 8 and 14. Jocelyn’s

8-year old sister was also born in the United States, but the 14-year-old was born in Mexico. Mom said that Jocelyn communicated in Spanish with both parents; however, she used “español e inglés [Spanish and English]” when communicating with her siblings. Her mother also explained that she communicated in Spanish and English with her friends and in their neighborhood. Jocelyn did not attend daycare. She did not begin pre-kindergarten until she was 5 years old because, as her mother explained, “nació en noviembre [she was born in November].” She was in the bilingual Montessori program because Jocelyn’s mother believed that it was important for her to learn English “porque es su primer idioma. Su segundo idioma es español porque es nacido en los Estados Unidos [because it is her first language. Spanish is her second language because she was born in the United States].” According to Jocelyn’s mom, she should also maintain her Spanish language:

Es importante porque ambos idiomas son buenos para ella. Más que aprende es perfecto para ella. Es basada en la comunicación. Más comunicación que tenga con la gente puede aprender todos los idiomas que se pueda.

[It is important because both languages are good for her. It is based on communication. The more she communicates with people; she can learn all the languages she is able to].

School. Jocelyn was in kindergarten. She was in the bilingual Montessori program. Her class consisted of 3-year-old, 4-year-old, and 5-year-old children. Jocelyn had been with the same teacher in the same classroom for 2 years. Next year, if she remained in the program, she would move to a first grade bilingual Montessori classroom where she would remain with the same teacher through the third grade. Jocelyn was instructed in both English and Spanish. Math was conducted in English, and the other subjects (language arts, social studies, and science) were conducted in Spanish. Jocelyn’s teacher said that she was more dominant in English. Jocelyn scored advanced in English and early advanced in Spanish on her language proficiency tests.

She qualified for general education, but her parents wanted her to be in a bilingual program, so she was considered an opt-in.

Language use. Even though her oral language was stronger in English, her teacher said, “Her writing is more in Spanish because, you know, the lessons I do, they’re in Spanish. So, she’s writing in Spanish and reading in Spanish.” According to Jocelyn’s teacher, she also spoke more Spanish now than she did before, “cause she’s getting the reading and she’s getting the writing, so her speaking is more in Spanish now than it was before.” Jocelyn also mixed the languages in the same sentence when communicating in class. According to her teacher, she communicated in both English and Spanish with her classmates. However, the teacher did notice that when she was communicating with someone who mainly spoke English, she would speak to that person in English and vice versa when she was communicating with someone that mainly spoke Spanish or spoke both languages. The teacher gave the example of Jocelyn communicating in Spanish with her but only using English with her teacher assistant. “They will speak to her in English because that’s what she speaks in here all the time”, she said and further explained:

Like Spanish, she use Spanish just a little bit. I think it’s the person because they go to me and they try to do it in Spanish because they know that I do Spanish. The lessons and all of that and then with her they come ask her, you know, whatever in English but she is more dominant. So, I think is them reading the person.

Jocelyn communicated in both English and Spanish with me. However, I noticed that she also mixed the languages within the same sentence. For example, while explaining the details of a story that was read to her in English, she said “They went to go pick up the tortuga [turtle].” During another story time that was conducted in English, she explained “y aquí está. [and here is] the mom and dad” while showing her drawing of the story (see Figure 4.3). While retelling a

story that had some Spanish vocabulary but was mostly in English, she said “That is the book que dijo ya no más tamales [that said no more tamales]” as she showed me her drawing. While retelling a story that was read to her in Spanish, she pointed to her drawing of the story and said “Una [A] rainbow.” Jocelyn even mixed English and Spanish within a word. For example, when explaining the story details of a story that was read in Spanish, Caperucita roja [Red Riding Hood], she said “knockió [knocked]” instead of tocó (the Spanish word for knocked) and “solvió la problema [solved the problem]” instead of resolvió (the Spanish word for solved). In Spanish *ió* indicates the third person singular simple past tense. Jocelyn was applying Spanish grammar rules to English words (knocked-knockió and solved-solvió). Jocelyn used her full language repertoire to process information and applied what she was learning.



Figure 4.3. Jocelyn’s story time and writing conference: “Thanksgiving for Emily Ann”

She wrote bate [bat]. She dictated and I wrote: “Aquí esta [here is] the mom and the dad.”

Summary. Jocelyn, born to Mexican immigrant parents, was the youngest of three children. Jocelyn’s parents spoke Spanish to her at home; however, her sisters spoke to her in

both English and Spanish. So, Jocelyn had been exposed to both Spanish and English since infancy making her a simultaneous bilingual. Jocelyn enrolled in a bilingual program in pre-kindergarten when she first started school. Jocelyn scored advanced in English on her language proficiency test; however, her parents believed that it was important for her to receive a bilingual education, so they opted into the bilingual program. Jocelyn communicated in both English and Spanish. She also purposefully adopted Spanish and English according to her audience in order to communicate effectively. Jocelyn used her full linguistic repertoire, demonstrating flexibility in the use of her languages verbally and during her writing. Jocelyn not only included English words in Spanish sentences and Spanish words in her English sentences, but she also applied Spanish grammar rules to English words. Jocelyn demonstrated her bilingual identity through her language practices.

Xiomara: “O, es de mí” [Oh, it is about me]

Xiomara was in the after-school’s music class. She was curious about what I was writing and glanced at my notes, “o, es de mí [oh, it’s about me],” she said, noticing her name in my notes. She was tall, with black hair, a playful twinkle in her brown eyes, and even though she was missing some of her front teeth, she was usually laughing and telling jokes. Xiomara was inquisitive, playful, and a bit bossy. The following anecdote illustrates an example of her playfulness. The children were singing the action song “We’re Going on a Bear Hunt” during music class. Suddenly, Xiomara began acting like a bear, chasing the children while saying, “eat people” and growling. On another occasion, Xiomara pretended to take a crayon from behind my ear. “¿Qué es eso? [what’s this]” she asked while passing her hand beside my ear and producing a crayon. I smiled, and she said, “imagine if someone is there and then he does like

this (she placed her hand by my ear) and take a coin.” Xiomara can also be bossy. For example, after being chosen for lunch duty, she was pushing a large trash can while collecting the lunch trays. Karolina told Xiomara that she was not finished with her lunch when she first approached her, but when Xiomara came around the second time, she told Karolina, “Ya pon la en la basura [put it in the trash now].”

Home. Xiomara was born in the United States. Xiomara was the youngest of three children. She had two older brothers, ages 12 and 10. Both Xiomara and her 10-year-old brother attended the same school. Her 12-year-old brother was in middle school. At 18 months, her mother enrolled her in a childcare program where both English and Spanish were spoken. According to her mother, both parents only spoke to her in Spanish. However, her mom said that the siblings communicated in English and Spanish with each other. Both parents were born and raised in Mexico and migrated to the United States 13 years ago. All the children were born in the US. According to Xiomara’s mother, Xiomara communicated with her friends in Spanish and English. She used both English and Spanish in her neighborhood depending on who she was talking to. Her mother explained, “hay vecinos que hablan solo inglés; hay vecinos que hablan español [there are neighbors who speak only English; there are neighbors who speak Spanish].” Xiomara’s mom believed that it was important for her to be bilingual. She said that she should learn English, “porque es su idioma. Ellos son nacidos aquí y tienen que hablar inglés [because it is her language. They were born here, and they must speak English].” However, her mom also thought that maintaining and developing her Spanish “les abren más puertas, tienen más oportunidades [will open more doors for them, they have more opportunities].”

School. Xiomara was a kindergarten student. She was in the bilingual Montessori program. Xiomara enrolled in the program last year as a pre-kindergarten student. Her class consisted of 3-year old, 4-year-old, and 5-year-old children. Xiomara had been with the same teacher in the same classroom for two years. Next year, if she remained in the program, she would move to a first grade Montessori classroom where she would remain with the same teacher through the third grade.

Xiomara was instructed in both English and Spanish. Math was conducted in English and the other subjects (language arts, social studies, and science) were conducted in Spanish. Xiomara's teacher said that she was stronger in Spanish than English. Xiomara's language proficiency was tested when she enrolled in school and she scored advanced in Spanish and beginning in English on her test.

Language use. Xiomara communicated mostly in Spanish in the classroom but when the lesson was conducted in English during math, she used English to communicate. The teacher said that she noticed that Xiomara mostly used English outside the classroom:

It's just like I can see Xiomara like here is stronger in Spanish but like outside I can see like talking to, you know other people, other kids, it's English. Yea that's what I've noticed with her. It might be the switching like she knows that here is bilingual and she knows like outside, like with the after-school program or with other people, it's mainly in English that's what I noticed with her.

Xiomara's teacher noted that she went back and forth from English to Spanish, but she did not mix the languages within her sentences: "Like she can give me complete sentences, complete thoughts in English or in Spanish depending on the situation." Her reading and writing were stronger in Spanish than English. The teacher also noticed that when Xiomara was communicating with someone who mainly spoke English, she spoke to that person in English:

I think they read the person. You know, like the assistant that I have, she is dominant in English. So, she, like, she knows Spanish. Really, she speaks Spanish good, but with her, they speak in English only, even you know Xiomara. I think it's the person. They will speak to her in English because that's what she speaks in here all the time.

Xiomara communicated in both English and Spanish with this researcher. During our writing conference, Xiomara expressed her thoughts in Spanish using complete sentences in Spanish when the story time was conducted in Spanish (see Figure 4.4). She did the same thing in English when the story time was conducted in English. However, during our story time in English, Xiomara began retelling the story in English then switched to Spanish, but she did not mix the languages within the same sentence on that occasion. Yet during another writing conference, Xiomara did mix the languages within the same sentence. For example, while explaining the story details of a book that was read to her in English, she said, "Then a búho [owl] say ho, ho, ho." Xiomara also mixed the languages within the same sentence during her conversation with Jocelyn. While the children were in the cafeteria, Jocelyn told Xiomara, jokingly, she was eating like a pig. Xiomara replied, chuckling, "Come [I eat] like a pig now." During an observation of her in the after-school music class, Xiomara mixed the languages also, she said "My big chanclas [flip flops]," pointing at her feet. Xiomara was not afraid to express herself in either language. She was outspoken in both Spanish and English.

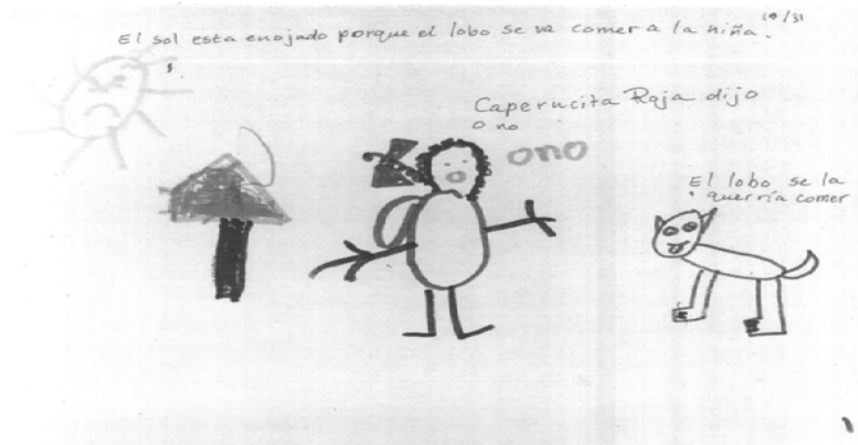


Figure 4.4. Xiomara's story time and writing conference: Caperucita roja [Little Red Riding Hood].

She wrote o no. She dictated and I wrote “El sol está enojado porque el lobo se va comer a la niña [the sun is mad because the wolf is going to eat the girl]. Caperucita Roja dijo o no [Red Riding Hood said oh no]. El lobo se la quería comer [the wolf wanted to eat her].”

Summary. Xiomara was the youngest of three children born to Mexican immigrant parents. Her parents spoke to her in Spanish, but her older siblings spoke to her in both English and Spanish, exposing her to both languages since infancy. Xiomara was also enrolled in a childcare program at 18 months where both English and Spanish were used. Xiomara was therefore considered a simultaneous bilingual (Grosjean, 2010). Xiomara communicated in both English and Spanish. She scored advanced in Spanish on her language proficiency test and academically her reading and writing were stronger in Spanish. She could also read some English. Xiomara read her audience and in order to communicate effectively with her teachers, peers, and neighbors she purposefully adopted her languages to that of her audience. She was conscious of the fact that she was in a bilingual classroom, so she mostly used Spanish in the classroom but outside the classroom she mostly used English. Xiomara also demonstrated

flexibility in her language use by applying her full linguistic repertoire during verbal communication and during her writing. Xiomara inserted Spanish words in her English sentences. Xiomara revealed her bilingual identity through her language practices.

Patterns across Individual Writing Conferences

In this section, I discuss patterns from each student participant's writing conference. The story time and writing conferences consisted of the following:


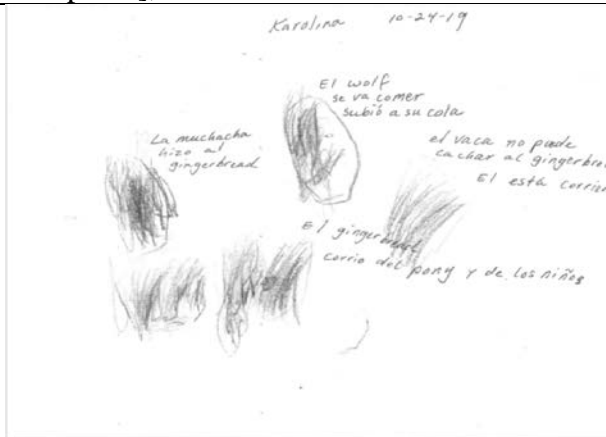
- Read aloud and interactive discussions connecting stories to real life experiences
- Teacher-led discussion (researcher) of the story details in the language the story was read in, but children allowed to converse in whichever language they chose and to use their full linguistic repertoires
- Child-produced written product based on the story details while engaging in discussions around the story with the other student participants
- Individual conferences of 3 to 5 minutes during which time the child retold the story and dictated the details of her written product.

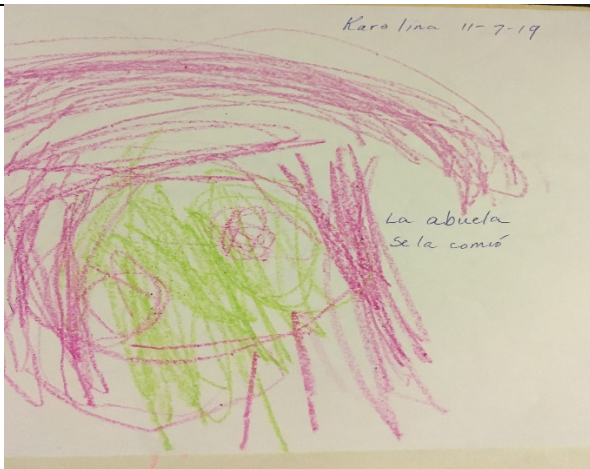
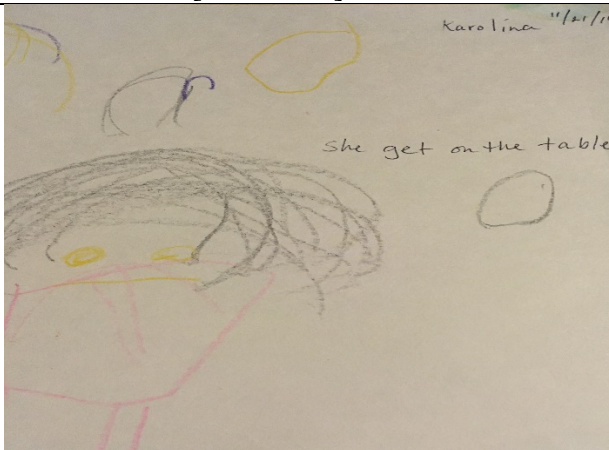
An overview of the story time and writing conferences is presented in Tables 4.2-4.5 below for each child.


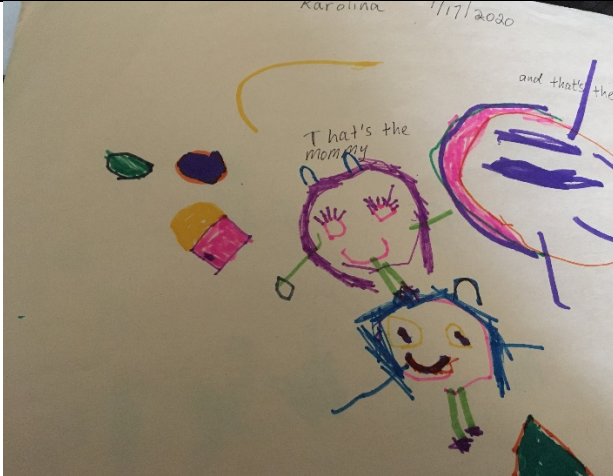
Patterns in Karolina's Writing

Table 4.2

Karolina's Writing Conferences

Story Time/Writing Sessions	Story Title Genre Language	Written Product Dictation	Notes About Writing Conference
First Session The story was read in Spanish.	<i>Los tres cerditos</i> Fairytale Spanish	 <p>She dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote her words: “Se va comer” [he’s going to eat]. “¿Quién es él?” [who is he] (I asked). “El [the] wolf.” “El agua” [the water]. “Se va explotar el [the] wolf.” [The wolf is going to explode],</p>	The conference was conducted in Spanish. Karolina used the English word “wolf” instead of the Spanish word lobo [wolf] when talking about the wolf in the story.
Second Session The story was read in Spanish.	<i>El niño de jengibre</i> Fairytale Spanish	 <p>Karolina dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: “La muchacha hizo al Gingerbread” [the girl made the Gingerbread]. “El [the] wolf se va comer” [will eat him]. “Subió a su cola” [he climbed on his tail]. “El vaca no puede cachar al [the cow can’t catch the] Gingerbread”. “Él está corriendo” [he is running]. “El [the] Gingerbread corrió del pony y de los niños” [ran from the pony and the children].</p>	The conference was conducted in Spanish. Karolina used the English word “Gingerbread” instead of the Spanish niño de jengibre to name the character. She also pointed to the horse in the story and used the English word pony. She did not use the Spanish word caballo [horse].

Story Time/Writing Sessions	Story Title Genre Language	Written Product Dictation	Notes About Writing Conference
Third Session The story was read in Spanish	<i>Caperucita roja</i> Fairytale Spanish	 <p>Karolina dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: "La abuela" [The grandmother]. "Se la comió" [He ate her].</p>	The conference was conducted in Spanish. Karolina again used the English word wolf instead of the Spanish word lobo (wolf) when retelling the story.
Fourth Session The story was read in English.	<i>Thanks-giving for Emily Ann</i> Fiction English	 <p>Karolina dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: "She get on the table."</p>	The conference was conducted in English. Karolina retold the story using English only. When asked what the girl was doing, she said, "Hiding." When I asked her why, she said, "Her mommy and Daddy there being angry"

Story Time/Writing Sessions	Story Title Genre Language	Written Product Dictation	Notes About Writing Conference
Fifth Session The story was read in English.	<i>Froggy's Best Christmas</i> Fiction English		The conference was conducted in English. She retold the story using English only. "He was sleeping." "Dreams." "They wake him up."
Sixth Session The story was read in English with Spanish words like <i>masa</i> and <i>tamales</i> in certain sentences.	<i>To Many Tamales</i> Fiction English with some Spanish vocabulary		The conference was conducted in English. She retold the story using English only. "those are tamales," she said, pointing to objects she had drawn. Karolina used the word tamales which was also used in the text.

During the writing conferences, Karolina inserted English words when discussing the stories that were read and discussed in Spanish. A pattern noted across three stories read in Spanish showed that Karolina would use the English word for one of the characters. For

example, instead of using lobo [wolf], Karolina used the English word wolf while retelling the fairytales having wolves as main characters. In the story, *El niño de jengibre*, the Spanish version of the *Gingerbread Boy*, she used the English word wolf for the fox character when retelling the story. She also use the word gingerbread instead of the Spanish pan de jengibre, in her retelling. All English words mixed in with her Spanish retellings were nouns that named a character from the book. In the stories *Thanksgiving for Emily Ann* and *Froggy's Best Christmas*, both read in English, Karolina did not insert any Spanish words when she retold the stories. When Karolina was retelling the final story *Too Many Tamales*, a story written in English but including some key Spanish vocabulary, she retold the story in English, but she used the Spanish word tamales, which was also used in the text.

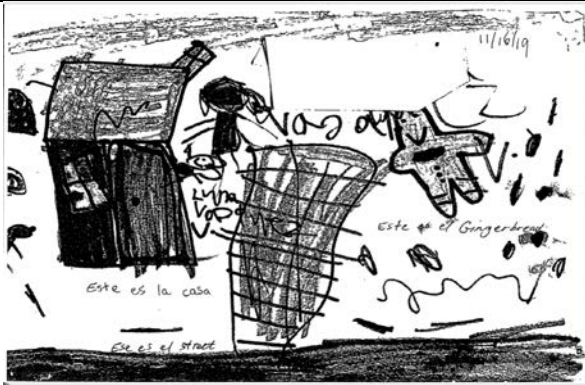
Patterns in Esmeralda's Writing


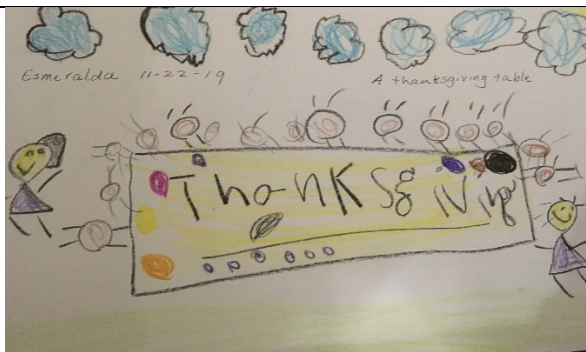
Table 4.3

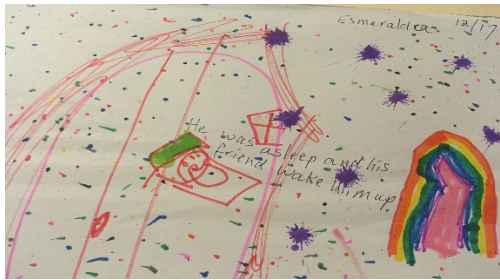

Esmeralda's Writing Conferences

Story Time/Writing Sessions	Story Tittle Genre Language	Written Product Dictation	Notes About Writing Conference
First Session The story was read in Spanish.	<i>Los tres cerditos</i> Fairytale Spanish	<p>Esmeralda wrote Los tres [The three]. Esmeralda dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: “Esta es una casa de [this is a house of] sticks.” “El lobo[the wolf] blow.”</p>	The conference was conducted in Spanish. Esmeralda inserted English words in her sentences when she was retelling the story. When I asked, “¿Qué hizo el lobo

Story Time/Writing Sessions	Story Tittle Genre Language	Written Product Dictation	Notes About Writing Conference
		El casa [the house] break.” “El cerdito fue afuera” [The piggy went outside].	con la casa?” [what did the wolf do with the house?] Esmeralda began to blow. Then I told her “Puedes usar cualquier palabra que quieres.” [you may use which ever word you like] Esmeralda started blowing again and said “Amm, blow?”

Second Session The story was read in Spanish.	<i>El niño de jengibre</i> Fairytale Spanish	 <p>Esmeralda dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: “Este es el[this is the] Gingerbread.” “Este es la casa” [this the house]. “Este es el [this is the] street.”</p>	The conference was conducted in Spanish. Esmeralda inserted English words in her sentences when she was retelling the story. “He’s trying to get the Gingerbread.” I asked, “who” and she explained "El
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Story Time/Writing Sessions	Story Tittle Genre Language	Written Product Dictation	Notes About Writing Conference
			grandma y el vuelo” [grandpa].
Third Session The story was read in Spanish	<i>Caperucita roja</i> Fairytale Spanish	 <p>Esmeralda wrote: Wo we Wow o no. Esmeralda dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: “El lobo [the wolf] trying to get la niña [the girl].” “Este es la niña” [this is the girl]. “Este es el lobo” [this is the wolf]. “El lobo [the wolf] went in there.”</p>	The conference was conducted in Spanish. Esmeralda inserted English words in her sentences when she was retelling the story. Esmeralda said “La niña [the girl] is going to go to el casa y el lobo...”
Fourth Session The story was read in English.	<i>Thanks-giving for Emily Ann</i> Fiction English	 <p>Esmeralda wrote: Thanksgiving. She dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: “A Thanksgiving table.”</p>	The conference was conducted in English. Esmeralda retold the story in English but inserted a Spanish word to describe a character. For example, when I asked who came to lunch,

Story Time/Writing Sessions	Story Title Genre Language	Written Product Dictation	Notes About Writing Conference
			she said, “Her tía.”
Fifth Session The story was read in English.	<i>Froggy’s Best Christmas</i> Fiction English	 <p>Esmeralda dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: “He was asleep, and his friend wake him up.”</p>	The conference was conducted in English. Esmeralda retold the story in English only. “The bear. He wake them up. They wanna play.”
Sixth Session The story was read in English with Spanish words like <i>masa</i> and <i>tamales</i> in certain sentences.	<i>Too Many Tamales</i> Fiction English with some Spanish vocabulary	 <p>Esmeralda dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: “This is her house”</p>	The conference was conducted in English. Esmeralda retold the story in English but used the word tamales that was used in the text. “The ring was inside the tamales.”


During the writing conferences, Esmeralda inserted English words in her sentences when discussing the stories that were read and discussed in Spanish. A pattern noted across the three stories read in Spanish showed that Esmeralda mixed English and Spanish in her sentences when retelling the story details. For example, she said “el casa break” when retelling the story *Los tres cerditos*. In the story, *El niño de jengibre*, the Spanish version of the *Gingerbread Boy*, she



explained that “El grandma and the vuelo [grandpa]” were chasing the Gingerbread man. She also used the word gingerbread instead of the Spanish, *niñito de jengibre* when she named the main character of the story. In the story *Thanksgiving for Emily Ann*, read in English, Esmeralda used the Spanish noun *tía* to name the character. In the story *Froggy’s Best Christmas*, which was also read in English, Esmeralda did not insert any Spanish words when she retold the story. When Esmeralda was retelling the final story, *Too Many Tamales*, a story written in English but including some key Spanish vocabulary, she retold the story in English, but she used the Spanish word *tamales* which was also used in the text.

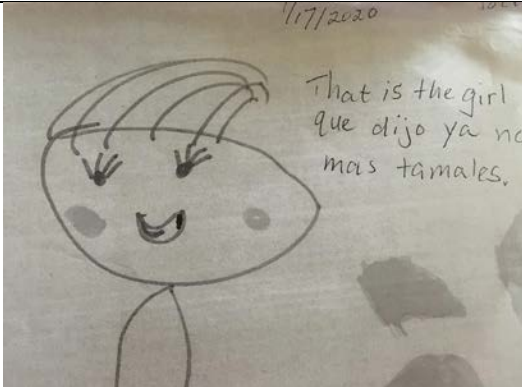
Patterns in Jocelyn’s Writing

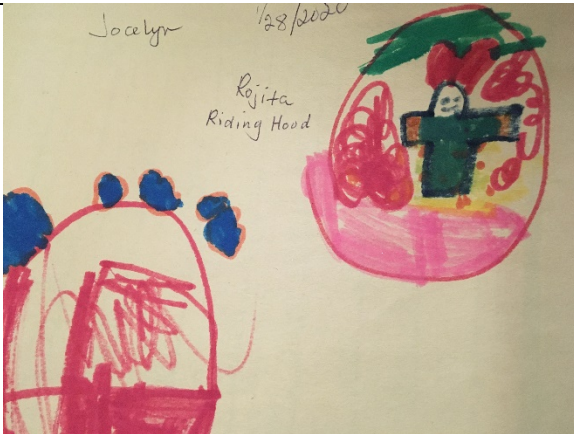
Table 4.4

Jocelyn’s Writing Conferences

Story Time/Writing Sessions	Story Tittle Genre Language	Written Product Dictation	Notes About Writing Conference
First Session The story was read in Spanish.	<i>El niñito de pan de jengibre</i> Fairytale Spanish	 <p>Jocelyn dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: “Este es la viejita y lo que está haciendo en la cocina” [this is the old lady and what she’s doing in the kitchen].</p>	The conference was conducted in Spanish. Jocelyn retold the story in Spanish but inserted English words. When I asked Jocelyn what the old lady was making, she said “Una [A] Gingerbread.” Jocelyn also indicated “Una [A] rainbow” in her

Story Time/Writing Sessions	Story Tittle Genre Language	Written Product Dictation	Notes About Writing Conference
			drawing as part of the scenario.
Second Session The story was read in English.	<i>Thanksgiving for Emily Ann</i> Fiction English	 <p>She wrote bate [bat]. Jocelyn dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: “Aquí esta [here is] the mom and the dad.”</p>	The conference was conducted in English. Jocelyn retold the story in English but also mixed the English and Spanish in her sentence. “There’s a girl and there’s a table where she’s getting the chicken and food y aquí esta [and here is] the mommy and daddy.”
Third Session The story was read in English.	<i>Froggy’s Best Christmas</i> Fiction English	 <p>Jocelyn wrote sale [come out], sale [come out]. Jocelyn dictated the details of her</p>	The conference was conducted in English. Jocelyn retold the story in English but inserted Spanish noun to describe the character. “They went to

Story Time/Writing Sessions	Story Title Genre Language	Written Product Dictation	Notes About Writing Conference
		drawing and I wrote: "He's celebrating Christmas."	go pick up the tortuga" [turtle].
<p>Fourth Session</p> <p>The story was read in in English with Spanish words like <i>masa</i> and <i>tamales</i> in certain sentences.</p>	<p><i>Too Many Tamales</i></p> <p>Fiction</p> <p>English with some Spanish vocabulary</p>	 <p>Jocelyn dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: "That is the girl que dijo ya no más tamales" [that said no more tamales]</p>	<p>The conference was conducted in English. Jocelyn retold the story but mixed English and Spanish in certain sentences, "That is the book que dijo ya no más tamales." She also used Spanish and English sentences during her retelling of the story details. "Había mucho tamales" [There were a lot of tamales]. "They ate them because the ring was...because they lost the ring."</p>

Story Time/Writing Sessions	Story Title Genre Language	Written Product Dictation	Notes About Writing Conference
Fifth Session The story was read in Spanish.	<i>Caperucita roja</i> Fairytale Spanish	 <p>Jocelyn dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: “Rojita [little Red] Riding Hood.”</p>	<p>The conference was conducted in Spanish. Jocelyn retold the story in Spanish but mixed English and Spanish within a sentence and within a word.</p> <p>” Quería espantar [He wanted to scare a Roja [Red] Riding Hood.” She said “knockió” [knocked] instead of tocó (the Spanish word for knocked) and “solvió la problema” [solved the problem] instead of resolvió</p>

Note. Jocelyn’s sessions were a bit different because her consent to participate was received last, so she began participating in the study after the other girls. She had five sessions instead of six.



During the writing conferences, Jocelyn inserted English words in her sentences when discussing the stories that were read and discussed in Spanish and Spanish words in the stories that were read in English. A pattern noted across the two stories read in Spanish showed that Jocelyn mixed English and Spanish in her sentences when retelling the story details. For

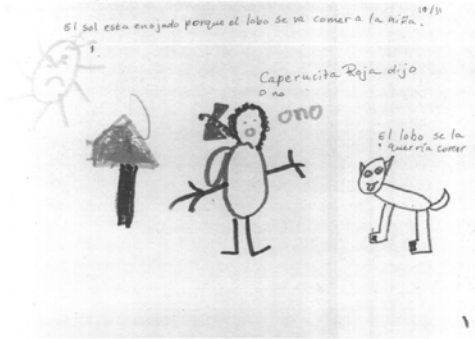
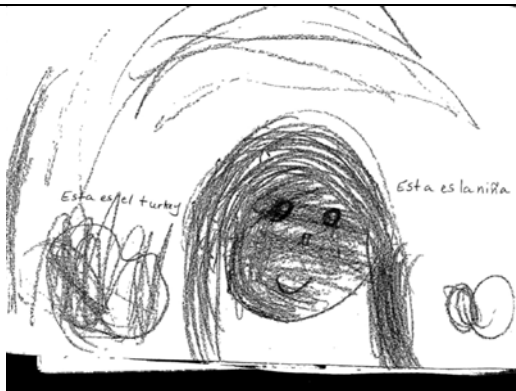
example, she said “una gingerbread” when asked what the old lady was making instead of using the Spanish word pan de jengibre. She also used the word gingerbread instead of the Spanish niñito de jengibre in her retelling of the story. In the story *Caperucita roja*, she not only mixed English and Spanish within a sentence but also within words. For example, she said “Quería espantar [He wanted to scare] a Roja [Red] Riding Hood.” Other examples included “knockió a la puerta,” and “solvió la problema.” In the story *Thanksgiving for Emily Ann*, read in English, Jocelyn also mixed English and Spanish in a sentence, when she said “y aquí esta [and here is] the mommy and daddy.” In the story *Froggy’s Best Christmas*, which was also read in English, Jocelyn used the Spanish word tortuga instead of the English word turtle when she retold the story. When Jocelyn was retelling the final story, *Too Many Tamales*, a story written in English but including some key Spanish vocabulary, she also mixed English and Spanish in her sentence “That is the book que dijo ya no más tamales.”

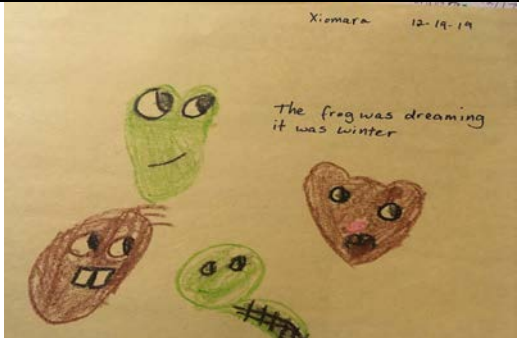
Patterns in Xiomara’s Writing

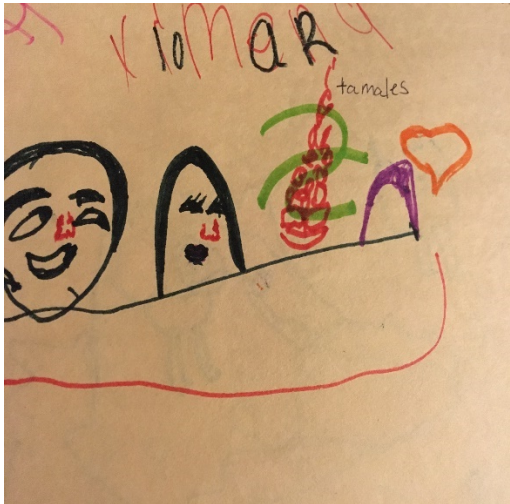
Table 4.5

Xiomara Writing Conferences

Story Time/Writing sessions	Story Title Genre Language	Written Product Dictation	Notes About Writing Conference
First Session The story was read in Spanish.	<i>Los tres cerditos</i> Fairytale Spanish	 <p>Xiomara dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: “Casa de paja” [House of straw] “Esta es muy suave” [This is very soft]. “Esta es un poquito fuerte” [This is a little strong]. Este es la casa del tercer cerdito y esta es muy fuerte” [This is the house of the third pig, and it is very strong].</p>	The conference was conducted in Spanish. Xiomara retold the story in Spanish and did not mix the languages. “Este es la casa del tercer cerdito y este del segundo y el primero” [This is the house of the third pig, and this is the second pig’s and the first].
Second Session The story was read in Spanish.	<i>El niño de jengibre</i> Fairytale Spanish	 <p>Xiomara dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: “Este es la boca del zorro que le quería comer” [this is the mouth of the fox that wanted to eat him].</p>	The conference was conducted in Spanish. Xiomara retold the story in Spanish and used the English word Gingerbread to name the main character instead of the Spanish word <i>Pan de jengibre</i> .

Story Time/Writing sessions	Story Title Genre Language	Written Product Dictation	Notes About Writing Conference
Third Session The story was read in Spanish	<i>Caperucita roja</i> Fairytale Spanish	 <p>She wrote “o no”. She dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: “El sol esta enojado porque el lobo se va comer a la niña” [the sun is mad because the wolf is going to eat the girl]. “Caperucita Roja dijo o no” [Red Riding Hood said oh no]. “El lobo se la quería comer” [the wolf wanted to eat her].</p>	The conference was conducted in Spanish. Xiomara retold the story in Spanish and did not mix the languages. “Esta es la Caperucita Roja diciendo, o no” [This is Red Riding Hood saying oh no].
Fourth Session The story was read in English.	<i>Thanksgiving for Emily Ann</i> Fiction English	 <p>Xiomara dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: “Esta es el [this is the] turkey. Esta es la niña” [this is the girl].</p>	I began the conference using English, but Xiomara responded in Spanish and she was very detailed in her responses. She did use the word turkey in her sentence in Spanish. “y este es el [and this is the] turkey.” She also used the word mom instead of the

Story Time/Writing sessions	Story Title Genre Language	Written Product Dictation	Notes About Writing Conference
			Spanish word mamá in her Spanish sentence. “La [The] mom piensó” [thought]. Xiomara switched to English about half-way through the story and completed retelling the story details in English. When I asked what everyone else was doing, she replied, “Doing the chores, playing with someone else.” She flowed seamlessly from Spanish to English.
Fifth Session The story was read in English.	<i>Froggy’s Best Christmas</i> Fiction English		The conference was conducted in English. Xiomara retold the story in English but used the Spanish word búho instead of the English word owl. “Then a búho

Story Time/Writing sessions	Story Title Genre Language	Written Product Dictation	Notes About Writing Conference
		Xiomara dictated the details of her drawing and I wrote: "The frog was dreaming it was winter."	[owl] say ho, ho, ho." Xiomara was very detailed in her retelling and she flowed in English.
Sixth Session The story was read in in English with Spanish words like <i>masa</i> and <i>tamales</i> in certain sentences.	<i>Too Many Tamales</i> Fiction English with some Spanish vocabulary		I began the conference using English, but Xiomara responded in Spanish. She retold the story details in Spanish but at the end she mixed English and Spanish in her sentence. When I asked what the family were doing at the end of the story, she replied, "Cocinando [cooking] tamales y [and] the end."

During the writing conferences, Xiomara inserted English words in her sentences when discussing the stories that were read and discussed in Spanish. She also inserted a Spanish noun describing one of the characters when she was retelling the story in English. A pattern noted across the three stories read in Spanish showed that Xiomara usually did not mix English and

Spanish in her sentences when retelling the story details. However, she did use the English word gingerbread instead of the Spanish, pan de jengibre, in her retelling of the story. In the stories *Thanksgiving for Emily Ann* and *Froggy's Best Christmas*, both read in English, Xiomara did mix English and Spanish in some of her sentences when she retold the stories. In the story *Thanksgiving for Emily Ann*, Xiomara flowed seamlessly from Spanish to English as she retold the story details. She gave a very detailed account in the stories she retold in English as well as the ones retold in Spanish. When Xiomara was retelling the final story, *Too Many Tamales*, a story written in English but including some key Spanish vocabulary, she did mix English and Spanish in her last sentence.

Themes

I collected the data and analyzed it using the NVIVO 12 software. The following three themes emerged after examining the summary of codes across the data categories and the patterns noted in the raw data – bilingual ability, bilingual agency, and bilingual flexibility.

The codes were grouped under three larger themes as follows:

- Bilingual ability: all Spanish, all English, and Equal English and Spanish.
- Bilingual agency: communicates in English with English dominant speakers, communicates in Spanish with Spanish dominant speakers, communicates in English when spoken to in English, communicates in Spanish when spoken to in Spanish; communicates only in Spanish with Spanish Speakers, and communicates only in English with English speakers.
- Bilingual flexibility: English, some Spanish, mostly Spanish some English, and translanguaging.

The data showed that the children had the skills to communicate in both languages, demonstrating their bilingual ability. The second group of codes compared with the patterns noted in the raw data revealed that the children purposefully adopted English or Spanish, depending on the audience, demonstrating their bilingual agency. The last group of codes compared with the patterns noted in the raw data showed the children's bilingual flexibility representing translanguageing within a word or sentence.

Cross-Case Analysis of the Themes

The first research question states: What are the language competencies of the student participants? The four girls demonstrated bilingual competency, the skills to communicate in both English and Spanish, based on the data collected. They demonstrated the ability to understand the languages they heard (English and Spanish) and communicated in both languages at home, school, and in their communities which was indicated in the narrative of each girl. The information in the narratives also addressed research question two: How do they use their receptive and productive language competencies in different spaces and with different people? Bilingual agency was also noted as they purposefully adopted English or Spanish depending on the audience. The third research question states: How are their language abilities and usage evident in their writing and composing? The four girls demonstrated the ability to compose their written product in both English and Spanish as noted above in the individual case analyses of the girls' story time and writing conferences and in the class writing samples of the three kindergartners. The girls also demonstrated bilingual flexibility as they translanguageed in a sentence and word.

The four girls in this study were exposed to and communicated in both English and Spanish in their homes, at school, and in the community, which made them bilingual. All four girls were enrolled in a bilingual program at school, providing the opportunity for the girls to develop their emerging literacy skills in both languages which would make them biliterate. The girls were all born in the United States, but their parents all migrated from Mexico, placing the girls in a bicultural environment. The four girls demonstrated the ability to communicate in both English and Spanish. The use of their languages as they went about their daily lives conveyed their bilingual ability. They purposefully adopted English or Spanish depending on their audience, demonstrating bilingual agency. They demonstrated the flexibility to flow between both languages as they translanguage within a sentence and even a word. The girls revealed their bilingual identities through their language practices; they demonstrated bilingual ability, bilingual agency, and bilingual flexibility.

Bilingual Ability: The Skills to Communicate in Both English and Spanish

The first research question states: What are the language competencies of the student participants? Below, I discuss the findings regarding the language competencies of the participating children, namely: listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing in both English and Spanish. Based on my observations and interviews:

- the children were hearing and understanding both English and Spanish;
- the children were speaking Spanish and English;
- Jocelyn, Esmeralda, and Xiomara were at a higher reading level in Spanish than English, according to their teachers; and

- the children were writing or composing in both languages.

In the following four sections, I explain the children's bilingual competencies in each of the language competencies: listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing.

Listening comprehension. During dismissal, staff members from the after-school program collected the students who participated in the program from their various classes and took them to the cafeteria. The children were first taken to recess, then to after-school lunch, and then picked up by the respective teachers for their group activities. The children were grouped by age. Xiomara and Jocelyn's after-school music class was conducted in English and the children sang English action songs. The teacher instructed the class in English and began the class with a breathing exercise and stretches. Xiomara and Jocelyn heard and followed the teacher's instructions. During one of my observations, the children were participating in the action song "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes." I noticed that Xiomara and Jocelyn were repeating the words of the song and touching each body part indicated in the song as the teacher echoed the words. When the teacher played a number song, Xiomara listened to the words and responded by using her fingers to show the numbers indicated in the song. She shouted "three," echoing the words of the song and showed three fingers. Xiomara continued to follow the directions given in the song. The songs the teacher played were all in English. Xiomara and Jocelyn sang along and acted out the songs. On another occasion during music, the children began playing some sort of color game as they returned to the rug after a bathroom break. "Green! Green!" one little boy shouted, and Xiomara sat down on a green square on the rug. I also observed Jocelyn listening and responding to one of the girls in music class who was

speaking to her in English and Spanish, and Jocelyn was responding in both languages. Jocelyn was giggling as she listened to the little girl.

While observing Karolina at after-school lunch, I noticed that she was sitting next to a first-grade student admiring the little girl's book. The first grader asked Karolina, "You want me to read the book?" Karolina nodded yes and smiled. Karolina listened quietly as the little girl began reading and describing the pictures in the book. She was nodding her head as the girl spoke. She then began asking the girl questions about what she had just heard (for example, "Is this a princess book?") and touched the picture of one of the characters in the book and said, "I like this one." The children sitting next to Karolina were speaking English, so on this occasion, Karolina was only hearing and speaking English with the children next to her. The first grader got up to throw away her trash and left her recorder next to Karolina. One of the children asked to play the recorder. "No," said Karolina and held onto it. The teachers were now giving instructions in English as they encouraged the students to wrap things up. Karolina began to clean-up and waited for further instructions. When I observed Karolina during her after-school art class, she also demonstrated the ability to listen and understand English. For example, the teacher told Magda and Karolina that it looked like they were almost done painting. Karolina said, "So I'm done." The teacher asked if she wanted to do another maraca, but Karolina said no. The teacher then asked her if she wanted to draw. Karolina said yes and went to the table with a large bag of markers and said, "I want to draw my sister." The teacher said, "Do you want to draw a car?" but Karolina repeated, "I want to make my sister," and began to draw. After a few minutes, the teacher pointed to Karolina's drawing and asked if that was her sister. Karolina nodded and said, "Uh huh."

Esmeralda had dropped out of the on-site after-school program, so I observed her in her classroom. During my observations, I noticed that she was hearing both languages. Most of her peers spoke to her in English, but I did hear children speaking both Spanish and English in the classroom. However, her teacher conducted the class in Spanish. For example, the teacher gave instructions and taught her small groups in Spanish. When the teacher told the class to clean-up and prepare for lunch, she spoke Spanish, and Esmeralda cleaned-up her station and followed her instructions. On one occasion while Esmeralda was at her literacy center, one of the children at her center, who was talking to her in English, asked if she knew me (the little girl was one of my former students). Esmeralda answered, “I go to her class,” (referring to me taking her to my classroom after-school to participate in the story and writing time). A few minutes later, Esmeralda walked over to her teacher’s table and her teacher began speaking to her in Spanish. The teacher then turned to the rest of the class and said “Váyase con su grupo” [go with your group]. Esmeralda returned to her table and looked at her teacher as she listened for further instructions. I also observed one of her peers asking her in Spanish to help her; she then handed Esmeralda her tablet. Esmeralda put on the headphones, listened, and said, “Press it,” touching something on the tablet’s screen. Esmeralda entered a code then asked the girl, “Can you hear?” The child answered her in English, “I can hear it.” Esmeralda’s teacher informed me that she was hearing both English and Spanish in the classroom. When I asked her how she decided which language to speak to Esmeralda in, she said,

I would say she’s equally strong in both English and Spanish, but according to what subject we are studying, so if we’re studying math, I’ll talk to her in English. If we’re studying the other three subjects, then it’s Spanish.

According to Esmeralda's mom, she heard both English and Spanish at home. She said that she spoke to Esmeralda in both languages and so did her dad. However, her sister spoke to her in English. Her mom said the siblings spoke to each other in English. Mom also said that both English and Spanish is heard from friends and other family members.

Karolina, Jocelyn, and Xiomara were in the same bilingual Montessori class. The class was multi-age. According to their teacher, the girls heard both English and Spanish in class, stating, "We speak both languages. You know with the program we do both. We do the reading in Spanish, the Language arts in Spanish. The only one that we do in English is the math." She further explained, "Like in the mornings we do follow the bilingual like, you know, the morning routines whether in English when it's English day whether in Spanish when it's Spanish days." I also asked the teacher how she decided what language to use to speak to the girls and she said, "Like it depends on the lesson that I'm teaching." According to Karolina's, Jocelyn's, and Xiomara's parents, both English and Spanish were spoken at home. Karolina's mom said that she spoke to her in both English and Spanish. However, her mom also said, "But my husband, he'll speak more like in Spanish." According to her mom, the children spoke to each other in English. Jocelyn's mom informed me that both parents spoke Spanish to Jocelyn, but the siblings spoke Spanish and English at home. Mom also said that Jocelyn also heard both English and Spanish from her friends. According to Xiomara's mom, both parents spoke to her in Spanish but as in the case of Jocelyn, she heard both Spanish and English from her older siblings.

During my story and writing time with the girls, I conducted three read alouds in Spanish, two in English, and one that was mainly in English but with some Spanish vocabulary. The girls were able to listen, understand and retell all the stories. When I read the Spanish story *El niño de*

jengibre [The Gingerbread Boy], Esmeralda was able to explain “He’s trying to get the gingerbread.” When I asked her “¿Quién?” [who?], she answered “El [the] grandma y el vuelo” [and the grandfather]. Xiomara said “Umm Había una vez una señorita y un señorito y hizo una Jengibre y luego se lo comió y luego ya” [once there was a woman and a man and (she) made a Gingerbread and he got eaten and then that is it]. When I asked Jocelyn, “¿Y que hizo el hombre de jengibre?” [and what did the Gingerbread man do?] She said “Se corrió” [he ran] and she was able to explain that they wanted to eat him and were chasing him. When I asked who, she explained “Los señores y los animals” [the men and the animals]. When I asked Karolina, “What did the fox do?” she answered, “Se va comer” [he’s going to eat him]. When I asked “¿Y antes de comerlo que estaba haciendo?” [What was he doing before he ate him?]. She answered “Subió a su cola” [He got on his tail]. The children listened and understood the stories that were read to them in English. When I read the story *Thanksgiving for Emily Ann* to the girls, Esmeralda explained the problem in the story saying the little girl was not happy “because she was boring” (bored) and identified the main character and story details. Even though the story was read in English, and I was conducting the session in English, Xiomara began explaining the details of the story in Spanish. “Su hermano era muy malo y dijo no niñas en mi cuarto” [her brother was very bad and said no girls in my room]. Later she switched to English and explained “The girl she feel happy because everybody came to visit for Thanksgiving night.” Jocelyn explained what the family was doing in the story, “Celebrating Thanksgiving time,” and identified the problem, main character and story details. Karolina explained that the families came to eat, “daddy, and grandmama, a baby.”

Speaking. The girls were all able to speak in English and Spanish and flowed seamlessly between the languages. For example, during one of my observations of Xiomara in the cafeteria, one of the little boys seated on the opposite side of Xiomara in the cafeteria hit his arm on the table. “Ay se pegó Mani” [Oh, Mani hit himself] she said to the girl seated next to her, “en la mesa” [on the table]. They both looked under the table. Then the little girl said something to Xiomara in English. Xiomara responded, “That’s mine.” She later noticed me writing in my notebook and asked, “¿Pa que es eso?” [What is that for] as she pointed to my notes. I answered, “Estoy haciendo notas de lo que está pasando” [I’m making notes of what is happening]. She then nodded.

I also noted the following when I observed Jocelyn during one of my story and writing times with her, Xiomara, and Esmeralda. Xiomara got the markers and placed the basket with the markers on the table. “Hey Xiomara,” said Jocelyn and began grabbing some of the markers. “Yo quiero eso, y eso” [I want this and this] she said, grabbing the colors, and added, “I like blue.” Jocelyn got ready to draw and said, “How do I draw it?” (referring to the gingerbread boy). “I need brown, I’m going to draw mine brown.” She looked at Xiomara who was dancing in place and said, “¿Tienes que ir al baño porque estás moviendo tu deste come si tienes que ir al baño?” [Do you have to go to the bathroom? Why are you moving like you must go to the bathroom?] Xiomara said that she did not have to go to the bathroom. Jocelyn then said, “Yo si tengo que ir al baño” [I do have to go to the bathroom]. When Jocelyn returned from the bathroom, Xiomara tried to get in her seat. “Move out of my seat,” Jocelyn said. The girls were giggling and talking in both English and Spanish. Esmeralda showed Jocelyn her drawing and

began telling her about her picture. “This is the house, this is the street, and the grass.” Jocelyn asked her, “Where is the line for the street?”

During one of my observations of Esmeralda at her literacy station, she was scolding one of her peers in English, “Stop it, Nia, these are not yours,” she said, as the girl tried to take one of the books out of the basket. After the child left, Esmeralda returned to her book and was searching for the page she was on. As she turned the pages she said, “not that one, not that one.” She finally found the page and began reading again.

Karolina, the youngest of the four girls, also flowed from English to Spanish. While I was observing her in the cafeteria, she picked up a french fry and tasted it. “This is spicy,” she said. Suddenly she noticed one of the teacher assistants walking through the cafeteria. “Hola [hello] Ms. S,” she shouted, waving her hand. Karolina’s after-school art class was conducted in English, but her art teacher was bilingual. The following dialogue between Karolina and her art teacher demonstrated her ability to communicate in English. Karolina was squeezing glue on the pink felt heart she was making (see Figure 4.5). “I put a lot,” she said. She placed googly eyes on the glue. “This is for my mom,” she said, as she showed the teacher her felt heart. “It looks like it’s crying,” the teacher said. “Uh huh, it is,” said Karolina. She turned around and squeezed some more glue on the felt heart. The teacher asked Karolina not to use too much glue. “My mom is crying,” she said and pointed at the felt heart. The teacher asked, “Is that your mom?” Karolina smiled.



Figure 4.5. Karolina's pink felt heart that she made in her art class

Karolina's, Jocelyn's, and Xiomara's teacher, Ms. Mendoza, explained that the girls spoke both English and Spanish in the classroom. However, Xiomara tended to speak more Spanish in the classroom, but Ms. Mendoza said, "Xiomara like here is stronger in Spanish, but like outside I can see like talking to, you know, other people, other kids, it's English." Ms. García, Esmeralda's teacher said that even though Esmeralda communicated in both English and Spanish in the classroom, with her she tended to speak mostly in English. When I asked her the language she used when she speaks to another child or adult, Ms. García said:

I think she leans towards the English more. It's just her stronger side, so I feel like she just leans towards the English when it comes to conversations or just talking to her peers. She'll go for English.

The children's parents all said that both Spanish and English were spoken at home. Xiomara's and Jocelyn's moms both said that the girls spoke Spanish to their parents but spoke both Spanish and English to their siblings. Esmeralda's mom said that she spoke to Esmeralda in both English and Spanish, but Esmeralda spoke to her in English and that her girls spoke to each

other in English. However, both Esmeralda's mother's parents and her father's parents only spoke Spanish, according to her mom, so she talked to them in Spanish. Her mom said that Esmeralda spoke both English and Spanish with friends but mainly spoke English in her neighborhood. Karolina's mom said that Karolina spoke both and that it depends on the language mom is talking to her in. Her mom said Karolina spoke in English to her sisters even though she spoke both English and Spanish to her parents.

Reading. Karolina was in pre-kindergarten and she was not reading yet. However, she could comprehend and retell stories or information when listening to a read aloud, which I documented under the listening/comprehension section above. I observed Esmeralda reading at one of her literacy stations. Esmeralda was sitting at the reading station with another student. She was reading in Spanish. "Esta es mi casa" [this is my house]. "Esta es mi perro" [this is my dog], she read. "Where's the nother book," she asked while looking around. She chose another book but was not reading this book as fluently as the first. The book had longer sentences, and the vocabulary was more advanced. Her teacher, Ms. García said, "She knows how to decode words. She's kind of like on level, on reading level B the last time. So, she's pretty good in Spanish."

During our story and writing conferences, I noticed that Xiomara was able to read the Spanish read aloud I had read to the girls. Figure 4.6 is a picture of one of the Spanish read-aloud that was read during our story/writing conferences. After I read the story, Xiomara would go through the book while drawing about the story and she would read certain passages from the story. Figure 4.7 shows a picture of one of the English books. She could read some of the English passages, but she read the Spanish passages fluently. Her teacher, Ms. Mendoza, said

that she was “stronger in Spanish.” Jocelyn did not read as fluently as Xiomara but was able to decode the Spanish words. Ms. Mendoza said, “ You know the lessons I do, they’re in Spanish. So, she’s writing in Spanish and reading in Spanish.” I did not have the girls read any leveled books as this was not the purpose of the story/writing sessions. However, I was able to observe them reading (except Karolina). Figure 4.8 is a picture of the English read-aloud that was read during one of our story/writing conferences that contained some Spanish vocabulary.

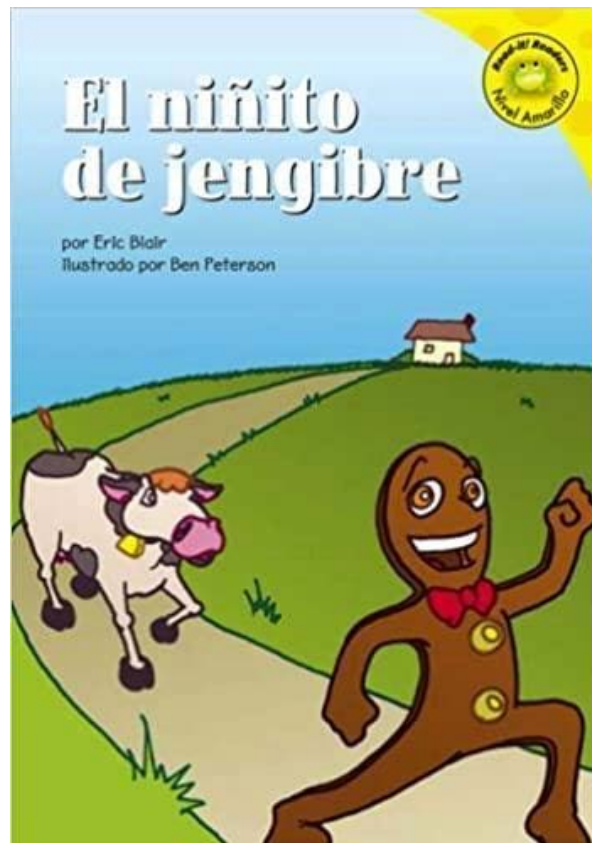


Figure 4.6 Spanish read aloud book Xiomara read after I read it during the story time/writing conference.

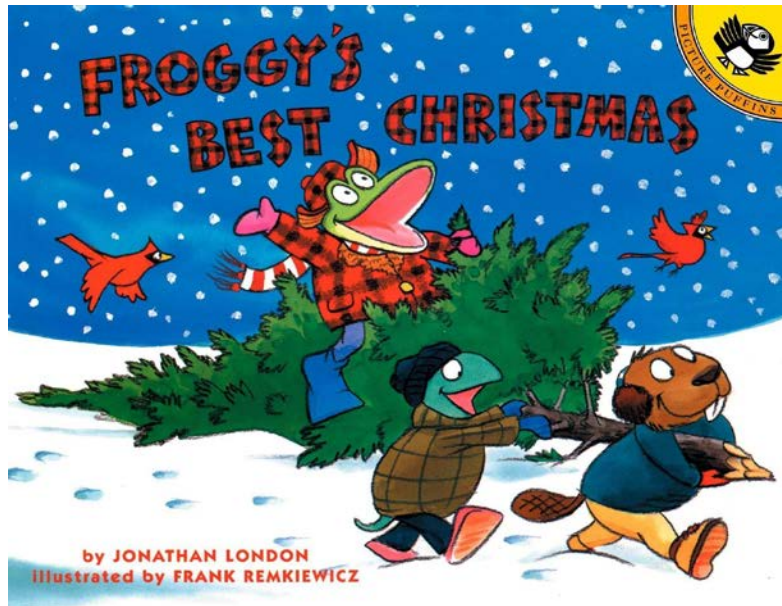


Figure 4.7 English read aloud; Xiomara would read some of the English passages.

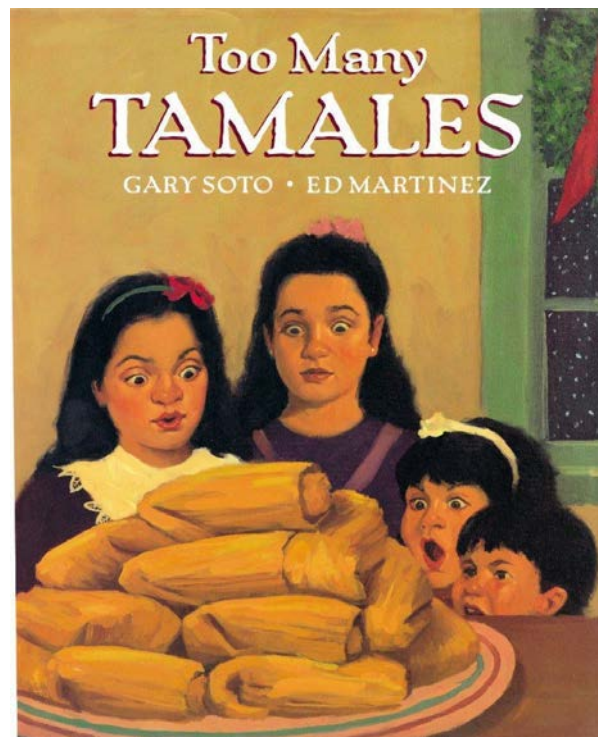


Figure 4.8. English read aloud with Spanish vocabulary words; I observed the girls reading some of the passages from the book during story time and writing conference.

Writing/Composing. I conducted six story/writing sessions during which time all four girls produced a written product. The children were able to compose details of stories read in Spanish and English. For example, I read *El niño de jengibre* [The Gingerbread Boy] in Spanish. The girls were instructed to write about the story. Karolina pointed to an object she had drawn and indicated that it was “gingerbread” (see Figure 4.9). She also dictated the meaning of the other images she had drawn.

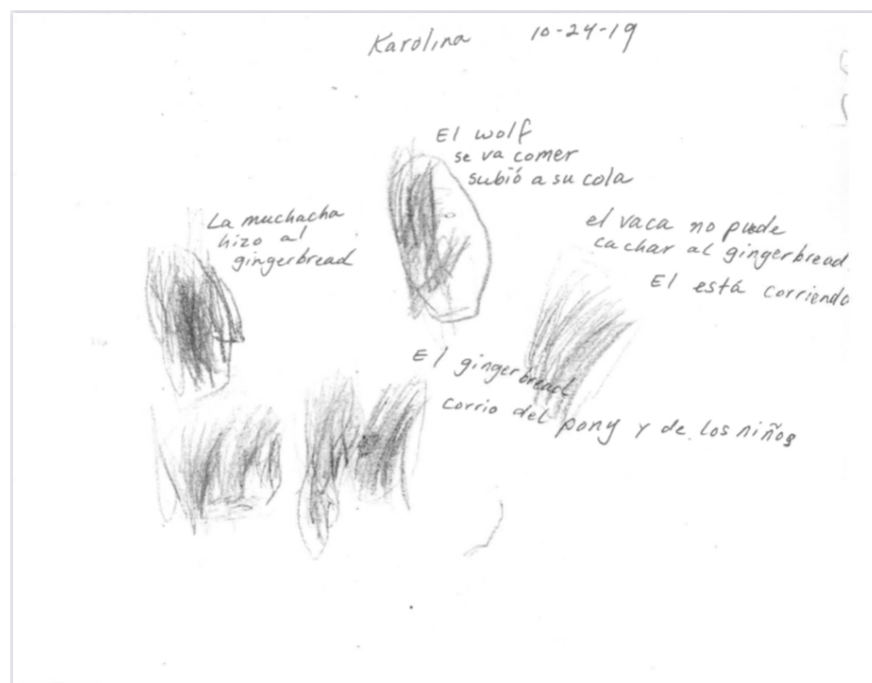


Figure 4.9. Karolina’s written product and composition: *El niño de Jengibre* [The Gingerbread Boy].

Karolina dictated and I wrote: “La muchacha hizo al Gingerbread” [the girl made the Gingerbread]. “El [the] wolf se va comer” [will eat him]. “Subió a su cola [he climbed on his tail]. “El vaca no puede cachar al [the cow can’t catch the] Gingerbread.” “Él está corriendo”

[he is running]. “El [the] Gingerbread corrió del pony y de los niños” [ran from the pony and the children].

Jocelyn’s product is seen below in Figure 4.10. She explained the meaning of her drawing. Jocelyn dictated and I wrote: “Este es la viejita y lo que está haciendo en la cocina” [this is the old lady and what she’s doing in the kitchen].



Figure 4.10. Jocelyn’s written product and composition: *El niño de jengibre* [The Gingerbread Boy].

Esmeralda explained the details of her written product in Figure 4.11. Esmeralda dictated and I wrote: “Este es el [this is the] Gingerbread.” “Este es la casa” [this the house]. “Este es el [this is the] street.”

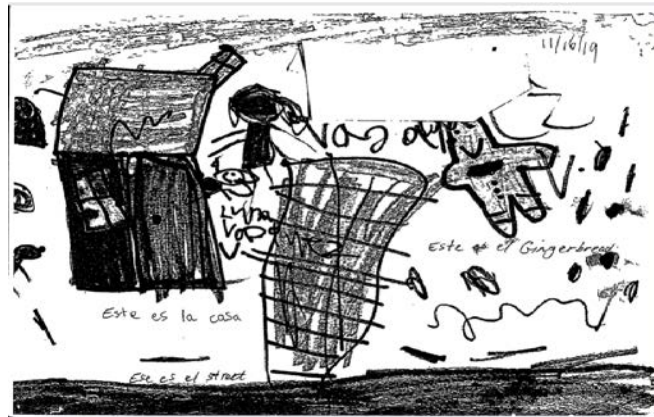


Figure 4.11. Esmeralda’s written product and composition: *El niño de jengibre* [The Gingerbread Boy].

Xiomara’s written product is seen in Figure 4.12. Xiomara dictated, and I wrote: Este es la boca del zorro que le quería comer [this is the mouth of the fox that wanted to eat him].



Figure 4.12. Xiomara's written product and composition: *El niño de jengibre* [The Gingerbread Boy].

During the story/writing conference, I read one of the English stories entitled *Froggy's Best Christmas*. The conference was conducted in English and the girls produced a written product and composed in English. Karolina's written product is seen in Figure 4.13 below.



Figure 4.13. Karolina's written product and composition: *Froggy's Best Christmas*. Karolina dictated and I wrote: "They throw snowballs."

Jocelyn composed the story in English but wrote Spanish words (see Figure 4.14). She wrote sale [come out] indicating the part of the story where the characters were invited to come outside. Jocelyn also retold the story in English. Esmeralda's written product and composition of the story is seen in Figure 4.15. Xiomara drew the characters and her composition was in English (see Figure 4.16).



Figure 4.14. Jocelyn's written product and composition: *Froggy's Best Christmas*. Jocelyn wrote sale [come out], sale [come out]. She dictated and I wrote: "He's celebrating Christmas."



Figure 4.15. Esmeralda's written product and composition: *Froggy's Best Christmas*.

Esmeralda dictated and I wrote: “He was asleep, and his friends wake him up.”

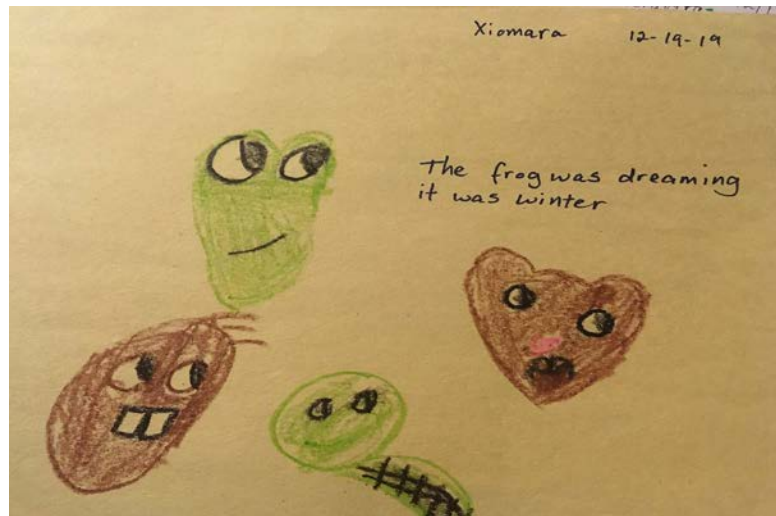


Figure 4.16. Xiomara’s written product and composition of story: *Froggy’s Best Christmas*. Xiomara dictated and I wrote: “The frog was dreaming it was winter.”

Esmeralda’s teacher said that she tends to write in Spanish more than English, “I guess because Spanish is more syllables, it’s easier for her to kinda like decode how to spell it, so she tends to write in Spanish more.” Mrs. Mendoza said the following about Jocelyn’s writing, “But her writing is more in Spanish because you know the lessons I do, they’re in Spanish.” She also said that Xiomara’s writing was stronger in Spanish. In the Montessori pre-kindergarten program, Karolina did not do any journal writing. Ms. Mendoza said that she primarily practiced writing her name or letters. According to the teachers, the children’s writing assignments were all in Spanish. The following are samples of Esmeralda’s (Figure 4.17), Jocelyn’s (Figure 4.18), and Xiomara’s (Figure 4.19) writing done in the classroom. The samples are the final drafts after teacher writing conferences.

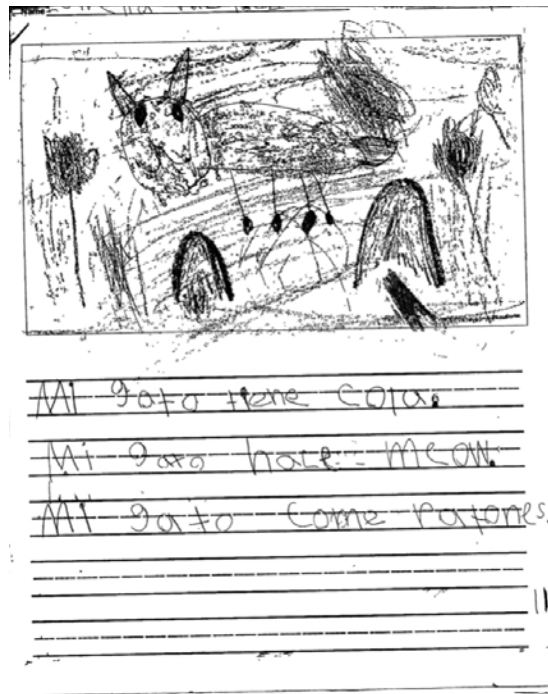


Figure 4.17. Esmeralda's class writing sample. Esmeralda wrote: Mi gato tiene cola [My cat has a tail]. Mi gato hace meow [My cat goes meow]. Mi gato come ratones [My cat eats rats].

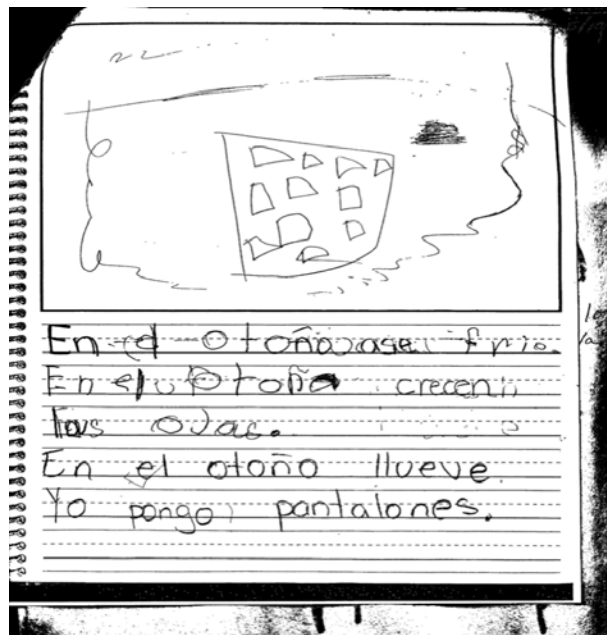


Figure 4.18. Jocelyn's class writing sample. Jocelyn wrote: En el otoño ase frío [It is cold in the fall]. En el otoño crecen las ojas [In the fall leaves grow]. En el otoño llueve [It rains in the fall]. Yo pongo pantalones [I put on pants].

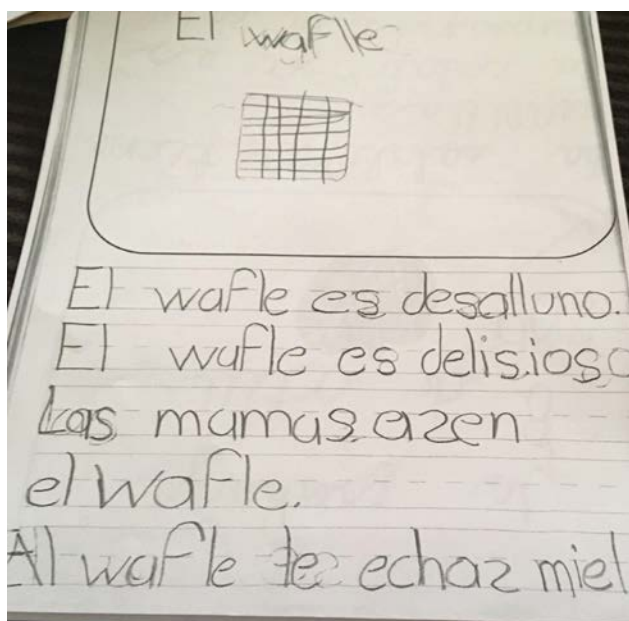


Figure 4.19. Xiomara's class writing sample. Xiomara wrote: El wafle [The waffle]. El wafle es desayuno [The waffle is breakfast]. El wafle es delicioso [The waffle is delicious]. Las mamás asen el wafle [Moms make waffles]. Al wafle echas miel [You put syrup on the waffle].

Bilingual Agency: Purposefully Adopting English or Spanish Depending on the Audience

The girls demonstrated critical thinking when choosing a language in which to communicate. They chose language purposefully when communicating at home with family and friends, in the community, and at school with their peers and adults. In this section, I share their bilingual agency in their areas of home/community and school.

Home and community. Xiomara's parents emigrated from Mexico to the United States 13 years ago. Their three children were born here in the United States. Spanish is their dominant language. However, their children were exposed to both Spanish and English at an

early age. During my interview with Xiomara's mom I asked "¿qué idioma habla Xiomara con usted?" [what language does Xiomara speak to you]? and she answered "español" [Spanish]. "¿Ambos padres hablan el mismo idioma con ella?" [Both parents speak the same language to her], I continued, and her mom answered "sí" [yes]. When I asked mom what language the children spoke to each other, she answered "español e inglés" [English and Spanish]. Xiomara communicated with her parents solely in Spanish but used both Spanish and English to communicate with her siblings. Xiomara is the youngest sibling. Her older brothers are ages 10 and 12. She has heard both English and Spanish from her older siblings since infancy, so she responded accordingly. Her mom also explained that she communicated with her friends in English and Spanish. Her friends communicated in both languages with her, so she responded accordingly. I asked her mom how Xiomara communicated with neighbors and in the community. She answered that she communicated in both English and Spanish. Xiomara's mom explained, "Hay vecinos que hablan solo inglés. Hay vecinos que hablan español" [There are neighbors that only speak English. There are neighbors that speak Spanish]. Xiomara purposefully chose her language of communication. She spoke Spanish to those who spoke Spanish and English to those who spoke English. She used both languages with those that spoke both.

Jocelyn's case was similar to Xiomara's. Jocelyn's parents emigrated from Mexico to the United States 10 years ago. I asked Jocelyn's mom "¿Cuáles idiomas hablan en la casa?" [What languages do you speak at home?]. Her mom answered, "español" [Spanish]. I then asked, "¿Y qué idioma habla Jocelyn con usted?" [and what language does Jocelyn speak to you?]. She answered "español" [Spanish]. However, when I asked, "¿y los niños entre (ellos) que idiomas

hablan?” [and the children, what languages do they speak to each other], her mom answered, “español y inglés” [Spanish and English]. Jocelyn only communicated in Spanish with her parents but used both English and Spanish to communicate with her siblings. Jocelyn was also the youngest of three children, so she had heard both English and Spanish from her siblings since infancy. Jocelyn’s mom also noted that Jocelyn communicated with her friends in both English and Spanish.

Esmeralda’s parents immigrated to the United States when they were children. Esmeralda’s mom was 4 when her parents immigrated to the United States. I asked her what languages they spoke at home. She answered, “Spanish and English.” I then asked, “What language do you speak to your child in?” and she answered both, but she said Esmeralda spoke English to her. Esmeralda’s mom said that the siblings spoke to each other in English. Esmeralda’s mom spoke English like a native English speaker. She was also a teacher’s assistant and usually spoke English unless she was communicating with some of the students. Even though Esmeralda’s mom spoke to her in both languages, she knew that her mom used English frequently when communicating and that she was very comfortable communicating in English. Her mom said that Esmeralda spoke in English when communicating in her neighborhood. She also noted that Esmeralda communicated in both English and Spanish with her friends and extended family members. However, Esmeralda’s grandparents, both her mom’s and dad’s parents, only spoke Spanish, so Esmeralda communicated in Spanish with her grandparents. Thus, Esmeralda purposefully adopted English and Spanish depending on her audience.

Karolina’s parents were from Mexico. They immigrated to the United States as adults. Their children were all born in the United States. Her mother said, “I finished high school and

then I moved.” She attended junior college in the United States, “that’s where I learn the language and then I start doing my grade hours and finish my associate,” she said. She later became a bilingual schoolteacher and is now Karolina’s teacher. Mom said that they spoke English and Spanish at home. I asked her what language she spoke to Karolina, and she said both English and Spanish, “but my husband, he’ll speak more like in Spanish.” I then asked, “What language does Karolina speak to you in?” She answered “Both; it depends. Like it depends...” I completed her sentence “on whichever one you’re talking to her in.” “Yeah,” she replied. Karolina’s mom said that the siblings communicated with each other in English. Karolina was the middle child. Her older sister was 12 and her younger sister was 3 years old. Her older sister had been talking to her in English since infancy. Her mom said that Karolina communicated with her friends in both English and Spanish. However, her neighborhood was mainly Spanish speaking, so Karolina spoke Spanish in her neighborhood. Karolina was conscious of her audience and chose her language purposefully when communicating.

School. These four girls demonstrated bilingual agency at school. They communicated in Spanish with those individuals that they knew were Spanish dominant. This included both adults and peers. They communicated in English with those individuals that were English dominant or who mainly spoke in English. They used both English and Spanish with those who used both languages.

During the interview with Ms. Mendoza, Karolina’s, Jocelyn’s, and Xiomara’s teacher, she stated:

I think they read the person. You know like the assistant that I have, she is dominant in English. So, she, like, she knows Spanish. Really, she speaks Spanish good, but with her, they speak in English only, even you know Xiomara. I think it’s the person.

Ms. Mendoza further explained:

They will speak to her in English because that's what she speaks in here all the time. Like Spanish, she use Spanish just a little bit. I think it's the person because they go to me and they try to do it in Spanish because they know that I do Spanish. The lessons and all of that and then with her they come ask her, you know, whatever in English but she is more dominant. So, I think is them reading the person.

Ms. Mendoza believed that Karolina, Jocelyn, and Xiomara used language purposefully depending on their audience. She noted that they *read the person* and that "they know who they're talking to." She said it is as if they ask themselves, "Okay so do I speak English, or do I speak Spanish to this person?" The children were thinking critically as they engaged in day to day conversations with others. Mrs. Mendoza made the following observation about Xiomara:

It's just like I can see Xiomara like here is stronger in Spanish but like outside I can see like talking to you know other people, other kids, it's English. Yea that's what I've noticed with her. It might be the switching like she knows that here is bilingual and she knows like outside like with the after-school program or with other people it's mainly in English that's what I noticed with her.

Ms. García noted that in class when the lesson was being conducted in Spanish, Esmeralda shared or dictated what she had written in Spanish. I asked Ms. García, "What have you noticed about the way she uses her languages? Umm when she's not in the classroom? Maybe in the cafeteria, or in recess, or in the hallway?" Ms. García replied, "Umm, well just that she tends to umm, I think she tends to go for the English when it comes to anything else, but academically she's able to be very good in Spanish." Esmeralda, like Xiomara, recognized that they were in a bilingual class and they communicated in Spanish in the classroom when the

instruction was conducted in Spanish. However, both teachers noted that outside the classroom, they used more English when communicating with others.

Bilingual Flexibility: Translanguaging Within a Word or Sentence

The four girls demonstrated flexibility and adaptability switching back and forth between their languages as they went about their daily lives. As bilinguals, the girls flowed between their two languages as they communicated verbally and as they composed their written products. They mixed the languages within a sentence while speaking and composing. Jocelyn even mixed the languages within a word while composing.

Translanguaging while speaking. While speaking, the girls exhibited the ability to switch back and forth between their languages within the same sentence and conversation. They translanguaged while speaking to their teachers, peers and even while talking to this researcher. During my interviews with Ms. Mendoza, Karolina, Jocelyn, and Xiomara's teacher, I asked her if the children ever mixed the languages when they were speaking. She replied, "Oh, yes, yes. I think all of them. I don't know, they just switch back and forth." She said the following about Karolina. "She'll start in English and then Spanish. She'll switch back and forth." She gave the following example. "Let's say she's counting like in English but then she'll say something like, umm, I need to escribirlo en mi cuaderno [I need to write it in my notebook]." When I asked Esmeralda's teacher, Ms. García, if she ever mixed the languages when communicating, she replied:

Yes sometimes. Like today we were talking about the Gingerbread man so instead of saying El hombre de jengibre - oh the Gingerbread man- but she understands that the translation is El hombre de jenjibre, but she would tend to mix 'em up sometimes.

I noticed that the children were translanguaging while speaking during several of my observations. While observing Jocelyn during snack-time in the cafeteria after-school, I noted the following. The children had been instructed to start cleaning-up. The after-school teachers were beginning to gather their respective group of students. As Jocelyn stood up to empty her tray, she turned to me and said, “you want to follow because vamos a ir a la clase de ella” [we’re going to her class], while pointing to the teacher. When Jocelyn returned after emptying her tray, Xiomara was in her seat. She told Xiomara, “excuse me, yo estoy aquí” [I am here]. On another occasion, the children were all gathered in the cafeteria and had just finished snack-time. They were given coloring books and crayons because it was raining, and they could not go outside to play. Jocelyn was busy coloring a picture in her coloring book. She then turned to me and showed me a page in her coloring book and said, “Mira como dibujé [look at how I drew] the last picture.” During a conversation between Jocelyn and Xiomara in the cafeteria, I noted the following. The girls were eating their snack. Jocelyn turned to Xiomara and said, “What are you eating? You look like a pig, Xiomara.” Then Xiomara answered, “Come [I eat] like a pig now.” When Xiomara was in her after-school music class, I also noticed her mixing the languages. She was sitting on the carpet talking to one of the boys. She then pointed to her feet and said, “My big chanclas” [flip-flops]. I also noticed Esmeralda translanguaging when talking. Esmeralda was at one of the literacy stations forming sentences with her Spanish vocabulary cards. “Where’s árbol [tree] at?” she asked while looking for the card. After completing her sentence, she grabbed another bag of vocabulary cards in order to form another sentence. As she reached for the bag, a little boy at her station gave her a mean look. “No hacemos [we don’t do] one bag,” she said to the little boy, opened the bag and began working on making another

sentence. On another observation of Esmeralda in the classroom, she was working on Spanish letters and sitting at a literacy station alone. I asked her what she was working on. She answered, “coloring esta [this]” and showed me her work.

Translanguaging while writing/composing. The girls were also translanguaging during our story and writing conference time while composing their written product. As they composed their written product, they flowed between their languages while expressing their thoughts. Jocelyn even translanguaged within a word. Figure 4.20, Figure 4.21, and Figure 4.22 are examples of the girls translanguaging during writing.

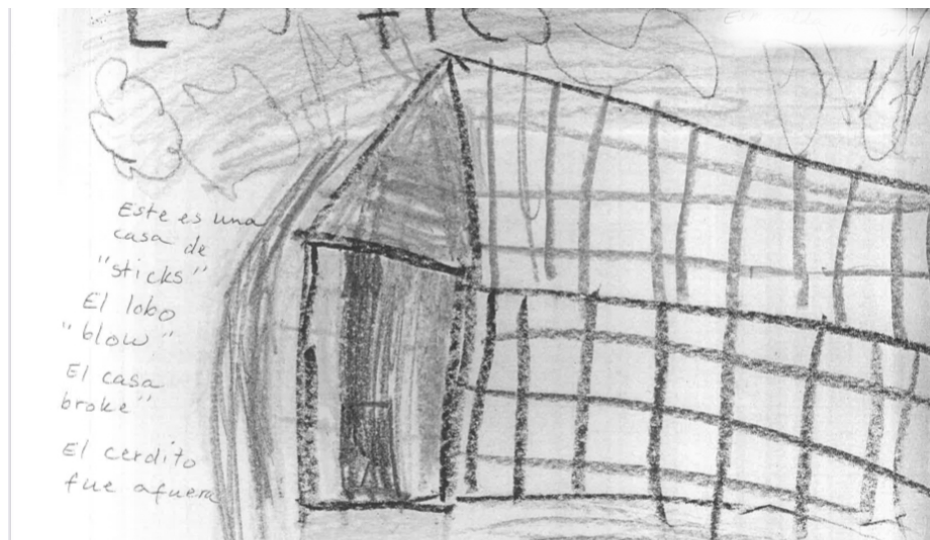


Figure 4.20. Esmeralda’s written product and composition: Los tres cerditos [The Three Pigs].

Esmeralda wrote Los tres [The three]. Esmeralda dictated and I wrote: “Esta es una casa de [this is a house of] sticks.” “El lobo [the wolf]blow. El casa [the house] break. El cerdito fue afuera.”

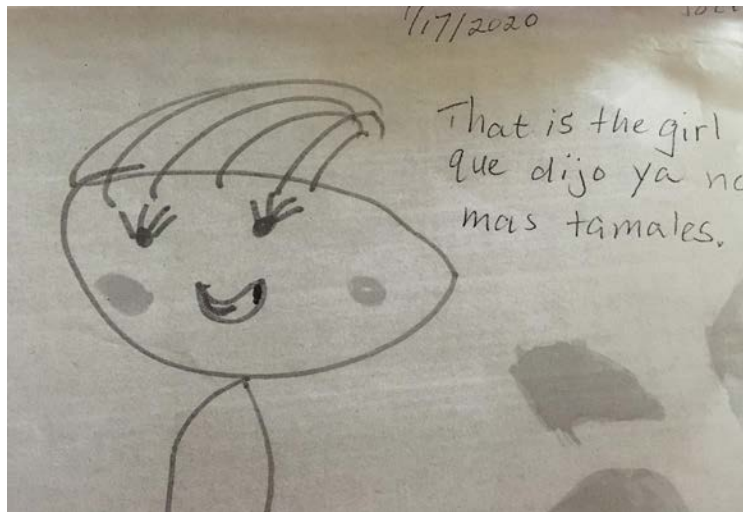


Figure 4.21. Jocelyn’s written product and composition: Too Many Tamales

Jocelyn dictated and I wrote: “That is the girl que dijo ya no más tamales” [that said no more tamales].

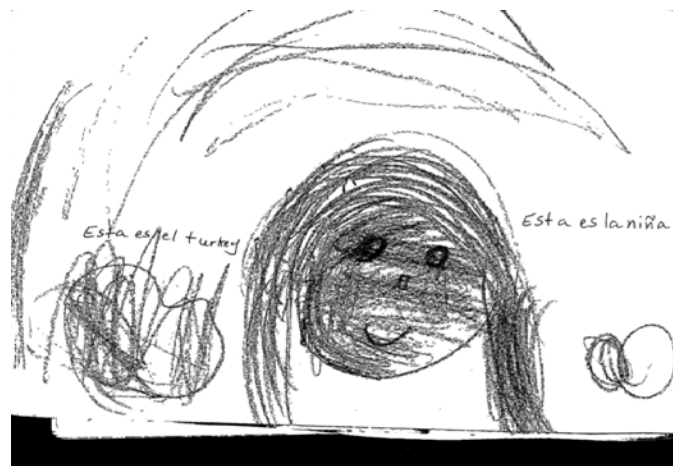


Figure 4.22. Xiomara’s written product and composition: Thanksgiving for Emily Ann.

Xiomara dictated and I wrote: “Esta es el [this is the] turkey.” “Esta es la niña “ [this is the girl].

The girls demonstrated translinguaging while writing and composing as documented earlier in the chapter included multiple examples. Karolina dictated “el [the] wolf.” Esmeralda

dictated “el lobo [the wolf] trying to get la niña [the girl]. El lobo [the wolf] went in there.” Jocelyn dictated “Aquí esta [here is] the mom and the dad.” Also, when retelling the story of Caperucita roja [Red Riding hood], Jocelyn translanguaged within a word by applying Spanish grammar rules to the English words knocked - knockió and solved - solvió. Karolina dictated multiple translanguage sentences: “La muchacha hizo al [the girl made the] Gingerbread.” “El [the] wolf se va comer [will eat him]. El vaca no puede cachar al [the cow can’t catch the] Gingerbread.” “El [the] Gingerbread corrió del pony y de los niños [ran from the pony and the children].” Lastly, Esmeralda dictated “Este es el [this is the] Gingerbread. Este es el [this is the] street.”

Conclusion

In this section, I presented my findings based on data collected through observations, interviews (parent and teacher), and story time and writing conferences. First, I shared narratives of each of the four participants, and then the patterns across the individual writing conferences. Next, I explained the themes, and lastly the themes that cut across cases. The purpose was to answer the following research questions:

- What are the language competencies of the student participants?
- How do they use their receptive and productive language competencies in different spaces and with different people?
- How are their language abilities and usage evident in their writing/composing?

The four participants demonstrated bilingual ability: the ability to comprehend (when hearing the languages), speak, and compose in both Spanish and English. They communicated in both languages at home, their community, and at school. While two of the participants

communicated with their parents in Spanish, they used both Spanish and English when communicating with their siblings. All four participants were in a bilingual program, so they heard and spoke both Spanish and English in the classroom. However, they wrote in Spanish in the classroom. The three kindergarten participants could read some English, but their reading level was more advanced in Spanish. The girls listened to texts read aloud in both languages. According to their teachers, the girls communicated in both English and Spanish with their peers but tended to use more English when communicating outside the classroom in the cafeteria, on the playground, during specials (music, art, and physical education), and in the after-school program. The participants also demonstrated bilingual agency. They purposefully adopted English or Spanish depending on their audience. They spoke English to a primarily English-speaking audience and Spanish to a primarily Spanish speaking audience. They used both languages when communicating with a bilingual audience. In addition, the participants demonstrated bilingual flexibility. They mixed the languages within a sentence (translanguage) when speaking and composing a written product. Jocelyn even translanguage within two words by applying Spanish grammar rules to English words. The participants flowed between their languages as they went about their daily lives.

Overall, the findings illustrate that these young children have bilingual competencies that provide them bilingual agency to communicate with others and affords them bilingual flexibility through opportunities to apply grammatical rules from one language to another as they translanguage at the word and sentence level. Their languages are interrelated and used as a tool in making sense of their environment. These young children think and interact in both their languages, conveying their bilingual identity. They are perceived and identified as bilinguals

and must therefore be treated as such. As teachers educate these young minds, they must recognize that the children are not monolinguals, and they should be viewed through a bilingual lens.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This study examined the language practices of four young simultaneous bilinguals through a bilingual lens which enabled me to pay attention to their reasoning across languages and the relationship between the languages in the process of making meaning. The present study has implications regarding research, instruction, and policy for all bilingual children. This research study sought to contribute to the literature on bilingualism and biliteracy by examining how pre-kindergarten and kindergarten simultaneous bilinguals use language as they initiate their formal schooling. I used a case study approach to describe their language practices by focusing on their language production. Through this study, I examined the language competencies and usage of the children and how this was manifested in their writing. The study took place during the on-site after-school program at an elementary school located in a low socio-economic community. Data collection and analysis were done concurrently. The primary strategies used in data collection were the writing conferences and on-site observations. Teacher and parent interviews, artifacts of the students' work (drawings and writing samples), and documents that reflected the children's oral language proficiency (IPT scores) were used to triangulate the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Findings from this study revealed the critical thinking abilities and resourcefulness of these four girls to navigate between Spanish and English. Overall, results provide evidence that the simultaneous bilingual participants have bilingual identities that permeate every part of their lives. Specifically, the following themes emerged:

1. Bilingual Ability: The skills to communicate in both English and Spanish.
2. Bilingual Agency: Purposefully adopting English or Spanish depending on the audience.
3. Bilingual Flexibility: Translanguaging within a word or sentence.

Discussion of Findings

In the present study, I applied a sociocultural lens. Based on the sociocultural perspective of learning, children have language and literacy experiences through their interactions with others such as parents, siblings, extended family, and friends (Moll, 2013; Vygotsky, 1978). The four girls heard and spoke English and Spanish during their interactions at home, with parents, siblings, and extended family members; in their community with neighbors and friends; and at school with peers and teachers. In addition, they read and wrote or composed in both languages at school while interacting with adults and peers.

Bilingual Ability: The Skills to Communicate in Both English and Spanish

The bilingual ability theme addressed the findings regarding the language competencies of the participating children, which were listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing in both English and Spanish. I found that the girls were hearing and understanding both English and Spanish and speaking Spanish and English. Jocelyn, Esmeralda, and Xiomara were at a higher reading level in Spanish than English, according to their teachers, and they were writing or composing in both languages.

These children exemplified the following definitions of simultaneous bilinguals. Grosjean (2010) defines bilinguals as those who use two or more languages and simultaneous bilinguals as children who receive dual language input from parents or other caregivers during

the first few years of their lives. Gort (2019) also explained that in addition to language use, bilingualism is also about one's experience with languages. She further noted that for bilinguals, each language tends to have different purposes. According to Escamilla (2006), simultaneous bilinguals are in homes where two languages are used, or they speak one language at home (Spanish, in this case) and attend pre-schools where they are instructed in English, thereby acquiring two languages, which is the case of most emergent bilinguals. Based on my observations, and in the parent and teacher interviews, the four girls all used two languages at home, in their communities, and at school, exemplifying simultaneous bilinguals. In addition, they all received dual language input from either their parents, siblings, or other caregivers such as child care workers, teachers, and nannies. An example of the different purposes that each language tends to have is that Esmeralda mainly used Spanish to communicate with her mother and father's parents because they only spoke Spanish, otherwise, she used English when communicating with her family. She had a specific purpose for using Spanish, which was to maintain a relationship with her grandparents. Gort (2019) also explained that in many communities around the world, language competencies are developed in two languages and possibly a third system to the extent required by those of the environment. These girls were all born and are being raised in the United States. They are the children of Mexican emigrants and are in an environment where competencies in both English and Spanish are required in order to maintain family and community relationships and to succeed in the United States.

There is also a distinction between early simultaneous bilinguals and early sequential bilinguals. Early simultaneous bilinguals are exposed to both English and the heritage language from birth, but early sequential bilinguals are exposed to the heritage language first and then to

English when they begin formal schooling (Lee, 2013). All four girls were exposed to both English and their heritage language before entering pre-kindergarten.

At school Karolina, Jocelyn, and Xiomara are in the same Montessori class. According to their teacher, the girls receive both English and Spanish input in class, with math taught in English and everything else in Spanish. Esmeralda's teacher explained:

I would say [Esmeralda's] equally strong in both English and Spanish but according to what subject we are studying so if we're studying math, I'll talk to her in English. If we're studying the other three subjects then it's Spanish.

In addition to simultaneous bilinguals, I also consider these four girls emergent bilinguals because they are in the dynamic process of developing bilingual and biliterate competencies (Reyes, 2006). The school district labeled three of these girls as ELLs and referred to them as Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students. Jocelyn was considered non-LEP because she rated Advanced in English on the IPT language proficiency test; however, her parents wanted her to remain in the bilingual program. She was considered an opt-in, which is a bilingual student that tested as non-LEP but opted into the bilingual program. I prefer the term emergent bilingual, recognizing the languages that students already know, thereby acknowledging bilingualism as a cognitive and social resource (Babino & González-Corriendo, 2017).

These four girls were already in the process of developing bilingual abilities, which is something more children and adults need, not only because of the career and economic benefits but also because of the metalinguistic benefits (Bi, 2017). However, we must be careful not to allow monolingual schooling to hinder this development by failing to acknowledge the fluid and complex language practices of bilinguals (Gort, 2018). Unfortunately, most bilingual children in the United States are in programs that are focused on English literacy, thereby failing to take

advantage of the biliterate potential of bilingual students (Durán, 2018). Most bilingual children in the US are enrolled in programs that only support English literacy or in programs that apply monolingual principles in bilingual instruction (August et al., 2009; Durán, 2018; Gort, 2018). Furthermore, even in some bilingual or dual language programs, the languages of the bilingual children are viewed as two separate entities because they adhere to strict language separation (Gort, 2018, 2019; Venegas-Weber, 2018). They do not acknowledge the cognitive and biliterate advantages of the mix-language practices distinctive in bilinguals because their languages are not regarded as one linguistic system that enables meaning making (Gort, 2018, 2019; Venegas-Weber, 2018).

Bilingual Agency: Purposefully Adopting English or Spanish Depending on the Audience

The four girls demonstrated the confidence and capability to strategically use English or Spanish in order to communicate effectively. The findings indicated that these four young girls chose their language purposefully when communicating with others and adopted English or Spanish depending on their audience. During my interview with Xiomara's mom, she explained that there were neighbors who only spoke English, so Xiomara spoke English with them, and there were neighbors who spoke Spanish, so Xiomara spoke Spanish with them. Xiomara purposefully chose her language of communication. She spoke Spanish to those who spoke Spanish and English to those who spoke English. She used both languages with those that spoke both. She spoke in both Spanish and English with her siblings but only used Spanish with her parents. Jocelyn only communicated in Spanish with her parents but used both English and Spanish to communicate with her siblings. Murshad (2002) discovered the following in his observations of bilingual children in an East London primary school. The children all

emphasized the importance of using language purposefully in order to communicate effectively, so the first, second, or in most cases, a combination of all the languages in one's repertoire could be used. Murshad (2002) found that almost 60% of the children used their first language when interacting with their parents; however, in interactions with their siblings, none of the children used their first language exclusively.

Even though Esmeralda's mom spoke to her in both languages, she was aware that her mom used English frequently when communicating, and that her mom spoke English like a native English speaker, so Esmeralda purposely chose to communicate with her mom in English. Both sets of Esmeralda's grandparents only spoke Spanish. So, Esmeralda communicated in Spanish with her grandparents. According to Murshad (2002), most children are aware and very competent at switching from one language to another according to their audience in order to ensure that they effectively convey meaning. Esmeralda purposefully adopted English and Spanish in order to communicate effectively. In their study on language investment, Babino and Stewart (2019), found that out of a need to maintain family relationships, the three students in their study also used Spanish when speaking to grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins that only spoke Spanish.

Karolina spoke to her mom in both languages depending on whichever language her mom was using with her. Karolina's mom said that her neighborhood was mainly Spanish speaking, so Karolina spoke Spanish in her neighborhood. At 4 years old, Karolina was already conscious of her audience and chose her language purposefully when communicating.

Martínez (2010) found in his study of sixth graders at a middle school that the students used *Spanglish* (a mix of English and Spanish) to change voices for different audiences, which

demonstrated significant audience awareness. Even though the four girls in this present study were significantly younger, they also demonstrated the ability to choose language purposefully when communicating with family, friends, neighbors, their peers, and teachers at school. At a young age, these four girls were already demonstrating critical thinking skills by adopting English or Spanish depending on their audience. In his study, Martínez (2010) suggested that the skill of audience awareness could be transferred over into the students' academic writing.

During my interview with Ms. Mendoza, Karolina, Jocelyn, and Xiomara's teacher, she noted, "[they] read the person," and "they know who they're talking to." The children demonstrated the ability to think critically by purposely adopting their languages as they engaged in day to day conversations with others. In her study, Axelrod (2012) gave an example of a 4-year-old girl, Estrella, who made a distinction between English and Spanish as she rarely switched between the two languages. She only spoke in Spanish to those people who she knew spoke Spanish, demonstrating the ability to purposely adopt her languages. In another study, while the researchers were observing kindergarteners during their writing, they noted that when asked to read what they had written, the children responded in the language in which they were asked (Moll et al., 2001) demonstrating the ability to adopt language depending on the audience. In her study, Reyes (2006) discovered that 4-year-old Katia purposefully adopted her languages depending on the language used by the customer, as she participated in transactions that involved both English and Spanish. Katia and her 10-year-old sister helped their mom run a little in-home store (Reyes, 2006). Overall, these studies demonstrated the resourcefulness and keen awareness of bilingual children to navigate between their languages as they interact with others, even at a young age. According to Gort (2019), research indicates that young bilinguals can use their

developing languages purposefully when conversing with different partners from the earliest stages of productive language, so by age 2, bilingual children know which language to use, with whom, and in what situation.

Bilingual Flexibility: Translanguaging within a Word or Sentence

All four girls adeptly drew from their full linguistic repertoires, switching back and forth between English and Spanish as they went about their daily lives. These four bilinguals demonstrated flexibility when using their languages to communicate verbally or compose their written products. Translanguaging regards the language system of emergent bilinguals as a single interconnected system which is used to make meaning of their environment (Garcia, 2014; García & Kleifgen, 2010). Studies show that many bilingual children include words in English in sentences written in Spanish and words in Spanish written in sentences in English (García, 2009a; Gort, 2012; MacSwan, 2017; Martínez, 2010). For example, Axelrod (2012) noticed that 4-year-old Javier included English words in sentences written in Spanish for emphasis.

Cummins (1979) argued that the languages support each other in the child's acquisition of language and knowledge, which I noted when Jocelyn translanguaged within a word by applying Spanish grammar rules to English words. For example, when composing her story, she used the word *knockió* (knocked) and *solvió* (solved) instead of using the Spanish word *tocó* (knocked) and *resolvió* (solved). She applied the Spanish third person singular simple past tense to English words. According to Grosjean (2010), bilinguals integrate knowledge from both languages, which I observed in the case of Jocelyn. Furthermore, Bi (2017) noted in his study that there is evidence that indicates even when one language is in use, both languages are

simultaneously activated in the brains of bilinguals, and that being a bilingual means having a brain that is constantly involved in code switching.

I asked Ms. Mendoza, Karolina, Jocelyn, and Xiomara's teacher, if the children ever mixed the languages when they were speaking. She explained that all of them switched back and forth and gave an example of Karolina using English and Spanish in the same sentence: "I need to escribirlo en mi cuaderno [I need to write it in my notebook]." Karolina demonstrated that her languages were part of one linguistic system that she strategically accessed and used in context (Pacheco & Miller, 2016). Xiomara was sitting on the carpet talking to one of the boys. She pointed to her feet and said "My big chanclas [flip-flops]." Xiomara grouped parts of her languages together in a structured manner to form her sentence (Swain, 1972).

During our story time and writing conference, Esmeralda used her linguistic resources to construct meaning and communicate as she composed her written product (García et al., 2011). The story was read in Spanish and she wrote: "Wo we Wow o no". She dictated and I wrote: "El lobo [the wolf] trying to get la niña [the girl]. Este es la niña [this is the girl]. Este es el lobo [this is the wolf]. El lobo [the wolf] went in there." Sanchez (2009) noted a similar occurrence in her study. Yadira, a 7-year-old Mayan girl, used both her native Mayan language and Spanish to construct meaning while discussing the Spanish text she was reading with her mother.

All four girls used their linguistic resources to make meaning around text and to communicate as they translanguaged while composing their written product during story time/writing conference (García et al., 2011). For example, after reading an English story the girls were instructed to write about the story, retelling it in their own words. After Jocelyn was finished with the written product, she dictated, and I wrote: "Aquí esta [here is] the mom and the

dad.” Even though the story was read in English, Jocelyn applied the input received in one language to another, showing a reciprocal relationship between the languages (Hopewell, 2017). After reading *Los tres cerditos* (The Three Little Pigs), Karolina dictated the details of her written product and I wrote her words: “Se va comer [he’s going to eat].” “¿Quién es él? [who is he],” I asked. “El [the] wolf.” “El agua [the water].” “Se va explotar [he is going to explode], el [the] wolf.” Like Jocelyn, Karolina applied the input she received in Spanish to English, also demonstrating the reciprocal relationship between the languages.

Implications for Policy and Literacy Education

Overall, the findings from this study illustrate that these four girls approach learning bilingually because their very identities are bilingual in nature. Their languages were used as a unified system in the process of meaning making. These young girls think and interact bilingually and not as two separate monolinguals in one. From a holistic perspective on bilingualism and biliteracy, learning for these girls is an interrelated process (Durán, 2018).

Policy

The NRP is guided by a monolingual perspective when organizing and presenting data regarding research on bilingual literacy (August et al., 2009). Therefore, a monolingual lens is used for language and literacy development in bilinguals and monolingualism is used as the norm for instruction. This places ELLs and minority students in a deficit position, with a need to learn oral and literacy skills in English (August et al., 2009). So, ELLs are classified as behind their monolingual English peers from the onset. The overall findings from this study indicate that we must consider the linguistic resources of the child when considering language and literacy development for bilinguals.

Bilingual Education. A bilingual lens must be applied in the literacy instruction of bilingual children. This study demonstrates how these four girls use both their languages as a resource. The languages are interrelated and are considered a single interconnected system which they use to make meaning of the world around them (García, 2014; García & Kleifgen, 2010). The girls were constantly adapting their linguistic resources to make meaning around Spanish and English oral text (García et al., 2011). Like a growing number of students in US schools, these four girls did not enter school as monolinguals; in contrast, they entered as bilinguals (Escamilla, 2006). All four girls were born in the United States and have been receiving dual language input since infancy. According to Vygotsky (1978), their languages are considered a tool in their cognitive development.

Classifying bilingual children as ELLs does not acknowledge their dual language. In fact, the language other than English is seen as a deficit. These children should be classified in terms that refer to and acknowledge their developing bilingualism such as the term emergent bilinguals (García, 2009b). In contrast to the label ELL, the term emergent bilinguals does not suggest a deficit in comparison to those who speak English, but instead, it recognizes the child's bilingual development (García, 2009b). In addition to the label they are given, I advocate for an additive perspective in their literacy instruction which means that these children's native language should be considered a resource and should not be viewed as a problem (García, 2009b; Martínez, 2010; Reyes, 2006; Sparrow et al., 2014). Bilingual children must be allowed to develop competency in both languages as both languages are resources in their cognitive and linguistic development (Cummins, 2007; Martínez, 2010; Reyes, 2006; Sparrow et al., 2014).

Therefore, a bilingual lens must guide the organization and presentation of data on bilingual literacy.

Dual language. I, therefore, advocate for dual language instruction because the focus is not only on English acquisition, but instruction is provided in the student's native language and English on a permanent basis (Figueroa-Murphy, 2014; Gort, 2006; Quintanar-Sarellana, 2004). In this model, the bilingual learners' linguistic and cultural background are considered resources for learning and contribute to their sociocultural and linguistic development (Gort, 2006). The dual language program is also considered a late exit program as students continue to study in both languages throughout their years at school (Figueroa-Murphy, 2014). The aim of the dual language program is to promote bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism in all children (Figueroa-Murphy, 2014; Gort, 2006; Lopez, 2011). Two-way immersion (TWI) programs and alternative discourses TWI programs are dual language programs. They focus on bilingualism and biliteracy, grade-level academic achievement, and cross-cultural competence for native English speakers and native speakers of a minority language. Further, a growing number of researchers (DeJong and Bearse, 2012) support the effectiveness of TWI. In the United States, most of the TWI programs are at the elementary level but there is a growing interest to strengthen and expand the program to the secondary level as this will support students in their multilingual development (Babino & Stewart, 2019; DeJong & Bearse, 2012). However, there are obstacles at the secondary level such as the state's curriculum framework, state mandated testing, and appropriately leveled materials aligned with the grade level curriculum that challenges the program's effectiveness (DeJong & Bearse, 2012).

Furthermore, even Dual language programs are sometimes criticized for approaching bilingual education from a monolingual perspective, viewing bilingualism as two monolinguals in one (Venegas-Weber, 2018). They ignore the distinctive hybrid language practices (translanguaging) that are characteristic of bilinguals and their importance as cognitive tools in the learning process (Venegas-Weber, 2018). Gort (2019) noted that from a contemporary holistic perspective on bilingualism “each bilingual is a unique individual who integrates knowledge from each of their languages to create something more than two separate languages” (p. 331). Therefore, bilinguals will show different competencies in each language. Their degree of bilingualism and language repertoire is fluid, changing over time and experiences, which makes their literacy experiences and process different from that of monolinguals (Gort, 2019). It is therefore imperative that dual language programs take a translanguaging stance without the strict separation of the languages.

Seal of Biliteracy. An increasing number of US states are beginning to recognize high school graduates who demonstrate proficiency in both English and an additional language through a state approved Seal of Biliteracy; an emblem is placed on the student’s diploma or transcript signifying proficiency in multiple languages (Colomer & Bacon, 2020; Kristen & Heineke, 2018). The intent of the program is to promote biliteracy in kindergarten through 12th grade students and to also promote the maintenance of students' home languages (Kristen & Heineke, 2018). English language speakers are also encouraged to become biliterate in English and another world language (Kristen, Heineke, & Egnatz, 2018). The Seal of Biliteracy prompted changes to instruction and assessment, shifting towards more proficiency-focused approaches (Kristen et al., 2018).

However, critics of the Seal of Biliteracy suggest that the program can favor white English-dominant students over bilingual students of color. Colomer and Bacon (2020) emphasized the necessity of engaging in critical conversations around the dynamics of literacies, languages, culture, race, and power in order to address the linguistic and racial inequities that minority students face in the US. Critical biliteracies provide a stepping-stone in bringing about a critical consciousness in bilingual instruction (Colomer & Bacon, 2020). The findings indicated that critical conversations around bilingualism and biliteracy invoked a political and social awareness of what it means to be biliterate (Colomer & Bacon, 2020).

Literacy Instruction

The accountability framework that has been put in place by the federal NCLB Act of 2001 and its state grant programs mainly focus on students' performance on English standardized assessments, thereby penalizing schools and districts if subgroups, such as ELLs, did not demonstrate adequate yearly progress (Pacheco, 2010). Unfortunately, this has created standardized approaches to teaching reading and learning English, as the focus is on the assessment (Pacheco, 2010). Therefore, the existing programs usually do not allow educators to adjust language practices and content to the child, to make it meaningful (García et al., 2011). Despite the existing pressures educators are facing as a result of the focus on English standardized testing, assessing and meeting the needs of our students should be our primary goal.

Oral Language Development. Allowing students to use their full linguistic repertoire facilitates comprehension and oral language development. Based on the findings of the present study, literacy instruction should not be standardized but should be tailored to the needs of our students. Children's language practices and literacy experiences must be considered in order to

scaffold learning. They should be exposed to rich text in both their languages and allowed to translanguage as they interact with text. The four girls in this study processed the information that was read aloud through discussions around the text as they engaged in translanguaging. Their languages acted as a unified system facilitating comprehension. Literacy instruction must therefore promote and develop the use of both languages thereby promoting the cognitive development of the bilingual learner.

Written Language Development. The four girls in this study, along with Yadira in the study that Sánchez (2009) conducted, all used both their languages to construct meaning around written text. Both languages were used in the written product in a third-grade classroom that Moll et al. (2001) observed. Spanish was used to indicate the difference in the characters (one of the characters was Mexican). Quotation marks were used to indicate dialogue and the bilingual exchanges demonstrated how languages could interconnect and interact with each other. The girls in this study flowed seamlessly between their two languages to construct meaning in their discussions around text. They were able to produce detailed written products as they translanguaged while composing their written productions. Bauer (2019), after observing writing instructional strategies in a first grade dual language classroom, concluded that in order to develop children's biliterate potential, educators should model expected behavior; intentionally pair students to build on each other's strengths; take students' language proficiencies, literacy skills, and willingness to take risks into account; and be deliberate about how they support students' efforts.

Limitations of this Study

A major methodological limitation of the present study was my inability to observe and record the girls' language practices during the school day in their classrooms and other spaces at school. The study took place during the after-school program and not during a typical school day. Even though I observed Esmeralda during the school day, I was limited to observing her in the classroom during literacy stations, and I was unable to record her interactions with other students. I had to depend on the classroom teachers' interviews to gain insight on the children's language practices in the classroom and other spaces at school such as the cafeteria, hallways, gym, music, and art. I also depended solely on the parents' interviews to gain insight on the children's home and community language practices.

Implications for Future Research

The observable language practices of these children leads to implications for future research with young bilingual children. There is a continued need for longitudinal studies to understand how emergent bilingual children use their languages by examining their language practices at home, in their communities, and at school. Longitudinal research allows the possibility of studying emergent bilingual children's language practices in different spaces with different people. It also allows us to examine the development of their language use over time. Studies are needed that would provide early childhood teachers insight as to how to support and develop young children's bilingualism.

Summary

The purpose of the current study was to examine the language practices of four simultaneous bilingual children in their initial years of schooling. Understanding how

simultaneous bilinguals use their languages in and out of the classroom provides insight as to the linguistic, cognitive, and academic benefits of learning through two languages. The aim of this research study was to contribute to the literacy on bilingualism and biliteracy through an in-depth description of the language practices of these four simultaneous bilinguals. The study provides useful data that may be used to inform policies and instruction. Overall findings emphasize the importance of applying a bilingual lens when developing education policy and instruction for bilingual children whose very identities are shaped by their bilingual lives. The findings illustrated the bilingual competencies of the children, which provided them agency to communicate with others, purposely adopting English and Spanish to their different audiences. The children demonstrated bilingual flexibility by applying grammatical rules from one language to the other. The study also empowers bilingual children by recognizing their bilingual identity and their ability to apply all their linguistic resources in their cognitive and biliterate development.

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APPENDIX A

English Recruitment Flyer

Examining Language practices of Bilingual Children

You and your child are invited to participate in a research study
Conducted by

Mrs. Dawn Gittens-Abdullah
Pre-k teacher

E-mail: dgittens@twu.edu

Telephone: 214 729-0105

Purpose of research study

The purpose of the research study is to describe the language practices of preschool bilingual students. This study is to help me understand how bilingual children use and learn English and Spanish in and out of the classroom setting. The study will begin January 16, 2019. I will take notes during your child's normal classroom activities, during his/her routine school activities (lunch, recess, art, music, etc.) for 5 weeks, and audio-tape your child during our routine 5 minutes writing conferences (a total of 5 audio recorded conferences). I will collect writing samples and I will then study your child's language usage (oral and written) and how he/she communicates with others. I am also planning to interview three parents at a mutually agreed upon time in my classroom. I will audio-record the interviews.

Risk and benefits

There is a risk of loss of anonymity. Anonymity cannot be guaranteed but the researcher will protect you and your child's identity in every way possible by using code names in the reporting of the data.

A potential benefit of the study is that information about your child's language use, could be used to support his/her language development.

Confidentiality

I will not use your child's name or any other identifying characteristics in any communications or presentations about the study. I will also not use the name of the school, the name of the teacher assistant nor the name of any parent interviewed. All transcripts and data collection will use a pseudonym. The notes, writing samples, interview information, and recordings will be kept in a locked file cabinet in my possession and used only for professional purposes.

Participation

Participation is voluntary and participants may withdraw from the study at any time. Students must have been four at the beginning of this school year but could turn five within the school year.

APPENDIX B

Spanish Recruitment Flyer

Examinando las prácticas de lenguaje de niños bilingües
Su hijo está invitado a participar en un estudio de investigación
Llevada a cabo por
Sra. Dawn Gittens-Abdullah
Prekínder-profesor
Correo electrónico: dgittens@twu.edu
Teléfono: 214 729-0105
Propósito del estudio de investigación

El propósito del estudio de investigación es describir las prácticas lingüísticas de los estudiantes bilingües de preescolar. Este estudio me ayudará a comprender cómo los niños bilingües usan y aprenden inglés y español dentro y fuera del aula. El estudio comenzará el 16 de enero de 2019. Tomaré notas durante las actividades normales del aula de su hijo, durante sus actividades escolares de rutina (almuerzo, recreo, arte, música, etc.) durante 5 semanas y grabará en audio a su hijo durante nuestras Conferencias rutinarias de escritura de 5 minutos (un total de 5 conferencias grabadas en audio). Recogeré las muestras de escritura y luego estudiaré el uso del lenguaje de su hijo (oral y escrito) y cómo se comunica con los demás. También estoy planeando entrevistar a tres padres en un horario de mutuo acuerdo en mi salón de clases. Voy a grabar las entrevistas.

Riesgo y beneficios

Existe un riesgo de pérdida de anonimato. No se puede garantizar el anonimato, pero el investigador lo protegerá a usted y a la identidad de su hijo de todas las formas posibles mediante el uso de nombres en código en el informe de los datos.

Un beneficio potencial del estudio es que la información sobre el uso del lenguaje por parte de su hijo podría usarse para apoyar su desarrollo lingüístico.

Confidencialidad

No utilizaré el nombre de su hijo ni ninguna otra característica de identificación en ninguna comunicación o presentación sobre el estudio. Tampoco usaré el nombre de la escuela, el nombre del asistente del maestro ni el nombre de ningún padre entrevistado. Todas las transcripciones y la recopilación de datos utilizarán un seudónimo. Las notas, las muestras de escritura, la información de la entrevista y las grabaciones se guardarán en un archivador cerrado en mi poder y se utilizarán solamente con fines profesionales.

Confidencialidad

No utilizaré el nombre de su hijo ni ninguna otra característica de identificación en ninguna comunicación o presentación sobre el estudio. Tampoco usaré el nombre de la escuela ni el nombre de ningún padre entrevistado. Todas las transcripciones y la recopilación de datos utilizarán un seudónimo. Las notas, las muestras de escritura, la información de la entrevista y las grabaciones se guardarán en un archivador cerrado con llave en mi poder y se utilizarán sólo para fines profesionales.

Participación:

La participación es voluntaria y los participantes pueden retirarse del estudio en cualquier momento. Los estudiantes deben haber tenido cuatro años al comienzo de este año escolar, pero podrían cumplir cinco dentro del año escolar.

APPENDIX C

English Consent Form Parents

Consent to Participate in Research

Before agreeing to you and your child participating in this study, it is important that you read and understand the following explanation of the purpose, benefits, and risks of the study and how it will be conducted.

Title of Study: Examining the Language Practices of Bilingual Children

Principal Investigator: Dawn Gittens-Abdullah; dgittens@twu.edu; 214 729-0105

Explanation and Purpose of the Study: You and your child are being asked to participate in a research study to describe the language practices of preschool bilingual students and an interview which involves answering the following questions:

What are the language abilities of preschool bilingual children? How do they use their language abilities in different spaces and with different people? How do they demonstrate their language abilities and usage in their school writing?

The study will consist of observations in-and out of the classroom (your child's normal activities within the school day), recording the conferencing with your child about his/her writing (part of regular daily activity), and 1 parent interview that will take about 30-45 minutes to complete.

The interview and writing conferences will be audio-taped and transcribed. The interview answers will only be seen by members of the research team (myself and my advising professors). The audio tape of the interview will be deleted after the transcription is completed.

Foreseeable Risks: A risk in this study is loss of confidentiality. Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. A code name for you, not your real name, will be used during the interview. No one but the researcher will know you and your child's real name. The master list matching code names to real names will be stored in a separate and secure location. The audio files will be password protected on the researcher's computer and this consent form will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home office. Only the researcher will hear the audio files of the interview and writing conferences. The audio files will be deleted within one month of the time the writing conference occurs. This consent form will be shredded 5 years after the completion of the study. The results of the study will be reported in a dissertation but you and your child's names or any other identifying information will not be included. There is a potential risk of loss of confidentiality in all email, downloading, electronic meetings, and Internet transactions.

_____ Initials

There is also a risk of loss of anonymity. Anonymity cannot be guaranteed but the researcher will protect your child's identity and your identity in every way possible by using code names in the reporting of the data.

Another risk is that you might feel coerced into your participation in the study. You and your child's participation are voluntary (you may drop out at any time) and participating in the study or not will have no impact on my relationship with you or your child

The researcher will try to prevent any problem that could happen because of this research. You should let the researcher know at once if there is a problem and you will receive help. However, TWU does not provide medical services or financial assistance for injuries that might happen because you and your child are taking part in this research.

Benefits to the Participants or Others: You will not receive any monetary benefits for you nor your child participating in the study. Although there are no other direct benefits to you or your child, participation may provide the researcher with valuable information on the language practices of preschool bilinguals.

Questions about the Study: You will be given a copy of this signed and dated consent form to keep. If you have any questions about the research study you should ask Dawn Gittens-Abdullah whose phone number and email are at the top of this form. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research or the way this study has been conducted, you may contact the Texas Woman's University Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at 940-898-3378 or via e-mail at IRB@twu.edu.

_____ Printed Name

_____ Signature Date

*If you would like to know the results of this study tell us where you want them to be sent:

Email: _____

APPENDIX D

Formulario de Consentimiento (Spanish consent form for parents)

Consentimiento para participar en investigación

Antes de aceptar que usted y su hijo participen en este estudio, es importante que lea y comprenda la siguiente explicación del propósito, los beneficios y los riesgos del estudio y cómo se llevará a cabo.

Título del estudio: Examinar las prácticas lingüísticas de los niños bilingües

Investigador principal: Dawn Gittens-Abdullah; dgittens@twu.edu; 214 729-0105

Explicación y propósito del estudio: Se les pide a usted y a su hijo que participen en un estudio de investigación para describir las prácticas lingüísticas de los alumnos bilingües de preescolar y una entrevista que implica responder las siguientes preguntas:

¿Cuáles son las habilidades lingüísticas de los niños preescolares bilingües? ¿Cómo utilizan sus habilidades lingüísticas en diferentes espacios y con diferentes personas? ¿Cómo demuestran sus habilidades de lenguaje y uso en la escritura escolar?

El estudio consistirá en observaciones dentro y fuera del aula (las actividades normales de su hijo dentro del día escolar), conferencias con su hijo sobre su escritura (parte de la actividad diaria normal) y una entrevista con los padres que tomará alrededor de 30 -45 minutos para completar. Las entrevistas y conferencias de escritura serán grabadas en audio y transcritas. Las respuestas de la entrevista solamente las verán los miembros del equipo de investigación (yo y mis profesores asesores). La cinta de audio de la entrevista se eliminará una vez completada la transcripción.

Riesgos previsibles: un riesgo en este estudio es la pérdida de confidencialidad. La confidencialidad se protegerá en la medida en que lo permita la ley. Se utilizará un nombre de código para el padre, no el nombre real, durante la entrevista. Nadie más que el investigador sabrá el nombre real de usted y el nombre real de su hijo. La lista maestra que hace coincidir los nombres de los códigos con los nombres reales se almacenará en una ubicación separada y segura. Los archivos de audio estarán protegidos por contraseña en la computadora del investigador y este formulario de consentimiento se almacenará en un gabinete cerrado con llave en la oficina de la casa del investigador. Solamente el investigador escuchará el archivo de audio de la conferencia de redacción. Los archivos de audio se eliminarán en el plazo de un mes a partir del momento en que se produce la conferencia de escritura. Este formulario de consentimiento se destruirá 5 años después de la finalización del estudio. Los resultados del estudio se informarán en una disertación, pero no se incluirán los nombres de usted y su hijo ni ninguna otra información de identificación. Existe un riesgo potencial de pérdida de confidencialidad en todos los correos electrónicos, descargas, reuniones electrónicas y transacciones por Internet.

_____ iniciales

También existe un riesgo de pérdida de anonimato. No se puede garantizar el anonimato, pero el investigador lo protegerá a usted y a la identidad de su hijo de todas las formas posibles mediante el uso de nombres en código en el informe de los datos.

Otro riesgo es que podría sentirse obligado a participar en el estudio. Su participación y la participación de su hijo es voluntaria (puede abandonar en cualquier momento) y participar o no en el estudio no tendrá ningún impacto en mi relación con usted.

El investigador intentará prevenir cualquier problema que pueda ocurrir debido a esta investigación. Debe informar al investigador de inmediato si hay un problema y usted recibirá ayuda. Sin embargo, TWU no proporciona servicios médicos ni asistencia financiera para las lesiones que pueden ocurrir porque usted y su hijo participan en esta investigación.

Beneficios para los Participantes u Otros: No recibirá ningún beneficio monetario para usted ni para su hijo que participa en el estudio. Aunque no hay otros beneficios directos para usted ni para su hijo, la participación puede proporcionar al investigador información valiosa sobre las prácticas lingüísticas de los bilingües de preescolar.

Preguntas sobre el estudio: Se le entregará una copia de este formulario de consentimiento firmado y fechado. Si tiene alguna pregunta sobre el estudio de investigación, debe consultar a Dawn Gittens-Abdullah, cuyo número de teléfono y correo electrónico se encuentran en la parte superior de este formulario. Si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos como participante en esta investigación o sobre la forma en que se realizó este estudio, puede comunicarse con la Oficina de Investigación y Programas Patrocinados de Texas Woman's University al 940-898-3378 o por correo electrónico a IRB @ twu.edu.

_____Nombre impreso

_____ Fecha de firma

* Si desea conocer los resultados de este estudio, indíquenos a dónde desea que se envíen:

Email: _____

APPENDIX E

Consent Form - Teacher

Before agreeing to participate in this study, it is important that you read and understand the following explanation of the purpose, benefits, and risks of the study and how it will be conducted.

Title of Study: Examining the Language Practices of Bilingual Children

Principal Investigator: Dawn Gittens-Abdullah; dgittens@twu.edu; 214/729-0105

Faculty Adviser: Mary Amanda Stewart, Ph.D.; mstewart7@twu.edu; 940/898-2232

Explanation and Purpose of the Study: You are being asked to participate in a research study for Mrs. Dawn Gittens-Abdullah's dissertation to describe the language practices of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten bilingual students. The study will attempt to answer the following questions:

What are the language abilities of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten bilingual children? How do they use their language abilities in different spaces and with different people? How do they demonstrate their language abilities and usage in their school writing?

As a participant in this study, you will be asked to spend 30-45 minutes in a face-to-face audio-recorded interview with the researcher about the language practices of the student participant or participants from your classroom. The questions are concerning: 1) the languages the student participant(s) is (are) hearing, speaking, and writing in your classroom, 2) when the student(s) is (are) using English and Spanish during the school day, and 3) how the student(s) is (are) using the languages (English and Spanish) to communicate with peers and adults at school. The interview will not take place during your time of instruction. The interview will be audio-taped and transcribed. The interview answers will only be seen by members of the research team (myself and my advising professor). The audiotape of the interview will be deleted after the transcription is completed.

Foreseeable Risks: A risk in this study is a loss of confidentiality. Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. A code name, not your real name, will be used during the interview. Only the researcher will know your real name. The master list matching code names to real names will be stored in a separate and secure location. The audio files will be password protected on the researcher's computer and this consent form will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home office. This consent form will be shredded 5 years after the completion of the study. The results of the study will be reported in a dissertation but your name or any other identifying information will not be included. There is a potential risk of loss of confidentiality in all email, downloading, electronic meetings, and Internet transactions.

_____Initial

Another risk is that you might feel coerced into your participation in the study. Your participation is voluntary, and your participation will have no impact on my relationship with you.

Emotional discomfort is another risk. Please note that you are not obligated to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable in any way. If you become uncomfortable at any time during the recorded interview, I can stop the recording and you may also stop the interview at any time.

Participation and Benefits: Your involvement in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time. You will not receive any monetary benefits for participating in the study. Although there are no other direct benefits to you, participation may provide the researcher with valuable information on the language practices of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten bilinguals. If you would like to know the results of this study we will email or mail them to you.*

Your audio recording and/or any personal information collected for this study will not be used or distributed for future research even after the researchers remove your personal or identifiable information (e.g. your name, date of birth, contact information).

Questions about the Study: You will be given a copy of this signed and dated consent form to keep. If you have any questions about the research study you should ask Dawn Gittens-Abdullah whose phone number and email are at the top of this form. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research or the way this study has been conducted, you may contact the Texas Woman's University Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at 940-898-3378 or via e-mail at IRB@twu.edu.

I understand that, while this project has been reviewed by Dallas ISD, Dallas ISD is not conducting the project activities.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

*If you would like to know the results of this study tell us where you want them to be sent:

Email: _____ or address _____

APPENDIX F

Parent Interview – English

Name of Parent/ legal guardian

Child's name

1. Where was your child born?

2. Are there other children in the household? :

If yes, what are their ages? : Do they attend school? Where? :

3. What languages do you speak at home? :

- What language do you speak with your child?(depending on the response to #3)
- Do both parents speak the same language to the child? (depending on the response
- What language does your child speak to you in?
- What language do the children speak to each other in? (if applicable):

4. What language does your child speak with his/her friends? :

- What language is spoken in your community/neighborhood? :

5. Did your child attend daycare in the U.S.? What language(s) were spoken there?

6. Did your child attend Head start or any other Early Learning program in the U.S.? What language(s) were used there?

7. Does your child often travel to a country where a language other than English is spoken? What language?

8. Where were you born? :

9. When did you move to the United States? (depending on the response to # 8):

10. When did your child move to the U.S.? (If the child wasn't born in the U.S.)

11. Where did you attend school? In what language(s)?

12. Are you aware that your child is in a bilingual program? (if applicable):

13. Do you think it's important to learn English? Why?

14. Do you think it's important to maintain and develop Spanish? Why?

APPENDIX G

Protocolo de entrevista para padres (Parent Interview questions)

Nombre del padre / tutor legal _____

El nombre del niño _____

1. ¿Dónde nació su hijo?

2. ¿Hay otros niños en el hogar?:

Si es así, ¿cuáles son sus edades? ¿Asisten a la escuela? ¿Dónde?

3. ¿Qué idiomas hablas en casa?

¿Qué idioma hablas con tu hijo? (Dependiendo de la respuesta al # 3)

¿Ambos padres hablan el mismo idioma para el niño? (dependiendo de la respuesta al # 3)

¿En qué idioma te habla tu hijo?

¿En qué idioma se hablan los niños? (si es aplicable):

4. ¿Qué idioma habla su hijo con sus amigos?:

- ¿Qué idioma se habla en su comunidad / vecindario?

5. ¿Asistió su hijo a la guardería en los EE. UU.? ¿Qué idioma (s) se hablaron allí?

6. ¿Asistió su hijo a Headstart o a algún otro programa de Aprendizaje Temprano en los EE. UU.?

¿Qué idioma (s) se usaron allí?

7. Viaja a menudo su hijo a un país donde se habla otro idioma además del inglés? ¿Qué lenguaje?

8. ¿Dónde naciste?

9. ¿Cuándo te mudaste a los Estados Unidos? (dependiendo de la respuesta al # 8):

10. ¿Cuándo se mudó su hijo a los EE. UU.? (Si el niño no nació en los EE. UU.)

11. ¿Dónde fuiste a la escuela? ¿En qué idioma (s)?

12. ¿Sabe que su hijo está en un programa bilingüe? (si es aplicable):

13. ¿Crees que es importante aprender inglés? ¿Por qué?

14. ¿Crees que es importante mantener y desarrollar el español? ¿Por qué?

APPENDIX H
Observation Guide

Observation guide

Date:

Week

Student name Comments:	Language use: Eng. only	hear	hear	hear	hear	hear	With whom.... ESC/ESA: Eng. speaking Child/adult SSC/SSA: Sp. Speaking child/adult BC/BA: Bil. child/ adult
	Sp. only	hear	hear	hear	hear	hear	ESC/ESA: Eng. Speaking Child/adult SSC/SSA: Sp. Speaking child/adult BC/BA: Bil. child/ adult
	Both (more Sp. Than Eng.)	hear	hear	hear	hear	hear	ESC/ESA: Eng. speaking Child/adult SSC/SSA: Sp. Speaking child/adult BC/BA: Bil. child/ adult
	Both (more Eng. than Sp.)	hear	hear	hear	hear	hear	Eng. speaking Child/adult Sp. Speaking child/adult Bil. child/adult
	Both (about equal use)	hear	hear	hear	hear	hear	ESC/ESA: Eng. speaking Child/adult SSC/SSA: Sp. Speaking child/adult BC/BA: Bil. child/ adult

Observations (I noticed.....)

APPENDIX I

Teacher Interview Questions

1. What languages are spoken in the classroom?
2. Is there a specific time dedicated to each language?
3. How do you decide which language to use when you speak to the child?
4. What language (s) does _____ speak to you in? What about when he/she is speaking to another teacher or adult?
5. What language(s) does _____ speak to her/his peers in and vice versa?
Please elaborate.
6. Does _____ ever mix the languages when communicating? Could you give an example (if applicable) ?
7. When the child is sharing/dictating his/her writing what language does he/she use?
8. Can I see examples of her/his writing? Is there anything you would like to share about His/her writing product?
9. What have you noticed about the way the child use the languages when he/she is not in the classroom (for example cafeteria , recess, hallway, etc.)
10. Is there anything you would like to add with regards to the way the child use the languages (English and Spanish)?