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TRANSLANGUAGING AND IDENTITY IN A KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM: VALIDATING STUDENT'S HOME CULTURE AND LANGUAGE IN AN ENGLISH-ONLY ERA

A Dissertation Presented

by

MARIA EUGENIA LOZANO LENIS

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

September 2015

Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies
College of Education

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MARIA EUGENIA LOZANO LENIS

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DEDICATION

Para mi familia quienes me han apoyado en esta jornada incondicionalmente: a mis padres quienes me motivaron para seguir adelante y me inculcaron el amor por el estudio. A mi hermano, a quien quiero con todo mi corazón.
A Juan Pablo, Nicolás y Samuel con todo mi amor

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I want to acknowledge the support of my committee members, Dr. Theresa Austin, Dr. Pat Paugh, and Dr. Ilan Stavans, for guiding me in this long journey. My study would not have been completed without the constant support of my adviser, Dr. Austin. Her mentorship went above and beyond what was required, asking me co-design and implement several national and international professional development workshops, co-presenting at conferences, and specially for opening her home numerous times to work on data analysis and providing an space for students to share their work. Dr. Paugh's leadership in the ACCELA program provided me with the opportunity to present with the ACCELA teachers at conferences to showcase our projects. Her caring and enthusiastic personality as well as her professionalism made it possible to grow as a researcher. I want to thank Dr. Ilan Stavans for inciting in me the curiosity to explore the subject of languages in contact when I first met him in Amherst. His passion and dedication to his work made it possible to me for pursue this topic as the main focus of my research. Thank you all for your invaluable mentorship, guidance and patience throughout the years. Nevertheless, I want to acknowledge that any flaws or errors made in this study are entirely my responsibility.

I also want to acknowledge the work of the ACCELA Alliance' members, doctors Jerri Willet, Meg Gebhard, Pat Paugh and Theresa Austin for their limitless leadership and for providing me with the financial means and an invaluable research oriented environment where I could grow as a researcher and scholar.

My research would not have been possible without the help of the ACCELA teachers, and specially Mrs. Nelly Jones for opening her world to me. Thank you for allowing me follow you through your journey in the ACCELA Master's program and for letting me be part of your classroom data collection, formatting, and analysis.

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Special thanks to Dr. Stephanie Flores-Koulish for her coaching and editing advise. Finally this work would not have been completed without the love and support of Nicolás, Samuel and Juan Pablo.

ABSTRACT

COMPLEX IDENTITIES IN A KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM: VALIDATING STUDENT'S HOME CULTURE AND LANGUAGE IN AN ENGLISH-ONLY ERA

SEPTEMBER 2015

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This ethnographic multi-year study examines the effects of federal and state education policies in language-minority school children's in Western Massachusetts. Specifically, it explores, how, in an increasingly English Only era, a Latina kindergarten teacher resists Massachusetts' restrictive bilingual education law at the same time that she builds on her students' multi-ethnic identity.

Methodologically, this study combines ethnographic and discourse analysis methods and techniques analyzing the curricular effects that the NCLB and the state of Massachusetts language policy have on an underperforming school serving a predominantly Latino/a population. The focus of the study is the literacy practices enacted by a Dominican kindergarten teacher, and her students during the language arts block throughout the year.

The data analysis indicates that, despite Mrs. Dominguez's obligation to comply with the national and state mandated curriculum and regulations, she challenges and questions such policies. By making culturally relevant and pedagogically grounded curricular changes, she was able to provide her students

with their home language support (i.e. Spanish) and culturally relevant content that benefited her students' English literacy development and thus, their own cultural identity formation. These changes were informed by her ongoing professional development provided through a master's program, as well as her genuine interest in caring for her students' cultural and linguistic background. Regardless of the state's language policy restricting the student's home language use in the classroom, Mrs. Dominguez made use of Spanish, both, to mediate her teaching practices and student's second language development process, as well as to validate her student's home language and culture.

This study unveils the lived complexities in one kindergarten classroom and how their participants contributed to each other's identity formation. By emphasizing the importance of mediating their second language acquisition development, the participants in this classroom make use of their translanguaging ability (García & Wei, 2014), which requires high social and mental cognitive abilities in order to communicate effectively.

The findings of this study are intended to inform K-12 teachers, administrators, and policy makers about other possible teaching practices that comply with national and state policies, but are grounded in cultural diversity and equality.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

During a time of fierce political debates about immigration policies, many public schools in several states (e.g., California, Arizona, Massachusetts) are legislated to use English as the only language of instruction. Paradoxically, these changes come at a time when the percentage of Latino students has become the biggest minority in the United states (Census, 2010), the number of speakers of languages other than English has increased by 53.25% since the 1997-1998 school year (National Clearing House for English Language Acquisition [NCELA], 2010). Bearing the brunt of this legislation are new arrivals who are Spanish-speaking, thus potentially contributing to the achievement gap between Latino students and their white counterparts, which is increasing each year (Harper & de Jong, 2004, Suarez-Orozco & Todorova, 2008).

For Latino English Language Learners (emergent bilinguals[1] henceforward), the era of the No Child Left Behind and the English Only policies means greater possibilities for them to fall far behind their white, mono-cultural counterparts. These policies, with their strong emphasis on accountability, have translated into a lack of support for students from diverse backgrounds and have, actually, worsened

[1]According to Garcia and Kleifgen,(2010) by using the term emerging bilinguals "Instead of being regarded as 'limited' in some way or as mere 'learners of English' as the terms limited English proficient and English Language Learner suggests, students are seen as having the potential to become bilingual, and bilingualism begins to be recognized as a cognitive, social and educational resource, which is consistent with research on this topic" Garcia & Kleifgen, (p.3). Therefore, Following these authors, in this study I will preferably use the term emerging bilinguals, though English Language Learners or ELLs will be used whenever I refer to state and other policy documents and entities.

the schooling conditions for these students, thus contributing to their alleged academic failure. This is due mainly because the tests were developed for the assessment of English native speakers, not emergent bilinguals (Abedi & Dietal, 2004; Menken, 2006; Solano Flores & Trumball, 2003). As a consequence, most emergent bilinguals spend the majority of the instructional day in the classrooms of mainstream content teachers who are either untrained in working with them or who have not received sufficient training in this area (Batt, 2008; Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006; Harper & de Jong, 2004), giving students limited support in their learning process pushing them out as they fail to comply with the demands. Federal guidelines for highly qualified teachers focus only on core-subject area teachers, and do not require teachers who have emergent bilinguals in their classroom to be trained to effectively instruct these students (Echevarria et al., 2006).

In 1970, Cardenas & Cardenas conceptualized the Theory of Incompatibilities, as a framework for schools to use in understanding the factors contributing to the dismal failure of Latino children (Cardenas &Cardenas, 1970). They identified five areas of incompatibility: poverty (taking into account that children raised in poverty cannot be taught the same way that middle class children are taught), culture (minority children bring a culture that the school is unable to acknowledge and integrate into the curriculum), language (a student's first language is not taken into consideration for instruction), mobility (emergent bilinguals are highly mobile while curriculum is designed for stable communities), and societal perceptions (a negative attitude towards emergent bilinguals creates an environment of negligence and low expectations). Today, over 40 years later, public

schools serving predominantly an emergent bilingual population, have largely the same incompatibility with the majority of their students. This gap between what students bring to the school and what the schools considers valuable can lead to student's disengagement and apathy, since most schools ask their Latino children to leave their "maletas behind" (Gutierrez and Larson's, 1994) as they enter monolingual/monocultural schools where the aim is to eliminate all cultural differences among students and marginalize local identities.

In order for this situation to take place we have, on the one side, the school policies, that based solely on a political agenda, ignore years of extensive qualitative research in the field of bilingual education, which demonstrates that emergent bilinguals need between 5 to 7 years to acquire the necessary academic skills to succeed in schools (Brisk, 2006; Collier, 1995; Cummins, 1980; Menken, 2006; Thomas & Collier, 2002), while grounding their policy regulations on quantitative research that looks only at the typically poor results obtained by emergent bilinguals on standardized tests and not on the qualitative research findings on second language teaching and learning. Consequently, based on these quantitative findings, restrictive language policies were passed in California (Proposition 227), Arizona (Proposition 203), and Massachusetts (*Question #2*). These policies restrict the amount of students' first language education in public schools replacing transitional bilingual education with one year of "Sheltered Instruction." (Massachusetts Law, 2002). That is to say, that after one year of sheltered instruction, in which they are taught the basics of English grammar, students are placed in mainstream classrooms to participate in regular class instruction entirely

in English, and are expected to have the same proficiency as their monolingual peers (Massachusetts Law, 2002). As a result, these policies have fueled a debate over, not only the quality of bilingual education and language support offered to emergent bilinguals, but also have questioned the best way of teaching these children and how to educate the increased number of immigrant students that are populating the U.S public schools. Moreover, recent research has demonstrated the strong link between scripted lessons under policies such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the increase in poverty in the United States (Paugh, et al. 2007, Taylor, 2009), contradicting the idea that bilingual education is the main cause of educational failure. Bilingual education has been often negatively associated with urban educational settings "where the children of immigrants often find themselves in compensatory programs and where high dropout rates are viewed as the failure of students rather than the failure of the system" (Brisk, 2006).

On the other side, there are teachers in the public schools whose qualifications vary greatly in their capacity to deal with diverse populations. Students who are assigned to teachers with poor qualifications present significantly lower outcomes (Wright, Horn & Sanders, 1997). In schools with characteristics such as poverty, non-English language status, and minority status, this negative correlation is even greater. This is to say, the less socially advantaged the students, the less likely teachers are to hold full certification and degree in their field and the more likely are to have entered teaching without certification (NCES,1995; NCTAF,1996, Darling-Hammond, 2000).

Given the harsh educational landscape presented above, some educators do consider the multiple factors that Cardenas and Cardenas (1970) suggest are necessary to address for greater Latino student success. Research indicates that the effects of well prepared teachers on students achievement can be stronger that the influence of student background factors, such as poverty, language background, and minority status (NCTAF, 1996; NCES, 1995; Darling –Hammond, 1997, 2000). One such program was developed in Western Massachusetts amid the educational challenges in this state specifically.

The ACCELA Alliance

In order to address the needs of the emergent bilingual population in Western Massachusetts, a university teacher education program received in 2002 Title III federal funding in order to create a partnership with underperforming schools in a nearby district with a high population of emergent bilinguals. The ACCLELA Alliance (Access to Critical Content and English Language Acquisition) was formed by school administrators, school teachers, paraprofessionals, university professors and doctoral students, whose purpose was to engage in a system-wide dialogue, research and action program that would support quality teaching and equitable learning outcomes for linguistically diverse students (Willet et al, 2007). This free of charge professional development program consisted in a Masters Degree in Education that would run for three years instead of the usual two year program, and was specially designed to meet the needs and time constraints of the participants.

The ACCELA's federally funded Master's degree in Education with Licensure in ESL was tailored to fit the needs of teachers in "low performing schools." The ACCELA courses were aimed at introducing teachers to inquiry, second language, and multicultural theories on literacy and language development and socio-cultural and critical perspectives on classroom interaction. Furthermore, through their reading and research projects, teachers were encouraged to examine how their classroom practices are situated within specific socio-cultural, institutional, and societal contexts. Unlike many forms of teacher-inquiry focused only on teachers' own practices, ACCELA teachers present their findings to and engage in dialogue with school and central office administrators on the implications of their inquiry for the school and district policies. Faculty of the ACCELA Alliance committed to providing data-driven, locally-responsive, and sustained professional development to educators working to support the academic literacy development of linguistically and culturally diverse learners in this region.

About 65 full time teachers, divided into three groups, would take in–school classes during the semester and would, with the help of university professors and doctoral students, engage in classroom-based research in order to make informed decisions on how to better serve emergent bilingual students in inner city schools. An academic program was designed to bring the university to the schools, rather than the reverse, and took into account an initial survey given to the teachers, in which most of them expressed apprehension regarding taking classes with college age students at the university site. This made an enormous impact on the teachers'

appreciation and their commitment to the program, making them feel comfortable in their own space at the same time that were being challenged by the university.

While the Masters students were taking their classes, they would also be conducting research in their own classrooms with the help of the doctoral students in the Language, Literacy and Culture program in the university. Each doctoral student would be assigned up to 5 teachers to work with based on common research interest and/or other factors that would make the grouping process easy (e.g, most teachers in the same school, being able to visit each teacher without overlapping in times, etc). On a typical week, doctoral students would be visiting and collecting data at the teachers' classrooms during the school day. This could mean video taping, doing interviews, doing shadow visits to get to know the teacher's routine, digitalizing material to make it accessible to others, etc. Some would also be helping as teaching assistants in the master classes working together with the ACCELA faculty after school.

Mrs. Dominguez, the focal kindergarten teacher for this dissertation, was one of the teachers who participated in the third group of master's students and I was her research assistant and teaching assistant to some of the classes in the Master program at "Highway Elementary School," a school where students must also deal with the challenge of negotiating everyday life within an area that is filled with poverty and violence (i.e. an inner city school where 90% of students are eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program). Therefore, aside from suffering the consequences of a mandated (No Child Left Behind) scripted curriculum, a lack of home language/cultural support in the school, and a restrictive state educational

language policy (Question #2), students in Highway Elementary, also have to suffer the consequences of social inequalities. Mrs. Dominguez, who received her master's degree in 2007, rose above all of these challenges, to provide her kindergarten students with a stronger foundation and understanding of themselves in a way that makes for a worthy and important document.

Purpose of the Study

Given the current context for Latino students learning English across the United States, there is a critical need to better understand and further document the educational processes of emergent bilinguals attending public schools. More specifically, in states like Massachusetts, where the English-only legislation has passed, it is particularly dire. Therefore, this study explores in depth how, in an increasingly English Only era in the United States, one Latino kindergarten teacher resists and subverts Massachusetts' restrictive bilingual education law (Question #2), to empower her students in a school that has a 76% emergent bilingual population. Despite the political pressure to which public schools and especially teachers are subjected, studies that explore ways in which teachers that make bold curricular and pedagogical decisions in order to help their students thrive should be mandatory reading for policy makers, administrators and especially teachers (Austin, 2011; Bangou & Austin, 2011; Gebhard, Habana, & Wright, 2004; Gebhard, Harman, & Seger, 2007; Gebhard, Jiménez-Caicedo, & Rivera, 2006; Gebhard, Jiménez-Caicedo, & Rivera, 2011; Harman, 2007, Shin, Gebhard, & Seger, 2011; Willett & Rosenberger, 2005). Theoretically speaking, this study provides evidence of the importance of validating students' home language and culture as the base for

literacy development and cultural identity in emergent bilinguals. Taking Gee's (2000) identity theory, I analyze the Nature, Institutional, Discourse and Affinity identities in terms of the more salient through out the school year as well as the ones that are less visible due to the classroom nature or school demands.

The purpose of this dissertation project, therefore, is to respond critically on how a Dominican kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Dominguez, and her students understand, participate in, resist or negotiate the school curriculum requirements under Question #2 throughout their everyday literacy practices. The specific questions that I address are the following:

1. How is the emergent bilinguals' identity constructed, (mis)represented, (un)supported in this classroom under the Question #2 policy context?
2. How do the emergent bilinguals' identities change over time as the school year progresses?
3. How does Question #2 affect and transform the literacy identities of a group of kindergarten emergent bilinguals?

Significance of the Study

In recent years there has been an increase number in studies that look at identity as a way to understand its implications in the literacy development of emergent bilinguals. Some of the studies about identity that are coming from the psychological perspective, look at students' internal factors, such as their personalities, and how that affects learning a second language (Erikson,1950; Freud

1930/1965; Côté, 1993; Côté and Levine, 2002; Schwartz & Montgomery, 2002). Many of these studies target adolescents as the population to be studied, citing that it is during this period when learners go through most language changes in order to fit socially with their peers and to get a sense of belonging as they create a "close code" to communicate among themselves (Atwell, 1987, Rampton, 1995; Feinauer, 2012). Other studies focus on adult learners claiming that there is a vast number of English as a second language students who are coming to the United States that are in need of learning the target language (NCELA, 2007; NCES, 2014). They claim this population goes through a change of identity as they adapt to the new country shifting not only their place of living, but their profession and in many cases, their family structure. There are also studies that look at teachers' identity with respect to their emergent bilingual students, claiming that the role of the teacher is crucial when learning a new language (Harklau, 2000; Lasky, 2005; Lee,2008; Reeves, 2009). Harklau, 2000 states that teachers tend to assign identities to their students whether they agree with them or not. For example, calling a student "the best" or "the worst" can be a powerful identity to carry throughout school, opening or limiting their options as well as their access to better educational opportunities. Very few studies look at identity from a socio-cultural perspective taking into account elementary school children, especially at the early childhood age (McCarthy, 2001). I consider it is important to look at this population, as it is during their first school years that they start to define who they are and are becoming aware of how they are being perceived by others. This is why the work of Gee (2000) is central to this dissertation in helping frame this study within a socio-cultural identity

construct. But looking at the complexities of identity is the beginning of understanding what needs to be addressed when looking at young emergent bilinguals and their needs in a classroom setting. It is important to understand the kinds of identities that play a crucial role at specific times during the school year and how to nurture them so students can feel supported, engage in their learning process, and thrive educationally. It is clear that attention to socio-cultural identities in relation to literacy is needed and that more studies need to be undertaken, which take into account elementary school children, especially emergent bilingual Latino/a children.

From the language policy point of view, and taking into account the data published in recent years (e.g., Carhill, Suárez-Orozco, & Páez, 2008; Stiefel, 2006; Thomas & Collier, 2002), it is clear that public schools fail to provide a nurturing learning environment for emergent bilinguals. Policies like *No Child Left Behind* and the more recent, *Race to the Top* with their heavy emphasis on accountability, along with the English-only referendums that have passed in Massachusetts, and elsewhere, are putting emergent bilinguals, specifically, Latinos, in jeopardy. Since teaching is increasingly judged primarily by students' test scores, high-stakes testing will force to narrow and simplify the curriculum, encourage cheating, and will fall most heavily on poor and minority students, who traditionally have done least well on standardized exams. Furthermore, students who are not achieving success on language arts exams are labeled "at risk" without considering their progress in other subject areas. Furthermore, the implementation of mandated curriculum frameworks have left students with a "One Size Fits All" type of teaching

where the students' particular interests and background knowledge is being set aside. Dealing with a curriculum that focuses only on mastering a particular skill (i.e. phonemic awareness) presented in a way of isolated words in a page, leaves little room for authentic discussion and engagement from the students. Based on the results of the standardized testing, schools who fail to meet the passing grade criteria (i.e. Advanced, Proficient, and Needs Improvement scores) are designated as underperforming and are subject to state intervention or closure, forcing students to relocate to a different school. Highway Elementary School is one of the schools who are at risk of being intervened due to 80 percent of the students in the school (including emergent bilinguals) were classified in the categories of "Need Improvement" or "Failing" (Massachusetts Department of Education, 2007). Therefore, it becomes almost impossible for schools such as Highway Elementary to provide a linguistically and culturally relevant curriculum for their students since the focus is only on making adequate yearly progress.

In the next chapter, the literature on US educational policies and bilingual policies specifically are expanded upon.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Educational Policies at the National Context

Educational policies have always been tied to a country's ongoing political agenda, and the United States is not an exception. Considering, for example, the standards and accountability-based reform of the current national educational policy of No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, such liaison between educational policies and governing political agendas is even more evident. Thus, with the interest of giving a brief overview of the bilingual education history in the United States in connection with some incumbent political agendas, in the first section of this literature review, I present a summary of the main aspects of the government language policies organized historically by presidency terms, starting from the 36th President of the United States (1963–1969), Lyndon B. Johnson's *First Bilingual Education Act* and ending with the 44th and current president of the United States, Barack Obama (see table 1 below)

This first section of the present literature review will serve both as the socio-political context and background, as well as a historical tracing of language-related issues in this country, in order to better understand where the language policy changes are coming from and under which circumstances. However, given that the main focus of this dissertation is the language policy that affects students in Massachusetts, what I provide here is a brief summary or overview of the historical development in educational policy in the United States. For a more comprehensive and in depth version of the historical educational policy and politics see the

comprehensive work on language-minority education policy and politics developed by Wiley & Wright, (2004).

The Enactment of the First Bilingual Education Act and New Legislation

The United States has a long tradition of immigration of non-English speaking populations to this country. Yet, prior to 1968 there were no federal educational language policies regarding the unique requirements of minorities in need of English language development in the school system. For the most part, minority-language background was ignored in the public schools and minority-language students attended English immersion public schools, experiencing "sink-or-swim" methodologies across the country (Crawford, 1999; National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, 2002b).

President Johnson was a young teacher himself in Texas for Spanish-speaking students, which may have motivated the boom in social programs that were passed during his administration, such as the landmark Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, a part of his larger "War on Poverty." Shortly thereafter came the passage of the Bilingual Education Act in 1968, a first of its kind for education and second language learners specifically. Johnson's Bilingual Education Act established a federal policy for helping school districts develop new programs for immigrant students nationwide. This law passed as a result of the urge to educate the increasing number of immigrants arriving into this country and was aimed at helping school districts develop new programs for students with limited English ability.

Grounded in the Civil Rights Act (1964) that prohibited discrimination in education on the basis of a student's limited English ability, the new Bilingual Education Act (BEA) called for steps to rectify language deficiencies and to provide education for everyone. Its purpose was to provide school districts with federal funds, through competitive grants, to establish innovative educational programs for students who were labeled with limited English speaking ability. Based on the legislative history of this bill, it is not very clear if its purpose was to assimilate the children of immigrant people coming into this country as soon as possible, to encourage bilingualism and biliteracy, or to actually promote social equality or higher academic achievement, among other purposes. However, a key turning point in the bilingual debate of those times came in 1974 when the Supreme Court ruled in the case of *Lau vs. Nichols* in San Francisco that schools had a responsibility under the Constitution to ensure that limited English proficient children receive special help in their education process. As a result, during the same year, the United States Congress passed new legislation making native-language instruction a prerequisite for all school districts applying for federal bilingual education grants. In the Bilingual Education Act (BEA) reauthorization of 1974, under the presidency of Richard Nixon, the Congress declared, " it is the policy of the United States to establish equal educational opportunity for all children (A) to encourage the establishment and operation . . . of education programs using bilingual education practices, techniques, and methods" (BEA, 1974, Sec. 702(a)). For the first time a definition of Bilingual Education was given as the "instruction given in, and study of, English and, to the extent necessary to allow a child to progress effectively through

the educational system, the native language" (Sec.703(a)(4)(A)(i)). Later, in the 1978 reauthorization, under the presidency of Jimmy Carter, the BEA added the word "language" to the 1974 definition of bilingual education. It specified that instruction in English should 'allow a child to achieve competence in the English language (Sec. 703 (a)(4)(A)(i)). Also, when enrolling non-English Speaking children, "the objective of the program shall be to assist children of limited English proficiency to improve their English language skills" (Sec. 703 (a)(4)(B)).

Later, during the mid to late 1980's, educational issues were dominated by the continuing efforts to reform the nation's public schools. *A Nation at Risk* is the landmark report commissioned during Ronald Reagan's presidency that pointed out educational deficiencies in the public schools in this country (National Commission, 1983). Some of the highlighted results of the *Nation at Risk* Report emphasized the need to raise standards for both teachers and students at all levels of K-12 education. The report insisted that the raising of the standards could be achieved by raising the salary of teachers and consequently, raising the status of teaching, as well as by toughening the high school graduation requirements (Congressional Quarterly inc. & CQ Press., 1965). This could potentially improve teacher retention' rates of highly effective teacher (Hough, 2012). Simultaneously, by 1984 an increased number of immigrants arrived in the United States (a 63% increase from the decade of the 1970's to the decade of the1980's), thus challenging even further the quest for higher standards.

This wave of immigration (like others in different years) created a sense of instability and fear among the people already living here. The idea was that

immigrants were the cause of a decrease in job availability for natural-born citizens. That, coupled with a general fear of immigrants due to a lack of shared language created a general rejection of bilingual education and the instruction of foreign languages, as well as a determination to teach English as the status quo language (Fitzgerald, 1993; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). All of this was reflected in the reauthorization of the BEA law of 1984, in which there was a change from mandatory bilingual programs to the imposition of English-only programs. Transitional bilingual education programs were defined as providing 'structured English language instruction and, to the extent necessary, to allow a child to achieve competence in the English language, instruction in the child's native language' (Sec. 703 (a)(4)(A)). The goal of the program was to help the child achieve competence in English and a second language, while mastering subject matter skills (Sec. 703 (a)(5)(A)). During the reauthorization of BEA of 1988 the legislation included a three year limit on an individual's participation in transitional bilingual education programs or SAIPS: 'No student may be enrolled in a bilingual program . . . for a period of more than 3 years' (BEA, 1988, Sec. 7021 (d)(3)(A)).

During the early 1990's, President George H. W. Bush vowed to be the "education president" but remained a long way from fulfilling his presidential campaign pledge. He put forward educational legislation known as *Goals 2000: Educate America act" of 1994,* which stipulated that all children would start school ready to learn, that high school graduation would increase by 90%, and that students would leave grades 4, 8, and 12 by demonstrating competency in English, math, science, history, and geography. However, Bush's education proposal did not

generate the necessary support and the goals proposed in his *Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994* became impossible to reach. The only education initiative that Bush presented to the 101st Congress died at the end of 1990 session. His proposal consisted of authorizing cash awards for excellent schools and teachers, math and science scholarships, and alternative methods of certifying teachers. By the 1994, when Bill Clinton was President (1993-2001), and the reauthorization of the law was due, a shift towards cultural pluralism was evident, and recommendations from diverse groups such as National Association for Bilingual Education and the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund were welcomed (Weise & Garcia, 2001). The 1994 reauthorization of the BEA still aimed 'to ensure equal educational opportunity for all children and youth and to promote educational excellence . . . for children and youth of limited English proficiency' (BEA, 1994. 7102 (c)). Among the goals stated for Title VII was that language minority children 'develop proficiency in English, and to the extent possible, their native language' (Sec. 7111 (2)(A)). Although Native Americans and Native Alaskans were included in the Bilingual Education Act since 1974, for the first time, Native Americans were encouraged to develop programs for language enhancement for "the preservation and maintenance of native languages" (Sec. 7105). In the 1998 reauthorization of BEA, Goals 2000, the legislation states that Title VII will hold schools accountable for their own goals, assessments and evaluation procedures to determine whether language minority students are acquiring English and improving academically, based on national standards. Federal policy recognized both the complexity of educational laws for language minority

students and the need for locally designed and implemented programs (Garcia, 1998).

Clinton's presidential campaign focused on education, and specifically on teacher professional development in order to serve children better. The *America Reads* program's main focus was to eradicate illiteracy from the American public schools, by having all children reading by the end of 3rd grade. In line with this initiative, in the state of Massachusetts particularly, the Massachusetts Educational Reform Act of 1993 was passed to ensure that all students were learning at high levels. Groups of educators began the task of creating frameworks "of high quality, results driven, and focused on world class standards" (Frameworks, n.d). To assess whether students were meeting those expectations (or not), the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) was created and administered for the first time in 1998. Passing scores on the exams would be an indication that test takers could "synthesize, organize and apply knowledge to complex problems and real-life situations" (MCAS, n.d., para 2 and following).

Then, at the turn of the century, President George W. Bush (2001- 2008) made also education the center of his 2000 Presidential campaign. He reauthorized *The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965,* which has been considered the most far-reaching federal legislation in education ever passed by Congress. President Bush's reauthorization of *The Elementary and Secondary Education Act* became known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), and became law in 2001 (*No Child Left Behind Act, 2001)*. This Act contained the bulk of President Bush's education overhaul proposals, and the main emphasis has been on student,

teacher, and school accountability based on students' performance on standardized testing. Under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), rewards would be given to the best states and schools (as well as penalties for the worst of these), issuing annual report cards based on their adequate yearly progress (AYP) to the schools based on their results on the individual state's standardized tests —the basis of the new accountability system as a proposed solution for a failing school system. The goal of this new accountability system was to measure improvements in performance for individual groups of students. By 2005, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) released a report showing major improvement in reading and math for all students after the passage of the NCLB Act (National Center for Education Statistics). Supporters of the law applauded these results and claimed that due to NCLB, the achievement gap was finally closing (Gamoran, 2007). Critics, on the other hand, found that these results were manipulated, and that "the test and punish" strategy (Cawelti, 2006) of the new accountability system did not appear to be helping schools and teachers close this gap. In fact, schools with even a small population of emergent bilinguals showed a disadvantage in the AYP compared with other schools who did not, leading to the belief that the AYP provision punishes schools for serving a large population of emergent bilinguals, among other groups (Escamilla et al, 2003; Gándara & Baca, 2008; Martin, 2012). Thus, the passage of NCLB in 2001 had a significant and harmful impact on bilingual education and the Bilingual Education Act in the United States due to its emphasis on high-stakes testing for all children.

In fact, the Bilingual Education Act was renamed the English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act. Even though the Act leaves room for states and schools to choose their teaching methodology, the statement of purpose and accountability requirements make it clear that the primary objective is English language acquisition. Given NCLB's chosen rootedness in scientific (quantitative) research (Panel, 2000), the following four research perspectives were neglected: foreign language research, child language research, sociocultural perspective research, and psycholinguistic approach research, all more qualitative in design. A 2012 review of the literature by Dixon and colleagues based on seventy five peer-reviewed journal articles published from 1997 to 2011, showed that no research from any of these four perspectives indicated that English language learners can gain sufficient English proficiency to succeed in a mainstream classrooms after only one year (Dixon et al., 2012). In fact, Dixon's research corroborates the finding of other researchers who conclude that most children can take from 3 to 7 years to acquire academic proficiency in their second language (Hakuta, 2011; MacSwan & Pray, 2005, Crawford, 1998, 1999, 2002).

In October 2011, the 44th president of the United States, Barack Obama proposed *A Race to the Top* program through the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. Additionally, President Obama introduced a bipartisan bill to officially overhaul NCLB, which proposes more flexibility for states and districts, and focuses on the goal of building a world-class education system that prepares all students for college and careers. The new Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) has as a goal to ensure equity and opportunity for all students by calling for:

- Rigorous and fair accountability for all levels of school performance;
- Meeting the needs of diverse learners; and
- Greater equity in providing students a fair chance to succeed.

For emergent bilinguals specifically, the act stated that schools may provide dual-language programs, transitional bilingual education, sheltered English immersion, newcomer programs for late-entrant English Learners, or other language instruction programs. Schools may also provide effective professional development for all teachers of English learners, including teachers of academic content areas that are responsive to demonstrated needs identified by assessment. It is also required that states establish new criteria to ensure consistent statewide identification of students as English learners, and to determine eligibility, placement, and duration of programs and services based on the state's valid and reliable English language proficiency assessment. As well, states are required to implement a system to evaluate the effectiveness of language instruction programs, and to provide information on the achievement of subgroups of emergent bilinguals so as to derive better decisions by school districts for program improvement and to support districts in selecting effective programs (ESEA Blueprint, 2010). By the time of the re-election of President Barack Obama in 2012, 33 states and the District of Columbia had been given some flexibility to step away from NCLB, claiming that this change would enable improved student achievement standards, greater school accountability, and increasing teacher effectiveness (White House, 2013).

With these broad Federal policies as the backdrop, in the next section, the variety of bilingual educational programs are described and elaborated on to show how differing interpretations of policies play out across the US.

Table 2.1 US Educational Laws

President	Years	Educational Law
Lyndon B. Johnson	1963-1969	**Civil Rights Act** (1964) Prohibited discrimination in Education on the basis of a student's limited English ability and called for steps to rectify language deficiencies. **First Bilingual Education Act** (1968) A Federal Policy for helping schools districts develop new programs for students with limited English ability. **Elementary and Secondary Education Act ESEA** addressed the challenges of poverty to the achievement of students by providing more resources to the jurisdictions in which these students were schooled. Capacity was seen in terms of inputs; adequacy was often discussed in terms of equality of funding levels among schools or districts in the system.
Richard M. Nixon	1969-1974	**First Veto** during a nationwide television and radio address, President Nixon Jan. 26, 1970, vetoed the $19.7-billion Labor-HEW appropriations bill (HR 13111) that contained $3,265,302,700 for the Office of Education.
Gerald R. Ford	1974-1977	Authorized appropriations of $585-million in fiscal 1975-78 for bilingual education assistance under Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA); established an Office of Bilingual Education within the Office of Education.
Jimmy Carter	1977-1981	The unhealthy state of the economy in the second half of the decade sharply affected the nation's school system. **The public schools struggled** to keep their doors open in the face of growing operating expenses caused by spiraling energy prices, teachers' demands for increased wages and costly regulations imposed by Washington. The conditions at the public schools persuaded many parents to enroll their children in private institutions. Inner-city Roman Catholic schools, whose enrollment fell in the late 1960s and early 1970s as white parishioners moved to the suburbs, found their classrooms filling in the second half of the 1970s with blacks, Latinos and members of other minority groups attracted by the strict discipline and basic instruction those schools provided.

Ronald Reagan	1981-1985	**A Nation at Risk** (1983). A landmark report on educational issues in schools. Among them: high illiteracy rates, declining standardized test scores, poor teacher training and increasing need for colleges and business to provide remedial education.
	1985-1989	Reform themes: Raising standards for teachers (Better salary equals better teaching status) and standards for students (Having tougher high school graduation requirements). Reagan was committed to restructuring federal involvement in education. He wanted to reduce federal spending for education, abolish the education department and redirect money and authority to state and local levels. However, by 1984 congress had begun to reverse some of the policy changes and budget cuts on education that the administration had won earlier. Bilingual education was the single greatest subject of controversy during debate on the education reauthorization bill in 1989.
George H. W. Bush	1989-1993	Vowed to be the "education president" but remained a long way from fulfilling his campaign pledge. He had a number of goals for the year 2000, **Goals 2000**: All children will start school ready to learn, high school graduation will increase by 90%, students will leave grades 4, 8, 12 by demonstrating competency in English, math, science, history and geography. However, the Bush education proposal did not generate the necessary support and the goals became impossible to reach. The only education initiative that Bush presented to the 101st Congress died at the end of 1990 session. His proposal was to authorize cash awards for excellent schools and teachers, math and science scholarships, and alternative methods of certifying teachers.
William J. Clinton	1993-1997	**America Reads**: Train teachers to help students read and combat illiteracy. The aim was to have all children reading by the end of 3rd grade.
	1997-2001	President Clinton and Vice President Gore created GEAR UP, a nationwide college preparation and mentoring initiative, to provide early, sustained intervention and extra financial help to disadvantaged students.

George W. Bush	2001-2004 2004-2008	**No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act** (2001) The focus of his proposal was accountability. He called for states to design and administer annual tests to measure student performance as a condition for receiving federal education money. All public schools needed to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Schools that repeatedly fell short of state-set standards would be subject to sanctions, such as being forced to divert a share of their federal funds to vouchers to pay for private schooling or tutoring for needy children. In the same way, children were expected to score at proficiency level by the year 2014.
Barack H. Obama	2008 - 2012 2012-2016	2009 **Race to the top** (RTT) the Senate of Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee introduced a bipartisan bill to officially overhaul NCLB; RTT proposes to build in more flexibility for states and districts, and focuses on the goal of building a world-class education system that prepares all students for college and professional careers. In March of 2010, unveiled its **Blueprint for Reform** of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. (A Blueprint for Reform: *The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act*. United States Department of Education, *March 2010).* In June of 2012 President Barack Obama announced that his administration will stop deporting undocumented immigrants who fall under the criteria of the Dream Act (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors), this is to say, illegal immigrants can gain permanent residency based on their time of arrival into the US, their scholarly history, and their moral character.

Bilingual Education Programs

Throughout the United States there is an array of bilingual education approaches, some in which the main objective is the linguistic assimilation of the emergent bilingual population, resulting in what as early as 1973 Lambert et al., termed "subtractive bilingualism;" that is, the loss of the home language as the school language is learned (Lambert et al, 1973), and others that attempt to support true bilingualism. This section names and describes these different approaches.

Even though the definition of bilingual education has not always been clear and the implementation of the existing educational programs varies among districts, and even within schools (García & Baker, 2007), there is a variety of specific programs to fit the need of the emergent bilinguals in the public schools. Such programs include *Submersion programs* (also known as "sink or swim") where the language of instruction is 100 percent English, and *English as a Second Language (ESL) Pull out*, *ESL Push In, Structured Immersion* (also known as Sheltered English or Content-Based ESL) *programs* where 90 to100 percent of English is used as the language of instruction with minimal or zero home language support, as well as *Transitional Bilingual Education,* in which initially the language of instruction is 50 to 90 percent of the students' home or first language, gradually decreasing its use to 10% or less.

On the other hand, there is another set of programs that are less common in the United States, but increasingly growing in popularity. These programs are considered more progressive and are aimed at developing bilingualism and biliteracy in those non-traditional students who speak languages other than English

at home. These programs are *Developmental, Two-Way Bilingual (also known as Two- Way Dual Language, Two-Way Immersion, Dual Immersion or Dual Language) and Dynamic Bi/Pluri-lingual Education*. Since, in such programs, the main goal is to develop bilingual and bi-literate students, the amount of exposure or intensity of English language versus home language usage during instruction decreases or increases based on the type of program. For instance, in developmental bilingual programs, the use of home language in instruction decreases from an initial 90 percent to 50 percent or less by grade 4; while in Two-way Bilingual Education or Dual Language programs the most common practice is to have parity of exposure to both languages in a 50/50 model (García & Kleifgen, 2010). In their recent book, Garcia and Kleifgen offer a complete description of each of the above-mentioned programs, which I summarize in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2 Bilingual Education Programs

PROGRAM	LANGUAGE USED IN INSTRUCTION	COMPONENTS	DURATION	GOALS
Submersion (Sink or Swim)	100% English	Mainstream education; no special help with English; no qualified teachers	Throughout K-12 schooling	Linguistic Assimilation (shift to English Only)
ESL Pull out (Submersion plus ESL)	90-100% in English; may include some home language support or not	Mainstream education; students pulled out for 30-to 45 minutes of ESL daily. Teachers certified in ESL	As needed	Linguistic assimilation; remedial English
ESL Push-in	90-100% in English; may include some home language support or not	Mainstream education; ESL teacher working alongside the subject teacher as needed. Teachers certified in ESL	As needed	Linguistic assimilation; remedial education within mainstream classroom
Structured Immersion (Sheltered English, Content-based ESL)	90-100% in English; may include some home language support or not	Subject matter instruction at student's level of English; students grouped for instruction. Teachers certified in ESL, should have some training in immersion	1-3 years	Linguistic assimilation. Exit to mainstream education
Transitional Bilingual Education (Early-Exit Bilingual Education)	90-50% home language initially; gradually decreasing to 10% or less	Initial literacy usually in home language; some subject instruction in home language; ESL and subject matter instruction at student's level of English; sheltered English subject instruction. Teachers certified in Bilingual Education	1-3 years; students exit a they become proficient in English	Linguistic assimilation; English acquisition without falling behind academically

Developmental Bilingual Education (Early-Exit Bilingual Education)	90% home language initially; gradually decreasing to 50% or less by grade 4 or 50/50 from beginning	Initial literacy in home language; some subject instruction in home language; ESL initially and subject matter instruction at student's level of English; teachers certified in bilingual education	5-6 years	Bilingualism and biliteracy; academic achievement in English
Two-way Bilingual Education (Two-Way Dual Language, Two-Way Immersion, Dual Immersion, Dual Language	90/10 model: 90% language other than English, 10% English; 50/50 model: parity of both languages	English speakers and speakers of a LOTE taught literacy and subjects in both languages; peer tutoring. Teachers certified in bilingual education	5-6 years, usually at the elementary level	Bilingualism and biliteracy, academic achievement in English
Dynamic Bi/Plurilingual Education	English ad students' home languages in dynamic relationship; students are the locus of control for language used; peer-teaching	Teacher-led activities in English, coupled with collaborative project-based students learning using home ad hybrid language practices	4-6 years, usually at the high school level and specially for newcomers	Bilingualism, academic achievement in English

Adapted from García & Kleifgen (2010). *Education emergent bilinguals: Policies, programs, and practices for English language learners.*

Restrictions on Bilingual Education Programs

Most educators would agree that there is a need to have an educational language policy in which educators and policy makers come into agreement on what, how and under what circumstances to teach. One of the concerns most educators have is that these policies are being discussed at the state and national level without considering the political and socio-economics of the local contexts. While developing these laws, policymakers leave the teachers without a voice in decision-making, ignoring their experience in their classrooms. In order to make a sounder decisions based on research, in 1997 Congress established the National Reading Panel, which in the year 2000 was mandated to review the scientific research on reading instruction and to articulate the implications of that research for improving students' reading achievement (Panel, 2000). Surprisingly, (or not) one of the major findings of the report was that " based on the meta- analysis of 52 scientific studies, there is strong evidence substantiating the impact of systematic instruction in phonemic awareness (PA) instruction on learning to read" (Panel 2000). Most school districts took these results as the last word in teaching effectiveness, and teachers followed suit. Highway Elementary school, the site where this study took place, PA became the sole method used to teach children to read. But according to the National Reading Panel:

> Phonemic Awareness training does not constitute a complete reading program; rather, it provides children with essential foundational knowledge in the alphabetic system. It is one necessary instructional component within a complete and integrated reading program. Several additional competencies

must be acquired as well to ensure that children will learn to read and write (Panel 2000).

Unfortunately, it seems that the findings of the National Reading Panel were taken into account just partially, leaving out the inclusion of "several additional competencies" required.

Given the heavy influence of PA reading instruction, a focus on bilingual literacies faded, or at least became secondary to this all-encompassing approach to teach reading. Not only that, but state legislation that has been enacted has posed an even more serious hurdle.

Three State Policies against Bilingual Education

Historically, promoting English as the sole language of the US has been an on-going agenda of nationalistic movements that has attempted to Americanize millions of immigrants and is viewed as limiting in many respects (Leibowitz, 1996; McClymer, 1982; Tatalovich, 1995; Toth, 1990; Wiley, 1998). Even though the research that supported bilingualism back in 1968 was very limited due to the existence of only a few programs and the even more limited existence of evaluation of those programs, it only seemed logical that taking into account children's first language development would help them in their academic and cognitive development later on. Ironically now that the research exists to support bilingual education, the success it has shown during the last 40 years in many schools and with many children is seen as a failure in the minds of many people. This is due to the increasing questioning, attacking, and isolation of bilingual educators, fewer options for emergent bilinguals, and limited access to native language instruction. In

other words “a generation of experience and research is discarded, as the pedagogy is relegated to marginal status” (Crawford, 1998).

The case of Proposition 227 that passed in California in June 1998, the Proposition 203 that passed in Arizona back in November 2000, and Question 2, which passed in Massachusetts on November 2002 are examples of how, even though the research shows evidence of the effectiveness of bilingual education in producing higher academic achievement outcomes for ELLs, the vast majority of voters approved a measure based on the argument that English immersion was the most effective means of teaching English to immigrant students. In an analysis done by Crawford (1999, 2002) and de Jong, (2002) on the election outcomes for California’s Proposition 227, for example, they observed that research supporting the benefits of bilingualism played almost no role in public policy debates about the proposition and, thus, had a limited impact on voters. Crawford (2002) points out that while most education researchers may agree on the benefits of bilingualism, voters did not cast their votes on the basis of scientific evidence. Rather, they based their ideas on the groundless assumption that bilingual education causes high drop-out rates among language-minority students. Research showed than less than 30 percent of California’s 1.4 million language-minority students received any bilingual education prior to passage of Proposition 227, yet it was claimed that bilingual education was responsible for widespread educational underachievement. The reality was that the majority of language-minority children were not receiving the language and educational services to which they were entitled (Weinberg, 1997; Wiley, 1998; Wright, 2004).

Seeking to enshrine monolingualism, this law ignores the global recognition of the political, economic, and social importance of multilingualism. It is important to have a clear language-in-education policy, but not as a subtractive policy aimed at producing a highly homogeneous English-speaking population, but rather a system providing the greatest set of options to students within the constraints of budgetary policy" (Kaplan, 2001). Another factor that is seen as problematic is the argument that having one language would provide national unity and that this unity can be achieved by having all immigrants learn English. Politicians argue that having cultural and linguistic differences may lead to ethnic confrontations and linguistic separation in the US (Judd & Wolfson 1987, p. 119). By contrast, studies that have emerged on bilingualism in Canada, for example, conclude that two official languages in that country do not create any confrontation or social tensions (Magnet, 1990). Magnet points out that separatism and political pathology only grow in proportion with the ways that the Canadian government fails to deal with linguistic differences, not the other way around (Magnet, 1990).

Arizona's proposition 203, although it appeared to be independent from other nationalist movements, is very similar to California's 227. Both funded by wealthy financier and political activist, Ron Unz, Proposition 227 was revised in a way to eliminate some of the ambiguities that had cause some California school districts to keep their bilingual programs. Despite the salient similarities, (see Crawford, 2000 for a comparison analysis), Arizona's proposition was signed by local politicians, Maria Mendoza and Hector Ayala, creating the impression of being originated by local Arizona Latinos. (Wright, 2005 p. 668). This could have had a

great impact in the way people saw this new proposal as originating locally, as opposed to a proposition coming from a wealthy Californian with no experience in the field of education (Wright, 2005 p. 667). Given their geography, California and Arizona have long had an abundance of residents whose first language is not English. Massachusetts, however, belies this description.

Massachusetts and Question 2

Groundbreaking and forward-thinking educational policies established long ago have traditionally characterized education in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In fact, multiple and landmark state laws with indelible reach into the country's educational system give testimony of the strong influence of the state's on the rest of the nation's public educational system. Perhaps the most significant educational accomplishment of Massachusetts was being the first state to promote compulsory public education in the United States when the Massachusetts General Court in 1647 required free elementary education to people in towns of 50 or more families (Legassé, 2000). The state of Massachusetts is also home of the country's first board of education, the first training school for teachers, a school for mentally ill people, and a school for blind students. In more recent times, as mentioned above, Massachusetts also established the Education Reform Act of 1993, which aimed to provide improvement of public education in the commonwealth. Currently, however, and despite all of these groundbreaking, forward-thinking and enduring policies just reviewed, Massachusetts nowadays seems to be going against the ideals and philosophy that has characterized it since its constitution as a state. Such a drastic shift was made by the passage of Question 2 in 2002, a ballot initiative

that effectively restricted the use of any language other than English in instruction which led, consequently to the rapid decrease in bilingual education programs in public schools not only in Massachusetts but, coupled with the de facto English-only language policy embedded in the NCLB act, the number of bilingual schools across the country has severely decreased.

Question 2 requires that public schools educate English learners (children who cannot do ordinary classwork in English and who either do not speak English or whose native language is not English) through a sheltered English immersion program, normally not lasting more than one year. In the program, all books and nearly all teaching would be in English, with the curriculum designed for children learning English, although a teacher could use a minimal amount of a child's native language when necessary. Since its passage in November of 2002, many teachers and students in public schools were required to comply with the restrictive measures of the law, which directly affected emergent bilinguals and strictly excluded the use of languages other than English in everyday classroom instruction. In addition, non-native English speaking students, typically classified as English Language Learners in Massachusetts, are now being placed in mainstream classrooms with little or minimal first language (L1) support despite strong evidence regarding the inadequacy of this narrow approach and the importance of continued support and enrichment of the native language for second language acquisition (Cummins, 1980; Collier, 1995, Goodrich, Lonigan, & Farver, 2013). Besides, according to the law, "a parent or guardian could sue the school system to enforce the proposed law and, if successful, would receive attorney's fees, costs and

compensatory money damages" (Question 2 Ballot). The fact that a teacher, a school principal and/or the whole school district can be sued for providing instruction to children in their native language, seems to go against the idea that instructors should be able to make informed decisions as to what is best for their students, and that during instruction a teacher needs to be resourceful and use an array of resources, including other languages, in order to transmit knowledge.

It is then not surprising that many of the emergent bilingual students have been increasingly classified as underperforming in their classes according to their results on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), and as low-level learners, who, very frequently, are also mislabeled as students with special needs (MCAS, 2005, 2006, 2007). As a consequence of the passing of the restrictive-bilingual legislation in Massachusetts in November of 2002, rather than offering quality bilingual educational programs that focus on the needs of non-dominant and minority students, public schools require their teachers to adhere to an English-Only scripted curriculum and NCLB legislation, created to narrow the *achievement gap* between African American, Latino, and Native American students when compared with their White counterparts. However, the gap still exists and tends to widen even more (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Ogbu, 1994).

A review of the literature on the impact of Question 2 on emergent bilinguals reveals that there is a lack of research on how the law has affected Latino students specifically. There are a few studies that focus on how the law has been understood, how it has been approached by educators and how the law has impacted the way educators teach Emergent bilinguals in the state of Massachusetts. A thematic

analysis of the articles published right after the passage of Question 2 reveals the prominence of the distinct educational frames of accountability: one operating within the frame of accountability and the other outside of it (Cochran-Smith, 2004). Most of the research articles published after the passage of Question 2 had a heavy emphasis on providing data on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) results, and showed ways to improve scores (Goldsmith, 2002; Horn, 2003; Tabors et al., 2003). Later articles showed that the research moved from the accountability field (i.e. MCAS results) towards the professional development field in the area of second language acquisition (de Jong, 2006; DiGuisi & Fleming, 2005; Facella *et al.*, 2005; Harman, 2007; Willett et al., 2008; Gebhard, Harman, & Seger, 2007; Gebhard, Jiménez-Caicedo, & Rivera, 2006; Gebhard, Jiménez-Caicedo, & Rivera, 2011; Harman, 2007; Shin, Gebhard, & Seger, 2011; Willett & Rosenberger, 2005; Bangou & Austin, 2011; Austin, 2011; Guo and Koretz, 2013). Later, research also moved from blaming the test to focusing on improving the quality of instruction students are receiving in the public schools. This shift in the research could bring the discussion of the implementation of English Only policies to a different level. In this study I argue it is important to deviate from test results and underperforming schools and return to the importance of Cardenas and Cardenas' 1970 "Theory of Incompatibilities", which can renew a focus on how to better serve our emergent bilinguals. Teachers and school administrators need to move away from dedicating time on the drilling of simple tasks and teaching to the test, and more toward focusing more on helping their students gain the critical abilities necessary to succeed in school. One of the consequences of failing the state

test for a consecutive 3 years in a row and not demonstrating improvement at all levels is that the schools would be taken over by the state or they could be closed and students would have to go to a different school that is not underperforming. By closing schools that are struggling to meet the state standards we are not solving the problem of student failure. On the contrary, making these severe changes could impact children in a negative way by having to adapt to a new school, new teachers and probably a longer commute to get to school.

Focusing on professional development takes the pressure away from the emergent bilinguals as the ones not capable of learning English and starts focusing on changing the school practices and learning methodologies that incorporate new research (i.e. teaching language through content and the use of the genre approach with elementary school children). This most resent research also holds promise that focusing on improving classroom instruction will allow emergent bilinguals to gain more access to quality instruction, increase their language development and therefore reflect that learning in the improvement of their test scores.

In a study by Guo and Koretz (2013) on the effects of Question 2 on reading achievement for emergent bilinguals they found that neither its supporters' nor its opponents' opinions was borne out in this study: "the English immersion law had no sizeable effect on third-grade LEP students' reading performance. Depending on the assumptions one makes about the performance of the untested first-year LEP students, the effect ranges from essentially 0 to slightly positive, at most 0.07 of a standard deviation" (p. 141). In other words, the law has not had provided its intended results. Guo and Koretz also mention that the area where emergent

bilinguals thrived the most in the reading test results of MCAS 2006 were in the language skills necessary to identify high-frequency words, but they had more difficulty mastering less commonly (low-frequency) words (p. 142). These kinds of results lead teachers to identify areas where more work needs to be done in order for instruction to be more effective. More importantly, their research points out the serious limitations to English-only classroom policies related to language learning exclusively, but there is collateral damage when it comes to considering the ways that language and identity are closely intertwined.

Language Opportunity for our Kids

The Language Opportunity for our Kids (LOOK bill) updated MGL Chapter 71A *English Language Education in Public Schools* to encompass the latest in academic research and best practices in public schools serving emergent bilinguals in Massachusetts. This petition was filed on January 2015 by Jeffrey Sánchez and other Massachusetts District legislators, motivated by the data that shows that the current English Only law is underserving children from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. If approved, this bill would allow all districts to choose high quality alternate language acquisition programs based on the educational and linguistic needs of students, in addition to Sheltered English Immersion.

Specifically, upon passing of the bill, emergent bilinguals enrolled in a Massachusetts public school district or charter school shall be educated through a comprehensive, research-based instructional program that includes a content component to ensure appropriate acquisition of subject matter content and a language acquisition component to ensure appropriate acquisition of the English

language. The programs for emergent bilinguals may include sheltered English Immersion, dual language education or transitional bilingual education but shall not be limited to any specific program or instructional design provided that any such programs shall include the acquisition of the English language. There was a hearing scheduled for May 12th, 2015, but there has not been any decision made yet.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Sociocultural theories of language learning

In order to look closely at how the English Only policies are being enacted during the time frame of my study in the public schools in the state of Massachusetts, and to contextualize how Mrs. Dominguez, the kindergarten teacher in my study, and her students are negotiating the new law, I draw on the sociocultural theory of language learning. By using this lens, I pay close attention to issues of relationship among the participants, the way students learn, and the use they make of what surrounds them in the classroom.

The most fundamental concept of sociocultural theory is that the human mind is mediated. This is to say, people do not act directly on the physical world, instead, we rely on tools and labor activity, which allows us to change the world, to regulate our relationship with others and with ourselves, and within it, the circumstances under which we live in the world (Vygotsky, 1978, Lantolf, 2000). These tools, as Wertsch (1998) points out, can be physical artifacts, or symbolic ones. In order to explain human behavior under this unit of analysis, Vygotsky created the theoretical framework known as *Activity Theory*. The idea is that human behavior is a result of the integration of socially and culturally forms of mediation into human activity. One of Vygotsky's colleagues, A. N. Leontiev, took on Vygotsky's ideas to explain that activity is not simply doing something, it is doing something that is motivated either by a biological need such us hunger, or a culturally constructed need, such as the need to be literate (Leontiev, 1978).

There are other elements that complement the activity theory framework, including *internalization*, which Lantolf defines as the process through which higher forms of mental activity come to be, and *inner speech*, constituted of social origins but that takes place on a private or cognitive function (Lantolf, 2000: 15).

One of the main aspects of Vygotsky's theory is the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978). This is a metaphor that is used in order to understand how knowledge is mediated and appropriated by the learner. Vygotsky defines ZPD as the difference between what a person can do alone, and what the same person can do with the support of a more expert other, or with the use of artifacts (p.86). This idea has been very popular in the field of second language acquisition where we can see clearly how, with the help of a more capable peer, less skillful students are able to acquire new concepts. Recently, some researchers have taken Vygotsky's ideas and have developed a more "complete" way of thinking about ZPD. Lantolf states that *mediation* is the key element when talking about ZPD. He explains that it is clear that people working together are able to co-construct a context in which expertise emerges as a feature of the group (Lantolf, 2000: 17). He calls it "collaborative constructions of opportunities." Others call it "affordances" (van Lier, 2000) or "occasions for learning" (Swain & Lapkin, 1998), but the idea is still the same. In order to acquire knowledge and develop it in more sophisticated ways, there needs to be social interaction, appropriation, and collaboration between more experts and novice learners.

Another powerful theory developed by Vygotsky is the *semiotic theory*, the study of how meaning is constructed and understood. He states: " the

internalization of cultural forms of behavior involves the reconstruction of psychological activity on the basis of sign operations" (1978: 57). Signs as defined by Vygotsky are more than meaning and reference, they are "artificially created stimuli, the purpose of which it is to influence behavior" (cited in Wertsch, 1985: 91). This is to say that in order to learn we need to engage in social activities like having interactions with other people, engaging in different forms of schooling, going shopping, etc. Claire Kramsh explains: "these activities are mediated by all kinds of material signs like gestures, facial expressions, linguistic shapes, and sounds. As a result, all of the external exchanges are internalized as psychological processes and create new ways of thinking, modes of learning (Kramsh, 2000: 134).

Literacy is also considered a social semiotic (Holliday, 1978, Lemke 1989, Lemke 2002), a form of social action where language and context co-participate in the meaning making enterprise. Lemke sees a strong connection between local contexts and the larger society that needs to be taking into account when dealing with literacy development saying that " the meanings we make on any occasion are both uniquely emergent and culturally typical; they depend both on local contexts and on other meanings made in other times and places" (Lemke 2002, 22). It is also understood that literacy means more than learning to read and write. Since US schools are receiving more multicultural students every year, new educational challenges arise. Many of these students with different experiences using language in their homes find it difficult to meet the narrow requirements that schools have for them. It is especially difficult for students who have little opportunity for exposure and use of academic language outside of school. It is also true that many

teachers are often not prepared to recognize and build on the experiences of the students whose backgrounds are different from their own and therefore, find it challenging to deal with these situations (Colombi & Schleppegrell, 2002, 3).

Analyzing language learning through the lens of Vygotsky's theories allows us to pay close attention to the way emergent bilinguals, in this case, are creating, conveying, and exchanging signs. The meaning of these signs would be determined by the context in which they are produced along with what they are responding to. As well as Vygotsky, Bakhtin (1986) stressed the idea that anything anyone thinks or says is, in fact, created of pieces of language that have been voiced elsewhere, of texts that have been told and retold inside social groups and institutions and picked up by someone else in a different context, place and time.

Since language learning is a social activity in which identity is expressed, constructed and enacted within the context of school, the interaction that the teacher has with her students and the interaction among students are important markers for identity formation (Côté, 2009; Strokes 2012). What the teacher considers valuable in the classroom determines what and how the students learn and what is being picked up or disregarded by them.

Identity

"If you want to ask questions about literacy, don't look at reading and writing in themselves, but as they are embedded within specific social practices"
Gee 2002, 159.

Looking at identity has become a powerful tool in order to analyze and understand how students, schools, and society work (Gee, 1990, 2000, 2002;

Holland et al, 1998). Even though the term identity has been given different meanings by scholars in the field of education, this study goes in line with Gee's (2000) and Norton Pierce's definition of Identity. Gee defines identity as being recognized as a certain "kind of person" in a given context or even different "kinds" at once (p. 99). In the same line, Norton Pierce (1995, 2000) considers that "identity references desire – the desire for recognition, affiliation, and security" (Norton, 2000: 8). For Norton Pierce, Identity is "how a person understands his or her relationships to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands his possibilities for the future" (p. 5).

James Gee (1990) explains that identities are both multiple and situated and that people present various 'ways of being' that correspond to particular social situations. Teaching entails valuing the "ways of using language, of thinking, feeling, believing, and of acting" that children use to identify themselves as members of socially meaningful groups (1990: 143).

There are several authors that focus their work on the role of identity in children's learning (McCarthey and Moje, 2002, Gee, 1990, 2000, Norton, 2000). They state that identity is an important and too often overlooked concept in studies of literacy. But, most of the work done on identity and learning focuses on adolescents (McCarthey and Moje, 2002, p.228); they argue that this is because adolescents are generally more metacognitively reflective than younger children and because adolescents are often viewed as occupying "between spaces" that exist between childhood and adulthood such as home, school, peer group, popular culture, and academic culture. In the same line, Coté & Levine (2002) argue that

identity research within developmental psychology has taken an exaggerated individualistic perspective that ignores social and cultural influences (p. 453). They state that identity construction processes …[imply postmodern social structures that involve those individuals who actively interact with youth in order to participate in their formation of an identity (parents, teachers, clergy, mentors are potentially such agents)…] (p.454). In addition they state that in order to understand identity formation in adolescents "we need to understand early socialization processes" (p.473). What I can see in Mrs. Dominguez class is that identity work begins long before adolescence and that identity is not only shaped by the individuals who interact with the children but also by the literature that is available to them, the policies that are shaping how teaching is enacted, the curriculum used, the situation at home, and other intangible variables that affect them directly.

Researchers working in the area of critical and post-structural perspectives in the second language field also include socially situated views of identity in their research agendas. According to them, the learner should be seen as a social agent, located in a network of social relations, in specific places and in a social structure (Kress, 1989: 5) as well as an active agents when it come to deciding what to learn (Valdés, 2004; van Lier, 2000). According to Norton (2000), a student's identity is also closely related to their classroom language production, and language learning should be seen as a complex social practice that engages the identities of language learners, rather than a skill that is acquired with hard work and dedication (2000: 132). Students should be seen as building a complex identity, changing over time

and space (Norton Pierce, 1995), which is shaped by their investment in the classroom work.

In other words, language learning and expression involve much more than developing the skills of effective communication. These processes go beyond the instrumental, and toward identity formation. But, even there, speaking of identity as a single entity seems limiting. Instead, as I elaborate below, Gee expands on a more complex understanding of identity, which is useful for providing context in this study.

Different kinds of identities

The work of Gee, 2000, can be used as the base to analyze the concept of identity in elementary schools. For this particular study, special attention will be given to the way Gee theorizes identity. In his work, he describes four different perspectives that, as we will see in the analysis section, are connected and interrelated at different levels making it very difficult to isolate them. These four ways of viewing identity are the Nature identity, the Institutional Identity, the Discourse, and the Affinity identity.

The Nature identity (N-identity), which could be described as the person's essential state, is a description of who you are. That is, being a twin, being left handed, or being blond, for example. Genes carry the N-identity, and it constitutes the kind of person that you are, your personal characteristics based on your own nature. In the case of Mrs. Dominguez, she is a Dominican female in her early thirties. Her family moved from the Dominican Republic, but she was born in the United State. She identifies herself as mestiza, a person from indigenous and black

ancestors. In the case of her students, they are mostly between the ages of 5 and 6. Most of them are Latinos. The focal students, Salomé is a 6 years old girl, born in Massachusetts from Puerto Rican parents.

Gee's second perspective on identity is the Institutional perspective (I-identity). This kind of identity is given to the person by an institution. A "label" that is not given by nature, but instead, is being given or imposed by an "authority" or an institution. Being a musician, or a criminal are examples of I-identity. In order to obtain an I-identity from a person, an individual must have some type of interaction, perhaps professional or bureaucratic, with another person or persons, by whom the identity is ultimately subscribed. Here, Mrs. Dominguez' I-identity is as a kindergarten teacher, a master's student (at the time of the study). The focal student is a kindergarten girl. She is an emergent bilingual.

The third perspective is the Discursive identity (or D-Identity). This kind of identity is created by the interaction among people in respect to others and how they construct, through the discourse or dialogue who other people are. Gee, considers it an "individual trait". Being recognized as a quiet person or a hard-working person are examples of D-identity. Mrs. Dominguez' D-Identity is seen as a kind and sincere person by her co-workers, students and parents. She is also a hard-working student as perceived by her professors. As the researcher, based on my observations of her interactions with her students, parents, and colleagues I consider Mrs. Dominguez as caring human being. She is charismatic and enthusiastic about what she does. And for the focal student, her teacher sees Salomé's D-identity as an outgoing and smart girl. Her classmates describe her as amusing and a good

friend. As a researcher I consider her a dynamic and happy 6 years old girl, who is inquisitive about what surrounds her.

The fourth and final identity perspective that Gee proposes is the Affinity identity (A-Identity). Through a set of distinctive practices a person can create a self-portrait. It could be considered a way of looking at "who this person is" based on their activity practices. People may belong to an affinity group where they could share similar likes and participate in events that are characteristic of a certain group. Being a fan of a rock group or belonging to a religious group are examples of A-Identity. Gee points out that "for members of an affinity group, their allegiance is primarily to a set of common endeavors or practices and secondarily to other people in terms of shared culture or traits" (Gee, 2000 pg. 105). Affinity defers from Discourse identity in the sense that you can chose an affinity identity by the choices you make, the things you align to, but your Discursive identity is given by society. Gee explains that if an attribute is not recognized as defining someone as a particular "kind of person", then, of course, it cannot serve as an identity of any sort (Gee, 2000, p.109). In the case of Mrs. Dominguez one of her affinities is a religious one. She sings at her church and is very much involved with her community. When I met her, she was engaged to the pastor of her church, and a year later she got married. She often performs good deeds with the families in her classroom. One day, as I arrived to her class I found her talking to one of the parents in private. When the parent left, she told me she was giving her information about the nearest food panty due to the parent expressed her need for assistance in this matter. When I asked her if this situation was frequent, she told me that she often goes the extra

mile to help out her families outside of the classroom needs. Finally, one of the shared characteristics that Mrs. Dominguez has with her students is the ability to communicate in two languages. Being bilingual could be considered part of you're A-Identity since you can choose when, where and with whom to use it. Both, Spanish and English are present in Mrs. Dominguez's classroom and its use help the participants make meaning, gain deeper understanding and knowledge of the language in use.

However in multicultural contexts such us cities where there are large population of Latino immigrants, the phenomenon of languages in contact can be seeing as Nature identity since both languages are lived, experienced and used in a daily basis by its members. This phenomenon is described as translanguaging (Cenoz & Gorter, 2011; García & Li Wei, 2014; Lewis, Jones & Baker 2012) and it increasingly being study in the classroom context. I will elaborate on this construct in the next section.

For the present study I will focus on two of the perspectives that Gee presents in his work. Since the focus of this dissertation involves the literacy practices in a kindergarten class and the relationship the printed material children are exposed to has on their literacy development, special attention will be given to the institutional (I-) Identity (i.e., the curriculum used, the way the state policies are enacted, and the way Mrs. Dominguez combines all these ingredients in her classroom) and the Discourse Identity, paying close attention to the media presented in class (i.e., the way children are represented in the books and videos used in class). As I argue here, children who see themselves represented in the

"classroom culture", that is, what they know and value are discussed in class, have a easier time investing in learning and making sense of the school practices.

Beside Gee, there are other authors that have worked with identities constructs. Au (1993, 1998), for example, talks about "reading identity" as a key element in motivating and promoting literacy workshops for students from diverse backgrounds. She suggested that literacy practices should focus on making literacy personally meaningful for students by drawing upon their interests and experiences, teaching skills within context, and including multicultural literature in the curriculum. Reading literature that highlights the experiences of diverse cultural groups allows students to feel pride in their own identity (Au 1993, 1998; Compton Lilly, 2006; Kendall, 2008) and heritage, explore issues of social justice, and abandon stereotypes (Au, 1993). In her work, Au offers an explanation of the achievement gap from the social constructivist perspective. She sees the achievement gap as the combination of linguistic differences, cultural differences, discrimination, inferior education and different rationales for schooling (Au 1998, p.301). As teachers of multicultural/ multilingual children, we must strive to make use of the myriad cultural resources that children bring to classrooms. Whether video games, television shows, music, or films, all of these resources can support us in our quest to help children identify themselves as readers and writers and use their evolving literacy abilities to continue to pursue authentic dreams and interests.

Aside from reading identity, some authors have looked at what Gee, 2000 calls the Institutional Identity, a set of authorities: the law, rules, traditions or

principles of various sorts that determine who you are, and the rights and responsibilities that go with a particular position (Gee, 2000, p. 102). Seeing through Gee's institutional lens, the work of Angela Valenzuela states that, for children of color, school is too often a "subtractive process" (Valenzuela, 1999: 1); that ignores the important social and cultural resources that children bring to school, heightening children's vulnerability to academic failure. In other words, Valenzuela's work works in tandem with Gee's I-identity to show how students can so easily dis-identify themselves as learners as a result of the practices that many schools engage in, especially in the example here in Massachusetts where the students' home language is completely ignored.

Further, Macedo (2006) argues that rather than providing a venue for intellectual challenge, curiosity, and growth, too many of today's American public schools perpetuate ignorance in the form of dominant cultural reproduction that undermines independent thought and goes against the best interests of our students (Macedo, 2006). These practices do not prepare students in American public schools to overcome or surpass conditions of poverty for themselves or society at large. Although there are public schools and teachers who are making a positive impact on our children, they are too few. Underprivileged children born to vulnerable circumstances are especially the most susceptible to alienating classroom environments. Too many teachers, the force of which is predominantly White and middle class, are not conscientized about on the importance of culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995). And, even if they are, NCLB's stringent and oppressive requirements make creating an environment for meaningful and

culturally relevant curriculum and teaching next to impossible. Macedo (2006) also argues that inequity and inequality are embedded within multiple facets of the American educational system. Many of the policies and practices serve to maintain social control and do nothing to eradicate poverty. Although occasional success stories emerge informing the public of how some common and/or poverty-stricken people have overcome incredible odds to rise up from their circumstances, these stories are few when compared to the many left behind to live in the grinding and debilitating circumstances created by poverty (Macedo, 2006). It is now common knowledge that districts with high concentrations of low-income and non-white students are institutionalizing high-stakes testing pressures at greater rates than for their high-income, white counterparts, thus creating even more restrictive, less enriching educational environments for the very students that high-stakes, standardized, test-based educational reforms like NCLB are supposed to be helping. Thus, taken on the whole, students whose identities fall outside of the norms established by standardization face somewhat of a triple bind because of high-stakes testing. (Au, 2009: 68).

And so, while the prospects for promising and empowering I-identities and D-identities seem grim and hopeless for vulnerable students, it is that much more important to seek out the counter-examples, which continue to thrive in schools, despite the mandates. Mrs. Dominguez and her students, I found, can provide such an example. In the next chapter, I provide details about the research context for this study.

Translanguaging and Identity

As mentioned previously, there is research evidence that points out how identity is socially constructed and that communicative interaction is a key element for identity to develop (Gee, 2000; Norton, 2000; Riley, 2007). In order to become part of a community there must be a sense of belonging with such community. This belonging can be reflected in many ways: the way one dresses, the kind of friends one has, the kind of technology we use, and the way we talk and express our selves, among other characteristics. It is important to mention that being part of a certain community cannot always be negotiated and it is highly nuanced (Pavlenko & Blacklege, 2004). Going through this rather intricate and dynamic process participants develop an "identity repertoire" (Blommaert & Varis, 2011) where they can draw from depending on the situation they are presented with. Being able to select the linguistic repertoire based on a certain situation is also part of how we adapt our identity. For minority language speakers in multilingual contexts, for example, negotiating their linguistic practices may lead to "self-conscious, anti-standardizing moves" (Gal, 2006 p. 27), incorporating a hybrid language to reflect the fluid society (Jorgensen, 2010) they live in. These identities are performed, constructed, enacted, produced, but only in interaction with others (Jorgensen, 2010, p 4). According to Garcia (2010) multilingual speakers can choose "who they want to be and choose their language repertoire accordingly" (p. 524). Even though multilingual speakers may have two or more languages to choose from, certain situations may prevent them from using these resources. This is why it is imperative to look at the individual's language choices and practices with a power

relations and inequity lens. The term of translanguaging comes as a response to a linguistic phenomena change in multilingual/multiethnic schools and communities. It has gained recognition in the last decade in the area of multilingualism (Baker, 2001, 2006, 2011; Blackledge & Creese 2010; García, 2009, 2014). For García (2014) translanguaging is defined as a flexible use of linguistic resources by bilinguals as they make sense of their worlds. Conceptually, it is an epistemological change, a new way of viewing the use of language in different social, cultural and political context, where participants allow discourses to flow, giving voice to new social realities (García & Leiva, 2014). It is important to note that translanguaging differs from code switching in the sense that the later is seeing as language separation where speakers alternate between two or more languages, while translanguaging is a more dynamic process where meaning is mediated by the use of two or more languages. It is seeing as new language' practice in a highly globalized and technological world with the purpose of facilitating communication with others making it obvious that there are no clear-cut barriers between bilingual speakers (García & Wei, 2014). Additionally, according to García & Wei (2014) there are two key elements of translanguaging: creativity and criticality. Creativity is seeing as the ability to follow or break the language rules in order to create new forms of communication. Creativity is about pushing boundaries between the old and the new, the conventional and the unconventional. Criticality is seeing as a way to question and problematize different views of political, cultural, and social phenomena through discourse. Criticality is a way to express views adequately through reasoned responses to interactions, giving voice to new sociopolitical

realities by questioning linguistic inequalities (García & Wei, 2015, p.226). The present study will demonstrate the deep-rooted relationship between identity and translanguaging as we analyze the different types of identity and the presence of translanguaging in all of them.

Translanguaging and Education

The construct of translanguaging can help us understand multilinguals' language choices within an education, language and identity framework. When looking at translanguaging in educational settings, Hornberger & Link (2012) argue that educators need to acknowledge, value and build on the multiple mobile communicative repertoires of students and their families. Students' language use can be looked at as a transformative and creative process where speakers bring different dimensions of their personal stories and experiences into the classroom (Wei, 2011). In their study, García & kleifgen (2010) describe how educators in inner city schools in New York City encourage translanguaging in emergent bilinguals in order to help them think, reflect and extend their inner speech. They add that these students use diverse language practices for purposes of learning, and their teachers use inclusive language practices for the purpose of teaching (p. 89). Furthermore, García & Wei (2015) argue that translanguaging enables students to construct and constantly modify their sociocultural identities and values as they respond to their historical and present conditions critically and creatively. It enables students to contest the "one language only" or "one language at a time" ideologies of monolingual and traditional bilingual classrooms while engaging in complex cognitive activities (p. 226).

Bilingual speakers make use of translanguaging based on their own linguistic abilities. In a study by García & Kano (2014) where they used translanguaging as pedagogy in a bilingual English-Japanese class, they noted that emergent bilinguals showed a tendency to translanguage because they were dependent on their expertise with other language practices in order to complete a task. Their study showed that more experienced bilinguals translanguaged frequently in order to make meaning and to enhance the task, demonstrating their greater autonomy and ability to self regulate (p. 270). They conclude that students in that particular class demonstrated much linguistic awareness of their own language needs and were more conscious of their strengths and weaknesses.

When thinking about translanguaging in Mrs. Dominguez' kindergarten classroom I agree with García (2011) in her study of kindergarten students at a two way dual language class. She noted that emergent bilinguals used translanguaging for six metafunctions as they develop their bilingualism:

1. To mediate understanding among each other
2. To co-construct meaning of what the others are saying
3. To construct meaning within oneself
4. To include others
5. To exclude others, and,
6. To demonstrate knowledge.

In Mrs. Dominguez class, as we will see in the Analysis chapter, her 5 years old' students were not shy about using an array of their linguistic repertoire as they communicate with their teacher and their classmates. As noted in García (2011), translanguaging among kindergarten students always included linguistic signs from their growing repertoire, accompanied by gestures, pointing, physical imitation, noises, drawings, and onomatopoeic words (García, 2011 p. 40).

There is substantial research that demonstrate the benefits that translanguaging has for literacy development among bilingual students (Blackledge & Creese, 2010; García, 2009, 2014; García & Kano, 2014; García & Wei, 2014; 2015; Hornberger & Link, 2012; Li Wei, 2011a, 2011b, Sayers, 2013). Based on this research we can say that translanguaging builds deeper thinking, provide students with more rigorous content, affirms multiple identities, and at the same time develops the language needed to perform specific academic tasks. With this idea in mind we will be looking at Mrs. Dominguez and her student's interaction in her classroom.

Professional Development for teachers Serving Emergent Bilingual Students

In the era of accountability and constant change in the public school system, professional development (PD) is a must for in-service teachers. Teachers are facing endless changes in their every day work life including curricular, technological and structural changes that requires them to be constantly taking courses. PD is one way to bring teachers up to day in their field, where most schools would schedule time during their break to do so. Even though most PD courses are in the form of one-time workshops, where an expert delivers a speech and teachers listen attentively, it has been proved that this type of PD is not effective. Based on their study Michael Garet et al., point out that in order for professional development to be fruitful and effective it need to have several core features:

> (a) ongoing (measure in years) collaboration of teachers for purposes of planning with (b) the explicit goal of improving students' achievement of clear learning goals, (c) anchored by attention to student's thinking, the

curriculum and the pedagogy with (d) access to alternative ideas and methods and opportunities to observe these in action and to reflect on the reason for their effectiveness (2001, p. 917).

Effective teachers' PD is defined as professional development that yields changes in teachers' instructional practices, which can be associated to improvements in student attainments (Odden, Archibald, Fermanich & Gallagher, 2002). According to the U.S. Department of Education, the main purpose of professional development is to "prepare and support teachers by giving them the knowledge and skills they need in order to help all students achieve high standards of learning" (U.S. Department of Education, 1996). More recently, the NCLB Act of 2002 defines professional development as those activities that "give teachers, principals, and administrators the knowledge and skills to provide students with the opportunity to meet challenging State academic content standards and student academic achievement standards" (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Such activities need to be drawn from scientifically based research and aligned with academic content standards, student academic achievement standards, and assessments. With regards to the teaching of Emerging Bilinguals, NCLB requires that professional development enhances teacher understanding of effective instructional strategies that are "designed to give teachers of limited English proficient children, and other teachers and instructional staff, *the knowledge and skills to provide instruction and appropriate language and academic support services to those children, including appropriate use of curricula and assessments*" (Ibid) (emphasis added).

Sustainable and intensive professional development is more likely to have an impact that sporadic and de-contextualized ones. Focus on a specific academic subject matter gives opportunity for hands-on work and is integrated coherently with the school life and the students' academic needs. The work of the ACCELA Alliance focused on establishing and providing an evidence-based of everyday teacher's practices as well as a theory driven approach to sustained professional development of in-service teachers working with English Language Learners (e.g. socio-cultural and critical theories of teaching and learning, Systemic Functional Linguistics, etc.). Teachers had extended opportunities for analyzing classroom data, and discussing the process of their implementation of innovations (e.g., genre-based pedagogy), while keeping in mind the relationship of this to student's learning process. The quality of professional development give by the ACCELA program could serve as a model for other programs. In the following section I will explain more deeply the work done by ACCELA.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH CONTEXT

ACCELA Alliance

The present study takes place in an urban district in Western Massachusetts where the University of Massachusetts, through funds from Title III grant, began an innovative graduate program focused on providing in-service teachers on-site professional development (Willett et all, 2009). This professional development initiative is better known as the Access to Critical Content and English Language Acquisition (ACCELA Alliance).

The ACCELA's federally funded Master's degree in Education with Licensure in ESL was tailored for teachers in "low performing schools" in Western Massachusetts. The ACCELA Alliance was created as a response to the NCLB national policies. Its graduate courses aimed at introducing teachers to classroom-based teacher's inquiry, second language learning, multicultural theories and socio-cultural and critical perspectives on language and literacy development in classroom settings. Furthermore, through their reading and research projects, teachers are encouraged to examine how their classroom practices are situated within specific socio-cultural, institutional, and societal contexts. Unlike many forms of teacher-inquiry focused only on teachers' own practices, ACCELA teachers present their findings to and engage in dialogue with school and central office administrators on the implications of their inquiry for the school and district policies.

During their course work, the teachers used video recordings of classroom instruction and scanned student and instructional materials and artifacts to analyze specific classroom interactions, curricular units, or contextual issues, which were later discussed in their graduate seminars. The first cohort started with 25 teachers and faculty from the University of Massachusetts' School of Education who were deeply committed to working with the community to work towards social justice and educational equity. Class meetings were held on site in the city of Springfield, 40 minutes from the university's main campus, after the teachers' normal school day. This meant that university faculty and project assistants, like myself, needed to go to the different school sites where all of the teachers involved in the ACCELA's professional development program worked. Most of the program's graduate seminars were held in some of the teachers' own schools, either at the library or in another conference room at a local school. When necessary (i.e. conferences, guest speakers, workshops), the meetings were held in one of the school's auditoriums or the cafeteria.

As one of the main focuses of the ACCELA program was to decentralize the typical teachers' professional development process by "taking" the university to the schools where the teachers worked, teachers participating in the program did not need to go to the university campus for any reason. All of the administrative duties involving the participating teachers were performed by the ACCELA administrator; including class enrollment, program fee payments, record keeping, etc. Only on few occasions, teachers were asked to go to the university to receive training in specific

topics such as learning how to use library services (i.e., specialized searches of the literature) and to assist for university events and ceremonies.

The teachers in the master's program were all women with three to ten years of teaching experience. Most were middleclass white women with a very few of them from other ethnic backgrounds, including Latinas and some African Americans. Faculty and staff from the university were from different backgrounds as well, completing a very heterogeneous group where different socio-cultural and academic backgrounds, as well professional experiences would come to meet each other.

As part of the program, teachers were required to take 30 credits past their bachelor's degree, and they participated in intensive courses that would provide them with the tools to better meet the needs of the increasing population of English language learners that were present in their classrooms. At the completion of the program, in addition to receiving a Master's of education, some teachers also received either a state licensure as an ESL or Reading specialist. In the case of paraprofessionals participating in the ACCELA program, they would receive and accumulate university credits towards an Associate or a Bachelor's Degree.

Regarding the academic load, the master's program was organized so that teachers would take one class per semester, one intensive class during the winter break, and two classes during the summer. The total duration of the program was three years. Teachers that could not take the classes offered through the ACCELA program, due to any reasons, had the opportunity to go to the university campus to take them. However, some of the teachers expressed they had no desired to take

classes on campus because they often felt intimidated by the university setting, and many expressed feeling uncomfortable sitting in class with college students due to the age difference between themselves and the rest of the students.

The master's program was mainly designed to provide in-service teachers with the necessary content knowledge, skills and tools to work more effectively with minority students and more specifically with emergent bilingual children. This is why there were a wide array of graduate seminars the teachers could take to meet their needs, including Theories & Methods for Sheltered Instruction in ELL, Testing, Assessment, and Evaluation, Bilingual & ESL Education, Principles of Second Language Learning and Teaching, Language and Language Learning, Teaching Reading and Writing for Content and Language Learning, Diagnosing Reading Difficulties, and Issues in Children's Literature, among others. All of these seminars were taught by leading faculty of the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts, teemed with two or three doctoral students in the Language, Literacy and Culture program.

Up to the publication of this dissertation, ACCELA scholarships and programs have supported 21 paraprofessionals and community educators from Western Massachusetts to complete their bachelor's degrees, 63 in-service teachers to complete their master's degrees and ESL or Reading licensure. All of the teachers in Mrs. Dominguez' cohort, including her, successfully graduated from the ACCELA Master's program in 2008. Moreover, administrators and instructional leaders at the school district and state level also received specialized professional development. Furthermore, the ACCELA Alliance has provided many doctoral students, like

myself, with the opportunity to gain hands on research experience and to support teachers' action research projects and conducted our own research on teaching and learning in the context of inner-city public schools in the United States.

Similarly, 34 UMass Amherst faculty members have participated in professional development, many of whom engaged in collaborative research with ACCELA participants. Because of all these efforts and initiatives, the ACCELA Alliance and its principal investigators have received many awards including the Distinguished Academic Outreach Award from the University of Massachusetts President's office in 2008, and the American Educational Research Association's (AERA) DIVISION K award for "Innovations in Research on Diversity in Teacher Education in 2012.

Highway Elementary School

Highway Elementary School (a pseudonym) is situated in an urban district of Western Massachusetts. It is one of the largest cities in Western Massachusetts (Springfield website, 2008). Latino students are 48.5% of the school population in the city compared with 11.5% statewide (Massachusetts Department of Education, Enrollment/ Indicators, 2008). The city has a high percentage of people living under the poverty line (city) QuickFacts from the US Census Bureau," n.d.)

Since the restriction of transitional bilingual education in Massachusetts in 2002, mainstream teachers in the city have been under pressure to comply with new state teacher licensure requirements to support Emergent Bilinguals attending their mainstream classrooms. Mrs. Dominguez, for example, enrolled in the ACCELA

program to meet new teaching and professional requirements under NCLB and to further their understanding of second language and literacy development.

In 2006-2007, Highway Elementary School served approximately 750 students in grades kindergarten through fifth grade, out of which 68 percent were Latino, 25 percent were African American, and 7 percent were white. Eighty three percent of all students received free or reduced price (Massachusetts Department of Education, 2007). In its 2003-2006 NCLB reporting card, the school ranked as one of the lowest performing in Massachusetts (NCLB report card, 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006). For example, in 2007, the MCAS Report Card showed that 81 percent of the 3rd grade students received a grade of "Needs Improvement" or "Warning/Failing" in Reading (see Table 4.1 below).

For the past ten years, Highway Elementary School has been training teachers in the *First Steps* approach to literacy and language development instead of implementing a scripted curriculum package for writing development, which has been amore common practice in "underperforming" schools in Massachusetts. The *First Steps* project was first developed in Western Australia in 1988 to address the needs of students whose academic and cultural needs were not being met by current school literacy practices. It was first introduced in U.S. classrooms in 1995 (Banks Street Report, 2005).

Table 4.1 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System Results 2006-2007

MCAS Tests of Spring 2007
Percent of Students at Each Achievement Level for **Highway Elementary School**
Data Last Updated on October 3, 2007.

More about the data

Grade and Subject	Proficient or Higher		Advanced		Proficient		Needs Improvement		Warning/ Failing		Students Included (#)	CPI
	SCHOOL	STATE	SCHOOL	STATE	SCHOOL	STATE	SCHOOL	STATE	SCHOOL	STATE		
GRADE 03 - READING	19	59	0	14	19	45	48	32	32	9	77	58.1
GRADE 03 - MATHEMATICS	9	60	0	19	9	41	26	24	64	16	76	43.8
GRADE 04 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	10	56	0	10	10	46	42	34	47	10	78	47.1
GRADE 04 - MATHEMATICS	5	48	1	19	4	29	36	39	59	13	78	41.0
GRADE 05 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	21	63	0	15	21	48	41	28	38	9	76	54.9
GRADE 05 - MATHEMATICS	16	51	4	19	12	32	37	31	47	18	76	48.7
GRADE 05 - SCIENCE AND TECH/ENG	12	51	0	14	12	37	41	37	47	12	76	47.7

Mrs. Dominguez' Curricular Unit

Mrs. Dominguez's curricular unit became a pivotal piece of data for this study because of the ways that it stimulated discussion among the students. During this time of the school year all of the student's identities came to the forefront and in great extent. As part of the "Teaching Reading and Writing for Content and Language Learning" class, ACCELA teachers needed to develop a unit in which they had to design the curriculum, instruction and assessment for emergent bilinguals in a content area. The course focused on an approach to curriculum planning called Understanding by Design (Wiggins & McTighe 1998), with additional and very specific attention to genre theory and genre-based pedagogy as well as to multimodal literacies. The course was designed for teachers to explore challenges that emergent bilinguals encounter in learning academic language and content in the classroom, to study theoretical and research perspectives on academic language that inform the teaching of emergent bilinguals, and to develop a curriculum project that simultaneously teaches language and content knowledge (ACCELA, 2011).

Using Wiggins & McTighe's (1998) book on Understanding by Design (i.e.,

backwards planning of the curriculum) and the Sheltered Language Instruction Protocol (SIOP Protocol), the teachers needed to design and implement curriculum that included meaningful content for her students. At the same time, the curriculum needed to develop the students' language comprehension and skills and, most importantly, it had to meet the curricular requirements for the class they were teaching. They had to think first about what enduring understandings they wanted to impart to students through their teaching, and they had to determine what performance targets showed that the students had reached this understanding. So teachers had to move backwards in their planning in order to create the unit and its activities to meet the expectations and obtain the desired outcomes. As it may be anticipated, this critically situated professional development task went against what many teachers were accustomed to when designing a curricular unit. Most teachers could create great activities to implement with their students, but they would not necessarily have a clear map of where they wanted to get with those activities. Thus, the Understanding By Design approach provided them with a clear map.

Tables 4.2 and Figure 4.1 below, display a summary of the curricular unit Mrs. Dominguez designed called "The Tasting Unit." It was a three-week unit in which the teacher's main objective was to have her students be able to categorize, sort, and organize information given to them, all under the umbrella of the tasting unit where students would learn specific vocabulary related to the four different tastes, and got to try different foods.

Students were mentioning the food that tasted in the four different groups. Among the things they mentioned in the food groups, students mentioned they had

tried coffee as one of the bitter foods. Mrs. Dominguez took note on this element and as she developed the unit, was able to bring coffee to the class for students to distinguish the bitter taste.

Table 4.2 Curricular Unit Lesson Plan

Curricular Unit Week 1				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1. Introduce the sense of tasting by reviewing all the senses with students. 2. Introduce the five senses song. 3. Re- read the tasting part of "MY FIVE SENSES" book. 3. Introduce the K-W-L chart. 4. Start with the K part of the chart and jot down what students already know about tasting (things they can taste/not taste). 5. Start the W part of the chart based on how what they know can produce questions of things they want to know.	6. Introduce the book "taste" by Maria Ruiz. 7. Jot down specific vocabulary from the book on a vocabulary chart (four boxes for sweet, bitter, salty, and sour). Place Spanish words next to English words. 8. Tell students you will try these different tastes and write each taste in the correct box. (See if students can relate back to their own experiences with the taste and produce more words that can go in the chart.) 9. Write down what we learned in the KWL chart.	10. Read the book "Let talk about tongues" by Allan Fowler 11. Talk about the tongue and how it is the main part of the body that helps to taste foods. 12. Draw a big picture of a tongue and discuss the taste buds. 13. Hand out mirrors so that students can see the papillae. 14. Discuss saliva and how it helps spread the flavors all over your tongue. 15. M&M experiment. 16. Write down what you learned in the KWL chart.	17. Discuss the words on the vocabulary chart and talk about how they relate to the tongue. 18. Divide the tongue chart into the four major parts. 19. Have magazine cut outs of food to place on the tongue according to their taste. (Use previous chart for reference). 20. Show students pictures of people eating. Have them guess what taste. 21. Have children go to tables. Tell student you will give them one food that represents each taste. Using mirrors they will have to represent their face in their journal.	22. Review tongue chart. 23. Give students foods. Ask them to show which part of the tongue is used. 24. Record whether student's like/dislike taste. 23. Try experiment with blindfolding a child and blocking nose. 24. Have all children try. 25. Explanation about the sense of smell and taste (when we have a cold). 26. Write down what they learned in the KWL chart.
Curricular Unit Week 2				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1. Review all senses and body parts. 2. Sing Five senses song and point to the body parts. 3. Introduce Eric Carle as an author.	7. Review senses and how we describe them. 8. Refer back to sound chart. Which describing words did we use? 9. Review Eric Carle books and	13. Review describing words for seeing and sound charts. 14. Introduce the idea of creating an Eric Carle book about tasting. 15. Discuss	17. Discuss previous chart and tell children they will need to illustrate what they said on a paper that will compile to be the classroom book (first they	19. Revisions 20. Compilation and drafting of title for the book. 21. Binding of the book (by teacher) 22. Front cover illustrations by select students.

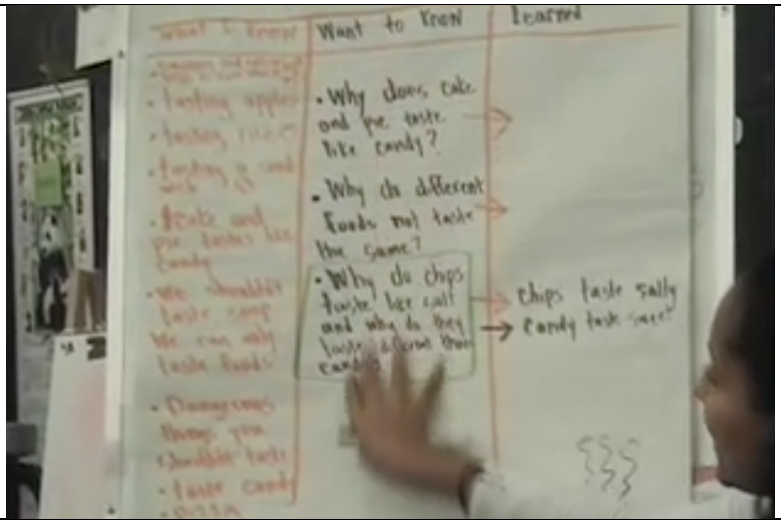
(Show his picture and talk about this illustrations). 4. Tell students you will read his book and they have to tell which sense he referred to. (Read "Brown bear Brown Bear) 5. Talk about repeating pattern of describing words. 6. Show items and describe them. Put words on a chart.	picture. 10. Introduce " Polar Bear, Polar Bear". 11. Jot down describing words in the book. 12. Show items and describe the sounds. Put words on a chart.	describing words on tongue chart. 16. Give each child a different food. Have them describe what they taste and write their name and description on a chart. (Repeat the repeating pattern in Eric Carle's book as they describe. For example "Jose, Jose, what do you taste? They will respond "I taste a sweet apple.")	will practice on a small paper and then revise on a large paper.) 18. Students will copy words from the charts and revise on the larger paper.	23. Read aloud to other kindergarten students in our POD.
Curricular Unit Week 3				
Formal Assessments (Springfield science assessments) Informal Personal assessments (students taste and describe)				

Participants

Mrs. Dominguez

Mrs. Dominguez is one of the teachers participating in the ACCELA program. She is a Dominican Republic descendent who grew up and has been working in Western Massachusetts since she got her licensure. When I met her in 2005 she had four years of teaching experience all in the same school. Her family comes from a religious background, as her father is a pastor. She is a well-educated, fully bilingual teacher, who arrived to Highway Elementary School in 2001 and worked in the school until June 2007.

Mrs. Dominguez Curricular Unit Sample



Transcript

What I know	What I want to know	What I learned
Smelling and seeing helps to know what to taste Tasting apples Tasting rice Tasting a sandwich Cake and pie taste like candy We should not taste soap We can only taste foods Dangerous things you shouldn't taste Taste candy Taste coffee Pizza, chips have salt and they taste different than candy	Why does cake and pie taste like candy? Why do different foods do not taste the same? Why do chips taste like salt and why do they taste different than candy?	Chips taste salty Candy taste sweet

Figure 4.1 Curricular Unit Sample

Mrs. Dominguez is the ideal kindergarten teacher: enthusiastic, sweet, affectionate, concerned about her students, and a very hardworking person. I started working with Mrs. Dominguez cohort in 2005 working as a research assistant to the ACCELA Alliance, but I started visiting her classroom in order to collect data, during the school year 2006-2007. As her research assistant, I was able to see her interactions in her master classes. She would often question the curriculum used in her school and the way she was asked to deliver her lessons. She explicitly mentioned how she was struggling to incorporate what she was learning in her master's degree content classes at ACCELA with what she was asked to do in her kindergarten classroom. Highway Elementary school had been labeled underperforming for the past several years based on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) results. This institutional status, as well as the pressure from the upper grades' teachers demanding kids leave her kindergarten class with more literacy skills, causes her to question constantly how she would be able to instruct her kindergarten kids to achieve the curricular content and transition successfully to first grade.

A typical day in Mrs. Dominguez class would be arriving to school before 7 a.m. to prepare for the day. She had a paraprofessional person helping her during classroom time that would arrive to the class at 8 a.m. When children arrived at 8:30 to class, she would start the day with the morning routine: going through the calendar, the weather and assigning the special helper of the day, all through songs poems and rhymes. She would also have a different question every day for the kids to answer during their "Kindergarten News" where she also announced the student

of the week. Then she would go over their schedule of activities for the day. At 9:30 a.m. she would ask them to go to centers that had been previously assigned so no more than 4 students were at a particular center at the time. Kids could go to math (i.e. working with shapes and Legos building sequences, etc.) reading (i.e. picking books that were at their level and reading them silently in the reading corner) pretending area (i.e. dress up and role playing material), etc. While most of the children would be at their centers, she would be working with a group of five to seven students in literacy development. She would use this time to asses kids, move them up reading levels and working on specific skills children needed to acquire. Kids would rotate centers every 25 minutes, so she would have a chance to work in small groups with the whole class.

Then, at 11:15 a.m. kids would gather in a circle in the rug area, the teacher would give them a snack before reading a story. The snack consisted usually of animal crackers, goldfish or Cheetos that she would buy from her own pocket as a way to help the kids stay focus before lunch at noon. This way Mrs. Dominguez helps her students' transition from daycare to kindergarten, where children used to take a nap and eat a snack as part of their school schedule, but that is no longer part of their new heavily academic schoolwork. After finishing the story and having an interaction with the students based on what they just read, Mrs. Dominguez would ask them to go to their desks and work on their writing journal. At the beginning of the year, most of their entries would be drawings and letters, but as the year progressed student were writing short sentences and small paragraphs. At 12:00 students would go to lunch with the paraprofessional and Mrs. Dominguez would

stay in her classroom preparing for the second part of the day and having lunch with other kindergarten teachers. After lunch students would go to recess and then to other subject areas (physical education, art, or computers) and would come back to the classroom at 1:40 p.m. The last part of the day would be dedicated to math, and science. The unit on testing that I analyze in this dissertation as an example of the work done by Mrs. Dominguez occurred during the science block. Finally, children would be dismissed at 3:00 p.m. and Mrs. Dominguez would stay in her classroom for one more hour in order to prepare for the next day. Twice a week Mrs. Dominguez would go to her ACCELA master classes that would start at 4:00 p.m. in a school near by Highway Elementary.

Mrs. Dominguez was under constant surveillance by her school administrators throughout the year, due to the school's low performance status throughout the different grades. This pressure to perform caused the school administrators to make the decision to make drastic changes in the school, and decide to convert the school into a Montessori program. Such dramatic change would require all teachers in the school to go through an intensive all summer training program without any monetary reimbursement. Although many teachers in the school decided to go with the change and stay for the training, Mrs. Dominguez decided she needed to move on to a different school. The amount of work she had already put into her classes and her students, and the pressure from the administration made her realized she needed to move on to a school that offered her more support and better working conditions.

After she communicated her decision to leave, the school administration decided to focus their time and energy on the teachers that were going to stay through the transition into a Montessori school, and took off of their radar the teachers that did not commit to the change. This situation gave Mrs. Dominguez the space to make her own pedagogically sound curricular changes without having to report to the school authorities. Thus, Mrs. Dominguez started applying in her classroom many of the theories and skills that were being discussed during her classes in the ACCELA program, and this gave her the tools to move away from the strict English-Only regulation into a more culturally responsive approach to teaching.

Salomé

Salomé is one of the most outgoing students in Mrs. Dominguez's class, and therefore, I chose her to be a focal participant in this study. She is 6 years old, born in the continental United States from a Puerto Rican family. She only spoke Spanish with her family. Kindergarten at Highway Elementary School was Salomé's first schooling experience, therefore, from her arrival; she had to adjust to this new environment including learning how to behave in school. Like any other student in Mrs. Dominguez class, Salomé was restlessly curious and willing to learn "how to do" school at the same time that she was learning English as her second language. It was the first time she attended any kind of formal instruction at any educational setting since up until then, she had been at home with their caregivers. Because everything was new to her, the teacher had to introduce the concept of "doing school" to her and other students like her, and had to explain simple class rules such

as asking permission to go to the bathroom, raising their hand when they needed to say something, or not falling asleep in class after lunch (unlike some kindergarten classrooms in other schools, there was no nap time allowed at Highway Elementary School).

The majority of the time Salomé was willing to participate in the different activities proposed by the teacher and position herself as one of the most outspoken students in class. She was the one who often raised her hand to answer a question even though she did not always know the answer or even how to say what she wanted to say in English. But not knowing English was not an obstacle for her. As we will see in the analysis, Salomé would go ahead to share stories in Spanish for the whole group and with the help of the teacher, would convey her message in English. Even though Salomé's test scores were not the best in Mrs. Dominguez' class, her grades were the ones that have shown the most improvement in their English proficiency. She started kindergarten with limited English knowledge and showed more academic growth through the year compared to her classmates.

<u>María Eugenia Lozano</u>

Originally from Colombia, I come from a working class family and I am the first one in my immediate and extended family to go to college. Even though my parents did not graduate from high school, they knew the importance education has in someone's future. I was fortunate enough to have the support of my parents to pursue my education and I felt that I needed to make them proud since they were making an incredible effort to send me to a catholic private school and then to the only public state university in my hometown. As I was growing up, I realized class-

differences were very salient in Colombian society and I became more aware of the inequalities that I was living in.

Teaching became my passion very early in my life, so it was the path that I took after graduating fro high school. Five years later, when I was finishing my Bachelor's Degree in Foreign Language Education at Universidad del Valle in Cali, Colombia, I was offered the opportunity to come to the United States as a teaching assistant at a community college in Washington State. After a year there, I went back to Colombia to teach for a year, before coming back to the States to start my master's program. Three years later and after working as a visiting faculty in Washington State University, I moved to Amherst, Massachusetts to pursue a doctoral degree in education with a concentration on second language acquisition and second language literacy development, where I joined the newly formed ACCELA Alliance.

As a doctoral student and project assistant for ACCELA, I was involved in different ways in this program: I helped a group of teachers gather and analyze data collected in their classroom. This included visiting the teachers during a specific time and doing interviews, video recordings, audio recording and digitizing material to be analyzed later. I also was a teaching assistant in some of the seminars that Mrs. Dominguez took during her Master's program (i.e., Children's Literature, Introduction to World Languages) so I was able to help her make connections between her class assignments and her teaching practices. As a result of coursework for my doctoral degree, I learned about critical theory and theories of agency, resistance, identity, power and discourse. I wanted to examine the interests, norms,

discourses and institutional forces bound up in the negotiation and experience of emergent bilinguals in a mainstream English classroom in a western Massachusetts school.

I attempt to make transparent my own positionality not only as a researcher but also as a former pre-school teacher and teaching assistant. I want to acknowledge my own assumptions and biases I have brought to my research (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Norton, 1997b) and describe openly the methodological processes I have used to come to my findings. Due to the fact that I am Colombian and Spanish is my first language, I felt I could relate to both the Latino students in Mrs. Dominguez' class, as well as with her, since we all share similarities in our cultures. This empathy is reflected in the analysis that is present in this study.

CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

As a project assistant in the ACCELA Program, I started helping Mrs. Dominguez by collecting and analyzing data during her second year of the master's program. My visits were an average of twice a week for nine months, and the research assignment mainly focused on a particular aspect related to the master's class Mrs. Dominguez was taking at the time. For example, she would focus on assessment or reading materials available to her students as part of the Language and Literacy Assessment class, Teaching and Evaluation, and Multicultural Children's Literature class. I wrote extensive field notes and collected over 50 hours of video recordings that focused mainly on teacher-student interactions during the Language Arts period where I was able to see students' academic growth. As I mentioned previously, one of my goals was to look at the development of the students' identity in the classroom. Due to this interest, I focused part of the video recordings on listening to and documenting student interaction among themselves, outside of the teacher-student interaction. After a few visits, I realized most of these interactions occurred when students were sent to work at the tables. The "table time" was a good opportunity to listen to the students talking about what interests them, what concerns them, and what intrigues them. It was also an informal way I found for interacting with the students and getting to know them better.

The video data collection started after having observed the class for two weeks. Again, the idea of not starting to videotape right away was to have the

students get used to having me as an outsider and the researcher in the classroom in order to make my presence less intrusive. But obviously and besides the preparation for the video recording and the data collection "tryouts," the first day of videotaping students were very curious about the camera, and wanted to look at it and touch it. As a way of getting students become more and more familiar with it, the teacher introduced me to the students. Then we all came to an agreement that the camera needed to be ignored and left alone. Besides this agreement, students were still showing their curiosity for the recording equipment. As a way of getting the students become used to the camera, sometimes I decided to turn the video screen around so they could see themselves while I was videotaping them.

Table 5.1 Data Collection Summary

SCHOOL YEAR 2006-2007 **HIGHWAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**		**Mrs. Dominguez**
Data Collection Period	**Data collected**	**Hours of classroom visit**
September	First class visits without video recording 1 Video recording	**4.5 hours**
October	11 Video recordings Data digitalizing	**15 hours**
November	Data digitalizing 1 Video recording	**5 hours**
December	Data digitalizing Data analysis	**5 hours**
January	No data collection No video recording	
February	1 Video recording Data analysis	**3 hours**
March	3 Video recordings Data digitalizing	**5 hours**
April	2 Video recordings	**5 hours**
May	3 Video recordings Data digitalizing	**5 hours**
June	3 Video recordings	**5 hours**
9 months		**52.5 hours**

Due to Mrs. Dominguez' interest in bringing her students' culture and families to the classroom, she organized several special events during the school year, including the first day of class celebration, two open houses, informal interviews with students, a show-and-tell celebration where parents were asked to bring objects that represented an aspect in their children's lives, a Thanksgiving celebration, and an end-of-the-year celebration, all of which were videotaped.

In addition to field notes and video recordings, I also scanned texts produced by the children and documented the results of some of the assessments students took during the school year. As a Project Assistant I also participated in some of the

classes that Mrs. Dominguez took for her master's degree through the ACCELA program so, as the ACCELA learning community, we were able to triangulate some of the questions, concerns, and ideas that arose during her Kindergarten classes and with her peers within the context of the master's courses.

In order to gather a systematic and rich account of data documenting Mrs. Dominguez' implementation of the English-Only state policy within the classroom, I used traditional ethnographic data collection techniques (i.e., participant observer). I wanted to know about the classroom culture and was able to gain access to the group by being consistently in the classroom, being available to help in any was that was needed. During our collaboration, my relationship with Mrs. Dominguez evolved and became very relaxed and friendly. We spoke informally during the class and during breaks. I usually stayed to have lunch with her and the other kindergarten teachers. I sensed that the informality between us helped students feel more comfortable with me during the class videotaping sessions and interviews. Canagarajah (1999) suggests that informants will sometimes rebel against what they sense is a researcher's power, even resisting volunteering information. In my case, I felt that the relationship between Mrs. Dominguez and I was not merely as a researcher- informant, but it was an open and collaborative one where we were helping each other in our particular goals. During our conversations after class, sometimes Mrs. Dominguez would comment on how a particular activity had gone or confided information about a particular student and his/her family. For instance, one day a parent of one of her students came and wanted to speak privately with her. The mom only spoke in Spanish and needed help to get social services. Mrs.

Dominguez explained to me later that she gave the mother instructions on where to get free food. She gave her an address and directions to the nearest food pantry where she could get what she needed. Later, she mentioned to me that she opened herself to help her families at different levels, and that she felt she had a commitment not only to her students during class time, but that she cared for their well being outside of school as well.

Talking about this incident with the other ACCELA project assistants in the doctoral program, I learned that Mrs. Dominguez' behavior was unusual, even though the teachers in the program were very committed to their students and most went the extra mile to help their kids during class. All of the teachers in the master's program worked in schools with a great percentage of students who qualified for the free or reduced price lunch, but very few teachers' position themselves in a situation like Mrs. Dominguez did.

In this study I provide-verbatim transcriptions of the data without attempting to change any grammar, punctuation, or wording. Excerpts are generally short and those specific words and phrases to which I refer in my analysis are bolded within the data and referred to in the analysis. Within dialogue excerpts, I have abbreviated Mrs. Dominguez' lines with the initial "T', Salomé, my focal student's pseudonym, my intervention with the "ME" initials, and the students that were not focal in the study with the initials, "St".

Along with the thick description (Geertz, 1973) of the community being studied in this ethnographic study, there is the need to add depth to such description by coding for themes in the data. This is to say, I coded salient and

repetitive stances that are recurrent and that can be analyzed to explain a certain pattern in the every day lives of the participants. These codes emerged from the data and not the other way around. In order to code the data I revised the video recordings and field notes and tabbed them using a qualitative analytical software package called Hyper Research. This particular software allows me to digitally code my data and organize it by a particular theme or code while creating direct links to particular data samples and artifacts (i.e., video recordings, sample students' texts, images, etc.). Figure 5.1 below displays a sample of the coding system within the Hyper Research Software environment.

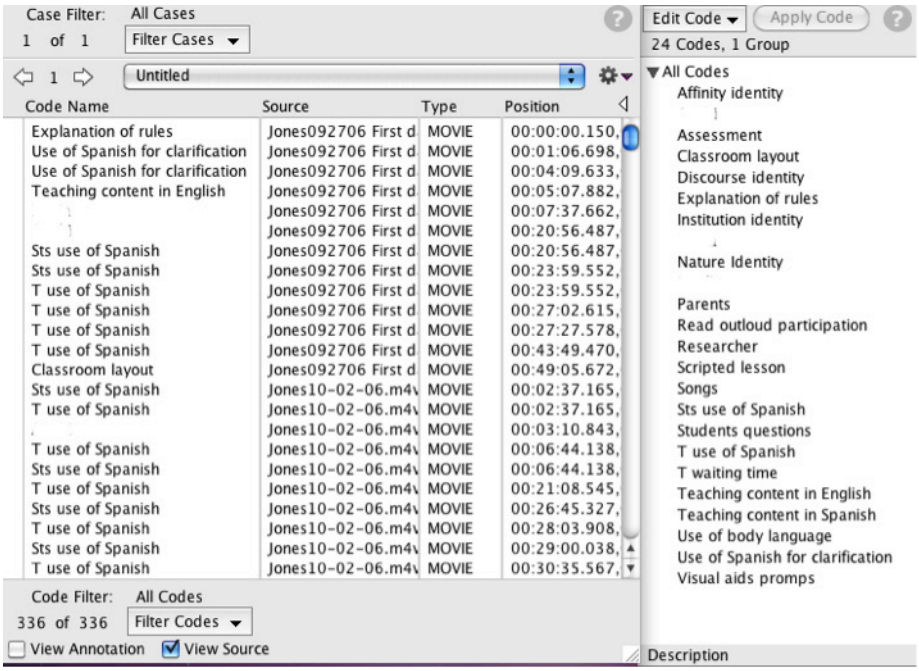


Figure 5.1 Hyper Research Coding

Data Analysis

Discourse Analysis

Throughout this dissertation, I analyze language-in-use (Gee, 2001), where language is a medium for creating perspectives, enacting different social identities, and carrying out various social activities. Gee's (1996) differentiates between upper case "Discourse", referring to broad social, cultural, and ideological processes, and lower case "discourse" referring to ways of using language within face-to-face events and similar situations. In this approach, language both "reflects and constructs the situation or context in which it is used" (Gee, 1999, p. 82).

Gee (1999) further explains that language is a tool we use to make certain things significant (or not), to engage in a certain activity, to get recognized as enacting certain identities, signal what relationships we have, would like to have, or are trying to have with others, relay a certain perspective on what is appropriate or valuable, make certain things connected or relevant, and to privilege certain sign systems and knowledge. Discourse, then, is a tool that people use to build and recognize identities. Discourses are embedded in institutions and involve props that help with recognition. A particular Discourse can involve multiple identities and we can ask which of these identities a person is seeking to enact and which are being attributed (the person is being positioned in that identity). As a tool or "thinking device" (Gee, 2005, p. 51) Discourses lead us to ask certain questions about language-in-use.

When we talk about discourse analysis, we need to talk about *situated meaning* as a tool for analyzing language (Gee, 2005). Words have different meanings depending on the context in which they are used and the social and cultural groups

to which the speaker/writer belong. These meanings are negotiated in interaction between groups that are often in competition over things like power and knowledge (p 70). These discourses or identities change over time and with new experiences. We can get to know people's Discourse models by observing what they say and do and by looking at the texts, media, social practices, social and institutional interactions, and diverse Discourses that influence them (Gee, 2005).

Discourse analysis was most useful analytical lens for this research study given the amount of classroom talk on the transcripts. Additionally, discourse analysis provided me the opportunity to look carefully at the identity constructs to pull out salient features that spoke to each of the focal identities.

Ethnography

The present longitudinal ethnographic study (Dyson and Genishi, 2005) is derived from a much larger collaborative qualitative study designed by my academic mentors in the ACCELA Alliance- professors Theresa Austin, Jerri Willet and Meg Gebhard- regarding the literacy practices of emergent bilingual kindergarteners. Through this collaborative professional development and research project, I engaged in extensive field work and data collection activities and my particular focus in this study is on the impact of national and state level language policies on the everyday literacy practices on Mrs. Dominguez' kindergarten class. Therefore, the present study draws on qualitative research methods and uses concepts and techniques associated with discourse analysis to offer some interpretations of the challenges teachers and students face under constraining educational reform and language policies.

An ethnographic approach allows me to examine the actual everyday literacy practices of the study participants, leading to "thick descriptions," that may provide valuable insights into cultural patterns of this social group (Geertz, 1973). As I would give an overview of Mrs. Dominguez work during the school year, I wanted to pay special attention to the curricular unit she developed for the class "Understanding by Designed" that focused on creating a backwards planning unit focusing first on the enduring understanding she wanted her students to have and then, create activities to achieve those goals.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS

This analytical chapter is divided into two parts: part one looks at the whole school year and the way students identities emerged based on the sociocultural dynamics of the classroom literacy practices as directly connected to the school, the school district, state and national policy levels (e.g., Mandated curriculum, Massachusetts Question 2, and NCLB). This macro- analysis of the identities across the academic year provides insightful information about what and how external factors affected the every day classroom practices. The second part of the analysis looks at Gee's (2000) types of identity viewed in single events throughout the school year. In this second part of the analysis, I show which kinds of identity were more salient among the participants in the study through microanalysis of the curricular unit on Testing. Specifically, by looking at the four types of identities (Nature, Institution, Discourse and, Affinity) proposed by Gee (2000) I can see how external and internal factors influence what happens in Mrs. Dominguez kindergarten class. By doing this in-depth analysis I look at the every day interactions in order to document any change over time in the classroom and to answer the following research questions:

1. How is the emergent bilinguals' identity constructed, (mis)represented, and (un)supported in the classroom under the Question 2 environment?
2. How Question 2 affects and transforms the literacy identities of emergent bilinguals?

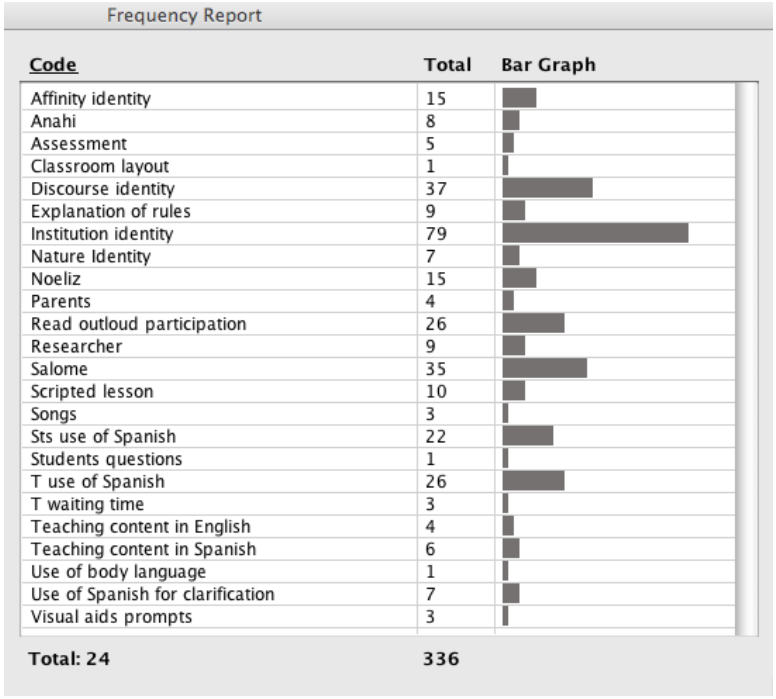
3. How is the emergent bilingual's identity changing or not over time as the school year progresses?

Identities enacted in Mrs. Dominguez Classroom Across the Year

The single event analysis presented above provides powerful insights about what goes on in Mrs. Dominguez classroom with regards to the types and modes of interactions among students, and student and teacher during the *Language Arts Block.* By doing microanalysis of these events I can look at the different identities that are salient in the everyday interaction, and the way they are supported or not by the teacher. However, since the construct of identity can provide several levels of analysis, looking only at those individual events would constrain my analysis of how the language policies at the school, state, and federal level are influencing (or not) what the teacher does in the classroom and how these policies at the macro level affect the local decisions the teacher makes when teaching her emergent bilinguals. Therefore, in the second part of this analysis, I analyze the data at the macro level in order to observe and identify how these four different identities are present, absent, or over-represented throughout the academic year in order to answer the third research question of this study as to how is the emergent bilingual's identity changing over time as the school year progresses.

The results of a study report generated using Hyper-Research software show that out of the 26 different codes I used when coding the data (e.g., video recording, field notes, classroom artifacts, student tests, etc.) the coding results for the different identities are as follows: The Institutional identity emerged as the more

salient one with 79 entries, fallowed by Discourse Identity with 37, Affinity identity with 15, and finally Nature identity with 7 entries.



Frequency Report

Code	Total	Bar Graph
Affinity identity	15	
Anahi	8	
Assessment	5	
Classroom layout	1	
Discourse identity	37	
Explanation of rules	9	
Institution identity	79	
Nature Identity	7	
Noeliz	15	
Parents	4	
Read outloud participation	26	
Researcher	9	
Salome	35	
Scripted lesson	10	
Songs	3	
Sts use of Spanish	22	
Students questions	1	
T use of Spanish	26	
T waiting time	3	
Teaching content in English	4	
Teaching content in Spanish	6	
Use of body language	1	
Use of Spanish for clarification	7	
Visual aids prompts	3	
Total: 24	**336**	

Figure 6.1 Hyper Research Identity Report

But in order to find out where all these identities took place during the school year, I decided to create a chart using the Hyper-Research data. The following figure shows the four kinds of identity proposed by Gee (2000) and their representation throughout the year. What this graph shows is that in Mrs. Dominguez' classroom the institutional identity was very salient during the first two months of the school year. As I mentioned earlier, for many of the students, this kindergarten class was their first schooling experience. They needed to be explicitly instructed on how to handle scissors, how to take care of crayons, and how to follow a routine. Mrs. Dominguez spent quite a long time setting the grounds in order to start the school year content curriculum.

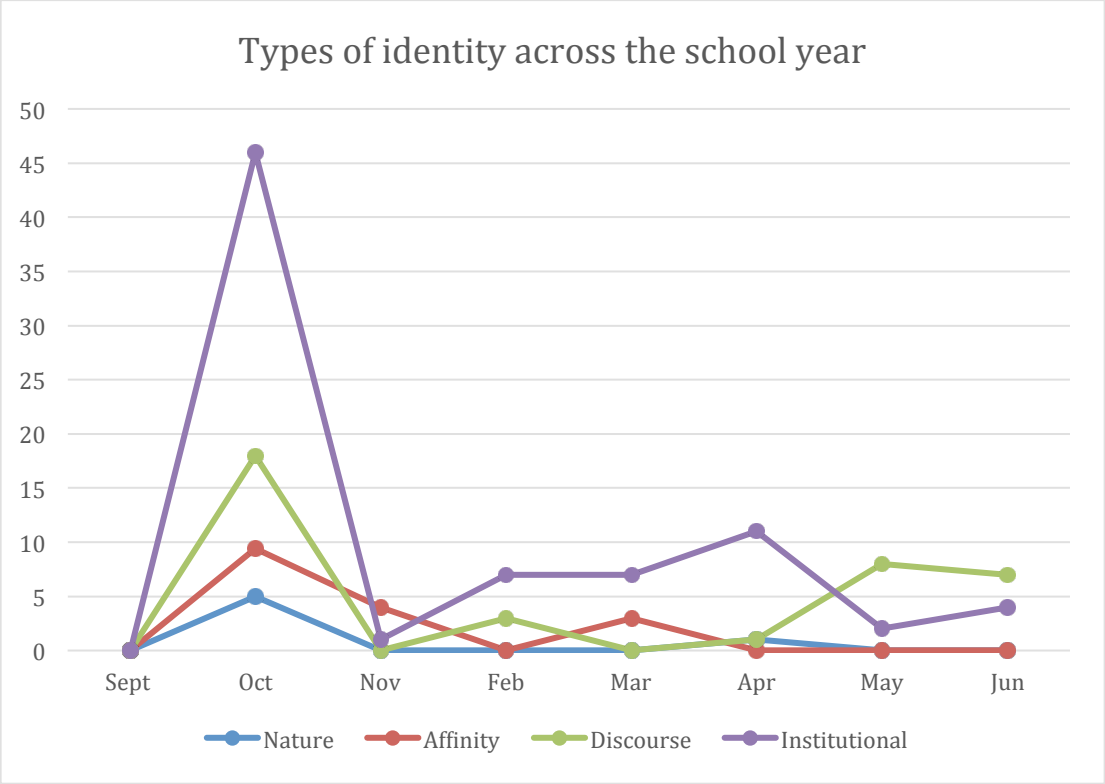


Figure 6.2 Identity Across the Year

When coding for institutional identity I was interpreting what the teacher said or did that was a representation of the school policies or the national policies she had to follow. The I-identity code included instances where the teacher remainded her students of the classroom rules and school behavior, when she was following closely her curriculum or delivering a test. It is important to note that Mrs. Dominguez is following closely the curriculum she was given. The use of the new curriculum in her classroom and the fact that she felt she needed to have the actual book in her lap in order to follow closely where she needed to be at a particular day, shows the great pressure she felt from outside to perform according to the national standards. In Mrs. Dominguez own words: "I have to memorize the new curriculum, it is important for me to be precise when delivering the lesson so I can understand

how the curriculum unfolds and see if it works" (Personal conversation, October, 20th 2007).

If we look at figure 6.2 we can see that after the students settled in, and the teacher felt comfortable with the new curriculum, the Institutional identity diminished during the following months, but it was always present. During the month of April, the month of standardized testing, that her kindergarten students had to go through in this particular district, we see the I- identity raised again. As a test administrator, Mrs. Dominguez had to follow a very strict procedure for the test prompts making use of her institutional identity.

The Discourse identity is the next identity that came the most through out the school year. When coding for D- Identity I was looking for the way other people talked about Mrs. Dominguez as well as the way she talked about her students. This is to say, the way she was perceived by others and how she perceived other people. Mrs. Dominguez was constantly positioning herself as a learner in her classroom and her students saw her as a person with whom they could relate to. The fact that students felt they could share what was in their mind and felt safe to share their stories at a personal level shows how she was perceived in the classroom as a trustworthy person. Most of the students wanted to share personal stories with the whole class, either related or not with what was going on in the lesson at the moment. Mrs. Dominguez made sure she provided the environment for this kind of sharing to take place every day in her class. In looking at figure 6.2 we can see that the Discourse identity diminished as the school year passed but rose again at the end of the school year towards the months of May and June. This is due to Mrs.

Dominguez's invitation to the parents to come to the class and talk about their children. Mrs. Dominguez sent out an invitation to all the parents in the class telling them about a new unit she was about to start. The name of the unit was "My world and I". Her original idea was to have the parents come and bring objects that would represent their son/daughter. This activity had a great turn out and about half of the parents came to the sharing time. This allowed the parents to be part of their children's class. At the same time, it gave the children a special time to be the center of attention. Among the visits that I was part of, there was Salomé's mom. She came with a basket full of her daughter's personal belongings: toys, movies, a special clothing piece she wore when she was a baby, and she also came with her pet, a small turtle, which turned out to be the hit of the day. Most students wanted to know about her pet and Salomé became the class expert that had the most information about turtles to share with her class. Since Salomé was talking about what interested her, her mother was in the classroom describing her likes and dislikes, this whole event positioned Salomé as an important member of Mrs. Dominguez class.

The third identity that came very strong was the affinity identity. Most of the events that were coded for affinity dealt with the use of Spanish in the classroom, as they show the commonality among the majority of participants. The students who spoke Spanish in the classroom wanted to belong to the group of Spanish speaking peers in the classroom. This A-identity was salient at the beginning of the school year and continued its presence as the year progressed. During the months of September through November, both the students as well as the teacher were getting

to know each other. Since kindergarten was the first schooling experience for most of the kids in Mrs. Dominguez' class, most of them brought their home language, Spanish, and made use of it while they were in the process of acquiring the English language. Consequently, they were translanguaging during the Language Arts block, which was a clear violation of Question 2. This situation could have had legal consequences for Mrs. Dominguez since " the parent or legal guardian of any school child shall have legal standing to sue for enforcement of the provisions of this chapter, and if successful shall be awarded reasonable attorney's fees, costs and compensatory damages" (Question 2 Ballot, 2002).

There is also an isolated event for which I used the affinity code during the month of March (jones031407). This was when the Mrs. Dominguez was doing a read aloud with the whole class and she had to step out of the classroom. Since the assistant teacher was away at that moment, she asked me to finish the activity for her. So, I sat down in the teacher's chair and finished reading the book. I was surprised by Mrs. Dominguez's request, because this was the first time she ever asked me to work directly with the kids. Up to that point, I was interacting with small groups of students as I was videotaping their activities and the interaction between the students and I was spontaneous. Even though up to that point in time, the events I had coded as affinity were mostly interactions in Spanish between the teacher and the student, and among students, I interpreted this event as part of the affinity identity since Mrs. Dominguez positioned me as an educator who could help her out when she needed it.

The last identity that was present in the classroom was Nature identity. Mrs. Dominguez started the new school year getting to know her students and finding out about their background. But it was not until she started her "Tasting Unit" in October, that she got to know what her students liked to eat and their preferences for snacks and drinks. When developing this unit Mrs. Dominguez wanted to expose her students to the different tastes (salty, sweet, bitter and sour) and brought to the class foods that would represent the four groups. Among the bitter group, she brought black coffee and spinach. Students were very hesitant to try the coffee but some said they had tried it before at home. The situation elicited a conversation about what some kids eat at home and how it differs from other students. This was an opportunity Mrs. Dominguez used to bring up cultural differences among the students reflected in the ethnic foods they were mentioning.

Beside the Tasting Unit, Mrs. Dominguez created another unit by the end of the school year. It was called "All about me" and consisted in having parents come to class to share with the whole group information about their kids when they were babies. Most of the parents came to the class and they talked about their children's as infants, they brought pictures and baby clothes they used, as well as they favorite book when they were babies.

Even though I present here the different identities separately, the next part of analysis will demonstrate how complex these identities were when analyzed at a particular event and how they could be intertwined making them very difficult to isolate of one another. As we will see, the interactions presented could be analyzed using one particular lens and could be seeing as a combination of identities.

Identity viewed in single events through out the school year

This second part presents the data, paying close attention to single events that are a salient display of Gee's four kinds of identities as presented during the classroom interaction in the *Language Arts block* of Mrs. Dominguez class. A microanalysis of this type gives information about the daily life of the classroom community and the way the interaction among the students and the teacher influences the way they see themselves and the others in the classroom.

During a preliminary analysis of the data looking at individual events during the *Language Arts Block,* and using HyperResearch Qualitative Research Software (2012), I created codes to name the kinds of interactions that were salient in those particular events. My original intention was to see at a micro-level how the teacher-student, student-student interaction was leading to the creation of a particular classroom identity. In doing so, I was looking at isolated events that were giving me information about what was happening at a particular moment in the classroom. Then, each of these event codes could more easily be classified as demonstration of a particular identity. This first look at the classroom routines provided me with insightful information about the every day interaction among the participants, about what kind of relationships were created, and about the way Gee's four different identities were displayed during those interactions. The presentation of these identities and how each played out in the data are explicated in the following paragraphs.

Affinity Identity

The Affinity Identity, A-Identity henceforward, also discussed by some researchers as "communities of learners" (Brown, 1992; Brown et al, 1994) as cited in Gee 2000, has group collaboration as main ingredient for learning. A-identity refers to the way the teaching and learning takes place in the classroom. A classroom community that fosters the A-identity believes that knowledge is not carried by just one person (i.e. the teacher), but instead the whole group constructs it through collaboration and interaction. In settings like a kindergarten classroom, for example, the learners and the teacher can create an empathy group (A- identity), where all can bring valued ideas to the discussions that are validated by the teacher and also by the rest of the group. However, as these interactions take part at an institution (i.e. the school), this empathy stills retains a good deal of power (i.e., by the school, the teacher, and/ or the researchers), (Gee, 2000). In the case of Mrs. Dominguez' classroom, the A-identity emerged during the informal interactions the teacher has with her students. It is obvious that she identifies herself as a Spanish Speaker and makes use of this common language in the classroom any time she needs to as a way to create a connection with her students. As stated in the theoretical framework section, in the following transcript we will see that translanguaging in Mrs. Dominguez' classroom is used to mediate understanding, serves as a tool to co-construct meaning, and to include participants (García & Wei, 2015). Besides, as she tries to incorporate the camera and myself into the classroom' routine, she decides to acknowledge these new changes, and decides to make me part of the class as well.

The transcript of the first video recording made in Mrs. Dominguez's class at the beginning of the school year demonstrates how she builds the rapport with her students positioning herself as a learner in her own classroom. In this particular transcript, A-identity, was salient. Mrs. Dominguez and her students were still getting to know each other and getting used to the classroom routine (I-identity), but at the same time she wanted to relate to her students at a personal level.

This transcript took place the third week of class (end of September) and illustrates the linkage between A-identity and the learning that takes place in her classroom. As the school year began, students started getting to know each other and began making connections among themselves and with the teacher, trying to make friendship bonds in the classroom. At this time, the language the students use is decisive in creating the affinity group. In this particular classroom, the Spanish-speaking students composed of 75% of the student body, would mostly interact among themselves; students that only spoke English (15%) gravitated toward one another, and the bilingual ones (10%) mostly connected with their English-Only speaking peers, allowing for translanguaging to takes place.

The task, as part of the routine when the teacher finished reading the book during the language arts block "Read out loud" time, consisted on students working individually on the tables. What the students were working on included tracing short sentences like: "A Kite" on a piece of paper, and coloring the picture of a kite and other words as well.

Dominguez092706 Min 24:00
Affinity Identity

1. T: A… listo, vamos a leerlo juntos. Ready? Point to the word "A". (looking at S2)
2. S1. Maestra::
3. T: A kite.
4. S2: kite
5. T: This is a kite.
6. S1: Yo no puedo ver a esto. ((I can't see that)) (Student points at the camera)
7. T: You can fly it in in the sky when there is wind. Kite.
8. S1: Yo no puedo ver nada ((I can't see a thing)) (pointing to the camera)
9. T: And you pull it. The string.
10. S1: Inaudible
11. T: (to S1) Forget the camera is here. O.K? We are going to forget the camera is here.
12. S2. A kite.
13. T: A kite. Una chichigua, tu sabes que es una chichigua? que se usa para volar en el cielo. (A kite [a Dominican word for kite], do you know what a kite is? It's used to fly in the sky)
14. S1: Es una barrileta. (It's a kite. [A Mexican word for kite])
15. T. Una barrileta, good. A kite.
16. S3. A kite
17. S1: A kite
18. T: Good. A kite. And what is this? (T moves on with the rest of the activity)

This transcript is an example of what happens usually in Mrs. Dominguez class when there is the need for negotiation of meaning. In this transcript we can see how the teacher is interested in getting her students focused on the task they are working on, and not get distracted by the presence of the camera. At the same time, she is working with a student that needs help with the classroom routine by giving them the tools they need to work by themselves on the tables. In line 13 Mrs. Dominguez sees the need to use the Student 1 home language to clarify the concept of "kite". As the teacher knew her student's available languages, she decided to use translanguaging as a pedagogical tool to help her. Mrs. Dominguez initiates the interaction in Spanish after trying to get the student attention and making few

attempts of explaining the concept to the student in English (Line 5, 7, 9). Since Mrs. Dominguez is not familiar with the word "kite" in the student's Mexican Spanish dialect, she offers her Dominican Republic version of kite, and asks the student: "¿tu sabes lo que es una chichigua?" The student then replies by saying the word that is familiar to her, "Es una barrileta". This interaction allowed the teacher to acquire a new word (Line 15) by acknowledging it in the interaction, showing her students she is learning from them as well as her students are learning from her. The fact that the teacher positions herself as a learner in her own classroom shows an empathy for her students, as she is one more language learner in the class. By inverting their roles of teacher-learner, she is able to position herself at the same level of her students. The fact that Mrs. Dominguez constantly puts herself in situations like this one, something that could be considered unusual for a teacher, making every interaction as a collaboration in the group instead of a one direction flow of information. By using translanguaging, the teacher re-affirms the connection she has with her students and is able to use their share home language as a powerful tool for teaching and making connections with the students that go beyond the classroom interaction. Finally the teacher is able to move on to another concept, as she saw Student 1 was able to relate to a familiar word and that she was able to make a connection. By accepting and responding in a positive way to the student intervention, the teacher value their "share world" as immigrants coming from different backgrounds and sharing a common goal of learning.

The A-identity can be seeing in action in Mrs. Dominguez class throughout the year, in every event there is interaction among the participants. The way Mrs.

Dominguez has meaningful conversations and interacts with her class shows evidence of the way she creates and supports this affinity group in her classroom. The teacher positions herself as not being the only one carrying and transmitting out knowledge, but the students are also positioned as being in charged of co-constructing it through interaction among them and with the teacher. This group is built on the base of the use of Spanish as the common language of the students and the teacher. According to Hornberger (2005) translanguaging allows learners to maximized their learning "when they are allowed and enabled to draw from across all their existing language skills (in two+ languages), rather than being constrained and inhibited from doing so by monolingual instructional assumptions and practices" (p. 607). It is also used as a way to mediate second language learning and to build on the students' funds of knowledge (Moll, 1992). In this classroom, Spanish seems to be the strong link that holds them together and that lets the students and the teacher grow academically and personally.

Due to every single event can have traces of different kinds of identity, the previous transcript is portrayed as an example of the A-identity as the main salient identity presented, but it has also traces of other identities as well. For instance the Institutional identity is very tangible during this excerpt. It is clear that Mrs. Dominguez is aware of the policy when in line 1 of the transcript she initiates the interaction in Spanish followed immediately by the English intervention. After a few attempts to explain the concept to the student in English (Line 5, 7, 9) she moves to Spanish in lines 13 and 15. These external policies, being reflected on the teacher as her Institutional identity, shape the way teaching and learning takes place in her

classroom. As shown in the analysis of this particular events' transcripts, each of these identities can be present in an isolated teacher-students interaction, but they all can be appear in a single interaction, showing the vey rich and complex social processes students and their teacher are participating in.

Discourse identity

Continuing with Gee's identity theory, the Discourse Identity is shaped by characteristics others ascribe to a person. That is, the way a person is talked about and recognized in public has a strong impact on one's identity. At the school level, children learn from what they read and what is read to them. It is crucial that children see themselves portrait in the kind of literature that is available for them, and to see their culture, not only represented in their classroom but as well as validated by the teacher and the school. Unfortunately the district-issued mandatory curriculum material available for the students to read is lacking a cultural connection and focuses merely on the language task (i.e. phonemic awareness) making it very difficult for students to make connections to their everyday lives. As mentioned before, identity is not only shaped by the individuals who interact with the children (i.e. teachers and caregivers), but also by the literature that is available to them, the policies that are shaping how teaching is enacted, and the curriculum used.

Up to now, we have seen Mrs. Dominguez schedule in her classroom, and how she works to make sure the students are ready to learn (i.e. always having the class material prepared ahead of time, bringing a snack for the kids to help them stay focus on their long schedule, provide her families with the information they

need to get social services), but is the every day interactions she has with her students that we can see the way she personally supports her emergent bilingual students and how she builds on her students previous experiences in order to bring them to the level she wants. Every day during the "Read out loud time" in the rug area during the Language Arts Block students are encouraged to express themselves as they interact with the prescribed Harcourt Trophies Curriculum books she has to use. Most of these books are specifically tailored to practice phonemic awareness, so Mrs. Dominguez works with one series that compiles all the sounds in the English alphabet and every two to three days she introduces a new sound to her students.

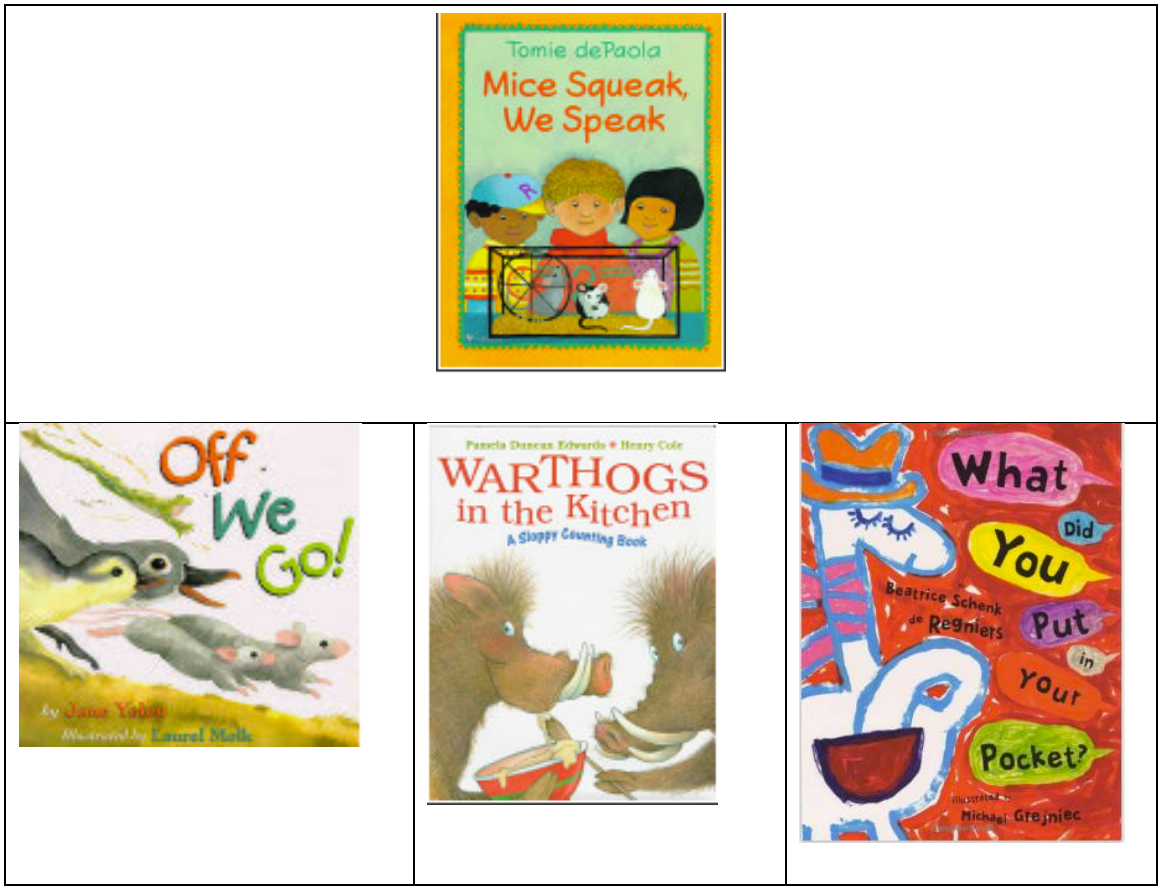


Figure 6.3 Harcourt Series Book Sample

In order to keep her students' attention Mrs. Dominguez always is receptive to her students' reaction to the book she is reading. The teacher welcomes all sorts of student's comments (some of them off topic) during this time. Students feel welcomed to speak in the language they prefer to use (most of them use Spanish), but at the same time the teacher makes use of this time to help them build their vocabulary by paraphrasing in English what they had enunciated in Spanish and asking them to repeat in the target language.

In the following transcript the kindergarteners were listening to Mrs. Dominguez's story during reading time. As explained before, students use this time

listen to the stories presented in the curriculum, most of them created to follow closely the task they are working on (i.e. Phonics). Mrs. Dominguez also uses this time for whole class sharing of personal events or news, that could be either related or not to the story of the day. This particular day they started the language arts block by reading a book called "*Mice squeak, we speak*" by Tomie de Paola, a book about animals and the noises they make. As mentioned above, the teacher takes advantage of this "socializing" time to reinforce the classroom rules as well as to help students acquire the target language. Before going ahead with the story reading, the teacher reviews the different parts of the book and does a picture walk with the students. As I said before, Mrs. Dominguez follows closely the curriculum she was given. Since the school changed the curriculum used the previous year, the teacher feels the need to familiarize herself with the new curriculum and places the actual book on her lap and reads from it on a couple of occasions during the lesson delivery to make sure she is following it accordingly. In the next transcript Mrs. Dominguez is reading the animal book and several students wanted to comment on what they were listening to. The teacher wants her students to participate but reminds them of the class rules.



Dominguez100206 min46:30
Discourse Identity

1. Ss. (All are exited about the book and are taking at the same time. Some want to participate and are not raising their hands to get their turn at talk)
2. T: Shh. (T addressing a student) If you would raise your hand, then I could have picked you. (T looks for another volunteer) Salomé.
3. Salomé: Cuando iba pal hospital. Cuando mi mamá iba pal hospital ella dijo que nos montamos en el carro porque había mucho de esos volando por allí. (pointing to the book page where there are pictures of bats) [When I was going to the hospital, when my mom was going to the hospital she told us to get into the car because they were a lot of those flying around]
4. T: When you got in the car with your mom, you saw a lot of… What are these? (pointing to the picture of bats)
5. Salomé: a bat
6. T: What are those? (looking at the whole class)
7. Ss: [talking]
8. T: Bats
9. Salomé: Son murciégalos [the student mispronounced the word in Spanish by inverting the last two consonants]
10. T: Murciélago. A bat. Say bat.
11. Ss: Bat.
12. T: Bats. A bat. No son "estos". No se llaman así. Todo tiene un nombre. Salomé. ¿Cómo se llaman? Birds?
13. Ss: No

14. T: Butterflies?
15. Ss: No
16. T: Bats. It has a name. You saw a bat. When your mom went to the hospital you saw a bat. You saw bats flying around.

Salomé, the focal student, is always enthusiastic about participating during the reading time. As this is her first schooling experience, she had had only a month of formal English language instruction at the time this video recording was done, which is why most of her utterances are in Spanish. Mrs. Dominguez, as an experienced and culturally responsive teacher, is able to provide for Salomé, and students like her, an environment where she is welcome use translanguaging, but at the same time, and under the umbrella of Question #2, (Institutional Identity) the teacher encourages her students to build their English language acquisition by always repeating in the target language after the teacher or by listening to other students enunciate in English. Furthermore, in the above transcript we can see that Mrs. Dominguez's nature identity (i.e. Dominican) allows her to understand Salomé's Spanish which is marked by a Caribbean Spanish oral register. Also, a student mispronunciation of the word "murciélago", (by saying "murciégalo"), is a very common morphological and phonological mistake among young speakers of Spanish.

As it has been a month since the beginning of the school year, the teacher is reinforcing the classroom rules (turn 1) and working on increasing her students' English vocabulary (turns 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15). We can also see how Mrs. Dominguez welcomes Salomé's comments (although later in the month Salome would get in trouble for not always following the classroom rules and forgetting to

raise her hand when asking for a turn at talk). The teacher knows she can count on Salomé to encourage her classmates to participate in class. Even though the teacher discursively positions Salomé as an English language learner (D-Identity) in turns 4, 12 and 16 above, Mrs. Dominguez's intervention is used as a teachable moment for all the other students who are participating of the activity. In turn 4 for example, the teacher knows Salomé has learned a new word, bats, but the student is not able to incorporate this new word into her everyday life yet. She uses this opportunity to help her acquire it by using it in context and asking her to replace the work "estos" as many language learners would say to refer to an unfamiliar term, for the new word "bats". It is important to consider that even though the material presented in the curriculum (animal sounds book) does not present any kind of culturally relevant information, it is the interaction among the participants that make this activity a teachable moment not only to introduce new vocabulary, but to create a community where every student who wants to say something can be heard and acknowledged.

As mentioned earlier, students' participation is encouraged at any time during the different school events. But, it is during the reading time that students tell more stories and bring to the floor their background knowledge, concerns, experiences and most importantly, their personality most of the time making use if translanguaging to convey meaning. The above transcript is an example of how students comment on their everyday life and bring these comments to the rug area where they can be heard and valued by their peers and by their teacher. Mrs. Dominguez makes sure her students have an opportunity to express themselves if

they choose to, and makes sure the other students can benefit from the intervention as well. In this transcript we can see from turn 1, Mrs. Dominguez is trying to get her students to follow the routine of group participation as she praises the student who raises her hand before talking.

It is important to note that the stories that are told during reading time are not solely those of the students. Mrs. Dominguez also participates actively in the storytelling that happens in her classroom. After Salomé finished her intervention, the teacher followed it with one story of her own. She told the class that a bat once entered her apartment and flew around everywhere:

1. T: You know what? Mrs. Dominguez … Let me tell you a story. Mrs. Dominguez had a bat in her apartment, and it was flying everywhere. I was very scared. And it flew… it flew out.
2. St: You have to get down.
3. T: Yes, you have to dock. Bats … they really can't see. They have very good ears but they can't see. When they fly around they really can't see things. They fly in the dark. They like the dark.

Mrs. Dominguez's intervention elicited other mini-stories from a couple of more students. The whole lesson took 20 minutes, and all students participated actively from the start. After they finished with the read out loud, the teacher transitioned to an animal sounds game to play with the students before going to lunch.

Mrs. Dominguez cannot always give her twist on the curriculum provided to her. Due to the restrictions that she has with the curriculum she is asked to use (i.e. her institutional identity), the materials available for her to read to her class were heavily limited to phonetics books that were out of context and provided little content to talk about. There are several instances in which Mrs. Dominguez

demonstrated her frustration towards the material available for her to use and she commented that many times the material would provided little to no conversation material or in some instances, it would go against what the teacher would tell her students. (i.e. a story's text using instructions for the child protagonist to go up the slide, the counter of the everyday experience of going down the slide as she herself tells them on the playground). Another example is the book "Warthogs in the Kitchen: A Sloppy Counting Book" (Edwards & Cole, 1998), in which children were supposed to listen to the story of four warthogs trying to bake some muffins, but the whole purpose of the story (as explicitly said by the teacher at the beginning of the lesson) is to listen to rhyming words, and to count to ten. The curriculum' activity to accompany the book asked students to draw the part of the story children considered the funniest. This activity was particularly troublesome for the students since the students did not considered the story to be funny. These kinds of activities where there is a disconnection between what was first explicitly stated at the beginning of the activity with what was asked at the end showed to be problematic for the students who tried to make sense of these stories. It was hard for the teacher to make herself understood when she prompted her students to do this task due to the fact that the children had a hard time trying to figure out what was the funny part of the story. Since the beginning of the activity, they were guided throughout the reading time to focus on the sounds presented in the book and also they were asked to count different elements of story. Suddenly, the script required the teacher to ask tem to notice or comment on the funny part of the story. Thus, the request came out of context to the story's stated purpose in the script. In fact,

none of the children could come up with something funny that happened on the story, perhaps because it was not a funny story to start with. It was the teacher who had to give them ideas on what they could draw. After she prompted her students for funny moments in the story, the children were able to bring some of their own to draw.

Institutional Identity

Gee defines the I-identity as a label given to a person or a group of people by an authority. The I-identity is regulated by laws, rules traditions or principles of various sorts (Gee, 2000 p. 102). It is not something that a person can get by himself or herself or something you are born with, but instead, it is a label given to the person by merit (being hired as a coach in a league) or by imposition (being diagnosed with ADHD).

The I-identity is present in Mrs. Dominguez' class at different levels, starting with the curriculum that is used, the way the teacher divides her class time, the layout of the classroom, and most importantly the language that is used for instruction. All of this is driven by the institution, namely the school she teaches at, the district the school is within, the state of Massachusetts, and relevant, current federal policies impacting teachers.

As part of Question 2 in the state of Massachusetts, the law mandates that teachers are allowed limited use of any language other English in the classroom. The teacher can use the students' home language only for clarification purposes, keeping the intervention short and then, moving on to the target language, in this case, English.

Even though the official language of the school and in fact, the whole state of Massachusetts is English, Mrs. Dominguez was able to avoid compliance with the law due to the fact that she was not under the surveillance of the school's principal. As the school was turning to a Montessori school, Mrs. Dominguez, as well as other teachers in the "Highway School" decided they did not want to commit to a whole summer of unpaid Montessori training and therefore, resigned. This situation put her outside the principal's radar, and gave her the possibility to explore, make informed decisions, and to put into practice what she was learning in her Master of Advance Studies at the University of Massachusetts where she was also getting a license on teaching English as a Second Language.

As a way to create a lesson plan to explore language development among emergent bilinguals and as part of a class requirement in the ACCELA program, Mrs. Dominguez developed The Tasting unit. Mrs. Dominguez decided to create a separate lesson from her Harcourt Teacher's Handbook in order to use authentic, culturally and academically relevant material with the aim of getting her students' interests and have them develop their critical thinking skills that lack in her current curriculum.

This transcript is also taken during the Language Arts block. Students are sitting down in the rug are making a big circle as Mrs. Dominguez is reviewing what they have been talking in science. All students are eager to participate during the rug time. Most of them are shouting out answers without raising their hand, but the teacher wants them to follow the classroom rules for participating and raising their hands when they have something to say. She praises the students who follow the

rule and tries to ignore the ones who do not. During this transcript Salomé, one of the focal students is shouting out her answers without raising her hand throughout the event, but towards the end, the teacher calls her attention and reminds her directly what the rules for participating are.

Dominguez102306 Min 00:02:06- 00:05:27

1. T What have we been talking about in science? Who can tell me what we have been talking about in science?
2. Salomé: the five senses
3. T: (ignoring Salomé's response) Henry, I like the way you raise your hand, what?
4. Henry: about the five sense
5. T: about the five senses. Who can remind me what the five senses are?
6. Ss: raise their hands
7. T: Anahi.
8. Anahi: hearing
9. T: Samaris
10. Samaris: Tasting
11. T: tasting. Hearing, tasting…
12. St: touching
13. T: touching. Kevin
14. Kevin: seeing
15. T: Seeing. Good job! Seeing and one more..
16. Paola: smelling
17. T: smelling! Wow, you guys did a nice job
18. St: and feeling
19. T: we said touching
20. St: and feeling
21. T: yes, feeling. When you touch you feel things. Wow, boys and girls you did a nice job remembering those five senses. We talked about four of them. Which ones did we already talk about?
22. St: hearing
23. T: we talked about hearing
24. St: smelling
25. T: we did smelling
26. St: hearing
27. T: we did hearing and we did what?
28. Salomé: tasting?
29. T: we did not, did we do tasting yet?
30. Sts: inaudible

31. T: Henry
32. Henry: touching
33. T: touching! Good! We did four. And I am going to draw them here. (T moves to the easel and grabs a marker to draw) we did. (The letter P letter falls from the easel and Erica grabs it and gives it to the teacher) That's OK Erica. Leave it there. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Eyes up here. Come up. (Sts gather next to the easel). We did seeing, and we talked about things that you can see and we talked about describing them, what we see, what color they are, what shape they are. We talked about seeing. (T draws a pair of eyes at the bottom of the page)
34. Salomé: smelling!
35. T: we talked about sss…smelling (T draws a nose next to the pair of eyes). Things that you smell.
36. Salomé: and tasting!
37. T: we talked about smelling, we did not talk about tasting yet
38. Sts: seeing, touching smelling, touching, hearing
39. T: touching! We went on our touching walk… (T draws a pair or hands next to the nose) And we picked things outside. Remember when we went outside and we touched the surfaces, what does it feel like, does it feel bumpy, does it feel smooth. Does it feel rough or soft.
40. Sts: hearing
41. T: sit criss-cross apple sauce (talking to the whole class). We talked about seeing, smelling, touching…
42. St: Puedo tomar agua? [Can I drink water?]
43. St: hearing
44. T: hearing. Whether the sounds are loud, or soft, or do they stop and start
45. Salomé: or are on going
46. T: right, are they ongoing sounds
47. Salomé: when… one day my dad…
48. T: No, Salomé, you did not raise your hand. I am sorry but the rule is if you have something to say you have to raise your hand. Melanie, can you move? Can you sit over here? Only one person goes to drink water (T moves on with the activity without Salomé's intervention)

At this time of the school year (end of October) Mrs. Dominguez is still reminding her students about the classroom rules (the I- Identity), and how to behave when they interact as a whole group. Up to now Salomé has been a student who loves to participate and interact with everyone in class. She usually sits near the teacher and her interventions are usually taken into account by the teacher as well as by the rest of the students. But in this particular interaction, the teacher

decided to make Salomé accountable for not following the classroom rules. In line 3 Mrs. Dominguez praises Henry for raising his hand and gives him the turn at talk even though Salomé had just shout out the correct answer to the question the teacher asked. Because Mrs. Dominguez was not explicit about reminding Salomé of the classroom rule and did not review the ways of doing School (Gee, 1999), throughout the interaction we see her participating without raising her hand. In lines 28, 34 and 36 Salomé is participating and her interventions are being validated by the teacher and taken into account when discussing the topic. But it all comes to an end when in line 47, Salomé decides to share a story without raising her hand, but is stopped by the teacher in line 48. Mrs. Dominguez decided to pause the class to tell Salomé explicitly about the classroom rules and how she is not following them and decided not to give Salomé the floor.

Even though translanguaging does not seem significant in this transcript, we see one student making an intervention in line 42, and it seems that it was not picked up by the teacher, but it is not until line 48 that the student gets permission to drink water. Mrs. Dominguez is delivering a lesson, but at the same time is reinforcing the classroom rules. When the students ask for permission to drink water, she does not acknowledge it right away but wait for the right moment to stop the lesson and address other business. By conceding the student the request, the teacher is validating the language they have in common and supporting her language choices.

Mrs. Dominguez has been a very charismatic teacher with her students, accepting of their differences and supportive of their learning process. The previous

transcript shows us a teacher that wants all her students to learn how to do "schooling", she wants them to follow the classroom rules. When talking to Mrs. Dominguez at the end of the school day about the tasting lesson, she mentioned, "there has to be a moment when students have to be reminded of the rules. It is the end of October already and they need to know how to participate" (personal conversation, October 23, 2006). But taking a closer look at the interaction and analyzing what is going on with Salomé, we see her expressing her nature identity (explained in detail in the next section), this is to say, participating when she wants to say something without raising her hand and not acquiring the institutional identity of raising one's hand to participate. At the same time, we see the teacher's institutional identity of doing school. This means reinforcing the class rules, praising the students who follow them, and providing guidance to the ones who do not.

Nature Identity

As its name describes it, nature identity refers to the qualities you are born with and that which defines who you are. Being a twin or being left handed are personal characteristics that do not come from the outside, instead, this "power" comes from nature (Gee, 2000). However, the nature identity occurs only because it is being recognized and defined by an outside force (i.e. Discourse and dialogue, affinity groups, etc) where identity is constructed. It is because that left handed people, for example, are being recognized and talked about as "creative people" in social interactions, that this acquires a pre-existing meaning already circulating in society.

Let's look at Nature identity in a kindergarten classroom. This transcript is also taken during the "Tasting Unit" the teacher has been working on during the month of October. Mrs. Dominguez is working on the different tastes and she wants her students to try something different: a bitter food. She decided to bring spinach leaves for the students to eat and she gets some resistance to try this new food item. The teacher sees this "acquired" resistance to green leaves from the students as something to laugh about. They have been trying salty, sweet, bitter and sour food and making a chart of all the things they have tasted. For this particular segment, they just finished tasting salty popcorn. It is important to say that all the students have been participating actively during this time.

Jones 102506 00:36:06-00:38:38
Nature identity

1. T: One last thing. One / last /thing/
2. Sts: Water
3. T: for today. (T gets up from her chair and grabs a bowl full of spinach leaves from a cart that has been carrying the food for the "Tasting Unit". T grabs a leave and starts giving spinach to the students). Taste it. Put it all on your mouth and taste it.
4. Henry: A mi no me gusta eso! (Henry puts his hands covering his mouth and rejects T offerings)
5. T: Taste it.
6. Salomé: ¿Qué es?
7. T: Just put in your mouth my friends, you need to taste it. Try it. How do you know you are not going to like it if you don't taste it. (Some students stretch their hands to get a spinach leave, others make disgusting sounds).
8. T: taste it. OK. I am going to taste it (T puts an spinach leave in her mouth).
9. Sts: (disgusted) Eeww! (T continues handing in spinach leaves to the Sts.)
10. St: dame uno! (Sts extend their hand to get a spinach).
11. St: this is bitter
12. St: salado
13. St: I wanna get one I wanna get one! (stretching his arm to get it)
14. Sts: Eeww!
15. Sts: Ummm! Yummy!
16. T: how do you know how it taste if you have not taste it. ¿Cómo sabes…como sabe..?

17. Sts: salado!
18. T: Salado? ¿Como los chips?
19. T: OH! Look at Jean, they way he tastes it.
20. Salomé: yo me lo comí. (Some students get up and go the trashcan to spit out their spinach form their mouths. T. smiles)
21. Sts: bitter!
22. T: Do you want to taste it (talking to a student. T sits and goes back to the chart they have been working on). Ok. My friends. Now, salty like the popcorn?
23. Sts: No! Bitter (other students start coughing and get up and spit their spinach on the trashcan. T laugh out at the students for spitting out the spinach)
24. T: sweet like the chocolate?
25. Sts: No! Bitter!
26. T: sour like the lemon?
27. Sts: No!
28. T: what is it?
29. Sts: Bitter!
30. T: Bitter! (Sts come back from the trashcan and sit down, other students are laughing at the whole situation) It is good for you! OK. Come up. Listen, who watches Popeye?
31. Sts: (Some students raise their hands)
32. T: Popeye, in the cartoon, Popeye eats spinach. That's what makes him strong. Sit down. Sit down.

This is another transcript from the Tasting unit Ms. Dominguez created as part of her "Teaching Content for Language Development Course" requirement for her master's degree. In this transcript we are seeing Ms. Dominguez letting her students express how they truly feel about tasting something new and not so popular among them as candy or popcorn. As I mentioned before, the teacher has given her students an array of foods to try and to develop the language skills they need to talk about the different tastes. During this transcript, the teacher wants her students to try something bitter and decided to bring spinach leaves for her students to eat. She knows her students are going to show some resistance and in line 8 the teacher decides to show her students that she is willing to try it as well. Even though some students are expressing verbally their concern about eating

spinach and are making disgusting sounds, (lines 4, 9, 14) some other students are raising their hands and are asking to get a piece to try (lines 10, 13, 19). When Ms. Dominguez finished giving out the spinach leaves, some students get up and go directly to the trashcan to spit it out. The teacher is very conscious the students may not like the flavor of this particular food and sees no problem on having the students demonstrating their dislike by throwing the spinach away in the trashcan (lines 20, 23). At the same time she wants to make a reference that the students may be familiar with and asks them if they know Popeye, and reminds her students that Popeye eats spinach to get stronger. In this particular interaction, Mrs. Dominguez portrays herself as a caring person, reminding her students of the nutritional value of spinach as represented in the media and, at the same time, is giving students space to express themselves freely. The fact that many students got up and went directly to the trash receptacle could have been taken as a disrespectful act that would go against the classroom behavior and respect towards the teacher. But instead, Mrs. Dominguez reacts with humor and waits patiently for students to come back to the rug in order to continue with the activity. By respecting their likes she is respecting who they are as individuals. It is not possible to impose someone to like something, so we see that Mrs. Dominguez is giving her students space to decide whether they like spinach or not and opportunity to enact their agency.

Regarding the use of the language in this particular transcript, we can see how the students participate in the activity in the language they want to use and the whole class acknowledges and accepts the translanguaging that is taking place in that particular situation. It is natural for students to mix in the languages in the

class as most of the students (75%) come from a Puerto Rican or Mexican background where the two languages have a place in their communities and thus in class. Mrs. Dominguez allows translanguaging in her room as a strategy to teach children holistically including all her students' background and language expertise. By doing so, Mrs. Dominguez is not privileging one language over the other, but treating them as equally important as her students are.

In a similar instance towards the end of the school year we continue to see how caring and charismatic Mrs. Dominguez is. She continues to accept students' intervention in the language they want to use and validates their contributions to the discussion they are having. The following transcript was taken in April, just two months before the end of the school year. While students have proven to master the content of the kindergarten curriculum, as all of them have leant to read and write in English, we can see how Spanish is still accepted and validated in their literacy development as it gives them agency.

Dominguez040907 min 8:14- 11:18

1. T: Who rides a big yellow bus? Listen to the question. Who comes to school in a yellow bus?
2. (Some students raise their hands)
3. T: Debbi rides a big yellow bus, Paola rides a big yellow bus, Oswaldo rides a big yellow bus. (T addressing John) Do you come to school in a big yellow bus?
4. John: (Nods yes)
5. T: ¿Tu vienes en un bus Amarillo? [Do you come is a yellow bus?]
6. John: (Nods yes)
7. T: Are you sure? I do not know… I think you walk with your brother and sister. (T makes a walking movement with her two fingers) or do you come by car? (T makes a driving car gesture with her hands)
8. John: In a car
9. T: In a car. Is not a big yellow bus. You come in a car.

10. T: (Addressing the whole class) what else can we see? We know it is a big yellow bus. What else can you notice? What else can you tell me by looking at the pictures?
11. Ss: Chlidren
12. Salomé: there are children looking out the window.
13. T: Yeah, that is a good prediction. Children go on buses. Where? So, where are these children going?
14. Ss. To school
15. T: Yeah, they could be going to school or going from school to home. The big yellow bus. Do you ride a bus to school Paola? Or your mom drives you to school?
16. Paola: Mi mamá takes me to school.
17. T: Good. Noeliz. (other children start talking) Noeliz. It is Noeliz turn to speak, then it is your turn (addressing a student).
18. Noeliz: Algunas veces yo voy caminando porque mi papá no se despierta y él es que guía el carro [sometimes I go to school walking because my dad does not wake up and he is the only one who drives the car].
19. T: OK, are talking about the bus, we are talking about getting to school. Ok.
20. Salomé: Mrs. Dominguez. My mom takes me to school and I go in a bus home.
21. T: Ok.

In line 5 we see Mrs. Dominguez wants to make sure John understands the question, as she knows he does not ride the bus to school. She switches to Spanish and makes use of gestures for clarification purposes. Also, Mrs. Dominguez, as a knowledgeable kindergarten teacher, makes use of repetition when talking to her students. We see in lines 1, 3, 10, 13, 17, that she either repeats the question or restates it in a different way to convey the message to her students. As we have said previously, the teacher is not the only one switching from English to Spanish. The students also make use of translanguaging when participating in class. In line 18 we can see that Noeliz wants to add to the conversation they are having by adding an intervention in Spanish. Mrs. Dominguez acknowledges it and moves on.

It is important to note that the use of translanguaging in Mrs. Dominguez class began from the first day of class and continue throughout the school year. Students were expressing themselves in the language they prefer, and the teacher

used the available languages to scaffold learning and co-construct meaning with the students. In the last curricular unit, developed by Mrs. Dominguez during the month of June, "All about me" the parents were invited to the class to showcase their children. As many of the parents spoke only Spanish, most of the presentations were in that language. This allowed students to also participate in Spanish and be part of the activity. As students were leaning English throughout the year, they were also making use of their home language and creating a third space where translanguaging was available and accepted. Students finished the school year with a party where the parents and family were invited and asked to bring food to share. Mrs. Dominguez took advantage of the time where the parents gathered in her class to praise her student's achievements and this was done in Spanish as well.

CHAPTER 7

IMPLICATIONS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study supports the idea that literacy practices in the classroom that include culturally relevant content and high teacher-student, student-student interactions in the language that is available to them have a strong link and affect students' identity, and therefore, their academic competence (Au, 2009, García & Wei, 2014). A critical literacy perspective (Freire & Macedo, 1987; Kress, 2000; Lo Bianco & Freebody, 1997; Luke, 2000; New London Group, 1996) informed my exploration of Mrs. Dominguez and her students' literacy practices. This study also presents evidence of how validating students' funds of knowledge (Moll, 1992), and their cultural and linguistic background overtime leads to greater academic achievement and improved classroom performance. The inclusion of translanguaging in her classroom adds to the educational space Mrs. Dominguez is creating for her students to feel more inclusive of their learning process as well as making sure all her students feel validated and taken into account by giving space to new sociopolitical realities that question linguistic inequality (García & Kano, 2015).

It is important to note that children of color from low economic urban areas are constructed more frequently as "high risk" readers than middle class white students (Gee, 1999; Wohlstetter & Malloy, 2001). What is different about Mrs. Dominguez class is the way her students are acquiring their second language by giving value to their first language. Throughout the whole year it was interesting to see how the teacher was able to convert monolingual Spanish speaking students to bilingual ones, providing them with ample opportunities to express their thoughts

in the language they preferred at the moment and validating their ideas in a classroom that is supposed to be English only by law. We see Mrs. Dominguez' use of translanguaging as a strategic alignment (Ramirez, 2008) to the imposition of the language policies in Massachusetts (i.e. Question 2). It is used when she felt the need to include her students' home culture, to clarify or to make a connection with her students. By allowing translanguaging to take a presence in her classroom she is engaging with her students at a different, deeper level. She is providing differentiated instruction to students that needed extra support in their home language (García & Wei, 2015) and, at the same time, is keeping her students engaged in the activities she has designed for them.

From the student's point of view, one can say the presence of translanguaging in the classroom allows them to participate freely, to show they are following the topic, to demonstrate understanding for what is going on during the discussions, and to select their language preference for a topic that is related to home so it can be better expressed in the home language.

Working within a system that often marginalizes lower socioeconomic students from a very early age, urban public school teachers need to facilitate their students' access to multiple academic registers while incorporating the students' funds of knowledge (Moll, 1990) into their classroom experiences. The use of translanguaging, as a present linguistic phenomenon available in many classrooms through out the United States is a tool that may be used to help multilingual teachers to mediate both language learning and school achievement.

In addition, teachers must encourage students to draw upon available resources that both scaffold their understanding of a specific genre and encourage them to creatively transform them. For emergent bilingual students, who often need explicit scaffolding, reinforcement of content through multimodal representation, validation of their own cultural backgrounds, and a purpose for the reading or writing, fosters their language and content comprehension in mainstream classes (Moll et al, 1992; Partridge, 2004; Peregoy & Boyle, 2000).

Even though Mrs. Dominguez is fully bilingual (Spanish and English), many monolingual teachers can adopt translanguaging in their teaching practices and be prepared to be bilingual teachers by developing an understanding of the cultural and linguistically differences that exists in their classrooms. This awareness can lead to meaningful interactions between participants where tolerance is the norm and everyone is welcome to participate in the language of their choosing. The curriculum of a classroom that incorporates translanguaging in their teaching needs to reflect the sociopolitical, socioeconomic, and sociohistorical diversity as represented in the student's population (García & Wei, 2014). By acknowledging, accepting, and incorporating this diversity into the everyday curriculum, teachers and students become experts and learners at the same time, creating a class dynamic where everyone learns from each other. Future studies addressing translanguaging and identity in emergent bilingual could focus on the strategies that successful monolingual teachers use when trying to incorporate diverse languages into their classroom practice. These studies would give light to many in service

teachers that struggle to incorporate linguistic diversity in their everyday classroom interactions.

Moreover, this study is aligned with the idea that there are multiple "voices" or elements playing very important roles in the classroom (Engestorm, 1995, Rossell, 2002) that affect at different levels the student's performance. Aside from the teacher-student interaction, there are a number of key elements in analyzing how identity is constructed and co-constructed within the classroom. This is to say, from the building structure, the way the students are sitting in the class, the curriculum used by the teacher, to the time allowed for students' interaction among each other, the language used to interact with each other, everything has a meaning that is socially constructing the classroom and their participants' identity as well.

In looking at the interactions that occurred in Mrs. Dominguez' classroom throughout the school year, and drawing on the theoretical framework proposed above, I show evidence of the complicated effects of a locally enacted language policy (i.e. Question 2), student-teacher mediation of learning, and students' identity construction as a way to support the argument that early attention to identity in relation to school literacy practices is needed in order to maximize students' engagement and potentially prevent drop-outs among Latino learners. It is important to note that the identities proposed by Gee (Institutional, Nature, Discourse and Affinity) instead of been viewed as isolated instances, need to be seeing as intertwined and co-constructing each other in the every day classroom interactions. They cannot be seen as separate or distinct entities because they operate side by side with one another. As stated in the analysis chapter, when

coding for identity in Mrs. Dominguez classroom for example, the way she reminded her students to follow the classroom rules could clearly be identified as institutional identity (school policy reinforcement) but also this same event could be coded as discourse identity (the way teachers talk), or could be affinity identity (a Latina teacher reminding her Latino students to follow the rules in order to succeed).

Also, this study shows how the micro-politics enacted by Mrs. Dominguez in her classroom have demonstrably achieved very positive results in terms of students' achievements at the end of the school year. In institutionalized school contexts, if a child is able to "perform" successfully in the multiple academic registers and contexts of schooling (New London Group, 1996; Schleppegrell, 2004), s/he will have access to richer facilities and resources in her/his academic life (e.g. gifted and talented programs, after school honors programs) (Darling Hammond, 1995; Olsen, 1997). By providing instruction in the student's home language, allowing translanguaging to take place during class interactions, even though it was not allowed, the teacher was able to meet the needs of her students by bridging their two worlds together.

In her classroom, Mrs. Dominguez made several curricular decisions during the school year that had a direct impact on her students' performance: she created two units that differed from the Harcourt curriculum ("The Tasting Unit", and "All about Me"), she modified the testing prompt to create a more contextualized version of it, she brought material to the class outside of the curriculum provided. Unfortunately, since these modifications were done without the formal consent of the school, the success in Mrs. Dominguez's class could be perceived as a result of

the official school politics instead of the implementations done by the teacher to fulfill her students' needs.

Looking closer at Mrs. Dominguez student's interaction one can see how the context of the classroom shaped the language production of the students. This is to say, when students were engaged in what was going on, they were able to produce more orally and in written form, than when they were not invested at all. This study supports the idea that validating personal interest leads to greater academic achievement and improved classroom performance. Throughout the school year, Mrs. Dominguez' students were allowed to express their beliefs in what they value, and where they come from. In Mrs. Dominguez classroom we could see how language and literacy practices become "identity construction practices" in which the perspectives of self and other are exchanged in the roles that learners take on as private, public, and social selves (Shin, 2010). At the same time students are:

> […] learning how to perform as members of a social group and simultaneously as individuals, language learners experience processes of questioning, constraining, acknowledging, or changing self against specific normative practices and other conflicting discourses shaping social life (Shin, 2010 p. 82).

The elementary school classroom is an essential site where children are first exposed to particular identities as "low" or "high risk" learners (e.g. see terminology used in Dibels testing materials, 2005). In Mrs. Dominguez's class I can see the use of the testing profiles as a way to learn about each student's background, but not as a determinant on how the student is going to perform in her class. Even the tests

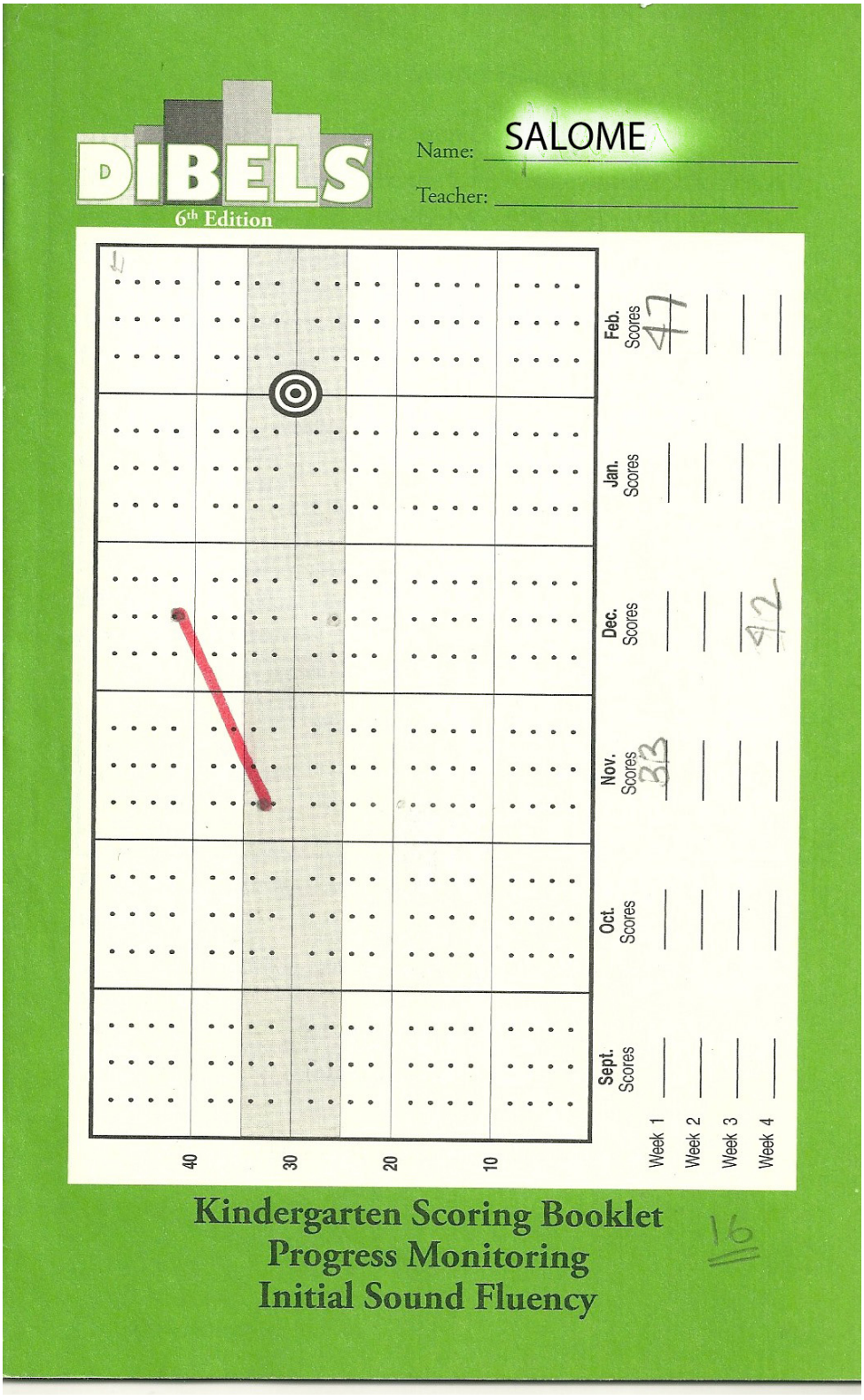
that she administers during the school year are not seen as 100 percent reflecting what the student is able to do in class. After one of the tests was administered, Mrs. Dominguez reflected on how unfair it was to evaluate children in a different way she usually teaches them. She explicitly mentioned how she does a picture walk with the kids before start reading any book, and how, by doing so, she is able to bring the students' awareness of the cues that link the written words and the pictures in a book. By reflecting on the evaluating process, she was able to go back and re-do an evaluation with a student, so she could follow the routine students were familiar with. Mrs. Dominguez also mentioned that the unclear pictures in the book usually confuse students rather than help them with comprehension. In an interview I had with her after a miscue analysis with one of her students, she mentioned how the book portrayed a picture of a happy child, but the accompanying text indicated that the child was scared. In another instance of book analysis discussion, (jones030507_b), Mrs. Dominguez mentioned how one of her students was trying to read a text by looking at the pictures to get some clues, but the pictures were showing a boy going up a slide. As I mentioned previously, since the illustrations contradicted the student's experience with going up the slide's stairs and down the slide every time they go outside to play, when the student found herself reading the sentence "he went up the slide" she corrected herself and read instead, " he went up the stairs". What the student was trying to do was to make sense of her everyday life and to link her experiences with her reading strategies. This time even though the student was right, and the book portrayed a "wrong" message, the student was marked wrong for her logical answer. It is imperative that students have contact

with real literature that portrays not only what they are able to read, but that focuses on their real lives and realities. Literature for emergent bilinguals should serve them as mirrors, windows, and doors. Students need to see themselves reflected in the literature they read so as to affirm who they are and their communities are. Obviously they also need to be introduced to wider perspectives in the world. Thus, they also require windows through which they may view a variety of differences (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). Scripted lessons fail to anticipate the culturally and linguistically diverse student's actual experience. Culturally responsive teachers who o recognize and address the script's failure to serve their students, need to be policy makers in the classroom to take action, as Mrs. Dominguez routinely did.

Finally, my study suggests that teachers who critically and systematically examine their classroom practices, the academic and social development of their students, and the nature of classroom interaction and student work are generally more effective in supporting students' learning and advancing the teachers' own professional development (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Newmann, King & Youngs, 2000; Weinbaum et al, 2004). Therefore the need for ongoing teachers' Professional Development that goes outside the margins of what has traditionally been done is essential to serving the needs of today's students.

APPENDIX

DIBELS EVALUATION RESULTS FOR FOCAL STUDENT



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