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Translanguaging Practices and Perspectives of Three Bilingual Teachers

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TRANSLANGUAGING PRACTICES AND
PERSPECTIVES OF THREE
BILINGUAL TEACHERS

A Dissertation

by

LILLIAN RAMOS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
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The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

August 2023

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August 2023

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ABSTRACT

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This is an ethnographic case study that explores and examines the translanguaging practices of three bilingual teachers in a rural elementary school in deep south Texas.

Translanguaging guides this analysis.

Keywords: translanguaging, bilingual education, after-school programming

DEDICATION

Dedico este trabajo principalmente a Dios, por darme la fuerza necesaria para culminar esta meta. A mi querida familia; con mucho esfuerzo y cariño, les entrego este trabajo, esto es para ustedes.

Mis padres, hermanos, tías, tíos, primos, abuelitos, amigos y compañeros, por todo su amor, sus oraciones y por motivarme a seguir hacia adelante. A mis sobrinos, ser la tía de ustedes es lo máximo en mi vida, los adoro con todo mi corazón.

Finalmente, en recuerdo amoroso de una gran maestra, Rosa E. Pacheco.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The global pandemic continues to affect education, and the full repercussions on education have yet to be determined. The opportunity gap refers to ways race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, English proficiency, community wealth, familial situations, and/or other factors contribute to the lower educational aspirations, achievement, and attainment for certain groups of students. The opportunity gap was an existing issue prior to the COVID-19 crisis; now, in the aftermath of the pandemic, the opportunity gap has become more evident, especially in bilingual education students: “The “opportunity gap” frame shifts our attention from outcomes to inputs – to the deficiencies in the foundational components of societies, schools, and communities that produce significant differences in educational, and ultimately socioeconomic – outcomes” (Carter & Welner, 2013, p.3). Being a bilingual student has been seen as a deficiency; however, after the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures, the opportunity gap became more prevalent between emergent bilinguals and English-speaking students. The pandemic took what was already an issue and made it more apparent.

A big issue that contributes to the opportunity gap, aside from the COVID-19 learning loss, is bilingual education becoming subtractive to make way for English only instruction. Schools use the standard English language as the main language of instruction instead of students’ native language or instead of using both languages.

Therefore, I will focus on the concept of teacher language ideologies and use the concept of translanguaging as a guiding principle of this empirical research within after-school programming.

Research is still taking place on the effects of COVID-19 impacting student learning; however, based on the research already published, we can infer the opportunity gap became even greater. Kuhfeld et al. (2020) suggest the extended time out of school will almost certainly affect student achievement, and that impact is hard to estimate given all the unique aspects of COVID-19 on schooling as well as on society. This opportunity gap seems even greater for Latino students as they are the largest and most rapidly growing ethnic minority in the United States, yet academically, they are falling dangerously far behind their peers (Gandara & Contreras, 2009).

When it comes to the Latino opportunity gap, the focus is far too often focused on language as opposed to any other factors: “Although Latinos have suffered many of the same inequalities as blacks and other minority groups in schooling – inadequate and overcrowded facilities, underprepared teachers, inappropriate curriculum and textbooks, and segregated schools – the civil rights focus on education for Latinos has been primarily the issue of language” (Gandara & Contreras, 2009, p.121). The scapegoat for the opportunity gap seems to usually be the language barrier. Too often bilingual students are automatically viewed as low performing students. The language of instruction versus the daily conversational language students are allowed to use in schools has long been debated. Advocates for bilingual education emphasize the benefits of maintaining students’ native language, having first-hand experience in this by being a bilingual elementary school teacher for fourteen years, this partially motivated me to conduct this study.

This study was motivated by my experience as an elementary bilingual education teacher in the same school in which this research took place. I grew up in the Rio Grande Valley and attended elementary school in the same town as our local college. After completing my undergraduate degree in education, I taught at the school where this research took place. This study grew out of my desire to explore how bilingual teachers enact their language ideologies within their classrooms because of my personal experience with struggling to meet the demands of district and state exams as well as supporting my students' language. I wanted to know how teachers assess bilingual education and how their language ideologies support their assessment.

This research will explore translanguaging pedagogy to enhance language instruction and assist in closing the Latino opportunity gap. It will focus on three Spanish-English bilingual certified elementary school teachers to see if and how they utilize translanguaging during their regular school day and during their after-school program. The study will focus on the teachers' linguistic practices and how they enact their language ideologies within their bilingual students' instruction. The main bilingual strategy explored in this study will be translanguaging. Since translanguaging is a relatively new topic compared to other areas of bilingual education, this study will contribute to the enhancement of translanguaging research and its utilization in classroom instruction.

Bilingual education brings value to students. This study came about because of an interest in bilingual education. The state of Texas is set into 20 educational regions. This study took place in Region One, "Located in South Texas on the United States/Mexico border, Region One ESC serves thirty-eight school districts and ten charter school systems in the eight county areas of Brooks County, Cameron County, Hidalgo County, Jim Hogg County, Starr County, Webb County, Willacy County, and Zapata County" (Region One, 2023). In this region, 405,529

students are Hispanic as of PEIMS data in 2021. In this population, about 40% is identified as being bilingual according to the Fall 2021 PEIMS data submission *and 2020 U.S. Census Report* on the Region One website. Because of the large enrollment of bilingual students, this study serves to assist teachers in exploring how our language ideologies impact our instruction.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are used in this study:

Translanguaging, the deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages (Otheguy et al., 2015).

Bilingualism, the practice of alternately using two languages (Garcia & Wei, 2014).

Language ideologies, Language is understood as the tool or property of dominant social groups (Woolard, 1992), which prioritizes some languages over others. In this study, language ideology is influenced by the primary use of English as directed by district and campus administration and coerced by high stakes testing as the driving force in policy making decisions.

Language policy, concerned with the decisions people make about languages and their use in society (Shohamy, 2003).

Language education policy, carrying out language policy decisions in the specific contexts of schools and universities in relation to home languages and to foreign and second languages; decisions may include which language(s) should be taught, when (at what age), for how long (number of years and hours of study), by whom and for whom (who is qualified to teach and who is entitled or obligated to learn) and how (which methods, materials, tests, etc) (Shohamy, 2003).

Positionality: Growing up in the Rio Grande Valley

The Rio Grande Valley is a distinctive location. It is about a 20-minute drive from the Mexican border but about a seven-hour drive to the nearest state, which is Louisiana. There is a unique culture here; when you hear someone proudly declare, *Puro 956*, that is an immediate tell-tale sign someone is from the Rio Grande Valley, and that person is proud to tell anyone who listens. A person sticking out the tongue while giggling a sarcastic, *Aaahhh* after telling a joke is a signature Rio Grande Valley gesture.

Growing up, my cousins and classmates shared their dreams of growing up and moving away from “The Valley”. Moving to more populated cities like Austin or Houston, or even moving out of state to New York or California. I felt like an oddball not wanting to live anywhere else but here. Some friends, classmates, and family members did grow up and move away for work, for love, or simply for adventure. I find myself having all three of those right here in my home in the Rio Grande Valley.

I always knew I wanted to be an elementary school teacher. I enjoyed reading every book I could check out at my school library. As soon as I finished one Nancy Drew book, I returned it and immediately checked out another bright yellow hardcover. When I read Roald Dahl’s *Matilda*, I wished I could be her teacher, Miss Honey, when I grew up.

I do not know if I ever became Miss Honey, but I did grow up to be Miss Ramos. I worked as an elementary school teacher aide while I was obtaining my undergraduate degree. I taught for two years while working on my master’s degree. I taught all grades kinder through fourth grade. After about thirteen years, I became a campus after-school programs coordinator taking on more of an administrative role outside the classroom. It was there that I decided to go back to school to pursue my doctorate degree.

Now being in my fourth year and doing my dissertation work and reflecting on my coming of age in the Rio Grande Valley, I remember how we always mixed our Spanish and English language. According to Garcia & Wei (2014) we are using the entirety of our linguistic repertoire. When I grew up mixing my languages, I was selecting the words I thought were best to communicate with those around me, which were usually my family.

Growing up translanguaging, attending school in the Rio Grande Valley and being a teacher here sparked the interest in this research. I want to explore how teachers enact their language ideologies to drive classroom instruction.

Background and Context

Though the opportunity gap was already an issue, COVID-19 made it even more salient, especially for the Latino population. Gandara and Contreras (2009) mention, “Latinos for the most part are now stalled at the level of high school completion, with dropout rates remaining very high across generations” (p.5). With the COVID pandemic, teachers reported that during distance learning, there was less small group instruction, less comprehension instruction, and less oral language development due to remote instruction (Crosson & Silverman, 2022). These differentiated tiers of instruction are important because they provide tailored instruction based on students’ individual needs. These have long been seen as best practices in the classroom and have become difficult and almost impossible to utilize with online learning. Students make greater gains when taught in small groups rather than whole group instruction (McDonald et al., 2009). However, the quick shift to online learning made small group instruction difficult due to technology issues, availability of technology, and having only one teacher rotating among online breakout sessions, leaving online students unattended.

To assist with closing this opportunity gap, there is an initiative to increase after-school programming in schools to provide students with additional instruction after the regular school day ends. There is research to support the idea that students attending after-school programs have better attendance (Jenson et al., 2018) and better overall positive correlation between participation in afterschool programs and academic achievement (Meadows, 2019).

This study was conducted to identify how an elementary school after-school program assists with closing the opportunity gap by utilizing translanguaging pedagogy in comparison with instruction during the normal school day. This study also focuses on three bilingual classrooms as influenced by teachers' and campus administration's language ideologies in their teaching practices.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to observe and examine an elementary after-school program as a strategy aimed at closing the COVID-19 opportunity gap. The after-school program was compared to the school's regular school day instruction. There was a focus on teachers' language policy, decisions people make about languages and their use in society (Shohamy, 2003), and how that guides their teaching. Observations on the use of translanguaging during the regular instructional day and in the after-school program setting were documented and reviewed with the purpose of how translanguaging was or was not utilized in the classroom. The purpose of translanguaging in the classroom is to leverage students' native language to build core content and language development (Garcia et al., 2017).

This study assists in exploring practices of teachers' language ideologies and policy. Cenoz and Gorter (2017) state, "Translanguaging is a recent and extremely successful concept in the area of bilingual and multilingual education that has gained wide acceptance in literature in a

short period of time” (p. 910). Though it is a relatively new topic, translanguaging research continues to increase. It highlights the idea that languages are no longer stored separately in our brains but stored in one linguistic repertoire (Garcia & Wei, 2014). Burton and Rajendram (2019) articulate that language compartmentalization is based on the belief that students’ first and second languages form distinct systems and exist separately in a learner’s mind, and thus, their languages should be designed for different functions (2019). Most schools continue to practice a strong separation of languages such as having programs with a language of the day or week, early transitional programs, and English- only instruction. Schools see the first language, if other than English, as a problem at which the only solution is English instruction and promoting English only in schools (Ruiz, 1984). Language instruction should be added to students’ linguistic repertoires and not removed: “In schools, the translanguaging of bilinguals tends to be severely restricted” (Otheguy et al., 2015, p. 281).

Translanguaging is a missed opportunity in many bilingual education classrooms. Restricting a speakers’ use of one language through prohibitions against speaking one or the other language is to sever them from important mediational means at their disposal (Orellana, 2016). It is an oppression of language to not allow students to use their entire linguistic repertoire as part of their education.

Research Questions and Goals

The guiding research questions for this study were as follows:

1. How do the teachers use their language ideologies to enact language policy in their respective classrooms?
2. In what ways is translanguaging utilized throughout the regular school day as compared to after-school programming?

3. How do teachers' enactment of language ideologies change between regular school day and after-school?

The rationale for this study was to explore the translanguaging use of three bilingually certified elementary teachers along with researching their respective language ideologies. Translanguaging aligns with my interest in observing bilingual teachers' methods of instruction as informed by their language ideologies. I included classroom observations to compare the regular school day instruction with that of after-school programming instruction with a focus on translanguaging. I focused on how the two different times of the instructional day are similar as well as different in terms of methods and delivery of instruction and the use of language at these different times of the school day. As a classroom teacher, I have observed students' utilizing translanguaging skills in their conversations. However, when teachers and/or administrators hear students speaking in their home language of Spanish or mixing English and Spanish languages, students are redirected or even reprimanded and told to speak English. Most schools continue to undermine students' multilingualism either through benign neglect or sometimes explicit prohibition on the use of students' home language within the public space of the schools (Cummins, 2019). English only or English for the majority of classroom instruction seems to dominate as a common practice that has been observed in public school classrooms.

Translanguaging is significant to professional practice in that it is now being included in the Texas House Bill Three Reading Academies. Translanguaging is the future of bilingual education. It is important that teachers know exactly what translanguaging is and how it can be utilized in the classroom.

Limitations, Assumptions, Delimitations, Trustworthiness

Limitations on this study included focusing on one campus in a specific area of south Texas. Limited time constraints of working full-time and being a doctoral student shorten the length of time available to be on the campus.

The credibility of this qualitative data study can be assured through multiple perspectives throughout data collection to ensure data are appropriately done by data triangulation, gathering classroom observations, teacher pre and post interviews and document analysis of lesson plans.

An assumption in this study is the teachers participating in this study were being truthful in their responses during our conversations, interviews, and classroom observations.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the Rio Grande Valley, there is a rare opportunity to live within two thriving communities. Given that the U.S. and Mexico are so close in proximity, it is natural both countries blend to create a mixed American and Mexican culture. Vastly different cultures meet at the border to adapt, adopt, and merge into a kaleidoscope of colors and combinations (Richardson & Pisani, 2017), so consequently, the mixing of languages becomes natural and fluid.

Translanguaging is a contemporary issue in education. It is a relatively young concept compared to other areas of research, and it has its advocates and its critics. I argue the use of translanguaging is fundamental when teaching bilingual students with a special emphasis on the Rio Grande Valley. My research focuses on translanguaging in the Rio Grande Valley community and its utilization within elementary bilingual education classrooms.

Translanguaging benefits students by utilizing students' home language within their respective classrooms thus adding a language to their linguistic repertoire as opposed to subtracting their home language. This section defines translanguaging and reviews the available research based on how it is used in schools and communities and including its limitations. I include my personal experience with how translanguaging has affected my life growing up in the Rio Grande Valley and becoming an elementary bilingual education teacher as well.

Theoretical Framework

Translanguaging is relatively new compared to other areas of research in bilingual education. The term stresses the flexible and meaningful actions through which bilinguals select features in their linguistic repertoire to communicate appropriately (Velasco & García, 2014). Translanguaging focuses on the unbounded and agentic dynamic actions of bilinguals as they use their entire linguistic/multimodal repertoire (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2020). There are four primary purposes for utilizing a translanguaging pedagogy: 1). to support students in comprehending complex content, 2). to provide opportunities for students to develop linguistic practices for academic contexts, 3). to make space for students' bilingualism, and 4). to support bilingual identities and socioemotional development (Garcia et al., 2017). Garcia and Wei (2014) state in their research how our languages are housed together within our brains and not necessarily compartmentalized as previously thought. Through a translanguaging lens, we break traditional boundaries. Translanguaging makes language more fluid and flexible. It is not only apt to describe the languaging practices of bilinguals and multilinguals, but it also has the capacity to liberate bilingualism, multilingualism and plurilingual from the societal constraints in which it has been held by monolingual and monoglossic ideologies (Garcia & Wei, 2014). Through utilizing translanguaging in classrooms, language becomes adaptive and unrigid in what is acceptable and unacceptable in terms of the standard forms of a language.

Language Ideology and Policy

In the regular school day instruction and in after-school programming, the language instruction utilized depends upon the district, campus administration policy, and the teachers' language ideologies. Teachers' language ideologies have an impact on student learning, whether it be implicit or explicitly shared by the teacher (Zuniga et al., 2018). Schools may see

students with Spanish listed on their home language form as needing to learn English as quickly as possible depending on the language policy of the district and campus. Schools, and the societies that fund them, view the learning of languages as an important goal of the “mainstream” student populations, but they frequently regard the maintenance and development of the home languages of immigrant-background and minoritized students as counterproductive (Cummins, 2019). Schools portray the idea that monolingual students should learn another language such as Spanish or French when it comes to graduation credits. However, when a student enters school with a language other than English, the unspoken policy is they must learn English to be successful.

Orellana (2015) states, “To restrict speakers in the use of those tools through prohibitions against speaking one or the other language in particular contexts is to sever them from important mediational means at their disposal” (p. 105). English tends to be the language teachers enforce in classrooms. The literature on teacher policy enactment in bilingual education contexts has emphasized teachers’ important role in supporting or constraining the goals of additive bilingual programs (Zuñiga et al., 2018). Teachers have the power to add or subtract a students’ home language: “In recognizing and understanding the relationship between language and power, teachers can be empowered to teach for equity within the discourse of enrichment language education” (Zuñiga et al., 2018). Thus, teachers have agency in the classroom to decide how they enact their language ideologies.

After-school Program and Translanguaging

Translanguaging in the third space (Gutierrez, 2008) was another focus of this study. “Translanguaging, at its core, is just languaging: what humans have done throughout time, using everything in their communicative toolkits to make and express meaning in the world” (Orellana,

2016, p. 105). After-school instruction works together with the regular school day instruction. However, there are changes in the delivery of that instruction. After-school is an extension of the regular school day, but there is more flexibility to teach unreservedly and not so restricted as compared to the regular school day. Orellana (2016) writes in her research how after-school is a place that blurs the line between the in-school and out-of-school spaces. After-school programming is an addition to the school day, but it is different in a variety of ways and allows both teachers and students to experiment with different ways of teaching, learning, and being together (Orellana, 2016). There is more leniency after school as compared to the regular school day. After-school programming tends to be more engaging, and students are highly motivated to attend after-school clubs. Grades are not given to the students, and there is no mandated curriculum – no “standards” to achieve or standardization of our diverse learning process (Orellana, 2015). After-school lessons are planned just as the regular school day; however, teachers have more flexibility in the delivery of instruction. In an after-school setting, students are more likely to be seen for their potential, rather than their limitations (Orellana, 2015). Students are also highly engaged in after-school programs because teachers see students as being more engaging as opposed to the regular school day.

After-school programs create a “third space” (Gutierrez, 2008) that acts as a safe place for students to bring in their background knowledge and lived experiences combined with their new knowledge from the classroom. A third space is where the teacher and the student script the formal and informal, the official and unofficial spaces of the learning environment; they intersect, creating the potential for authentic interaction and a shift in the social organization of learning and what counts as knowledge (Gutierrez, 2008). After school, students can be themselves and speak freely as opposed to worrying about their language being policed.

Researchers have demonstrated the value of using what was claimed to be students' first language as a resource for learning to read and write in a dominant second language (García & Kleifgen, 2020). Here, a student's home language is seen as a problem and not necessarily a valuable resource (Ruiz, 1984).

After school is an expansion of the regular school day, but there is more flexibility to teach unreservedly and not so restrictedly as compared to the regular school day. Since there is no formal assessment nor state assessment administered to students after school, students and teachers are given more flexibility. Students are also highly engaged in after-school programs because teachers see students as being more engaging as opposed to the regular school day since there is no state exam for after school instruction.

Ofelia Garcia's work was used as another framework for this study because of the shift it created in previous research about language. Prior to translanguaging pedagogy, our brains were thought to compartmentalize different languages; however, translanguaging states that we have one entire linguistic repertoire from which we pull linguistic features as needed when we are communicating (Garcia & Wei, 2014). This brings a new view of how students use language in the classroom. Prior to translanguaging, bilingual education programs saw languages other than English as a problem that needed a solution (Ruiz, 1984). Translanguaging flips the idea of rigidly separating languages and makes them fluid. It brings about the idea of adding bridges to languages as opposed to barriers.

Translanguaging in the Classroom

Creese and Blackledge (2010) stated, "we have suggested that as participants engage in flexible bilingualism, the boundaries between languages become permeable" (p.112). Translanguaging allows language to be more fluid: "Yet at the level of pragmatics, code-

switching in some environments is considered inappropriate” (Bauer & Gort, 2012, p. 150). Schools are one of those environments where code-switching is considered a deficit. Studies show that moving between languages has traditionally been frowned upon in educational settings with teachers and students often feeling guilty about its practice (Creese & Blackledge, 2010, p. 105).

As a child enters school, one registration form that must be completed by the parent or guardian is the Home Language Survey. The form notifies the district and the campus what language is spoken at home and what language the child speaks most of the time. Students with Spanish, or a language other than English, on their form are seen as an issue to be solved. In other words, once Spanish is written on the form, the school raises a red flag.

Teachers can incorporate translanguaging strategies by opening the spaces that will allow the recursive process of writing to interplay between the languages a student has (Velasco & García, 2014). We should allow students to use their entire linguistic repertoire as opposed to stifling them.

Translanguaging is not limited to oral interactions but has always encompassed other modalities (Garcia & Wei, 2014). However, since it is not promoted in schools, it is not a well-accepted concept. Garcia and Wei (2014) stated:

Bilingualism in education, which sees the two languages as separately performed, translanguaging in education encourages bilingual performances that in so doing enable students to move simultaneously along the continuum of two socially constructed languages according to standards of the community and the home, as well as those of school. (p. 69)

Within the context of bilingual education, translanguaging does not view languages as

needing to be separate, which is often the case. Translanguaging is viewed here as the process of tapping a single expanded linguistic repertoire that students and teachers use to make meaning and to learn (Garcia & Wei, 2014).

Many multilingual speakers believe that code-switching is a sign of linguistic weakness or inadequacy, and many bilingual teachers work hard to discourage code-switching when it occurs in their classrooms (Bauer & Gort, 2012). Hamman-Ortiz (2019) argues that bilingual classrooms should pursue a “both/and ” approach to language pedagogy, incorporating both focused spaces for targeted language practice and flexible spaces that are intentionally designed for students to leverage their full linguistic repertoires for making meaning. Creese and Blackledge (2010) state allowing students to use their entire linguistic repertoire has many advantages. However, research shows that codeswitching is rarely institutionally endorsed or pedagogically underpinned (Creese & Blackledge, 2010). Translanguaging is used in the classrooms for the purpose of allowing students to utilize their entire linguistic repertoire without being restrictive to the standard language practice (García & Wei, 2014). Garcia, Johnson, and Seltzer (2017) state, “A translanguaging classroom is a space built collaboratively by the teacher and bilingual students as they use their different language practices to teach and learn in deeply creative and critical ways” (p. 2). A translanguaging classroom welcomes students’ native languages and their manipulation of language and making connections.

Translanguaging Ideology and Implementation

According to Anzaldua (1987), For a people who are neither Spanish nor live in a country in which Spanish is the first language, and for a people who live in a country in which English is the reigning tongue but who are not Anglo, and for a people who cannot entirely

identify with either standard (formal, Castillian) Spanish nor standard English, what option is left but to create our own language? Anzaldua eloquently describes how natural it is to create a mix of languages, “Language forms are tools in their communicative toolkits, which they use flexibly according to need and circumstance” (Orellana, 2015, p. 105). The mixing of English and Spanish in the Rio Grande Valley is considered *Spanglish*. Casielles-Suárez (2017) defines Spanglish as “the result of bilinguals’ use of borrowing, calques, semantic extensions, nonce borrowings, and skillful mixture of two grammars in cases of code-switching and code-mixing” (p.154). In the Rio Grande Valley community, we see Spanglish on billboards, hear it on television, and read it in printed media. Richardson and Pisani (2017) write, proper Spanish is seen as a form of cultural capital.

When Mexican Americans in the United States lose their Spanish or speak it poorly in comparison, regal language is seen as being devalued (Richardson & Pisani, 2017). Not using the standard form of Spanish may be seen as an improper use of a language. Garcia and Wei (2014) explain, “Translanguaging is a way to capture the fluid language practices of bilinguals without giving up the social construction of language and bilingualism under which speakers operate” (p.5). Bilinguals can jump back and forth between languages in mere seconds and utilize their entire linguistic repertoire as opposed to seeing languages as separate entities.

Before there were bilingual education programs, Texas schools had a sink-or-swim approach: they would put English learners into a classroom and forbid them to speak Spanish in the class or on the school grounds (Richardson & Pisani, 2017), and this was seen as acceptable for that time. However, to prohibit speakers in the use of one of their languages is to sever them from important mediational means at their disposal (Orellana, 2015). Though it is an outdated practice to prohibit students from speaking their native language, it is still done

today, and schools continue to promote the English language.

“Third Space” Contexts and Language

Criticism of Translanguaging

With everything in life, there are two sides to every story. Just like researching the benefits of translanguaging is important, it is equally important to read the criticisms of it as well. To get a more comprehensive look at translanguaging, both arguments must be investigated. Teachers in mainstream (English-only) classrooms may worry that students who are translanguaging may be doing so to the detriment of developing their English skills (Hamman-Ortiz, 2019). Hamman-Ortiz points out that what is seen in classrooms causes fear that translanguaging will stifle the learning of English. Cummins (2019) states the argument for translanguaging immediately fails the classroom reality check. If not teaching for transfer, how should teachers in a Spanish/English bilingual program conceptualize what they are doing when they draw students’ attention to similarities between *encontrar* and *encounter*? Cummins argues if we, in fact, only have one linguistic repertoire and not separate languages, then how can we teach students how words are similar and translate between languages? Jaspers (2018) criticizes the goals of translanguaging as being overly optimistic. Translanguaging may come off as *too confident*. If the predicted effects fail to occur or prove to be overstated, there is a risk that this agenda gets discredited as realistic, naïve, or mistaken (Jaspers, 2018). Jaspers (2018) also points out the pressure translanguaging puts on teachers on the front lines. He states that translanguaging goals are adequate, but teachers are the ones who are doing most of the work and heavy lifting. Lewis et al. (2012) raise a variety of questions about translanguaging and the further research that needs to take place. A wealth of future research is needed to establish when, where, and how translanguaging is a suitable teaching approach (Lewis et al., 2012).

Translanguaging may be a little too new for it to be credited so strongly just yet. Lewis et al. (2012) bring up the question of translanguaging among the deaf community and if it is something they can also benefit from; they also bring up concerns about translanguaging being used in assessments and how it can be used among students with special needs. Lewis et al. (2012) found gaps in the research of translanguaging and concerns that need to be addressed before translanguaging can be seen as the end all, be all bilingual/ multilingual education. One commonality among the criticism of translanguaging is why the concept wants to remove the barriers between languages. Another commonality is the fact that it is a newer concept than others; therefore, there is a need for continued research into translanguaging.

Authentic Cariño

Authentic cariño is a holistic blend of familial, intellectual, and critical care to build a positive rapport with students as people who share a basic need to be understood, appreciated, and respected (Valenzuela, 2010). This is the idea of using a student's familiar language to build a positive relationship. Both authentic cariño and translanguaging involve an understanding and embracing of students' cultural and linguistic diversity. Authentic cariño utilizes translanguaging as a means of effective communication and expression. These two ideas provide inclusive spaces for students that transcend linguistic boundaries and foster connections with others. From personal experience in the classroom, I have noticed students will not enjoy learning from a person they do not like. When students feel a teacher believes in them and cares for them then puts forth much more effort than if they felt that she or he did not like them or considered the students not very capable (Cummins, 2000). Authentic cariño is a way to form a positive bond with students to show a teacher cares for them. Teachers have their best experiences when they connect with students and are able to help them in some way (Cummins, 2000, p. 40). Authentic

cariño even allows the teacher to be engaged with the class and for the learning to be playful as well as purposeful.

Conclusion

Hamman-Ortiz (2019) states that no student should be asked to leave his or her linguistic resources at the door. It is unfair to not allow students to speak their native languages or languages within their linguistic repertoire and be expected to use simply one or the other. Language instruction should be additive, not subtractive. Though some are skeptical of translanguaging, it is still something to investigate and continue to research.

Translanguaging at its core is just languaging; it is what humans have done throughout time, using everything in their communicative toolkits to make and express meaning in the world (Orellana, 2015). Translanguaging makes a valid case for having one linguistic repertoire as opposed to having our languages compartmentalized. However, translanguaging is not without its critics. Translanguaging allows us to be linked to others and the community. *We are* translanguaging. Translanguaging theory is less concerned with identifying why students shift between societal languages and more with acknowledging that this “mixing” is an authentic practice, the everyday way that bilingual individuals communicate with their families, friends, and communities (Hamman-Ortiz, 2019). Further research would include investigating why there is a disconnect between the benefits of translanguaging and the lack of its utilization in classrooms.

Translanguaging allows us to connect our daily lives with our language. It is an innate part of who we are. We are our language. We are translanguaging. It is part of our identity. This research will serve in contributing to the field of research by studying translanguaging across the spaces of the regular classroom and the afterschool program.

CHAPTER III
TRANSLANGUAGING IN REGULAR AND AFTER-SCHOOL INSTRUCTION
BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to observe and examine translanguaging practices in three elementary bilingual classrooms and compare them to the translanguaging practices of the after-school program. The focus was on the teachers' language policies during the regular school day and after school.

The guiding research questions for this study were:

1. How do the teachers use their language ideologies to enact language policy in their respective classrooms?
2. In what ways is translanguaging utilized throughout the regular school day as compared to after-school programming?
3. How do teachers' enactment of language ideologies change between regular school day and after-school?

The following definitions will be used throughout the study:

After-school programming, defined as an organized program offering one or more activities that: (a) occurred during at least part of the school year; (b) happened outside of normal school hours; and (c) was supervised by adults (Durlak et al., 2010)

Regular school day instruction, according to the TEA website, a full instructional day for students is 1,260 hours of instruction per year, at 180 days, 7 hours per day of instruction with the school year not starting prior to the fourth Monday in August (TEA, 2022).

Methods and Data Collection

This is a qualitative, ethnographic case study that examined the language practices of three teachers at one Title One elementary school during the regular school day and after-school instruction. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) stated, “Ethnography is an approach that seeks to find meanings of cultural phenomena by getting close to the experience of these phenomena” (p. 253). The focus of the study was on how the Spanish and English language was being used during the regular school day and during after-school programming. The participants were three elementary bilingual teachers with whom I conducted classroom observations and interviews regarding their language ideologies. This was most appropriate for this study because it allowed the identification of any shifts in language ideologies from formal instruction to informal after school instruction. It also allowed for observation of how teachers enacted their language ideologies to guide their teaching methods.

Bilingual Education in the Rio Grande Valley

The Rio Grande Valley is part of the Region One education service area. Region One comprises eight counties which include: Brooks County, Cameron County, Hidalgo County, Jim Hogg County, Starr County, Webb County, Willacy County, and Zapata County. As of February 2021, Region One services 405,529 Hispanic students as of PEIMS data in 2021. In this population, about 40% are identified as being bilingual. Most schools in the region provide bilingual education programs to service students who speak a language other than English at home. The bilingual program used on the campus where this study took place was the early transitional bilingual model.

Richardson and Pisani (2017) wrote, “Before there were bilingual education programs, Texas schools used a sink-or-swim approach; they would put English learners into a class and

forbid them to speak Spanish in the class or on the school grounds” (p. 201). This was a familiar memory for my family who moved to the region from Mexico as migrant workers. A turning point came with the Edcouch-Elsa High School student walkout of November 14, 1968, where Mexican American students fought for their rights to speak their language freely; the students’ demands were met in December 1968 through a jury trial (Richardson & Pisani, 2017).

School Context

This study took place at an elementary school in rural South Texas. The campus is the neighborhood school of a small community that mimics the familiarity of Mexico. Families live near each other with many of the students at the school being relatives. Siblings, cousins, aunts and uncles attend the same elementary school. There is a large group of students who walk to and from school. Many families live in the same house or on the same block. Community signs are predominantly in Spanish or in English with a Spanish translation. There is a Mexican bakery within walking distance of the school. There is a Spanish-speaking church one block south of the school where the community gathers for food bank distribution. There is a junkyard, a mechanic shop, and a community center near the campus, all of which provide services predominantly in Spanish. The Title I campus where this study took place fluctuates between 300 to 400 students due to the high mobility rate of the student population. Ninety-eight percent of students are identified as low socio-economic status according to the campus PEIMS data. The campus follows an early-exit transitional bilingual model with students as young as kindergarten transitioning from Spanish instruction into all English instruction by the beginning of kindergarten or early first grade. By the end of second grade, most students transition into English instruction at the direction of campus administration due to the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, STAAR exam. Students labeled as recent immigrants from

Mexico take the STAAR exam in Spanish. The regular school day begins at 7:45 am and ends at 3:45 pm with students having a 45-minute lunch and 45 minutes of physical education. The district began implementing a wide variety of after-school programs to assist with the COVID-19 opportunity gap. All students are welcome to attend any of the after-school programs. Parents can register their children to attend after-school programs or decide not to allow their children to attend. The goal of the after-school program is to be an extension of the instructional day and include engaging and interactive lessons.

Participants' Years of Experience Teaching, Generalizations, Demographics

The participating teachers were three bilingual education teachers with a minimum of ten years teaching experience. Having a second-grade teacher to represent a lower grade teacher and having two higher grade teachers to represent the state assessed grade levels allowed for the comparison of teacher instruction between a state testing grade and a non-testing grade. It is important to explore both the early childhood grades as well as the upper elementary grades to obtain data for the study. The difference between an early childhood grade and an upper grade is important to note due to third, fourth, and fifth grade being state assessed grade levels.

All three teachers have more than ten years of teaching experience. I determined which specific teachers were the most appropriate to provide substantive answers and responses to the inquiries (Saldana, 2011). Teachers with more than ten years of experience were selected based on their ability to recall educational trends and changes in policy as opposed to teachers with less than five years of experience who may not see any great difference in educational trends. The teachers sponsored an after-school club or an activity as well as taught during the regular school day.

I observed the selected teachers during their regular school day instruction during their language arts block and observed them again during their after-school program. The after-school program started out as a grant in which ten schools in the district were provided additional funding to increase their after-school program and provide more teachers, more clubs, and more activities for students. When the grant finished after five years, the district decided to provide all schools with the opportunities to increase their after-school programs. After-school activities were held Monday through Friday from 3:45 pm until 6:00 pm. Somedays, the after-school program continued until 6:30, depending on the amount of time required for a particular club to meet. All students were encouraged to join any club that interested them. Teachers volunteered for whichever club they liked to sponsor.

The methods for this study included teacher and classroom observations, teacher interviews, artifact/document collection, and audio recordings. Classroom observations consisted of sitting through one hour of classroom instruction during the regular school day and again in the after-school program. I visited each of the three teachers two times a week for four weeks. Four of the observations were during the regular school day and four observations were in the after-school program. This allowed me to see each teacher eight times throughout the four weeks. Eight classroom visits per teacher with three teachers total gave me 24 total teacher observations. To recruit the teachers, I created a pre-screener questionnaire for all teachers interested in joining this study. I discussed my study with the campus principal for approval prior to addressing the teachers. I then cross-referenced all interested teachers with the qualifications I listed and selected a minimum of three teachers for the study.

I was able to observe the teachers' reading lessons. The campus has identified reading as their greatest area of need for the campus. Therefore, I focused on that subject to identify how

language and after-school assisted in meeting that need for reading improvement. I documented my fieldnotes on my two-step verification password protected laptop and used my university one drive, which also was password protected with a two-step verification process to keep all data secure.

Each of the three teachers were interviewed and audio recorded at the beginning and end of the study. The audio recordings served as a record from which to transcribe the interviews. The interviews were approximately thirty minutes and semi-structured to have guiding questions as well as have an open conversation. After the data was analyzed, there was a fifteen-minute post interview with each of the teachers individually. Four lesson plans for the regular school day and four lesson plans for after-school were collected for document analysis. I focused on identifying any translanguaging strategies occurring during instruction. Translanguaging strategies included creating a multilingual ecology through lesson planning, objectives, projects, and assessments (Garcia et al., 2017). I compared their regular school day instruction to their after-school instruction through observations during language arts, observations during after school clubs, classroom visits, and lesson plan document analysis.

My field notes provided thick, detailed, and precise descriptions of the classroom environment and teacher instruction. As I sat in the classroom during my observations, I took notes and was mindful of my emotions and opinions within my fieldnotes and only noted what I was observing. My reaction to a situation might have been indicative of my own language ideologies and positionality. As Orellana stated, “Be aware of how our word choices revealed things we hadn’t realized about what we thought, valued, assumed or believed” (2016, p.36). I found it difficult to not include my personal feelings and emotions in the observational notes; it took practice to only note what I was seeing and not including what I was feeling about what I

was seeing. Document analysis was also utilized to triangulate the research methods. Teacher lesson plans were analyzed and identified how teachers were using English and Spanish and compared the regular school day and after school day lesson plans for similarities and differences. Lesson plans were submitted weekly for the regular school day instruction as well as for after-school programming. Teachers provided copies of their submitted lesson plans.

Comparing the regular school day instruction and the after-school day instruction allowed me to identify the similarities and differences between the two types of instruction. I also interviewed the three teacher participants about their language ideologies and policies. Classroom observations during language arts time and during their after-school clubs as well as pre and post interviews gave insight into why teachers selected their instructional methods.

I also included two teacher interviews along with the teacher observations. The second interview was a follow up that allowed teachers to provide explanations as to why they enacted their language ideologies as well as their thinking process as to why they felt it was important to enact them. The interview protocol was based on Garcia's translanguaging teacher assessment tool (Garcia et al., 2017). See Appendix A for a list of interview questions. The first interview was semi-structured. The interviews at the end of study were dependent upon the direction of the initial interview and observations.

Data Analysis

The various documentation in this study was coded utilizing Saldana's (2021) qualitative coding methods. Coding allowed me to identify the similarities and differences between the regular and after-school instructional day and identify teachers' language ideologies by identifying themes. Saldana (2021) suggested finding themes by identifying words most frequently used by the participant. The frequency of occurrence becomes one important measure

of salient themes (Saldana, 2021). The data provided in this study was set up by the teacher with each of the three teachers having their own data chapter.

The data collected in this study included classroom observations during the regular school day as well as after-school instruction observations, recorded teacher interviews, lesson plan document analysis, and documented field notes. The audio recordings were transcribed using online software and coded to identify frequently used words relevant to language and themes (Saldana, 2021). The researcher edited the transcript for corrections where the software incorrectly transcribed the recording. After the data was gathered, Saldana's coding methods were used to identify themes. Data was triangulated by using field notes, documents, audio recordings and video recordings. Patterns were identified in the interviews, indicating the teachers' language ideologies (Saldaña, 2021). Coding was used to identify similarities and differences in the regular school day instruction and after-school. During the teacher interviews, participating teachers replied to the interview questions, indicating their language ideology. The interviews were transcribed and coded by major themes and topics. By conducting a document analysis on lesson plans and observing teachers in their classrooms, a picture was painted as to how teacher language ideology was enacted with their students. After the data were analyzed and patterns and themes were identified, the themes were presented to teachers to continue the discussion about their language ideologies (Zuniga et al., 2018). The data presented how the regular school day and the after-school program were similar and different when it came to language ideologies and the use of translanguaging. Interviewing the teachers allowed them to reflect on their language ideologies and how they were enacted within their teaching and daily classroom instruction.

Positionality

The study was motivated by my personal experience as a bilingual teacher for 15 years. I worked at the campus in which this study took place. The teachers in this study were my colleagues although I was no longer employed on the campus at the time of the study. I was a bilingual student growing up, but I have no memories of speaking Spanish at school. I was born and raised in the Rio Grande Valley. My extended family moved there from Mexico to work as migrant farm workers and for the most part, they all still live there.

The teachers in this study have spent most of their life in the Rio Grande Valley. Working at the campus where I conducted my research allowed me to gain personal experience. I identified themes and patterns that provided trustworthy evidence for my findings since patterns demonstrate habits, salience, and importance in people's daily lives (Saldaña, 2021). With any research, it is important to understand the author's positionality. Therefore, I present this research as a former bilingual elementary school teacher, after school programming coordinator, and current educational specialist at an educational service center. I have taught at the school where this research was conducted and have grown up around the same area. The teachers, campus administration, and district administration are familiar with me as some of my previous students still attend the campus and the classrooms in which the observations were conducted. The parents and surrounding community are also familiar to me, and I have taught many of the older siblings of the students sitting in the classrooms.

Trustworthiness

Researchers need to present evidence as clearly and convincingly as possible to prove to an audience the research is accurate (Saldaña, 2021). Access to social media allows anyone to say they researched any topic and claim to be an expert. Anyone can write a research paper, but

we must make it creditable with our trustworthiness, so we do not present a work of fiction but rather ground it in research. Credibility and trustworthiness must be aligned to the researcher's honesty and integrity (Saldaña, 2021). The researcher must even present the trials and tribulations of the research. We must accept that not everything planned will be executed perfectly. There will be errors along the way, but being up front about the areas of need and mistakes with the audience will gain readers' trust. We must also welcome unexpected observations and document those moments.

Limitations

The limitations of this study included but were not limited to only having one researcher at one location. It would be interesting to have this study completed among other similar elementary campuses to identify any bigger themes and similarities at other locations. Another limitation of the study is the time limited to two semesters.

Conclusion

This study took place throughout two academic semesters at an elementary school. During this time, my research questions aligned with the research design, data collection, and analysis. The areas must support each other to complete the research to the best of my ability: "With empowered scholar teachers working in schools, things begin to change" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 241). The research study is inspired by the idea that no language should ever be removed from a student's linguistic repertoire. Zuniga et al. (2018) stated, "It is important for teachers to identify and name distinct language ideologies and understand the ways those often-unquestioned beliefs can limit their own or their students' access" (p.73). Teachers can reflect on why they teach what they teach and reflect on what they think about language and how they teach it. "Educators who support, question, or challenge policy initiatives mediate language

policy implementation as they enact their professional agency” (Zuñiga, et al., 2018). Teachers are a catalyst for educational reform, and teacher research often takes the form of action research, which aims at answering questions that have direct applicability to the schooling context (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Teachers need to reflect on their language ideologies and how they put them into practice within instructional methods. They should identify that the language ideologies are implicit or explicit. Teachers have the power to support or oppress students’ native languages; therefore, they should want to be additive to students’ language, which is why research is so important as it provides teachers with information to improve upon their craft.

CHAPTER IV

TEACHER NATALIA

Teacher Description

Ms. Natalia (pseudonym) is a fourth grade, bilingual certified teacher for students that speak Spanish. She is a Latina in her early fifties. She majored in education at the local university. She grew up in California while working in the fields as a migrant farm worker with her parents and siblings. She moved to Texas as a young adult with her family and daughter. Both of her parents speak Spanish; therefore, she grew up speaking Spanish daily. In the present day, she considers Spanish her home language. She stated in her interview, “Spanish is my language, and you don’t want to lose your language.” She has been a teacher for twenty-three years. She started working as an office clerk at an elementary school; then she transitioned to working as a teacher’s aide while at the same time, working on her undergraduate degree; thus, she held down a full-time job, full-time mom and was a full-time student. She then started working as an elementary school teacher in the same district in which she worked as a teacher’s aide. She has taught grades pre-kindergarten through fourth grade.

Ms. Natalia is currently teaching in a bilingual, fourth-grade, self-contained classroom. In the past five years, she also taught fourth grade; however, her classes were departmentalized. At that time, she became the reading teacher for the entire fourth grade, while the other two fourth grade teachers taught math and writing respectively; students rotated to each of the three teachers for each subject. This is the first year Ms. Natalia’s class and the two other fourth grade teachers have a self-contained classroom.

Ms. Natalia's Classroom

This school year, Ms. Natalia has sixteen students. She has nine girls and seven boys. All the students in her classroom are bilingual. Fifteen out of the sixteen have met the transition criteria set forth by the district to receive most of their instruction in English as opposed to having Spanish instruction most of the time. Those that transitioned will test in English at the end of the year in April for the reading exam and in May for the math state assessments. The transition criteria created by the district has certain conditions students must meet to transition out of Spanish instruction into English. Most students transition in the early grades, some as early as kinder begin to receive English instruction. She has one student who is a recent immigrant from Mexico who receives additional services through the school's High Intensity Language Development (HILD) class. The HILD class has one teacher that pulls out the 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students that test in Spanish for the state assessment. Ms. Natalia has one student that will complete her state assessments in Spanish. Therefore, the student gets pulled out from Ms. Natalia's class to receive additional Spanish language arts instruction, along with math, science, and social studies for most of the day. The child returns from the HILD class back to Ms. Natalia's class for additional reading language arts instruction in Spanish.

Ms. Natalia has a unique approach to discipline and nurturing her students. She embodies the perfect blend of strictness, friendliness, and love in her interaction with students. As you walk into her classroom, it feels like entering a harmonious blend of organization that fosters learning and a safe space for students to interact using their entire linguistic repertoire without fear of being reprimanded. At first glance Ms. Natalia appears to be easy going with her students, however, she establishes clear expectations from the beginning of the school year of what is and is not acceptable classroom behavior. She believes in discipline and accountability and her

students are aware of the consequences of breaking her rules. She engaged with her students in playful banter, teasing them in good humor, and participating in their sometimes off topic conversations. She is aware humor is a useful classroom tool used to increase student participation and content retention.

The classroom is set up with a digital projector mounted on top of the ceiling, her dry erase board doubles as the large screen that all student desks face. The teacher's desk is at the east side corner of her classroom. The classroom is well-organized with ample room for students to sit and walk comfortably. The student desks are set up in an L-shape with the students on the west side of the classroom facing the east, but they can still face the front of the classroom; students in the center of the classroom face forward, and Ms. Natalia's desk is on the east side, facing the students. All desks, including the teacher, form a horseshoe shape. Student rows are set up by threes with each tripod of desks leaving about a two-three-foot gap for the other tripod of student desks in the same row but are not directly next to each other. This provides ample space between the desks, allowing the students to walk easily to the front of the class and to walk over to Ms. Natalia's desk. During each classroom visit I conducted, Ms. Natalia provided whole group instruction. Whole group instruction is when the teacher is providing instruction to all students in her class at the same time, this is also referred to as Tier 1 instruction. She actively monitors and provides instructional support as needed.

I had the pleasure of teaching alongside Ms. Natalia for eight years when we were both first grade teachers at the elementary school in which this research took place. That experience, along with my data, helped me confidently say that with Ms. Natalia, what you see is what you get. The district and the administration may set the rules, but Ms. Natalia takes no issue in breaking them. Her door closes, and she lets her personality shine through.

Data Collection

Ms. Natalia is as loud as they come with her energetic, vivacious, and humorous personality that shines into her teaching and keeps her students actively participating. She can be stern, but the affection she has for her students is very evident. Her personality will be presented in the data. The data was gathered over eight total classroom observations which took place in her classroom. Four of the observations were during the regular school day in the reading language arts block and the other four classroom observations were during her after school club. Her reading language arts block, taught in English as the primary language of instruction, was observed from 8:45 am – 9:45 am. Her after-school club was observed from 5:15 pm – 6:15 pm. Each observation was one hour in length. In each of the eight classroom observations, observational notes were taken, along with audio recordings which were transcribed. Ms. Natalia participated in a pre and post interview and submitted lesson plans for her regular school day language arts block and lessons plans of her after-school club. After all the data was collected and audio recordings transcribed, I reviewed the data to identify common themes. I also comparatively reviewed the data from each teacher to identify similarities and differences. The major theme of language policy making became evident, with the sub-theme of language use in the regular school day compared to the afterschool and teacher ideology.

Language Policy Making

Ms. Natalia freely allows her students to speak Spanish in class. The students, along with Ms. Natalia, use language in a variety of ways. She created an environment where students can use translanguaging, code-switching and translating despite this practice going against the district and policy mandates.

Language Use

In the first language arts classroom observation, I noticed the following interaction with the teacher and the students as Ms. Natalia read a passage aloud and stopped at the word “invented:”

Ms. Natalia– *¿Que es ‘invented’?* What does that mean? [*What is invented?*]

Student – to create, *invento algo nuevo* [*invent something new*]

Ms. Natalia– Yes! Excellent! To invent means you created something new; it has never been done before.

Ms. Natalia created a space where language is fluid for her as well as the students. She is quick to praise her students for their efforts no matter which language they utilized during class. Ms. Natalia is a caring teacher who utilized her authentic *cariño, a holistic blend of familial, intellectual, and critical care* (Valenzuela, 2010) to build a positive rapport with her students as people share a basic need to be understood, appreciated, and respected (Valenzuela, 2010). Throughout the eight classroom observations and field notes, Ms. Natalia used her authentic *cariño* throughout her teaching.

Observations showed various students coming up to her desk to present her work, and Ms. Natalia replied, “I love it, *que lindo, mi amor!* [*how lovely, my love*]” She affirmed in Spanish to one of her students who pointed to a paper, asking if she was correctly following along in the reading passage: “*Si, mi amor, ahi!*” [*Yes, my love, there*]

Another example of her caring personality was presented when a student showed Ms. Natalia her work:

Student: *Mira Ms.! ¡Mira lo que dibuje!* [*Look Miss! Look at what I drew!*]

Ms. Natalia: *¡Que hermoso bebe! Wow! ¡Me encanta! [How beautiful baby! Wow! I love it!]*

These comments are representative of Ms. Natalia's lively, loving personality. Valenzuela (2010) stated, "The literature on caring is properly premised on the notion that individuals need to be recognized and addressed as whole beings" (p. 108). Students are whole beings, not simply test scores or attendance data to receive school funds. Ms. Natalia treats her students as nine- and ten-year-old children and not simply test takers as fourth grade is a state testing grade level.

Regular School Day Instruction

During the first day of classroom observation, Ms. Natalia modeled pre-reading strategies, and her students followed along on the projector and took notes on their hard copies. During her lesson's, Ms. Natalia often mixed English and Spanish to connect students to the lesson or to make a joke to gain students' attention. One day, during one of the regular school day observations on October 26, Ms. Natalia was reviewing text features and pre-reading strategies during language arts. The lesson was provided in English with Spanish language support, she mixed English and Spanish while asking questions. For her recent immigrant student, Ms. Natalia walked over to the student to translate her directions.

Ms. Natalia (loud enough for all students to hear her): "Everyone have their *deditos*, *deditos?*" [*Everyone have their little fingers, little fingers?*]

Student 1: *Si Miss! Aqui esta! [Yes Miss! Here it is!]* (a student raised his finger to show the teacher he was following along with the reading).

On another occasion on November 1st during the regular school day observation, Ms. Natalia reviewed another reading passage where she asked students to think about what reading strategies assisted them with their comprehension:

Ms. Natalia (asking the class): “What did you do to understand the story?” (After a pause, no students answered, so she asked the question in Spanish): *Que hicieron para entender la historia que leímos? [What did you do to understand what we read]*

Student 2: “We used the text features.”

Ms. Natalia: “Very good! He used his text features! The text features help make the reading clear, *clarito asi como el agua.*” [*Clear like the water*]

In her lesson plans for her reading lesson during the regular school day, Ms. Natalia provided differentiating strategies for bilingual students by using vocabulary picture cards, emergent bilingual leveled readers, a dictionary and graphic organizer for notetaking, and an interactive daily journal. Ms. Natalia also used anchor charts during her lessons.

During the second regular classroom observations, Ms. Natalia again used translanguaging during her instruction. She was reviewing the test taking computer program. Students had their own district- issued laptop opened and logged into the computer program since this was the inaugural year of state testing being done online. Students in fourth grade are expected to take reading and math standardized state tests. The district has two campus-wide benchmarks: one in the fall semester around November and a second one in the spring semester, usually around February. Since students were going to take the district reading benchmark exam later in the week, Ms. Natalia reviewed a practice benchmark to review test taking strategies.

Ms. Natalia: “*Tienen que echarle bastante ganas en el examen mañana. [You have to try your best on the exam tomorrow]* You have to know where all of your icons are in the program.”

As the teacher reviewed the test taking strategies, students followed along on their laptops and had a sheet of paper to write down their notes and annotation about the reading passage.

Ms. Natalia: “*¿Que es lo primero que van a escribir en su hoja? [What is the first think you write on your paper?]* What is the first thing you write down when you are taking your notes?”

Student: “The important words”

Ms. Natalia: “Yes! *Le estas hechando ganas! [You are trying your best!]* You write down any vocabulary words in bold. Write them down on your notes page, on the blank sheet of paper.”

When the teacher used Spanish, I noticed the students became engaged. They either laughed if the teacher said something funny in Spanish or they picked up their heads from their papers to really listen to what the teacher was saying. The data collected showed the teacher instructing most of the time in English; however, when students utilized their entire linguistic repertoire, she never corrected students when they mixed English and Spanish language. When students did not reply to questions in English, the teacher inquired students to answer the questions by reiterating the same question in Spanish. During her teaching she asked the class,

“What did you do to understand the story?”

When no one answered, she asked the question again in Spanish, “*¿Que hicieron para entender la historia que leimos?*

During the third regular classroom observation, the teacher asked, “What is the first thing you write down when you are taking your notes? *Que es lo primero que van a escribir en su hoja.* [What is the first thing you are writing on your paper?]” By Ms. Natalia using her Spanish and welcoming students’ language as a resource to build new their new language, she welcomed the students background knowledge and used it as a foundation for her lessons. She would translate as she went along in her lesson. She models how language is fluid. As she speaks in English, she just as quickly speaks in Spanish.

Ms. Natalia – *¿Este es un cuento?* [Is this a story?] Is this a story?

Class – [Students remain quiet, no one answers]

Ms. Natalia – *Vamos a ver, si Tullio* [Let’s see if Tullio] wrote this about himself, what would this passage be called?

Student – an autobiography

Ms. Natalia – Yes! Exactly. Tullio was looking for hardware. What is hardware?

Something that I wear that is hard? Is that hardware? *¿Que es?*

Student – he is looking for a helmet and something to wear for his head.

Ms. Natalia – *se le quebró la bicicleta. Ya se la quebró la bike. Perdió la carrera, que piensas tú que va hacer ese muchacho?* [Use italics and brackets to offer a translation when things have been said only in Spanish.]

Student 1– He is going to fix his bike

Student 2– he is going to buy supplies at the hardware store

Ms. Natalia – hardware, *es una tienda de herramientas* [It is a store for hardware tools]

From the evidence, it is clear when the teacher uses Spanish, it engages students and brings humor to the lessons. According to Bell Hooks (2013), “Teachers who care, who serve their students, are usually at odds with the environment wherein they teach” (p. 91). Ms. Natalia’s use of students’ entire linguistic repertoire works as a type of rebellion against the campus district policy. Her instruction aligns with Vasquez’s (2003) work in *La Clase Magica* in using translanguaging as the medium for communication and the context for cultural expression as language encompasses every aspect of human experience. Her classroom is an open space for her students to play with language, and Ms. Natalia did not reprimand students in any way when they mixed English and Spanish. One example occurred during her instruction:

Ms. Natalia: “What does the word ‘jam’ mean in this passage?”

Student: “*Es como when the bike jams cuando la usamos. [It is like when the bike ajmes when we use it]*”

Ms. Natalia: “Very Good! When you are riding your bike and it gets stuck all of a sudden, it jams.”

Menken & Garcia (2010) write that the agency of the teachers in the classrooms makes them the final arbiter of the language education policy and its implementation. The state gives teachers the state objectives on what content to teach. Teachers have a decision to make on how they are going to teach the content. These strategies of improvisations and negotiation may not always stand the critical pedagogic scrutiny, but they do show the resistance of teachers and their willingness to have a creative space in their classrooms (Menken & Garcia, 2010).

The data presented English as the main language of instruction, but Spanish was utilized to bring in humor to the classroom, to bond with students, or to really emphasis an idea. A type of spontaneous code-switching observed was the teacher instructing the subject matter in one

language then switching to another when talking to the teaching assistant or scolding and advising students (Menken & Garcia, 2010). Ms. Natalia would not hesitate to change her language to gain her students' attention. It was not in her lesson plans to change the language of instruction, but she used both her languages to emphasize a lesson:

Ms. Natalia: "Why would the invention of a quick release skewer change the way cyclists compete in races?" (Students remained quiet.)

Ms. Natalia: *Aver, aver mis niños...Por que la invención del 'quick reléase skewer' cambio como la forma en que los ciclistas compiten en las carreras? [Let's see, let's see my kids...why did the invention of the quick release skewer change the way bicyclists compete in races?]*

Student: "For when the cyclist needs to change the tire more quickly Miss

Ms. Natalia: "Yes! Thank you! *¿O ustedes piensan que los ciclistas van a cargar sus bolsotas o mochilotas con todas, todas, todas las herramientas para cambiar una de las llantas? A poco piensan eso ustedes?* (The class laughed.)

[Or you do you really think bicyclists are going to carry huge bags and big backpacks with all, all, all their tools to change tires? You really think that everyone?]

Teacher Natalia used Spanish as much as her students. Many times, students who are not speakers of the language of the class would not understand the meaning; in such cases, multilingual teachers would then repeat it in the student's mother tongue and look for the beaming smile of understanding on the student's face (Menken & Garcia, 2010).

It is evident from the classroom observations, observational notes and recordings, Ms. Natalia used Spanish as a resource in the classrooms. In her regular and after-school lesson plans, Spanish was not listed. However, the lesson plans contained accommodations and

modifications, referencing the classroom bilingual center. This center was for students to use as needed and contained bilingual dictionaries, Spanish to English translations, and Spanish flashcards. The teachers also had their classrooms labeled in both English and Spanish, identifying common classroom objects like table/*mesa* and calendar/*calendario*. Scaffolds were listed on the lesson plans, providing think-time for students, using interactive journals, providing visual cues, and providing sentence stems.

After-School Instruction

To assist with the opportunity gap, Ms. Natalia sponsored an after-school project-based writing club. Her students began their projects first and then wrote stories about their project. The projects followed a holiday theme. For example, in the November observation, students were creating turkeys, in December students were working on decorating elves and in the January observation students were making three-dimensional snow globes. The after-school classroom environment was informal compared to the regular school day, and Spanish remained as part of the instruction during after school instruction. Ms. Natalia went from having sixteen students during the regular day to having only ten students after school. The small class size allowed for more teacher and student interaction. Students were able to move around the room without having to raise their hand. The classroom environment went from formal and strict to more casual. During the regular school day, instruction was more whole group, Tier I instruction and focused on test taking and reading comprehension. The classroom environment was structured, all students sitting at desks, facing the front of the class, raising hands for any assistance. The classroom had set procedures and rules which Ms. Natalia enforced. The afterschool, classroom environment continued to have rules, but students were no longer only sitting at their desks. They were sitting on the floor, against the wall, under desks, and students

did their writing in a place where they felt most comfortable. Rules and procedures continued, however, in a more relaxing, flexible tone.

Another major difference seen between after-school and during the regular school day was the absence of reading passages in after-school instruction. After school, the students worked independently in centers while the teacher worked with a small group or with an individual student. During the observations, the data presented more art projects after-school. No art projects were used during the regular school day. Art programs that use a choice-based teaching methodology in which students for the most part directed their own learning, functioned under the assumption that children foster intrinsic motivation and creativity through open-ended assignments and exploration (Chad-Friedman et al., 2019). Research suggests that integrating art during lessons will increase student intrinsic motivation. During the classroom observations, after-school students worked on creating cartoon pet turkeys in November, an elf in December as well as an ornament, and a snow globe in January. During her initial interview, Ms. Natalia described her awareness of the differences between her regular school day instruction and her after-school instruction:

Researcher: “Do you notice a shift in the type of language instruction utilized during your regular school day vs. after-school programming?”

Ms. Natalia: They are different, I hate to say it, but they are. In the afternoon, I use a lot of hands-on learning. I let them read independently, and I let them read to each other.

There is more paired learning and group learning. In my class during the day, we do more whole group instruction, and I monitor, and support students as needed, or I pull students to my table as needed. But after-school, we do hands on learning, we start with our art project. Students create an art project first and then what our project is they

always have a corresponding writing assignment. But we get to start with the engaging part of the lesson first after-school. I use art to motivate the students to write in our creative writing club.

Research has shown that when students believe in their work, they are more motivated and interested in learning (Chad-Friedman et al., 2019). Ms. Natalia used art at the beginning of her after-school club to motivate students to build their creative writing skills. She used the art project as the foundation for the lesson. The students talked about their project and then expanded their thinking based on what they discussed with Ms. Natalia. Ms. Natalia created a safe space for students to use their entire linguistic repertoire. However, when the students write about their project, that writing is done all in English. Chad-Friedman et al. (2019) suggest using a teacher-directed art curricula that emphasizes skill development may also prepare children for increased intrinsic motivation. Ms. Natalia expressed her students' lack of motivation to write; however, she noticed when she presented students with an art project first, they used the art project as the foundation to build their writing. The art project served as a prompt for students to write their creative writing piece.

After school, the classroom environment was relaxed and had more talk, there was an increase in utilizing Spanish:

Student: “Ms., *me puede ayudarme dibujar un turkey?*” [*Ms. can you help me draw a turkey?*]

Ms. Natalia: “*Pregúntale a tu friend que te ayude dibujar el pavo*, he draws a lot better than me. Go ask him and see if he can help.” [*Ask your friend to help you draw the turkey.*]

Student: “Okay, Ms.” (Student giggled as he walked to his classmate.)

Students also move around the room more often than the regular school day. For example, if a student needed help, they got up to ask Ms. Natalia at her desk or walked to a classmate's desk for help as opposed to the regular school day when students must raise their hands and be called on before getting up from their desks.

On a second after-school observation on December 14th, students were decorating a Christmas tree ornament. Students were sitting on the floor, under desks, or sitting against the wall while working on their projects.

Ms. Natalia: *Cuando decoren sus esferas, acaben escribiendo sus ensayos [When you decorate your ornament, finish writing your essays.]*

Student: *Mira Ms.! ¡Mira lo que dibuje! [Look Ms.! Look what I drew!]*

Ms. Natalia: *Que hermoso! Wow! ¡Me encanta! [How pretty! Wow! I love it!]*

According to the data collected, students were speaking more Spanish during after-school as opposed to the regular day. After-school allows teachers to adapt the learning to meet the child's interests. It is not enough to adapt the child to the pedagogy; the pedagogy must adapt to the child (Vasquez, 2003). That is not always possible during the school day due to campus and district mandates and curriculum. However, after-school, the curriculum is up to the teacher. The teacher has more agency. I observed Ms. Natalia adding to what the child already brings into the classroom. The students were creative in building their Thanksgiving turkeys with feathers, painting their Christmas ornaments, and decorating their elves; however, those activities were not necessarily possible during the regular school day since the regular day was more focused on reading passages.

In her lesson plans for her reading lesson during the regular school day, Ms. Natalia provided differentiating strategies for bilingual students by using vocabulary picture cards,

emergent bilingual leveled readers, a dictionary, graphic organizer for notetaking and an interactive daily journal. Ms. Natalia also used anchor charts during her lessons. During her interview, she explained how she supported bilingual students' language by providing instructional scaffolds. In the after-school lesson plans, no differentiated strategies were listed.

The regular school day focused a lot on test-taking strategies, state assessments, and reading comprehension strategies. The classroom and instruction were distinctly focused on reading and assessments. However, during the after-school observations, the tone somewhat changed. Learning was still evident, and the teacher utilized translanguaging. However, the focus was not so much on assessment as it was on reading and students taking ownership of their learning.

One area that remained constant was the use of English and Spanish afterschool. I was surprised to find this in the data because I assumed prior to the study that there would be a switch in language. I assumed Spanish would be more prevalent after-school but both English and Spanish were mixed just like they were during the regular school day. When a student came up to Ms. Natalia's desk to show her his ornament decoration, Ms. Natalia replied, "*Que hermoso mi bebe! [Wow! How pretty baby!]*". In another observation when students were decorating Christmas elves, Ms. Natalia reviewed the directions in Spanish to students and began to walk around the classroom to monitor how students were completing their assignments. She noticed one student needed to decorate part of the elf's shirt collar.

Ms. Natalia: "*Y el cuello de la camisa papi, en tu dibujo, necesitas decorarlo.*" [*And the collar of the shirt little one, in the drawing, it needs to be decorated*]

Student: "*Ya la voy a poner Miss, no se enoje Miss*" [*I am already going to put them Miss, do not get upset.*]

Both the teacher and student laughed at this interaction. The student joked with the teacher not to get after him for forgetting to fill in part of the elves' collar. English was the main language of instruction like during the regular school day, but Spanish was just as welcomed and used throughout the after-school instruction as well.

Teacher Ideology

During her interview, Ms. Natalia shared her belief in translanguaging and bilingual education. She expressed the benefits her students received by being bilingual. She also expressed how she utilized students' native language as the foundation to build their English language during her classroom instruction.

Researcher: "To what degree do you think students' languages are valuable in their education?"

Ms. Natalia: I truly believe in the mixing of their languages because a lot of the English words also come from the Spanish words, so they can understand the words better and they can associate the English word with the Spanish one. So, when you're associating the English and Spanish language, you are using the background knowledge students already have; they can create the mental image of it and make connections. They have a much better understanding of the lesson. So, I'm all for using students' native language, and they have to mix it if they can, *Yo me voy del English to Spanish, así [I can go from English to Spanish, like that]* (snaps her fingers) in a flash, (Ms. Natalia says while giggling).

It is evident from Ms. Natalia's demeanor that she enjoys being able to utilize both her English and Spanish language during her classroom instruction. During her interview, she mentioned a conversation she had with her brother about him trying to correct her by not mixing

English and Spanish. *No hables así*, her brother would tell her. Ms. Natalia shared in the anecdote, “I always told him to be quiet, and now look at me: I get paid to mix my languages.”

During her interview, she explained how she supported bilingual students’ by providing instructional scaffolds for them using language.

Researcher: “To what degree do you allow for flexibility and change your instruction to response to students’ needs, interests, and language practices?”

Ms. Natalia: I meet the children where they are, and I try to get them to where they need to be. I am not going to sit here and tell you I am going to teach in English all day, nor am I going to tell you I am going to teach in Spanish all day. It is where the child understands and understands me. At the same time, I am helping them to use their background knowledge to create meaning. They are gaining content in both languages. I don’t want to leave any of their language behind because they will need to be bilingual. It is important to speak more than one language, and it is beautiful to have the ability to speak two languages or even more than two.

Ms. Natalia stated during her interview the importance of being bilingual. She wants all her students to retain their two languages. To help bilingual children fully develop their literate abilities, bilingual teachers need to recall and reflect upon their own biliterate experiences (Murillo, 2017). Ms. Natalia welcomed students to share personal experiences and used their stories to build their language and background knowledge during her lessons. Ms. Natalia knows the best way to provide instruction to her students, even if that means going against district and campus directives. Educators who support, question, or challenge policy initiatives mediate language policy implementation as they enact their professional agency (Zuniga et al., 2020).

During her interview Ms. Natalia shared her belief in the importance of students having their two languages:

Researcher: “To what degree do you allow for flexibility and changes in your instruction to respond to the students’ needs, their interests, and their language practices?”

Ms. Natalia: I always tell my kids, especially at the beginning of the school year, how important it is to have more than one language. I was raised in the United States, but like, it’s my language. Spanish is my language, and you don't want to lose it because here, my kids know I try to teach them as a whole. I think them learning [Spanish] also goes into roots and learning about cultures, yet them knowing themselves and [Spanish] is beautiful, and they will always have two languages.

Ms. Natalia utilizing Spanish, whether as a resource or to enact *cariño*, went against the district and campus administration directives. It is an unwritten rule for Spanish- speaking students to utilize English because it is the language of the state exam. Working at this campus for nearly eleven years, I am familiar with the district and campus “unwritten” policies.

Researcher: “To what degree do you allow for flexibility and change your instruction to response to students’ needs, interests, and language practices?”

Ms. Natalia: How could someone not talk to a student in Spanish? Don’t speak in Spanish if they don't understand English? It is like me trying to talk to you in Chinese when you don't know Chinese, so I think it's very important because how does a student supposed to learn? Yeah, it's a process. It's not going to happen right away. It's not. But it will be worth it to them to learn both languages.

Ms. Natalia stated during her interview the importance of being bilingual. She wanted all her students to retain their two languages even though this goal of the teacher goes against the district and campus unwritten rule of making English the priority language.

The purpose of this study was to explore the translanguaging practices of three bilingual teachers. Miss Natalia used her personal language experiences and ideologies to enact her language policy in her classroom based on her experiences growing up. She stated in her interview at the time when she was growing up she did not know she was utilizing her entire linguistic repertoire. However, now she is learning more about translanguaging, she mentioned following Dr. Jose Media on her social media pages, she learned how important it is for students to utilize both their languages. Dr. Jose Medina began as an educational consultant posting social media videos about the importance of translanguaging and speaking about research on the importance of bilingual education. Because of his popularity and large social media following, he has made himself a content creator on TikTok and Instagram by sharing videos from his professional development sessions on bilingual education best practices. As stated in her post interview, Ms. Natalia's goal was to create a safe environment to nurture the student's first language. She recalled growing up in California and having to speak English and not being allowed to speak in Spanish. She did not want her students to feel that insecurity and inadequacy like she did. Although Ms. Natalia's schools utilize English as the main language of instruction, she knows the importance of being bilingual. She expressed in her pre interview how students need to know both languages as opposed to just one.

In our follow up interview in June 2023, I asked Ms. Natalia why she chooses to go against the district and campus directive about pushing English instruction. She clarified she wants her students to have a safe space in her classroom. She continued to call the students'

Spanish language their safety blanket. Ms. Natalia mentioned a time in her earlier years of teaching a former principal shared some advice to her. The principal shared, “If someone spoke to you only in Chinese would you be able to comprehend what they are saying?” The teacher took this as a time to reflect and share the possibility of her students not wanting to learn because they were not going to fully understand her if she only used English without any Spanish language support. She expressed her enthusiasm to create her classroom into a safe environment for students to utilize their entire linguistic repertoire.

In comparing her language use in the regular school day and after school. Ms. Natalia had no difference in her language instruction. She had created an environment for students to use their entire linguistic repertoire both during the regular class instruction and after school.

Discussion

Ms. Natalia is the language policy maker in her classroom. She goes against what the district and campus directive which is to speak mainly in English most of the day. The campus administration and the school district have their guidance and procedures in place. However, when the teacher is with students in their classrooms, they have agency over what and how they teach (Zuñiga et al., 2018). Having personal experience at the campus in which this study took place I can say the campus administration pushes instruction in the English language for most students and keeps the use of Spanish to a minimum, unless using it for instructional support. English is the language used most of the time. Only if the child is a recent immigrant from Mexico, do they get instructed in Spanish in a pull-out, highly intensive language development (HILD). However, if the child speaks Spanish at home as listed on the home language survey during school registration, the language of instruction is English for most of the school day. As

the section above showed, Ms. Natalia, taught in English but she code switched and/or translated a lot of her instruction.

Ms. Natalia was the only teacher that utilized Spanish as part of her instruction both during the regular school day and after-school. Her language mixing, code-switching and translanguaging was constant during both. This can be seen almost as a type of rebellion. Ms. Natalia goes against the rules set by the district and campus administration. When her classroom door closes, she teaches how she wants to teach. Her afterschool classroom is a “third space,” which she refers to as a “safe space for students to use language.”

CHAPTER V
TEACHER VALERIA

Teacher Description

Ms. Valeria (pseudonym) is a second-grade bilingual certified teacher for students that speak Spanish. She's a Latina in her mid-forties. She grew up in the Rio Grande Valley, in a town near the school in which she teaches and currently lives. She lives a short drive away from the campus; therefore, she is extremely familiar with the area and community. She has been a teacher for twenty-seven years. Ms. Valeria has taught in grades second, third, fifth and has experience teaching secondary level grades. She has been a second-grade teacher for most of her career and states second grade is her favorite grade level to teach. She studied English at the local university, while an undergraduate Ms. Valeria wanted to teach high school English, however; elementary school students captured her heart and she switched from secondary to elementary school teaching. She completed an alternative certification program to obtain her teaching certificate and is bilingual certified to teach students whose native language is Spanish. Ms. Valeria grew up speaking mostly English. She considers English as her home language; therefore, speaks it most of the time in and out of school. I have known Ms. Valeria for the thirteen years we worked at the same campus, six of those years we worked together. I had the pleasure of teaching second grade alongside Ms. Valeria for one school year. Our classrooms were across the hall from each other. We also worked together as part of a grant for which our campus received state funds to enhance the after-school program.

The grant lasted five years. I was the campus after school grant coordinator and Ms. Valeria taught the art club. I have always known Ms. Valeria to be someone who excels at collaboration and understands the importance of working together with colleagues. Ms. Valeria effortlessly combines her calm demeanor with a cheerful spirit in her classroom. Behind her soft-spoken nature lies a warm-hearted teacher who values meaningful connections with her students and her colleagues.

Ms. Valeria's Classroom

This school year she continues to teach second grade and has a total of sixteen students, ten boys and six girls. All the students are bilingual as listed on their home language survey. When parents/guardians register the children at school the state mandates parents/guardians complete a "Home Language Survey" which goes into the student's permanent record and identifies if the child is eligible to receive bilingual education services. The survey asks two main questions – What language is spoken in the child's home most of the time and what language does the child speak most of the time? If the parent/guardian answers either one of these questions with a language other than English, the child qualifies to receive bilingual education services.

As you walk into Ms. Valeria's classroom, it is set up in the shape of a horseshoe. The students' desks are in three open rows with one row in the middle of the class and the other two rows of desks along the edges of the classroom. Her kidney table for small group instruction is at the top of the horseshoe. Her teacher's desk is tucked away off to the side of the classroom. She has her five desktop computers along the wall on the south side. She has her students' cubbies and cabinets along the walls of the entrance to her classroom. There is a slight atmosphere of disorganization as with most elementary school classrooms. However, the space is functional,

productive, and conducive to students' learning. Upon entering the classroom, I was greeted by a sight that might seem chaotic at first glance, papers stacked across desks and cubbies, books piled haphazardly in various places, however; it is a purposeful classroom with students engaged in group work, using laptops independently, having partner discussions and the teacher working with a small group at her kidney table in the front of the room. She has educational posters on the wall for students to reference during their studies. Most are in English; some are in Spanish. She has bilingual labels across many of her classroom items. For example, on the computers she has the labels "computer" in blue and "*computadora*" in red on the same label. She has "calendar / *calendario*", "desk / *escritorio*", "door/ *puerta*" and various other labels across her entire classroom. All teachers have a bilingual center for their students in their classrooms. The center consists of Spanish dictionaries, Spanish/English translating dictionaries, children's books in Spanish. Students can go to the bilingual center at any time throughout the day as they need assistance. It is a campus directive for each bilingual classroom to have a designated bilingual center for students to use as linguistic support throughout the school day or on assignments to use the resources available to them as they need. The classroom bilingual center includes Spanish to English translation dictionaries, Spanish dictionaries, posters with cognates and additional Spanish language material. Each bilingual teachers' lesson plans have a bilingual center listed as a linguistic accommodation.

In terms of classroom management style, Ms. Valeria is free spirited. Students are able to get up as they need to gather any materials within the classroom. They ask permission to leave the classroom, however if they need to sharpen a pencil, grab a book, or go to the computer they are allowed to if they are not distracting anyone else. Despite the slight disarray, the classroom performs efficiently, and the students have adapted to their learning environment and are

comfortable navigating through their classroom. Ms. Valeria has created a space where students can embrace their curiosity and embrace their individuality. The strictest rule every teacher has in place and is enforced across the entire campus is no one is allowed to exit the classroom without permission, and no one is allowed to open the classroom door except the teacher. The classroom door always remains locked and can only be opened from the inside or with a master key, which only the principal and school custodians have access. Students are not allowed to open the classroom door to anyone even if they know the person standing on the other side of the door.

Data Collection

Ms. Valeria demonstrates a quietness that coexists with a friendly personality and a deep love for her students. She is a free spirit when it comes to classroom organization and management, but her students thrive in a place they are free to explore. Her qualities will be presented in the data. The data was gathered over eight total classroom observations which took place in her classroom. I observed Ms. Regina's classroom eight times: four were during her regular school day during reading language arts. The other four observations were during her after-school club. All observations took place between October 2023- December 2023. Four of the observations were during the regular school day in the language arts block and the other four classroom observations were during her after school club. Her language arts block taught in English as the primary language of instruction, was observed from 9:45 am – 10:45 am. Her after-school club was observed from 3:15 pm – 4:15 pm. Each observation was one hour in length. In each of the eight classroom observations, observational notes were taken, along with audio recordings which were transcribed. Ms. Valeria participated in a pre and post interview and submitted lesson plans for her regular school day language arts block and lessons plans of

her after-school club. After the data was collected and audio recordings transcribed, the data was reviewed to identify common themes. I also comparatively reviewed the data among all three teachers to identify similarities and differences. Her language policy implementation was visible in the data through sub-themes of language use in the regular school day compared to the afterschool and teacher ideology.

Language Policy Making

Ms. Valeria uses English primarily in her classroom and for most subjects. However, during her language arts small group rotations, Spanish is utilized for the one designated group of Spanish language students. All other subject areas are done predominantly in English.

Language Use

Ms. Valeria has created a space with a minimal management structure allowing students freedom of movement throughout the classroom. She acts as a facilitator and guide of the classroom rather than a strict enforcer of rules. While this classroom appears less formal than traditional ones, it fosters classroom exploration and learning. When it comes to language used in Ms. Valeria's classroom, there is a clear separation between English and Spanish. Throughout the day students engaged in separate activities depending on their language. During the small group rotations for reading language arts, three of the groups were learning in English and one group had the Spanish speaking students. The data collected presented how Ms. Valeria used language in her classroom both during the regular school day and after school.

Regular School Day Instruction

The campus directive is to push the English language more so than the Spanish. This is due to the students testing in English on the state exams. For the second graders in Ms. Valeria's class, they do not take the state assessment this current school year; however, her students will be

taking the state exams for the first-time next year in third grade, they will be assessed in reading in April and math in May of next year. Part of second grade's directive is to assist with preparing students for the state assessment next year. During each instructional day classroom visit, Ms. Valeria provided small group instruction. Small group instruction is when the teacher only works with a group of three to five students at a time and rotates every fifteen to twenty minutes. While the teacher is working with one small group, the rest of the class is at independent centers where they complete a task with minor teacher supervision. This is also known as Tier 2 instruction. Students were placed in small groups rotations for 20 minutes. The four centers included the teacher guided group where Ms. Valeria provided guided reading instruction. There were technology centers with students working on the district purchased reading program on tablets and laptops. There was the fluency center with students each practicing a play, each student in the center took a different character role and practiced their lines. The last group was the spelling center in which students used magnetic letters to build their spelling words.

The most notable theme coming across the classroom observations was Ms. Valeria kept her English and Spanish language use separate. The campus administration and district have their guidance and procedures in place in terms of language instruction. However, when the teacher is with his/her own students in their classrooms, they have agency over what and how they teach in their respective classrooms (Zuñiga et al., 2018). The criteria to transition from Spanish instruction to English instruction was to read a one-page grade level reading passage, blend a list of words, and read a list of Dolch words (Farrell et al., 2013). If the student can read and complete transition assessment, then they qualify to receive English instruction even though they have only had a minimum of one year in Spanish instruction.

During the regular school day, Ms. Valeria kept English and Spanish languages separate. She spoke only English to her three groups of students that met criteria on the transition assessment.

Ms. Valeria - Why is the title important? Why do authors include titles in their stories?

Student To learn

Ms. Valeria: But to learn what?

[Students remain quiet.]

Ms. Valeria If the title is not there, do you know what the story will be about? Why do all the books in the library have titles?

Student – It is important.

Ms. Valeria – Yes, but why is it important to include a title?

[Students remain quiet.]

Ms. Valeria When I go to the library and or I want to read this book, I read the title, and I think, no, let me pick another book. I read the title and I think do I want to read this book? Yes or no?

Student – If you don't know, you read the title

Ms. Valeria – For what? What does the title help you with? The title helps you figure out what the store is about.

In this observation on October 26th, the teacher was trying to get the students to answer her question, “Why is the title important?” She was trying to get students to answer titles that are important because they help us predict what the reading selection will be about. However, when the students did not answer her, she would provide additional questions or sentence frames in English. Unlike Ms. Natalia, who would provide a translation or mix her languages to bring

students' background information to the forefront when her students were quiet. However, Ms. Valeria only provides additional information in English to her bilingual students. All her students are still bilingual even though they have met the criteria and passed the assessment to transition to more English instruction. In another regular class observation November 30th, the teacher was working with a small group of her English transitioned students. During the instruction, only English was used.

The teacher was reviewing text features with the small group using the story of the week.

Ms. Valeria: "What text features do you see on this page?"

Student: Pictures

Ms. Valeria: How do you know this is a text feature?

[Students remain quiet.]

Ms. Valeria: How does the author let you know this is a text feature?

[Students remain quiet.]

Ms. Valeria: You see the letters in blue and they are bold.

English continued as the main language of instruction. Other than the Spanish instruction for the one student group, Spanish is not utilized during the rest of instruction. Ms. Valeria's method of instruction is reminiscent of the "monolingual principle" (Howatt, 1984) which emphasizes the instructional use of the target language only and excludes the native language to minimize the interference between the new language and home language. Ofelia Garcia's work on translanguaging suggests instead of compartmentalizing languages, language is fluid, and we have one linguistic repertoire from which we can pull different features as we need them when we speak.

In another classroom observation November 8th, again, the teacher was working with students in small group using English language. There was no translation or translanguaging during the instruction.

Ms. Valeria: Why do we use the glossary?

Student: It gives you clues

Ms. Valeria: Uhm...kind of...but something specific, what does the glossary help us do?

Student: It like helps you?

Ms. Valeria: But helps us with what? Remember these words from story, like migration, our vocabulary words, where do I find out what they mean?

Student: Oh! Miss! In the glossary!

Ms. Valeria: Yes, the glossary helps us find the meaning of the words in our story.

The data shows English as the main language of instruction for the group of students that have transitioned from Spanish instruction to English instruction. This next teacher and student interaction was the second regular instructional day observation. Ms. Valeria was doing her small group rotation with her Spanish students. Teacher reviewed text features with the Spanish story of the week.

Ms. Valeria: “*Vamos a buscar nuestra historia.*” [*Let’s look for our story.*]

[Teacher helps students flip pages to find the story of the week.]

Ms. Valeria: “*Como nos ayuda el autor con las fotos?*” [*How does the author help us with the photos?*]

Student: “*Lo la vas hacer read*” [*You are going to read to us?*]

Ms. Valeria: “*¿Por qué en autor incluyo las fotos en la selección?*” [*Why did the author include the potos in the selection?*]

Student: *Para ayudar a leer.*[To help read]

Ms. Valeria: *Miren esta página, aquí tenemos tres animales. Miren la foto aquí – ¿que ven en la foto en esta página?*[Look at this page, here you have animals. Look at the photo here What do you see in the photo on this page?]

[Students stay quiet.]

Ms. Valeria: *Aquí debajo de las fotos, tenemos algo.*[Here under the photos, we have something] Look under the photo, what do you see?

Ms. Valeria and her students use English and Spanish. This small group of six students did not meet the criteria to transition to English she continued teaching in Spanish for only those students. She only spoke Spanish when it came to teaching her small group of Spanish students. When it was the Spanish groups rotation with her, then she would teach in Spanish. To help bilingual children fully develop their literacy abilities bilingual teachers need to recall and reflect upon their own biliterate experiences (Murillo, 2017). Although she used both languages, she did not mix them. She used English for her three English groups and Spanish only with her one Spanish group.

During the same November 1st observation but when the teacher's rotation moved from an English group, to now the teacher working with the Spanish group when the reading selection of the week was being introduced and the teacher was working on the reading skill of making predictions. The same selection was available in English and in Spanish.

Teacher- *¿De qué se tratará este texto que vamos a leer? ¿Alguien tendrá una predicción?* [What is the topic of the text we are going to read? Does someone have a prediction?]

Student- *Vamos a leer sobre los cometas.* [We are going to read about kites.]

Teacher-*Ah, sí, ¿a al mejor...porque piensas eso? ¿Como usaste los rasgos y l' estructura del texto para ayudarte con esa predicción? [Ah, yes, maybe...why do you think that? How did you use the text features and structure of the text to help you make a predication?]*

Student- *Yo vi todas las fotos de los diferentes cometas volando en el cielo. [I saw all of the potos of the different kites flying in the sky.]*

The teacher did the same lesson, focusing on the same skill, with the students receiving English language instruction.

Teacher- Does anyone have a prediction about what we are going to be reading in today's reading selection?

Student - We are going to learn.

Teacher - Okay, yes, but what are we going to learn about?

Student 1 - About flying kites?

Student 2- Yes! Kites!

Teacher- That is a good prediction.

When providing the class with directions, the teacher continues to use English. For example, when students were getting a little too loud the teacher reminded the class to work quietly at their centers. Teacher rings the bell to get all students' attention and reminds them, "You are too loud, class, we are getting too loud during our centers. Only the people in the group should hear you." Because there is a group of students that receive Spanish language instruction, that is the main reason there is Spanish instruction happening in Ms. Valeria's class. Had it not been for that group of Spanish kids, it is possible, all instruction would be in English most of the time.

After-School Instruction

To assist with the opportunity gap and the COVID-19 learning loss, Ms. Valeria sponsored a creative writing club. She projected seemingly random items on the front screen of the class and students had to create a story using as many of the items as possible. For example, in one observation, the teacher projected a page with a backpack, a school, and other items. Students were directed to use at least one item from the pictures to write their stories but try to use as many items as they could. From the regular school day to the after-school programs, I noticed there were differences. There were eight students in the after-school club, which is half the total number of students in her regular school day. During the regular school day, Ms. Valeria did small group rotations during her reading language arts lessons. However, in the after school the students were either working independently or the teacher provided more whole group instruction, no small group instruction took place during the four after school observations. I noticed in the afterschool program, Ms. Valeria only used English as her language of instruction. She did not utilize Spanish in any of her lessons during after school. When a student asked the teacher for assistance on how to spell a word, the teacher provided instruction in all English.

Student: “Teacher how do you spell Dog?” I forgot.

Teacher – “Sound it out, use your sounds.”

When providing directions for the after-school club, the teacher also only uses all English:

Teacher - Write a story on your own paper. You must write about at least one of the things shown on this page. You may use as many of the pictures as you want.

In her pre-interview Ms. Valeria stated all her students in her after-school club were English speaking students and therefore, did not use Spanish afterschool.

Researcher: Is there a difference between your regular day instruction and your after-school instruction and if so, how are they different?

Ms. Valeria: Well, was just talking about that the other day, my classroom it's bilingual. It is a true bilingual classroom. After school I have a mix of students from the other classes, but they are all English.

Researcher: So, they're all for the most part all English students in your after-school club?

Ms. Valeria: Yes. From the other classes. And you can tell their vocabulary, just their expressions, they are not afraid. They just want to talk and talk and talk.

Ms. Valeria's interview correlates with the data, since there was no Spanish language used after-school in Ms. Valeria's class. Upon our follow up interview in June of 2023, I presented the data to Ms. Valeria and asked for clarification on why she kept the languages separate. Ms. Valeria stated the following:

Researcher: I noticed there were three groups you used mostly English with and there was one group where you used Spanish, and that same group worked on Spanish activities. Can you clarify why there are three groups that received English instruction and one group with Spanish instruction?

Ms. Valeria: Yes, that group of students did not pass the transition matrix, they receive Spanish language arts instruction. But only language arts, the rest of the subjects we do in English as well. Because I teach second grade, I do both languages here for language arts,

but the upper grade students that do not transition to English get pulled out to the HILD class.

Upon analyzing her lesson plans for her regular school day reading language arts instruction, Ms. Valeria utilizes the Texas English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) to plan for her bilingual students. The ELPS are what the state of Texas designed to outline language proficiency levels and student expectations for emergent bilingual students. The same language proficiency standards the same across all grade levels Kindergarten through grade 12. In the lesson plan that aligned with Ms. Valeria's lesson on text features, she has the ELPS 4.D listed, which states, "use prereading supports such as graphic organizers, illustrations, and pre-taught topic-related vocabulary and other prereading activities to enhance comprehension of written text." She also has other differentiation strategies listed for emergent bilingual on her lesson plan that include showing videos, using vocabulary cards in English and in Spanish, providing emergent bilinguals with extra time to complete assignments, provide clarifications as requested by students, and use cognates. I observed some of these strategies, for example, she has some vocabulary words posted around the room in pocket charts, there were labels across the classroom, the words in blue were English and words in red were Spanish. I did not observe all of the strategies listed on the lesson plan.

Compared to her after-school lesson plans, the lesson plans were simple. There was a state standard (TEK) at the top of the lesson plan, an ELP was listed under the TEK and the activity for after-school. On the after-school lesson plan the TEK for second grade standard is Compose literary texts and informational text. The ELP is Write using newly acquired vocabulary and content-based grade-vocabulary. The activity listed on the lesson plan was, the students were to compose multiple texts that were meaningful after discussing the picture

prompt. Unlike her regular school day lesson plans, the after-school lesson plans did not have any bilingual support; the only bilingual accommodation was the inclusion of the ELPS.

Teacher Ideology

Ms. Valeria's instruction aligned to the campus administration and district directive and view of language. The campus and district initiative for language use is for English to be used most of the time and use Spanish only for support or as needed in forms of translations or summary of the lesson. This alignment has a direct influence on language practices over the amount of time spent utilizing a certain language during instruction. In this study, the amount of English was more than the amount of time students used Spanish in the classroom. Here language is viewed "as a problem" (Ruiz, 1984). The teacher keeps the two languages separate but having English as the main language throughout the rest of the day and after-school presents a preference to English over Spanish. Neustupny's (1970) examples of language problems include code selection and enforcing one code over another. This is the policy at the campus the teacher follows. Ms. Valeria expressed her views on language in her pre-interview.

Researcher: How do you design your instruction while you're planning or your lesson plans to meet the needs of all language learners?

Ms. Valeria: Well, for my class right now, I have three groups of English and one group of all Spanish.

As the interview continued Ms. Valeria stated she does keep her languages separate in her classroom:

Researcher: How do you feel about the utilization of English and/or Spanish or the mixing of both languages? How do you feel about language being compartmentalized,

integrated, keeping them separate? To what degree do you think students' languages are valuable in their education?

Ms. Valeria: I think it's important for the general knowledge, the child to get concepts across and things like that. I think it is important for students to use all their languages in order to learn new concepts and ideas. But I do have my three English speaking group and I have my one Spanish speaking group. So, there I do keep languages separate.

Ms. Valeria is aware that languages are separated within her classroom according to who has transitioned to English. She knows all her students need Spanish to build their new learning; however, only her Spanish students continue to learn in Spanish. The transitioned students are primarily taught in English. When asked how she designs her instruction she pointed to language separation.

Researcher: How do you design your instruction while you're planning or your lesson plans to meet the needs of all language learners?

Ms. Valeria: Well, for my class right now, well I have three groups of English and one group of all Spanish.

Ms. Valeria's classroom has a clear separation of language. Only when she is working with the group of Spanish students does she bring in Spanish into her instruction. Most of the day the instruction is in English. It seems as if there was no Spanish group in her classroom, she would do all her instruction in English. Ms. Valeria is cognizant of the importance of utilizing Spanish as a foundation to build new learning as she stated in her interview, but the state assessment may play a factor in utilizing English as the primary language for those students that have transitioned. Second grade bilingual students are assessed on Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS). All English language learners must take the

TELPAS exam every school year until the campus Language Proficiency Assessment Committee determines students are proficient in English along with meeting other exit criteria. Though all her students are still considered bilingual and there seems to be minimal Spanish instruction happening during instruction. There is no change between her regular school day instruction and her after-school instruction. The only reason she has Spanish is for the Spanish speaking students that have not met the criteria to transition to English instruction. Since the students in her after school club have transitioned there is no Spanish instruction. Although the after-school students are still bilingual because there are ELPS listed on the after-school lesson plan.

Discussion

The findings of this study show Ms. Valeria align with the campus and district directive to position English as the language for most instruction. From her classroom observations and interviews, her pedagogical approaches and her interactions with the students followed the district and campus language directives. Ms. Valeria studied English in college and considers English her home language. This could be a factor in her agreement to follow the directive set by the administration as well as the TELPAS state assessment. Ms. Valeria's classroom instruction aligned with the language ideologies expressed by her in her interview.

In her pre-interview she stated, "I think it is important for students to use all of their languages in order to learn new concepts and ideas." She gave further clarification though by stating she does have languages separated. She has her language transitioned students learning in English but her non-transitioned students continuing to receive only reading language arts in Spanish. All other subjects are taught in English. Students Spanish is viewed as important; however, the practice of English seems to take precedence to meet the needs of the state

assessment in the current school year, and the next three years as students continue to take the state assessments.

In our follow up interview in June 2023, when asked why she kept the languages separate, Ms. Valeria stated it was because her Spanish group of students did not yet pass the criteria on the transitional matrix. The transitional assessment and moving from Spanish instruction to English is seen as a success criterion in the district. Speaking from personal experience, I remember district level administration meetings announcing the total number of students that transitioned from Spanish instruction into English was announced at the beginning of the meeting like a grand gesture, as if announcing the winning score at a sporting event.

This influence from the district and campus administration can be a factor in Ms. Valeria's perspective. Translanguaging was not utilized throughout the regular school day nor during the after-school programming. English was used most of the time during both times of the day. Ms. Valeria enacted her belief of English as the primary language of instruction in both the regular school day and after-school. The teacher considering English as her home language. Ms. Valeria prefers to speak English compared to her use of Spanish. This could also be a factor in influencing her ideology and teaching practice. Ms. Valeria could feel more comfortable using English as opposed to Spanish. As I observed her teaching in Spanish, there were subtle cues such as taking a little longer to process Spanish. It was not as fluently spoken compared to her English. She used her language ideologies to enact language policy in their respective classrooms by aligning her teaching methods to that direction of the campus and district administration. Her classroom practice echoed the school-sanctioned ideologies that perpetuate dual monolingualism for bilingual communities (Zuniga et al. 2018). Translanguaging was utilized seldom throughout

the regular school day and was not observed at all in the four after-school programming observations. After-school only English was used during instruction.

CHAPTER VI

TEACHER REGINA

Teacher Description

Ms. Regina (pseudonym) is a third grade bilingually certified teacher for students that speak Spanish. I knew Ms. Regina from working at the same campus together; however, I did not have the pleasure of teaching alongside her within the same grade level. However, as a colleague I would describe her demeanor as empathetic and kind. She embodies a high level of professionalism yet is warm and approachable and willing to help other staff members. At first, she appears shy and quiet, but once she feels comfortable her lively personality shines through her playfulness and charm. She is easy to get along with and has a helpful nature, always ready to lend a hand to those in need. From knowing her personally as a work colleague and having conversations with her, her dominant language is English,

Ms. Regina began her career teaching kindergarten, then moved on to teach second grade and is now currently teaching third grade. Ms. Regina is an excellent teacher who is known for taking the most struggling students and bringing them up to grade level by the end of the year. Her state assessment scores are always at the top percentile for the campus. Ms. Regina is a teacher that epitomized professionalism and is serious when it comes to her teaching and instructional methodology. She is determined to lead her students to be the best versions of themselves and to guide them from struggling students to being at or above their grade level. Ms. Regina is known for having students that most teachers will find extremely challenging. However, she always leads them to success.

Aside from scoring high on the state assessments, her classroom also always has one of the highest percentages of daily attendance on campus, her students love her, and she builds positive relationships with her students' parents. I had the pleasure of being Ms. Regina's eldest daughter's teacher. So, I have known Ms. Regina both as a colleague and as a parent. In these dual roles she plays, education is of the utmost priority. She is a teacher and a parent that creates a focused and disciplined environment, expecting students to meet high standards and holding them accountable for their actions. With her unwavering commitment to teaching, her work ethic is highly evident.

Ms. Regina is not only committed to her students' academic progress but also deeply cares about their well-being and development as individuals. She is generous and selfless in her willingness to use her own money to purchase necessary learning supplies for her students. She also purchases prizes and Christmas gifts for them. She understands some students may not have access to certain resources at home and creates a supportive and loving classroom to help ease students' challenges. Her level of dedication is commendable.

Ms. Regina's Classroom

I always knew she was the perfect, ideal teacher but never had the opportunity to observe her in her classroom. Ms. Regina has six boys and nine girls for a total of fifteen students in her classroom. All the students are bilingual learners. However, all were going to be assessed in English on the state exam at the end of the school year in April for the reading and in May for the math state assessments. Seven of her students were in my second-grade class last school year. As you walk into her classroom, it is well organized, like a classroom that appears out of Pinterest. Every aspect of the classroom is meticulously arranged to foster an ideal learning environment. She has academic posters and anchor charts posted on the walls, most are in

English, some have Spanish translations. The desks are nearly arranged in straight rows, no desk is out of alignment. The classroom is set up to allow for easy movement and interaction between students and the teacher.

Her classroom is set up in perfectly aligned rows all facing the front of the class. There are three rows of five desks each with five students sitting at each of the desks for a total of fifteen students. Her teacher's desk is on the west side corner of the room. All students are facing the front of the classroom towards the whiteboard that also acts as a screen for the projector to present the document camera and the teacher's laptop. The teacher uses an app as a point system to keep students engaged. When students are present and active in class, they receive points to spend on class prizes. The prizes are purchased by Ms. Regina. She also uses randomized popsicle sticks with each student's name written on it to call on students to share out during the class discussion. During my observations, I noticed all students are actively engaged. During each of the four regular classroom observations, students were raising their hand before saying anything aloud. I also observed all students were focused on Ms. Regina as she was speaking. When she would present content on the interactive whiteboard all students would turn to face the front of the room. Seldom did Ms. Regina have to regain her students' attention or remind them to focus on the task at hand. Most of the instruction was done whole group. When Ms. Regina has students switch from whole group to partners or to completing independent work, she always gives precise and clear directions to the students. She has the students repeat the directions back to her to ensure each student understood the task at hand before moving on. Students know exactly what is expected of them and they know the consequences of what may happen should they choose not to complete the assignment. It is evident the class rules and procedures are set in

place and minimizes any incidences of misbehavior. The classroom management is structured yet engaging. Students are smiling.

Data Collection

Ms. Regina embodies professionalism, maintains a calm demeanor, adheres to rules and guidelines diligently, and consistently demonstrates excellence in her teaching practices. She creates an environment where students feel motivated to learn, grow and reach their full potential. Her qualities will be presented in the data. The data was gathered over eight total classroom observations which took place in her classroom. Four of the observations were during the regular school day in the language arts block and the other four classroom observations were during her after school club. Her language arts block taught in English as the primary language of instruction, was observed from 10:30 am – 11:30 am. Her after-school club was observed from 4:15 pm – 5:15 pm. Each observation was one hour in length. In each of the eight classroom observations, observational notes were taken, along with audio recordings which were transcribed. Ms. Regina participated in a pre and post interview and submitted lesson plans for her regular school day language arts block and lessons plans of her after-school club. After all the data was collected and audio recordings transcribed, the data was reviewed to identify common themes. I also comparatively reviewed the data among all three teachers to identify similarities and differences. Her language policy implementation was visible in the data through sub-themes of language use in the regular school day compared to the afterschool and teacher ideology.

Language Policy Making

Ms. Regina has established a language policy that encourages students to use English as much as possible during instructional time. She occasionally utilizes Spanish for support. Ms. Regina designs her lessons to promote English language development.

Language Use

The campus administration and district have their guidance and procedures in place which is to promote the use of English most of the time and to use Spanish as needed for support. Spanish should not serve as the primary language instruction, even if the students are bilingual. Ms. Regina has English as the main language of instruction following the district and campus directive.

Regular School Day Instruction

In the first classroom observation on October 26th during the reading language arts time, the teacher was reviewing vocabulary words. The first word was *emergency*. The teacher provided a bilingual accommodation called a sentence stem.

Ms. Regina: An emergency is a noun, it means “a serious or dangerous situation”.

Describe to your partner what is an emergency. When you describe what an emergency is, I want you to use this sentence stem, “A situation is an emergency when? What makes a situation an emergency?”

After Ms. Regina provided the directions, she actively monitors group discussions; she joins in on the partners and redirects or repeats directions or provides more information. All students spoke in English in their discussion pairs. After the students discussed it with their partners Ms. Regina had students share out to the class.

Ms. Regina: Now that you discussed with your partner, what makes something an emergency? What was this word again?

Whole class: EMERGENCY!

Ms. Regina: Yes, now what makes something an emergency?

Student 1: A fire!

Ms. Regina: Yes, a fire is an emergency. What else can be an emergency?

Student 2: When something bad is going to happen.

Ms. Regina: Yes! That is also an emergency.

During the second classroom observation on November 1st, Ms. Regina was presenting a lesson on the biography of Milton Hershey. She began the lesson with a short, two-minute video tour of the Hershey chocolate factory in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

Ms. Regina: Let's view this video, we are going to get to see inside the Hershey chocolate factory. Everyone watched the video.

[Teacher plays the video for students, all students watching the video. Video is in English]

Ms. Regina: As I was listening to the video, I noticed that Hershey failed over and over again before he successfully created a chocolate bar. As we read, keep in mind how long it took Milton Hershey to become successful. I want you all to know that you are working very hard too, it might take time, baby steps at a time to become successful.

Student 1: Miss can I use a highlighter?

Ms. Regina: Yes, you may

[Teacher reviewing test taking strategies prior to reading the selection.]

Ms. Regina: What do you see on this page that is different, that is a text feature, what do you see?

Student 2: “A heading!”

Ms. Regina: Yes! A heading let’s circle this heading. Label it - Heading #1

During the third regular school day observation on November 3rd, the teacher was introducing the vocabulary word *memorize*:

Ms. Regina: The word is *memorize*; repeat the word three times.

All students: “Memorize! Memorize! Memorize!”

Ms. Regina: “A synonym for memorize would be *do not forget*. I want you to discuss with your partner something you memorized. Use the sentence stem, ‘Something I have memorized is _____.’ Think, Turn, and Talk to your partner.”

I noticed students speak in complete sentences with their partner because they use the sentence frame the teacher provided for them prior to discussing with their partner. After about two-three minutes the teacher gains the whole class’s attention.

Ms. Regina: “What is something important you had to memorize?” Teacher calls on one student to share out.

[Student remains quiet. Student was shy to speak, teacher provides background knowledge for students to share in discussion.]

Ms. Regina: “You play soccer, right? Can I use my hands when I play soccer?”

Student: Oh no Miss! No!

Ms. Regina: “How do you know I can’t use my hands? You did what with the rules of soccer? You mmmm_____”

Student: “Memorized them!”

In the eight classroom observations, four of which took place during the regular school day instruction for one hour during the reading language arts block, the teacher used Spanish seldomly. Out of the eight observations, Spanish was used on two occasions.

Ms. Regina: “The word is ‘instruction’. *La palabra es en español...¿A ver, ¿quién sabe?*

[The word in Spanish....Let me see, who knows?]

Student:

Instrucción! [Instruction!]

Ms. Regina: “Yes, thank you for your help. ‘Instruction’ in Spanish *es la palabra instrucción*’

The second occasion is when the teacher used authentic *cariño* to remind a student to close their book and open the reading textbook.

Ms. Regina: “Close this up *mi amor* [my love]; we are not using that book for now; we are using the reading book.

That same day, a student called on the teacher, and Ms. Regina replied with a respectful Spanish reply.

Student: “Miss?”!

Ms. Regina: *Mande?* [Yes?]

Student: “Do we use this book?” [Student picks up the reading book.]

Ms. Regina: “Yes, that one.”

When a child called on Ms. Regina to ask a question, the teacher replied with *mande*, which is generally seen as a respectful way to respond if someone calls your attention.

The campus and district promote English since that is the language in which students are going to be assessed. Ms. Regina is a third-grade teacher which means this is the first year her

students are going to be taking a state assessment. She is following the campus directive. Upon our follow up interview in June 2023, when asked for clarification as to why she uses mostly English in her instruction the teacher stated the following:

Researcher: “In all the classroom observation, I noticed most of the classroom instruction is done in English. Can you elaborate on your choice of language for instruction?”

Ms. Regina: “Well, the kids on the STAAR will be assessed in English, that is the language they are going to need to be successful. Also, at home they speak mostly Spanish and when they are at school, this is the only practice they get.”

A high-stakes assessment-based accountability system pushes rapid English acquisition, limits teaching with constricted curricula, and requires test-based instruction (Zuniga, 2016). Students are using only one language as opposed to their two languages. In the lesson plans for the regular and after-school Spanish is not listed. The only type of accommodation on the lesson plans is having a classroom bilingual center which is for students to use as needed and has bilingual dictionaries, Spanish to English translations, and Spanish flashcards. During the observations, I did not notice any student use the center during instruction. The problem is that so long as high-stakes standardized testing is the only type of assessment that matters and that assessments in English are prioritized for preparation over Spanish assessments, they will continue to offer a limited view of academic achievement (Zuniga, 2016). Ms. Regina in her pre and post interviews stated because all her bilingual students will be assessed in English, English is the language of instruction most of the time so students can practice the language since they speak Spanish at home. Students are bilingual but are treated as English monolinguals.

After-School Instruction

To assist with the opportunity gap and the learning loss caused by COVID, Ms. Regina used her club as a form of tutorial. She kept most of her regular school day students for tutorials on Mondays and Tuesday and then kept her students again for her after-school club on Wednesdays. Ms. Regina used her after-school club as another form of tutorial to provide additional instruction for her students. From the regular school day to the after-school programs I noticed there were some differences. One difference is in class size, the regular school day had fifteen students, after-school there were eleven students. During the regular school day, it was more whole group instruction, where Ms. Regina had all the students sitting at their desks while she provided instruction to all the students simultaneously. However, after school the students were working independently in centers while the teacher worked with a small group or an individual student at her kidney table located at the side of the classroom. There was only one after-school observation in which students continued with whole group instruction. They were reading a selection about Robert Peary, an explorer.

During this after-school observation Ms. Regina was presenting a reading lesson based on a selection about an explorer. The passage was in English. The teacher read the passage first and had students follow along as she read aloud to model fluency.

Ms. Regina: “What does *leading the way mean*?”

Student: “To be first?”

Ms. Regina: “That could be, to be the first one someplace or to do something no one has ever done before, so you lead the way for others. What does shivering mean? What does shivering look like, why would this man be shivering?”

Student: “Because he is in the North Pole; it is cold there.”

Ms. Regina: “Very good!”

During this part of the lesson, it was all English. There was no Spanish, no translating, nor code mixing. What was interesting was the next part after the vocabulary, when the lesson went into character analysis the teacher made connections to students’ being bilingual like the main character of the selection.

Ms. Regina: “He was a person that learned a lot of languages. What type of person is Robert Peary?”

[Students remain quiet.]

Ms. Regina: “Most of us here speak two languages.”

Student: “English and Spanish.”

Ms. Regina: “Yes, two languages is more than what most people speak. Robert Peary spoke more than one language like most of you here also speak more than one.”

The teacher used students’ bilingualism to make connections to the character of the reading selection. However, both languages are not always utilized during classroom instruction. After this one whole group observation, the other three observations were all small group instruction. I noticed there were more games after school and students using more technology. Students were using iPad and games at their desks. As students were working with their classmates in centers, students speaking more Spanish during after-school as opposed to the regular day. The teacher was not speaking Spanish to the group of students she was working with. Students were speaking Spanish within their independent centers carrying social conversations as well as discussing the task as at their center. During the teacher interviews, all teachers said after-school was not as “structured” as during the day. The teachers expressed how they had more leeway to teach how they want to teach after school. In our pre-interview, Ms.

Regina stated she does allow students to use more of their Spanish language after school as opposed to during the regular school day. However, during the observations, I did not notice Ms. Regina speak Spanish, only the students were speaking more Spanish after school. From the data and from speaking to Ms. Regina as a colleague, I would assume Ms. Regina views English as her home language and speaks it most of the time. In general conversations, in my personal experience in talking with her as co-workers, she uses English much of the time. The teacher continued to use English most of the time after-school. During one after school observation, the teacher was working one-on-one with a student on reviewing how to count money, the teacher and student were reviewing how to count dollars and coins.

Ms. Regina: “How many dollars do you have in front of you?”

Student: “One dollar”

Ms. Regina: “Yes, count all the one-dollar bills and find your total.”

Student: “1,2,3,4,5....5 dollars?”

Ms. Regina: “Yes, good job, 5 dollars...now let’s move on to the coins.”

English continued to be the language of instruction after-school. The only difference is the students were speaking Spanish. This could be because instead of whole group instruction, students were working in small groups and were having discussions with each other and not with their teacher. While the teacher was working with one student at her kidney table the rest of the after-school kids were working in centers on educational based games. All games were in English. During one after-school observation, four students were playing a multiplication game and four other students were playing a sight word bingo style game. The sight words were in English. There was no change between the regular school and after school language policy.

During the regular school day English was the main language of instruction and English continued in the after-school program.

Teacher Ideology

Based on the information presented in the data, Ms. Regina views the role of English as the success criteria and predictor of favorable state assessment scores. The role of English is to prepare students for the language on the state assessment. The role of Spanish is seen as students' culture and home, but not really seen as an academic asset. Since the after-school setting is not as focused on the state assessment, this may be a factor as to why there was an increase in students speaking in Spanish afterschool. During her interview, Ms. Regina provided insight into her beliefs on translanguaging and utilizing Spanish and English in the classroom. She also expressed when students use both languages in the classroom, "it is the best of both worlds." Ms. Regina is cognizant of the fact she does use more English in her instruction compared to Spanish.

Researcher: "And why do you emphasize English a little bit more during the regular day?"

Ms. Regina: "Well, I know that at home and on the weekends, the students are learning Spanish. That is their home language. So, I like to give them ample opportunity at school to also practice their English. At school is their only time to really practice their English because they do learn so much Spanish at home. Because I have some Spanish students and I want them to learn and to practice because a lot of the kids, they at home, all their parents speak is Spanish all day at home, whenever in the weekends, all Spanish. This is their only chance where they must speak English.

In her pre-interview, Ms. Regina also expressed the idea that Spanish is still important for students to have:

Researcher: “How do you feel about teachers utilizing English in the classroom or Spanish or like you said, the mixing of both?”

Ms. Regina: “To do the mixing, I use cognates. It helps my students with seeing both languages connect. And my English students learn Spanish too. Students should use it in their learning. They can mix their languages to express themselves. They need that to learn both. When my Spanish dominant students mix their languages that helps my English dominate students learn Spanish. So, it works out because everyone learns a new language. It gives the students it's like best of both worlds when mixing languages.”

When asked about how she plans and differentiates for her bilingual students, which in her class all students are bilingual, she expressed she uses assessment data to help her plan. In this district there are two major district assessments given, one is in November and the other is administered in February. Fridays are assessment days; new content is taught Monday through Thursday and assessments are on Fridays. There are end of the six weeks assessments that take place at the end of every reporting period which is six weeks.

Researcher: “How do you design your instruction to meet the needs of all language learnings?”

Ms. Regina: “I differentiate when I do my lesson plans and I look at their needs and their struggles. When I plan my lessons, I reflect on what are my students struggling with, what are their needs? And I plan accordingly. For example, we just benchmarked, so I review their assessment scores. I do my small groups according to their scores and I do my small group instruction to meet my students’ areas of need.”

The teacher's language approaches are connected to the district and campus administration directive as well as assessments. The campus, district, and state assessment influence over how much of a certain language students utilize and learn in class. Ms. Regina's instruction is aligned to the campus administration and district directive and view of language. She also uses English much of the time because that is the language in which students are going to be assessed at the end of the school year.

Ms. Regina conducts her lessons predominantly in English, with only occasional instances of Spanish. High stakes testing plays a role in how Ms. Regina utilizes language in her instruction. During her regular school day instruction and after-school there is a change in the increase of Spanish used by the students. English is the majority language during the regular school day as well as after-school; however, since students are in centers and not in whole group instruction, they do use more Spanish afterschool. Ms. Regina is aware of the increase in Spanish afterschool.

Researcher: "So, do you notice a shift in the type of language instruction during the regular school day and after school?"

Ms. Regina: "Students use a lot more Spanish after school. Only because in the day, since I have everyone, I want them to practice proper English. But after school, I'm a little bit more lenient and I'll let them talk to each other in Spanish a lot more freely. But in the morning and during the day, I want them to practice with me the academic vocabulary that we use and more structured English. But I mean, if I have someone's not understanding a word, I'll tell them, oh, it means this in Spanish."

Ms. Regina is aware of the change in students' use of language from the regular school day to after-school. She also acknowledges she uses Spanish as a support when students do not

comprehend a topic. It is essential to consider that such an instructional approach emphasizing academic and proper English may not fully acknowledge the linguistic diversity students bring into the classroom. High stakes testing and standardized language expectations may perpetuate linguistic biases. There should be a balance between preparing students for standardized assessments and recognizing and appreciating the linguistic diversity students bring to the classroom.

Discussion

Ms. Regina was the language policy maker in her classroom. Her instruction aligns with the district and campus directives of utilizing more English instruction and using Spanish as a support when needed. High stakes testing plays a role in her language policy as well. The teacher's experience with English being the language of the state assessment, she utilizes more English to ensure students practice English at school. She shared in her pre and post interview since students speak Spanish at home, school is the only time she can ensure they are getting practice in speaking English. The findings of this study for Ms. Regina show that the teachers' pedagogical approaches and her interactions with the students are based on the state test achievement. The data suggested all policies lead to the state exams. The district and the teacher saw high achievement on the state exams as the goal. How teachers' position their language ideology can play a critical role in influencing students' language use in the classroom during regular school day instruction and after-school.

Ms. Regina used her language experiences as a classroom teacher with high stakes testing and ideologies to enact language policy in her respective classrooms that aligned with the district and campus directive. Upon our post interview in June 2023, Ms. Regina stated English is the language students are going to be assessed in on the state exam and therefore need it to be a

students' strong language. By utilizing English for most of the day, students are immersed in the language and therefore will learn it faster and have more time to practice it. Translanguaging was rarely utilized throughout the regular school day but did increase during after-school programming by students speaking more in Spanish during after-school. Both class times had minimal mixing of languages. Students spoke all English during the day and increased their Spanish afterschool. Both instructional times had English as the primary language of instruction. Because English was used most of the time in both class times, the teacher's enactment of language ideologies did not change between regular school day and after-school only the student's use of Spanish increased.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is worth reiterating Ms. Natalia, Ms. Valeria, and Ms. Regina are all phenomenal teachers. They each work tirelessly to be the best teacher for each one of their respective students. The overarching goal of this study was to explore the translanguaging practices of three bilingually certified teachers in an elementary school. I was also interested in identifying any differences between the teachers' regular school day instruction compared to the after-school instruction. Finally, how are teachers' language ideologies influencing translanguaging practices in teaching. The guiding questions were:

1. How do the teachers use their language ideologies to enact language policy in their respective classrooms?
2. In what ways is translanguaging utilized throughout the regular school day as compared to after-school programming?
3. How do teachers' enactment of language ideologies change between regular school day and after-school?

Discussion of the Research Questions

Research Question 1: How do the teachers use their ideologies to enact language policy in their respective classrooms?

All teachers are language policy makers in their classrooms. How each interprets the campus and district directives is guided by their language ideologies, or how they understand English and Spanish as the tool or property of dominant social groups (Woolard, 1992).

English being a marker of dominance for the administration and a success criterion, was manifested in various ways in this study. One was the use of English only materials for instruction. The only Spanish language resources were found in the bilingual center each teacher had listed on their lesson plan and clearly defined area in their classroom. However, during the twenty-four observations conducted, I did not notice students utilizing the bilingual center in each of the classrooms. Another manifestation of an English first language ideology was the district's and campus's policy prioritizing English over Spanish. Students being able to use English fluently was seen as a success criterion to meet the standard set by the state assessment. The ideology also presented itself in how teachers viewed English as the language of success. All three teachers' students are mandated to complete a state assessment. Each of the respective exams are assessed in English. English is seen as one of the criteria for success on the state exams.

The three elementary school teachers in this study all work at the same campus within the same school district. District leaders and campus administration have given the directive to promote English language instruction. Palmer (2011) described how schools' perceptions of children's intelligence and success is linked to an English dominant ideology. This is the common notion that strong English implies more academically prepared students better equipped to pass the state exam (Palmer, 2011). Being as this campus views the students' use of English as a criterion for success and achievement, there is a problematization of students who are not as fluent in English. However, each teacher interprets and implements the directive in different ways. Ms. Natalia integrated code-switching, code-mixing and translanguaging within her own instruction and created a space for students to utilize their one linguistic repertoire (Garcia & Wei, 2014). Ms. Valeria kept languages separate between her English students and her Spanish

students. Ms. Regina seldom used Spanish and used English as the language of instruction most of the time. Although all students in these classrooms were bilingual, the use of Spanish was rare. The goal of this bilingual program became to promote English and use Spanish as needed. The district and campus administration directives had influence on the language practices and linguistic power dynamic teachers use for instruction.

Research Question 2: In what ways is translanguaging utilized throughout the regular school day as compared to after-school programming?

In comparing the three teachers, these varied in their use of translanguaging. In their pre interviews all three stated separately the importance of translanguaging and students using both their English and Spanish languages. Ms. Natalia expressed her views on using code mixing and translanguaging as part of her instruction. She stated in her post-interview she wanted to create a safe and welcoming environment for students to feel comfortable using whichever language they would like to use. Her interview aligned with her data and use of translanguaging both during the regular school day and after-school. Ms. Valeria also said she is in favor of using both languages; however, she made it clear she has a separation of languages based on how her students are labeled. The data aligned in that she did have her groups of English speakers and her one group of Spanish speakers and seldom mixed the languages in her instruction. Ms. Regina like the other two teachers, also expressed her agreement with translanguaging but encouraged her students to practice their English while at school since they speak mostly Spanish at home. She stated school was the only place she can ensure students practice academic and proper English.

The teachers' pre and post interviews showed all three of the teachers' expressed their support for translanguaging in the classroom. They spoke of their familiarity with it and the benefits. Though the interviews expressed value in translanguaging, it was seldom used by Ms.

Valeria and Ms. Regina. Ms. Natalia utilized translanguaging, code-mixing and code switching in both her regular and after-school instruction. Her use of authentic *cariño* through language seemed to make her more prone to embrace linguistic diversity in the classroom. Ms. Natalia was the one teacher that most visibly utilized translanguaging to demonstrate authentic *cariño*.

Research Question 3: How do teachers' enactment of language ideologies change between regular school day and after-school?

In comparing the data, the results were surprising. I assumed there was going to be a change in language from the regular school day to after-school. The teachers' classrooms during the regular school day were formal in their classroom management. However, after-school the setting changed to a more relaxed atmosphere. I assumed the same relaxed environment would also imply a more language fluid discourse within the after-school instruction. The data presented little change in the use of translanguaging from the regular school day to after-school. Ms. Natalia taught mostly the whole group during the regular school day, however after-school she had flexible seating for students to work independently. She utilized translanguaging and had fluidity in her instruction during the regular school day. Her use of language was the same after-school.

Ms. Valeria taught in small group rotations during her regular school day instruction and switched to more independent work after-school. In terms of language, she had a clear separation between English and Spanish. In her after-school program, all her students had passed the transitional matrix and transitioned from Spanish instruction to English. Therefore, since there was no group of Spanish students after-school, all instruction after-school was done in English.

Ms. Regina taught the whole group during the regular school day but switched to small group rotations after-school and incorporated independent work. She also introduced more

technology and games after-school which did not appear in her instruction during her regular school day instruction. Ms. Regina also kept her use of language the same. She taught mostly in English during the regular school and taught the same in after-school. The only change after-school was a pedagogical one, but the same language practices continued into after-school programming.

The concept of a “third space” in after school instruction was evident in the data. Gutierrez (2008) defined “third space” as a place where students’ background knowledge and new learning can combine while learning is playful and purposeful. It was most evident in terms of classroom management and structure. For example, Ms. Natalia and Ms. Regina went from whole class instruction to independent work. Ms. Valeria went from small group rotations to independent work. The after-school program became a third space to play with different types of instruction that is different from the regular school day. Changes in teaching and instruction were not applied to their use of language. The use of language was consistent with the regular school day. This suggests that the “third space” concept adapts to the needs and ideologies of each teacher while continuing to be a space allowing teachers to modify from their regular school day structures. Each of the teachers maintained their linguistic approach but adapted the structures students were learning to a relaxed atmosphere.

Implications of the Study

Each of the teachers used their after-school club as a type of tutorial for their students. All the clubs were based on the instructional needs of the campus. From my personal experiences working on the campus in previous years, reading has consistently been an area of improvement. Teachers used the after-school program as a method to aid in the opportunity gap and the COVID-19 learning loss.

The findings of this study suggested that teachers' language ideologies have a direct impact on the way they presented their language instruction, which in turn, impacted students' language use in the classroom. This research study explored teacher language ideologies for their potential to bring about change on how educators and policymakers approach language instruction and education. The implication of this study can impact the field of bilingual education by raising awareness of how student's linguistic and instructional needs are being met. These results should be considered by educators and policymakers when aiming to create more culturally inclusive classroom environments and language policies. By doing so, educators and policymakers can continue to create effective educational environments that invest in bilingual learners' academic success. By recognizing language ideologies, districts and schools can work towards reducing educational disparities to ensure equitable learning opportunities for bilingual learners. Students' academic success is not solely based on assessments. For example, Ms. Natalia in her pre and post interviews never mentioned a state assessment. Her priority was for students to know the value in both of their languages. She wanted to create a space for students to utilize their entire linguistic repertoire. She used authentic *cariño* to create a positive learning environment where students knew the value in their language.

This study suggested teachers who have a monolingual view of language deliver instruction most of the time in one language. Conversely, teachers with multilingual ideologies embrace and support translanguaging and linguistic diversity within classroom instruction. Teachers with language ideologies that support multilingualism may be more inclined to assess students' abilities based on understanding of content rather than only language proficiency. Teachers' language ideologies can influence how policies are implemented from the front lines of classrooms. For example, if teachers are not supportive of bilingual or multilingual education,

they may not effectively implement policies aimed at promoting language diversity. Language is aligned to identity. A teachers' language ideology can impact how students view their own linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Authentic *cariño* in the classroom creates a supportive, nurturing, and inclusive environment that positively impacts students' cultural background and language development.

Future work

The findings of this study show that teachers' pedagogical approaches and their language practices were influenced by the district and campus English-first language directive, which were in turn, influenced by the state assessment. High-stakes testing was the driving force in many of the teachers' instructional and linguistic practices. High-stakes testing is a factor in the linguistic approach that teachers use in their classrooms. In all her regular classroom observations, Ms. Natalia reviewed test taking strategies or reviewed a reading passage aligned to the state exam. Ms. Valeria used the district transitional matrix assessment as a form of success and was preparing her students to take the TELPAS state exam in February. Ms. Regina was focused on her bilingual students having ample opportunities for practice using the English language since that was the language of the state assessment. Each of the teachers used the state exam as the guide for their instruction.

Seeing language ideologies as a form of coercion could be further explored. Might teachers' ideologies and linguistic instructional practices change if there was no state exam? Districts and schools are judged by their state assessment scores. If the state assessment was not a factor, then how might the teachers' instruction change? Teachers' language experiences – as impactful to their linguistic ideologies around the role of English – could also be explored as a factor in their language ideologies. Teachers being reflective of their explicit and/or implicit

ideologies could identify sources to explain how they approach instruction, both pedagogically and linguistically.

By raising awareness of the impact of language ideologies on instruction, teacher education programs can address language diversity and strategies for supporting multilingual learners effectively. Continued research on language ideologies can inform educational policies and curriculum development at the district level, prompt policymakers to consider the role of language diversity in the classroom and promote the adoption of more inclusive language policies. This study's implications can contribute to the discussion on language equity in education by recognizing the impact of language ideologies on student instruction. Educators and policymakers can work towards dismantling language related barriers and promoting equitable learning opportunities for all students with home languages other than English.

The study's impact on student instruction can bring forward the critical role language plays in education and provide insight for creating more inclusive, effective, and equitable learning environments. By recognizing and embracing linguistic diversity, educators can better understand and support their students' academic and social-emotional development.

Conclusion

This study presented the importance of exploring language ideologies and how teachers enacted them within their instruction, either implicitly or explicitly. Understanding the importance of valuing students' home languages can increase support for students' linguistic growth and cultural identity. Examining language ideologies helps teachers and administrators to better understand existing biases. Language ideology plays a pivotal role in shaping language teaching practices. The ideologies embedded within our schools not only influence the choice of language(s) taught in classrooms, but also determine how these languages are taught, assessed,

and perceived by students and educators. By acknowledging the power language ideologies hold, we come to understand language teaching practices are not neutral but are subject to social, political, and cultural influences on teachers and district leaders. By identifying and deconstructing prevailing language ideologies, teachers can pave the way for transformative pedagogy that empowers students to celebrate their languages. A future where language education becomes a powerful catalyst for positive change and build bridges through language is possible.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Teacher Interview Questionnaire

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. What grade levels have you taught, and which do you currently teach?
3. To what degree do you think students' languages are valuable in their education?
4. To what degree are you familiar with the term "translanguaging"?
5. How do you design your instruction to meet the needs of all language learners?
6. Do you notice a shift in the type of language instruction during your regular school day vs. after-school programming?
 - a. Can you elaborate on what changes you can identify?
7. To what degree do you allow for flexibility and changes to your instruction to respond to students' needs, interests, and language practices?
8. How can teachers adapt their current pedagogy to make space for translanguaging? Or should translanguaging not be included in classes?

*Questions were based upon García, Johnson & Seltzer (2017) Reflecting and Planning For a Translanguaging Pedagogy Reflection Handout p.182

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Lillian Ramos was born in Edinburg, Texas. After completing her schoolwork at The Teacher Academy High School in Edinburg, Lillian entered The University of Texas Pan-American in 2005. She received her bachelor's degree in education in 2009. From 2009 to 2022, she worked as a bilingual elementary school teacher while obtaining her master's degree in Bilingual Education. She has also worked as an academic reading coach, after-school program coordinator, and reading specialist. In August of 2019, she began her doctoral studies at the University of Texas – Rio Grande Valley and completed her degree in August 2023. Lillian Ramos is currently an early literacy specialist at the Region One Education Service Center. She currently resides in Edinburg, Texas, with her favorite study buddies, her two dogs: Ammo and Bravo. She can be reached at Lillian.Ramos02@gmail.com.