

¿Por qué enseñar español?  
The experiences of bilingual teachers under the leadership of monolingual principals: An  
ethnographic case study

by

María del Pilar Mejía Vélez

B.A., Washburn University, 2004  
M.S., The University of Kansas, 2008

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

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## **Abstract**

Bilingual education has a long history in the United States, although the support for bilingual education through, which students preserve their culture and heritage language, has not been consistent throughout the years. While there is clear evidence that aligns students' academic, emotional, and economic successes are aligned when they learn English through their native language, there is a paucity of research regarding bilingual principals as leaders of dual-language programs. This study explores issues of challenges and essential support structures within dual-language programs. The results may be used to improve leadership in bilingual programs.

The purpose of this ethnographic case study was to explore the lived experiences of two Latinas who taught in Spanish within dual-language programs that were run by monolingual principals. This qualitative study was informed by two different sampling procedures, purposeful and criterion-based. The participants selected needed to be Latina (self-identified), Spanish dual-language teachers who worked with a monolingual principal as their leader within Midwestern U.S. schools, during the 2012-2013 school year. Narrative inquiry grounded the study in order to elicit stories that would represent the experiences of the teachers as they negotiated their path when their leader was monolingual and they taught in Spanish.

Findings indicate that teachers who taught in Spanish within an Anglo-majority educational context, experienced palpable manifestations of inequity and discriminations. The participants had strong self-worth, self-confidence, and self-awareness, which led them to persevere through the instances of judgment and imbalance. The finding also demonstrate that the participants developed coping mechanisms to empower themselves, and established newly-found and increased resourcefulness as an attempt to provide the students with the education they

deserved. The participants relied on alternative resources, long hours of research and re-planning, creativity, and resolve to function in an environment that was set out to demean them.

The study raised implications about the amount of support teachers in bilingual programs who teach in Spanish receive while led by monolingual principals. Another implication is that there is marginalization of certain languages that are not English. Lastly, this study raised implications regarding ways in which bilingual programs can become more just and egalitarian.

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Approved by:

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

There is a positive trend that indicates that the number of dual-language (DL) immersion programs has considerably and steadily increased since and, exceeding 2000 by the year 2012 (Maswell, 2012). As these types of programs continue to emerge in the state of Kansas and in the nation at large, it is essential to identify how teachers who used to work in traditional settings work together as part of non-traditional programs such as DL programs. In education, teachers are expected to work with one another in teams to collaborate, to solve problems, and to decide how to best approach instruction. These responsibilities are put in place with the purpose of providing effective instruction, and of assessing how students are learning (Freeman, Freeman, & Mercuri, 2005; Manning & Saddlemire, 2000; Padilla, Fairchild, & Valadez, 1990). This type of teamwork allows for a standardized approach to teaching and evaluation, even if individual instructional approaches vary from one teacher to another. It also encourages and promotes discussion among teachers about students' strengths and needs in order to make instructional decisions and results in joint problem solving within a collaborative culture to increase student achievement (Chapman & Harris, 2004; McLane, Finkbiner, & Evans, 1969).

Even though part of being a traditional teacher entails working closely with teammates, DL teachers collaborate with one another for additional reasons, such as working with the same students, but using different languages of instruction. Dual-language teachers also work to ensure that their curricular goals complement one another's instruction in order to address students' learning as a whole rather than in a disconnected and severed way (Gómez, 2014). This teamwork in the context of DL is critical, whether a school implements a co-teaching or a self-contained teaching model (Howard & Sugarman, 2007; Howard, Sugarman, Christian,

Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers, 2007). Since there is a high likelihood that students receive instruction from more than one teacher, having a cohesiveness of instruction increases the prospect of higher student achievement.

In addition to being open to and adept at working well in teams, DL educators in successful DL programs face challenges and demands that teachers in traditional settings may not face (Lindholm-Leary, 2005). By design, DL educators perform their work in culturally and linguistically diverse schools and classrooms; consequently, their jobs often require additional responsibilities compared to those in more homogeneous educational settings (Lopez & Zepeda, 2012). Some of these responsibilities include gaining a deeper awareness of students' lives in the context of their multiple realities, which include location and social order; focusing on the assets students possess by nature of their diverse backgrounds; viewing students as competent and capable instead of having deficit-based views (where the students are seen through their weaknesses only); recognizing that they have a duty to advocate both for their students and for educational practices that work in favor of all students; and committing to continuously learning about (and from) their students, students' families, and relevant social conditions so that their teaching practices can reflect cultural responsiveness (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Even though teamwork is essential in education for improving student achievement, the administrator's role cannot be dismissed. Principals, for example, are instrumental in creating the conditions that enable schools to become professional learning communities where staff can learn continuously and collaboratively (Smiley & Salsberry, 2007). Principals may find it necessary to challenge teachers to modify their instructional practices, decide what the best student grouping may be, and help other members of the team understand why certain changes are significant and necessary (Smiley & Salsberry, 2007). Educators and leaders, therefore,

evaluate how the curriculum affects student learning and, together, create desirable conditions so that children and their parents are empowered regarding their educational goals. Additionally, administrators and teachers also have to be aware of the language and literacy needs of the students and their social and emotional needs as influenced by the interrelationship of the students' language and culture (Lopez & Zepeda, 2012). For these reasons, it is essential to have administrators who "understand the nature of bilingualism and the importance of advocacy for teachers, students, and biliteracy" (Alanís & Rodríguez, 2008, p. 316). In other words, principals must have the knowledge and ability to provide effective direction to teachers working together to educate Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) students. Vital to the ability to respond to CLD students is having a deep understanding of the languages of instruction, not only in theory, but also in practice. DuFour (2008) suggests accomplishing this by working in collaborative teams, which are the fundamental building blocks of any organization, making it imperative for teachers and administrators to work together. In the specific context of teamwork within DL programs, the challenge of having a monolingual principal is twofold: the teachers are left with the responsibility of making instructional decisions without the knowledgeable input of the principal, and the principal has no choice but to take the team's word regarding the benefit and effectiveness of such decisions.

Just as teachers have an impact on students' education, principals have a significant influence on teachers' actions in the classroom that become evident in student achievement (DuFour & Marzano, 2011). DuFour and Marzao claim that one of the responsibilities a principal has in a school is promoting the success of every student. School leaders can accomplish this by actively participating in the development of a vision of learning, including its articulation and governance, while ensuring that the whole community is not only aware of this vision, but also

supports it (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2008). As an instructional leader, the principal is also responsible for elements associated with assessments, curriculum and the way it is implemented, and with instructional practices so that she can ensure the quality of the school staff, planning and providing professional development, establishing program structures, promoting the involvement of families and community agencies, and putting resources and supports in place that are associated with effective language education programs (Lindholm-Leary, 2005). However, principals do not do this work alone. Instead, they work in constant collaboration with teachers to ensure instruction is of the best quality and effectiveness. In a DL setting, specifically, “this includes giving native Spanish-speaking students the academic Spanish they need to be able to also acquire academic English” (Freeman, et al., 2005, p. 38). In other words, due to positive transfer of linguistic concepts from the native to the target language, students can become stronger in both their native and target languages. However, when the principal of a DL school lacks the fundamental knowledge of the components of the program—being bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural—understanding how to lead teams towards meeting the needs of all the students is inferior to what it would be if the principals had that knowledge.

Educational leaders in any setting have an obligation to be aware of teaching and learning practices within their setting (Spillane, 2006). Teaching and learning practices include, but are not limited to, instruction, employee performance, and observation and evaluation of instruction (Chrispeels, Strait, & Brown, 1999). Thus, bilingual principals are in a strong position to evaluate dual-language instruction and programs based on their familiarity with both languages and their ability to evaluate performance and instructional practices (Cloyd, 2007). Research suggests that both students and teachers benefit when schools with large number of low-income, minority, and English Language Learners (ELL) students have positive and caring communities

(Battistich, Solomon, Watson, & Schaps, 2010). With this in mind, the topic of teachers in the United States working together in a dual-language setting under the leadership of a principal who does not speak any Spanish is worthy of study. Specifically, the participants in this study are Latinas who have taught with a monolingual principal as their leader.

### **Rationale**

There is considerable support for bilingual education in the United States (Aguirre-Baeza, 2001; De Jesús, 2008; Thomas & Collier, 2003). Aguirre-Baeza emphasizes that being academically bilingual and biliterate is necessary for an individual to maintain social relationships. Additionally, De Jesús (2008) asserts that dual-language programs that are implemented well and with integrity are highly effective and have the potential to produce astonishing results in language acquisition and academic achievement. Moreover, Thomas and Collier (2003) recommend bilingual education because it enhances creativity and analytical thinking.

However, not everyone supports bilingual education as strongly as others, and some do not support it at all (Amselle, 1997; Padilla et al., 1990; Wiley, 2000). The “English-only” movement, for example, seeks homogeneity of language across diverse groups of people. Wiley (2000) speaks to the resistance of bilingual education under the premise that the more English language students use, the better and faster they will learn English. There is the belief that languages are in constant competition for space and visibility. Therefore, languages other than English represent a threat to the national and cultural identity, as well as to the unity and structure of the nation (May, 2001; Schmidt, 2002; Wiley, 2000). In other words, bilingualism is constructed as a threat and a liability to American patriotism, values, and ways of being.



One danger that is created through the discourse of resistance to bilingual education is the undervaluing or minimizing of certain cultures and identities, particularly those of Asians and Latinos (Leeman, 2004). Language is a hereditary characteristic, a cultural behavior, and a changeable attribute; as such, discriminating against it tends to be more acceptable than discriminating against attributes that are unchangeable, such as race (Leeman, 2004). For example, individuals have the ability to learn languages other than their native one. When they do so, they can elect what language to speak, when to speak it, and with whom to speak it, eliminating possible barriers between themselves and the speakers of a certain language. In contrast, people do not have the choice to change how they are coded racially. The risk of belittling a specific group could be further exaggerated if bilingual teachers find themselves working with monolingual principals. Researchers speak to the importance of the principal as a member of DL teams (Aguirre-Baeza, 2001; Carter & Chatfield, 1986; Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990). They allege that principals must be strong individuals who remain highly involved in educational reform and who do not shy away from the controversial and political aspects of leading in bilingual schools and advocating for all students, including those who are ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse. As instructional leaders, administrators need pragmatic and firsthand experience with the work that DL teachers do in order to successfully run schools in which all students reach their highest potential in both languages (Smiley, 2007).

Based on the information presented above, an argument can be made that there is abundant evidence regarding the benefits of dual-language learning. However, very little information exists about how dual-language teachers negotiate their experiences when working with monolingual principals, given that most principals are unlikely to be bilingual (Wiemelt & Welton 2015). Therefore, this study focuses on the experiences of dual-language teachers who

have worked with monolingual principals in order to highlight the key issues of challenges, essential support structures, and ways in which dual-language programs can function successfully in such circumstances.

### **Research Purpose**

The purpose of this ethnographic case study is to explore the collaborative experiences of two dual-language teachers who were part of educational teams within elementary schools (PK through 5<sup>th</sup> grade) in northeast Kansas where the principals were monolingual. For the study, the selection of participants was purposeful and contingent on access and contacts the researcher already had within the field of study. The participants and the researcher ended up being familiar with one another because they all worked in the field of DL.

### ***Research Questions***

1. How do the participants negotiate dual-language teaching under the instructional leadership of monolingual principals?
2. In what ways do the participants collaborate with dual-language team members to align with expectations required by the monolingual principals?

The study assumes that there were challenges that the teachers faced with regard to instruction and collaborating with other teachers on the team due to the principal being monolingual based on evidence in the literature discussed in Chapter 2. In order to conduct this study, it was necessary to understand the ways in which the participants negotiated such challenges within their classrooms, as well as the ways in which they positioned themselves in the team of dual-language teachers lead by the same principal.

## **Methodology**

This study is qualitative in that it seeks to establish an in-depth understanding of the experiences of two Latina teachers who taught in two different schools. One teacher taught in Spanish only, while the other taught in both Spanish and English. Both of these teachers also worked and interacted with a team made up of other dual-language teachers, all being led by principals who are monolingual in English. Qualitative research is “an inquiry process of understanding based on a distinct methodological tradition of inquiry that explores a social or human problem” (Creswell, 2007, p. 249). The participants provided a deep description of some of the ways being under the leadership of such leaders affected their experiences in the schools and in being part of the DL teams. Such context-rich descriptions have the potential to highlight key issues that affect dual-language programs and those who work towards continuous improvement of those programs.

Within the scope of qualitative research, this was an ethnographic case study. In case studies, “you can take persons, social communities (e.g., families), organizations, and institutions (e.g., nursing home) as the subject of a case analysis” (Flick, 2009, p. 134). The analysis in case studies involves describing the case study and where it takes place in a detailed manner; because their scope is determined by how the case is conceptualized, they are considered to be bounded (Hyett, Kenny, & Dickson-Swift, 2014; Njie & Asimiran, 2014). Cases can be one individual, a group of individuals, an entire organization, or an individual embedded within groups or organizations (Njie & Asimiran, 2014; Stake, 1995). For the purpose of this study, the two participants would be considered individual cases. The participants met the criteria of being women, being self-identified Latinas, and having been dual-language teachers working with monolingual white principals during the 2012-2013 school

year. I used multiple methods of data collection, including open-ended interviews, photo-elicitations, and document analysis, and then triangulated information obtained from all data sources for thematic patterns (Flick, 2009). Data collection took place over a period of 29 weeks. Further methodological details are provided in Chapter 3.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is grounded in Latino Critical theory, which is a derivative of Critical Race Theory. The roots of Critical Race Theory (CRT) can be traced back to the early works of Derrick Bell (an African American man) and Alan Freeman (a white man) in the mid-1970s, which stemmed from both men's deep distress over the slow pace of racial reform in the United States (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000). Critical Race Theory emerged from a movement that used to exist before—referred to as Critical Legal Studies (CLS)—and evolved to become its own separate entity (Ladson-Billings, 1999). Ladson-Billings notes that while CLS does not incorporate racism in its description, CRT continues to be useful in the process of understanding the complications, intricacies, and difficulties of racism, as well as when the goal is evolution towards judicial redress. Additionally, the goal of CRT is to cultivate an approach that includes theory, concepts, methodology, and pedagogy, while incorporating the role of race and racism and attempting to eliminate prejudice and other forms of subordination, such as those based on gender, class, and sexual orientation (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001).

Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit) builds upon the principles of CRT while also forming a foundation for concepts of race that go beyond the traditional black/white paradigm (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). Having originated in 1995 as an intellectual movement that emerged as a response to the long-standing presence and persistence of the invisibility affecting Latinos and Latinas in the United States (Valdés, 2005), LatCrit explains the multiple dimensions of the

identities of Latinos and speaks to how racism, sexism, classism, and other forms of oppression intersect (Delgado Bernal, 2002).

LatCrit theory can serve as a platform to reflect upon the experiences of Latinos of color within K-12 academic environments (Maldonado & Ybarra, 2012). The LatCrit lens would allow a contextualization of the participants' realities within "issues such as language, immigration, ethnicity, culture, identity, phenotype, and sexuality" (Delgado Bernal, 2002, p. 108) and issues that they may have experienced due to "class, gender, social status, religious affiliation, nationality, etc.," (Bhattacharya, 2007, p. 42). Within the specific discourse of LatCrit, these matters are made evident by the subordination, oppression, and invisibility of Latinas/os and negatively influence efforts to achieve social justice and equality, as well as to promote their culture (Crotty, 1998). Consequently, conducting this study framed within LatCrit revealed how, and in what ways, these elements played a role in how participants made sense of their experiences. Further elaboration of LatCrit and its application to this study is presented in Chapters 2 and 3.

### **Possibilities and Limitations of the Study**

The findings from this study could be used towards other DL programs in the state of Kansas, and possibly across the nation, for similar contexts. Any study that involves dual-language is relevant and timely due to the increasing number of programs emerging in the United States. Creating awareness of the effects of monolingual principals in schools that have DL programs through stories told by teachers who have worked for them may provide guidance for schools with similar vision and mission statements. The research highlighted the implications of having monolingual principals in DL schools and how such leadership affected team dynamics, influenced instruction in the classroom, and impacted the overall culture of the

school. The study also provided some perspective on the influence that monolingual principals in DL programs had with their students and teachers. The perspective gained from the study may raise questions about educational programs and policy regarding the support and maintenance of thriving dual-language programs.

As with any research, this study had limitations. One consideration was that I, as a novice researcher, conducted the study, inevitably limiting the depth of the conversations between the participants and me, perhaps, also affecting the skill level to formulate questions that would attain deep levels of information. Another limitation could have been that both the participants and I had time and availability constraints, which prolonged the data gathering process. Conducting peer debriefing mitigated this limitation. These debriefings allowed me to identify questions that I had not asked, as well as to recognize deeper questions to ask, which I did the next round of interviews. Moreover, there was the possibility that the participants may not have felt comfortable enough opening up to the extent necessary to generate rich data; however, there was no clear evidence of discomfort, and the responses they produced were rich, and seemed open and honest. Another challenge that may have been present was that, since my area of expertise is dual-language teaching, there was a possibility that the participants and I already were familiar with one another. We did end up being acquaintances, and I remained aware of this fact to as to continue building on the positive relationship that already existed between the participants and me.

### **Operational Definitions**

While there may be various ways in which the following terms can be defined, for the purpose of this study, a specific scope is offered for operationalizing key constructs.

1. Dual-language teacher – a classroom teacher who works with native Spanish speakers learning English and with native English speakers learning Spanish
2. Spanish dual-language teacher – a dual-language teacher who teaches in Spanish
3. Dual-language team – a team of dual-language teachers
4. Team – “a group of people working *interdependently* to achieve a *common goal* for which members are held *mutually accountable*” (DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, 2008, p. 471)
5. Self-contained dual-language teacher – bilingual teacher who teaches half of the day in Spanish and half of the day in English
6. Dual-language strand – a fraction of the school implementing a dual-language model. In the case of these schools, one dual-language strand was comprised of five classrooms, kindergarten-3<sup>rd</sup> grade, while the other included PK-1.
7. Monolingual principal – a principal who speaks English, but not Spanish
8. Traditional teaching – teaching in classrooms that are not dual-language
9. Experiences – the professional interactions of the two participants with and among their grade level dual-language teams and with the principal
10. Equity – “an operational belief that enables educators to provide whatever level of support is needed to whichever students require it. In the classroom, this means providing each and every student with what each individually needs to learn and succeed” (Singleton, 2015, p. 56).

## **Chapter Summary**

Within this chapter I have discussed the increasing number of bilingual programs in the United States, the benefits of such programs, and the level of support they have had in spite of the presence of some detractors. In addition, I have included information regarding the importance of DL teachers working in teams, instead of in isolation, to achieve stronger instructional cohesiveness, as well as the importance of having a principal that functions as the orchestrator of an environment in which teachers and students can continuously learn and that encompasses social emotional needs. Further, as bilingual education evolves in history and dual-language programs continue to grow in number in the United States, I have provided evidence that shows how researchers are exploring and studying these programs' progression and impact. However, there remains a paucity of research specifically focused on the need for principals who lead dual-language programs and schools to be bilingual in order to exert stronger influence in the school and its teams of teachers in order to effectively educate all students.

For this study, therefore, I used LatCrit as the theoretical framework and ethnographic case study as the methodology. Both are well suited to examine the experiences of Latino teachers who taught under the leadership of monolingual principals in dual-language schools. This framework allowed me to explore the collaborative interactions of the two Spanish dual-language teachers within the aforementioned context.



## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

This chapter is divided into six major sections: a historical overview of bilingual education, LatCrit as the theoretical framework for the study, bilingual education, power and its influence on language, teaching and learning within the context of bilingual education, and an overview of empirical studies involving bilingual education. The first section is an analysis of how bilingual education has evolved through the years and the impact it has had on school reform. The second section refers to LatCrit and its appropriateness as a theoretical framework for this study. The third section is a description of existing research involving the benefits of and the need for bilingual education. The fourth section explores the relationship between language and power, specifically using a Foucauldian perspective to argue for the disciplinary effects towards erasure of language and culture. The fifth section addresses teaching and learning within the context of bilingual education, and the final section offers an overview of empirical studies that are substantively relevant to this study to strengthen the need for this study. The purpose behind such discussion is to ground the study in theoretical, historical, and empirical contexts that are adequate and appropriate, and to find ways in which the study can contribute to the ongoing dialogue regarding the educational system that Spanish teachers navigate within an English-majority structure.

#### **Bilingual Education: A Historical Perspective**

Many people believe that bilingual education is a thing of this century, a recent development. However, research indicates that the United States was a polyglot land before the arrival of the Europeans (Freeman, et al., 2005; Leeman, 2004; Nieto, 2009) and that bilingual education has been a longstanding practice since the Pilgrims arrived in Massachusetts. The

Pilgrims wanted to keep their heritage alive and their language loyalties strong, and they saw the continent of America as an opportunity to achieve this goal (Fitzgerald, 1993). This trend of keeping people's native language alive continued throughout the colonial period; there was such an abundance of cultures in North America during this period that no fewer than 18 tongues, excluding Indian languages, were spoken on Manhattan Island (Arias & Casanova, 1993; Baker, 1996; Fitzgerald, 1993). There were over 300 different Native Indian languages in what today is the United States, at the time European immigrant groups began arriving (Crawford, 1989). However, despite the initial positive outlook on bilingual education during these early years, there have been many other years demonstrating quite the opposite (Smith, 2013).

From 1620, when the Pilgrims arrived on this continent, until the mid-1750s, people in what is now the United States spoke many languages other than English (Baker, 1996; Nieto, 2009). There was a positive perception about these languages, and they were viewed as a way to preserve people's heritage, which was viewed as an individual right (Baker, 1996). Schools with high populations of German-speaking Americans operated in that language because bilingualism was politically protected, and language loyalties remained strong from post-Columbus times until the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Crawford, 1989; Fitzgerald, 1993). However, in the mid-1750s, a push towards language assimilation began; contrary to how the founders of the land felt towards bilingualism, Benjamin Franklin grew impatient toward such German language loyalty (Crawford, 1989; Fitzgerald, 1993). The founding fathers, believers of democracy, supported individuals' choices to speak the language of their preference, mainly because their focus was on political liberty rather than on cultural homogeneity (Crawford, 1989).

Between the late 1700s and the mid-1800s, there were no established language policies in the United States (Crawford, 1989); however, people began to accept or reject bilingual

education depending on how influential the language-minority was. Some states, like Ohio, allowed parents to choose whether they wanted their students' instruction to be in English, German, or both. In the case of Louisiana, the statute was the same, but instead of German language learning, they offered the students the choice between English and French (Crawford, 1989; Fitzgerald, 1993). Andersson and Boyer (1970) note that "the territory of New Mexico authorized Spanish-English bilingual education" (Andersson & Boyer, 1970, p. 17). In contrast, states like "Pennsylvania, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska and Oregon passed laws that sanctioned instruction in language other than English" (Andersson & Boyer, 1970, p. 17), indicating a trend towards monolingualism.

Even though schools in Cincinnati, Indiana, Baltimore, and many other rural places continued teaching in English and German (Crawford, 1989) in the mid-to-late 19th century, linguistic assimilation and Nativism became the rule rather than the exception, ushering in a decline in bilingual education (Andersson & Boyer, 1970). This change impacted immigrant children, as making accommodations for them in the schools became less of a priority (Fitzgerald, 1993). At this time, these negative sentiments towards bilingualism had as much a religious origin as they did a political interest, mainly against Germans' religion and politics. For example, Catholic schools that conducted instruction in German were sanctioned. Expanding the ethnocentric preference towards English, Wisconsin became another state to pass laws enforcing monolingualism (Arias & Casanova, 1993).

Spanish-speaking colonies that were regulated with English-only schools in other parts of the world demonstrated devastating effects on student achievement (Crawford, 1989; Cummins, 2000). For example, the imposition of English as the only language of instruction resulted in students floundering academically, abandoning their native linguistic identity, and ironically,

exhibiting low academic skills in English (Cummins, 2000). Interestingly, though, “any immigrant group with sufficient political power, whether Italian, Polish, Czech, French, Dutch, or German, was able to incorporate native language instruction into the schools as separate subjects or as languages of instruction” (Crawford, 1989, p. 23) during most of the mid-to-late 19<sup>th</sup> century and in spite of all the efforts to eliminate bilingual education.

Similarly, in spite of many states’ efforts to eliminate German-language schooling—sometimes bilingual and sometimes not—it still prevailed until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Arias & Casanova, 1993). However, it was during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that anti-bilingualism sentiments became stronger, as illustrated by the launch of the Americanization campaign and the passing of The Nationality Act in 1906 (Crawford, 1989). The Americanization campaign associated English competency with political loyalty. The level of opposition towards bilingualism was such that it resulted in a complete halt of instruction in languages other than English and resulted in the National Americanization Committee launching an “English First” project in Detroit (Arias & Casanova, 1993). Further, The Nationality Act made it mandatory for foreigners who wanted to become American citizens to speak English. Another factor linked to the change in attitude towards bilingualism and bilingual education at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was a dramatic raise in the number of immigrants to America, which generated fear of new foreigners and accelerated the entry of the United States into World War I in 1917 (Crawford, 1989). It was during this time that the idea of Americanization grew even stronger. Hostility toward minority tongues became evident (Baker, 1996), and the pressure for English monolingualism and against instruction in German grew stronger (Crawford, 1989).

This rejection of the maintenance of foreign languages reached levels beyond religious and political; they began including legal and social elements, adding further challenges to

immigrant life (Crawford, 1989). Such challenges were specifically related to immigrant children, who were more likely to fail than to succeed in the English-only classrooms (Arias & Casanova, 1993), resulting in the decision to drop out of school for many of them. The possibilities for extensive use of dual-language instruction did not reappear in the United States until the early 1960s when the Cuban political exiles arrived in Florida (Crawford, 1989) and The Bilingual Education Act (BEA) of 1968 was introduced (Arias & Casanova, 1993). The BEA looked to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Valadez & Patiño Gregoire, 1990) to “provide assistance to local educational agencies in establishing bilingual American education programs and to provide certain other assistance to promote such programs” (Cordasco, 1969, p. 75). The intents of The Bilingual Education Act were to settle the debate over bilingual vs. monolingual education and to make *student learning* the focus of what took place in the classroom, which included teaching languages other than English to achieve this goal (Baker, 1996; Hakuta, 1989). However, this act led to continued debate in Congress, and the discussions became even more heated. Even though the bill passed, the U.S. Congress considered it a leap of faith.

In the 1970s, new tracks of federal bilingual education policy originated as a response to civil rights activism and addressed unequal treatment of Spanish-speaking students (Lyons, 1990). The concerns about these policies were not only about how Spanish-speaking students were performing. Chinese parents also started speaking up, and both groups began filing lawsuits because schools were failing to address their children’s language needs (Andersson & Boyer, 1970). In 1970, the only case dealing with the rights of language-minority students ruled by the U.S. Supreme Court was *Lau v. Nichols*, in which 1,789 Chinese students, plus Kinney Lau, were plaintiffs in a class action suit because they did not understand English and were, therefore,

underperforming in school (Moran, 2005). The ruling did not go in favor of the Chinese students because “there was no segregation” and “the same instruction was offered to all students, without regard to national origin” (Crawford, 1989, p. 34). The argument was that to provide separate instructions to the Chinese students would imply segregating and separating the students, which by then was illegal to do so in the United States.

Fortunately for the Chinese students, the decision was overruled in 1974 and the Chinese-speaking students were entitled to receive support and services, as well as to participate in programs that were designed to meet their academic and language needs (Crawford, 1989). The case *Serna v. Portales Municipal Schools* led to the first court mandate to implement bilingual education for non-English-speaking children and resulted in a judicial order for the initiation and implementation of bilingual-bicultural programs and instruction that specifically addressed the children’s native language and culture as a way to desegregate education (Arias & Casanova, 1993; Baker, 1996; Crawford, 1989; García, 2005). This case ruling took place in the mid-1970s, and others, such as *Ríos v. Read* (1977) and *United States v. Texas* (1981), followed. In these cases, the argument focused on having proper and meaningful education that included not only language, but also culture, even though the transitional bilingual programs, in which the students’ native language was to be used only until they achieved competence in English, had been unsuccessful (Han, 2012; Holmes, 1975). During these times, there were people who believed that preserving one’s native language meant that one rejected English language competence and its acquisition (Baker, 1996). President Ronald Reagan was one of the detractors of bilingual education, reducing funding for it by \$43 million and stating that his lack of support for bilingual education focused only on programs where the language of instruction was Spanish, not in English (Lewis, 1983). Contrary to President Reagan, President Bill Clinton brought hope

as he promised to support bilingual education and to make it stronger because of the change in social structures that was taking place in the United States due to an explosion of immigrants (Clinton, 1992). He wanted schools to be integrated within the communities to which they belonged and that represented their demographics instead of being isolated entities (Clinton, 1992). In ways that mirrored President Reagan's beliefs towards bilingual education, and after 200 years of getting along without an official tongue, English-only movements reemerged, going against the immigrant roots of the country and the Founding Fathers' rejection of the idea of an official language (Escamilla, 1989). Immigrants rejected assimilation and spoke their native tongues in their communities; however, immigrants speaking their native tongues was not a new practice, but one that had been occurring for decades with groups like Italians, Jews, and Slavs (Baker, 1996).

Regressing to earlier years, the sentiment towards bilingualism and native tongues began changing in the 1920s, as evidenced when "the most restrictive of the laws that legislated English as the basic language of instruction were struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court in the [1923] Meyer v. Nebraska case" (Crawford, 1989, p. 24). Americanization, however, had started to subside by the time the ruling was handed down, and attempts to legislate English as the only language of instruction were declining. Some large school districts were beginning to lift bans on German studies, and German was being used as a means of instruction (Crawford, 1989). Essentially, in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, matters started to shift again towards acceptance of and openness to foreign languages (Arias & Casanova, 1993).

As support increased for foreign language instruction, many bilingual schools were established in the United States. The purpose of these schools was not only to preserve heritage and culture, but also for the attendees to remain competitive in a global society. Amendments

were added to the Bilingual Education Act (BEA) during the Title VII Reauthorization of 1994. The purpose of these amendments was to make sure that students of limited English proficiency had equal educational opportunities and to promote educational excellence. These amendments prioritized funding for endeavors such as dual-language programs (Wiese & Garcia, 1998), even though many politicians and much of the mass media were still against bilingual education (Arias & Casanova, 1993). However, changes pertaining to bilingual education continued to take place. In 2001 the Bilingual Education Act was eliminated, and No Child Left Behind (NCLB), a federal law that was anti-bilingual education, was signed into law by President George W. Bush in January 2002 (Nieto, 2009). The mandates of NCLB failed to consider or mention “bilingualism or developing native language competences” (Baker, 1996, pp. 189-190), and reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) for another six years. The ESEA was the “first major legislation of national significance to be enacted by the 89th Congress. Keyed to ‘poverty,’ ESEA [would] virtually double the amount of federal aid available to schools” (Osborne, 1965, p. 190). Namely, the ESEA authorized most of the federal programs for elementary and secondary education and included five major provisions: increasing funding for low-income families, acquiring library resources, establishing supplemental education centers, awarding grants for regional education research and training, and strengthening state departments of education (Osborne, 1965).

Around the time the ESEA was ratified, the preferred term for students who were bilingual or who spoke minoritized languages changed to English Language Learners (ELLs) and was used only in reference to the students’ English proficiency (Baker, 1996). However, when Barack Obama was elected president of the United States in 2008, he spoke in favor of bilingual education and about the need for effective education reform (Baker, 1996).



In this section, I have outlined the cyclical trends of bilingual education. Even though there was extensive language diversity at the inception of the United States, and even before the country technically existed, the acceptance of bilingual education has not remained steady. Throughout the years, people have supported or opposed bilingual education based on the language being discussed. For example, the more influential the language-minority, the more support for bilingualism and bilingual education there has been. The German and French cultures, for instance, have historically been perceived as stronger and more valued than those of Latino origin. The difference in the way students of Latino origin were being educated sparked court cases such as *Serna v. Portales Municipal Schools*, *Ríos v. Read*, and *U.S. v. Texas*, all of which advocated for an appropriate and significant education for Latino students that included culture. Though these cases accomplished advancement in the education of some groups of language-minority students, the United States is a country in which people continue to question whether bilingual education should be implemented.

### **Theoretical Framework: LatCrit**

This study is grounded within the theoretical framework of Latin American Critical Race Theory (LatCrit), which is a derivative of Critical Race Theory, focusing on issues that are beyond Black and white racial histories and marginalization. LatCrit is an appropriate organizing lens to inspect the topic of this study given that bilingual Spanish teachers are working in primarily monolingual spaces with a monolingual principal. The appropriateness of this framework for this study is described below.

LatCrit is flooded with issues and challenges that go far beyond the traditional discourse of White privilege limited to the interaction between black and white people (Toro, 1995; Villalpando, 2004). Within the discursive spaces of LatCrit, there is domination of multiple

groups of people, constituting matters of oppression that derive from race, ethnicity, colonialism, and language, which are present within and among such groups (Iglesias & Valdés, 1998). There are also aspects of oppression that implicate marginalization, privilege, and subordination (Crenshaw, 1991). Further, scholars of LatCrit are engaged with and concerned about social justice and equity (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Haney López, 1997; Hernández-Truyol, Harris, & Valdés, 2006). Preserving language of origin, promoting culture, and negotiating the struggles individuals face with transnational and cross-national identities are at the core of LatCrit theory (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 1995).

LatCrit theory specifically focuses on the injustices experienced by people of various Latina/o descents in the United States. These injustices include, but are not limited to, invisibility, subordination, and marginalization, all of which are due to white supremacist discourses and their pervasive effects on the daily lives of people from Latina/o descent. In this context, invisibility denotes that people of Latino origin do not need to be considered and acknowledged. Subordination suggests less power or rank, as well as obedience. Marginalization refers to individuals being consigned to the fringes of society. White supremacist discourse is the root of these injustices and emphasizes the superiority of white people.

The goal of this framework is to attain just treatment across various systems of power, including education, law, healthcare, business, and housing. Further, scholars within this framework advocate for self-empowerment and moving away from Anglocentric and heteropatriarchal rules. The term Anglocentric rules refer to anything that centers around or gives priority to England or things English, and heteropatriarchal rules refer to the ways in which social systems are designed to meet the needs of a dominant group, namely those that are white, heterosexual, and male.

In an effort to attain social justice for all the groups of people previously mentioned, LatCrit theory creates a space for scholars to further discuss the issues of marginalization and enfranchisement (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Espinoza & Harris, 1997; Haney López, 1997; Hernández-Truyol et al., 2006; Montoya, 1994; Valdés, 2013). These scholars advocate that not all people live in a space of clearly defined lines. For example, the term Latina/o is, frequently and equivocally, used and thought of as a race (Hernández-Truyol, Harris, & Valdés, 1997; Montoya, 1994) when, in fact, it cannot be simply defined (Hayes-Bautista & Chapa, 1987). The term Latina/o is an amalgam of various skin colors, language variations, and cultures within which many individuals—whether in Latino countries or in the United States—continually navigate (Saragoza, Juarez, Valenzuela, & Gonzalez, 1992). This blend has developed via the process of colonialism, which takes place when a group of people takes control over one or more weaker groups through power. Together with colonialism, imperial capitalism (an economic system that exercises extreme authority), has resulted in many of the Latino nations being disadvantaged and relegated (Hernández-Truyol et al., 2006; Marotta & García, 2013).

The inception of LatCrit took place in 1995 (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). The focus of LatCrit has revolved around empowering all marginalized communities, and emancipating and strengthening them to achieve egalitarianism and rights for all (Hernández-Truyol et al., 2006; Valdés, 2005, 2013). These marginalized communities are populated with people who struggle to find their place in what the dominant culture considers to be acceptable culturally, politically, sexually, racially, and linguistically, which positions them in a status of lesser value (Delgado Bernal, 2001; Hernández-Truyol, 1999; Montoya, 1994; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). In other words, if an individual is different from the expectations and norms held by white people, s/he<sup>1</sup> is

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<sup>1</sup> By using the pronoun this way, I am being gender inclusive.

highly likely to be considered lesser, inferior, or unimportant. The significance of such a distressing scenario is that the majority of the world's population does not have the privilege of belonging to the dominant unit (Delgado Bernal, 2001; Hernández-Truyol, 1999; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001; Toro, 1995). This results in subordination that has reached the educational system of the United States. The educational system of the United States has enormous potential to help emancipate and empower, but instead of acting on such potential, it is plagued with oppression and marginalization (Iglesias, 1996/1997). Many students in today's schools experience oppression and marginalization first-hand when their native languages—those other than English—are excluded and rejected (Iglesias, 1996/1997; Iglesias & Valdés, 1998; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). The lack of acceptance comes not only from peers, but also from adults who could be educators or educational leaders, and from the educational system in general, saddening, offending, and angering many (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). Fortunately, there is a component to LatCrit that is specifically geared towards educational matters; this component theorizes and assesses the intersecting point between race and the various types of subordination, including language (Iglesias & Valdés, 1998; Montoya, 1997). Such emphasis is geared towards ensuring that human rights are acknowledged and respected not only in this country, but also all around the globe (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001).

Many scholars share the notion that social justice is the root of LatCrit theory in education, as it seeks to challenge dogmas that have existed for decades and that have dominated society, including the educational system in the United States (Iglesias, 1996/1997; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). One way to attain social transformation is through becoming aware of and being engaged with the struggles that people face (Montoya, 1997). This kind of work has the potential to be metamorphic for people's lives and to provide them with better options than they

previously had (Trucios-Haynes, 1997). Because social justice is one of the fundamental tenets of LatCrit, its scholars are also concerned with the right of equity for people in the United States and globally, with a goal of achieving a common collective good (Montoya, 1997). Muzzling students when they do not speak the majority's language—English—does not help to attain social justice and leads to a diminishing of their language of origin, culture, and identity.

Native language is one of the many elements that define people, and it is inherently tied to a place of origin (Iglesias, 1996/1997). This may not be the majority language of the nation in which an individual lives; the place where a person lives may not be the place where s/he was born. This scenario comes with implications and trials for those individuals, which is why LatCrit scholars invite and encourage people to embrace their “transnational identities as unique and empowering positions from which to develop cross-national solidarities” (Iglesias, 1996/1997, p. 192). Several school-age children in the United States live in homes where their parents and other family members still speak the language of the country in which they were born and have strong ties with family and community in that country (Iglesias, 1996/1997). As the students navigate that diverse space, they benefit from receiving an education where they are included and valued and where the rich cultural narrative of their native language is appreciated and used as a means for others' enrichment (Iglesias, 1996/1997). Using students' native languages as languages of instruction is a way to foster the sense of appreciation of a culture and its language. Specifically, using Spanish as a language of instruction is a way of legitimizing and preserving the culture of Latina/o students and a way to set the tone for an inclusive educational system (Montoya, 1997).

LatCrit theory places its focus on issues that affect the Latina/o population, in the United States and globally. Within the United States, LatCrit theory challenges the discourses of white

privilege that continuously create material suffering for people of Latina/o background. This suffering can take various forms, but one of the most predominant forms of suffering is an erasure of language, and by extension, history, literature, and other aspects of cultural knowledge and pride in favor of assimilation into the dominant culture. However, no amount of assimilation would ensure that someone from a Latinx background would be accepted into the dominant space because they would always be marked for their differences in appearance, language, and in how they speak. Thus, LatCrit theorists have an obligation to call for socially just spaces of education where Spanish language learning is not only given space, but also honored, and not marginalized as an obligatory act or conducted with whiteness ranked as being superior to anything else.

LatCrit theory was an appropriate lens to use in this study because it made highlighting the experiences of Spanish bilingual teachers as they worked within a dominant culture possible. LatCrit scholars continuously challenge the dominant culture to make space for Spanish language learning and valuing of various Latin cultures. Simply teaching Spanish in schools does not equate to creating a just environment, especially if the teaching values English as superior to Spanish. When English is viewed and portrayed as more important than other languages, students begin to learn to be ashamed of their heritage, and perhaps distance themselves from their own ancestry. In the following section, I discuss bilingual education in the United States in more detail.

### **Bilingual Education**

One definition of bilingual education, in general terms, is instruction that is given in two languages in order to teach parts of or the entire curriculum in a school. Another definition refers to bilingual education as the use of two languages by teachers and students in a school to satisfy

social, , and pedagogical needs (Hernández-Truyol et al., 2006; Villalpando, 2004). Bilingual education in the United States dates to pre-colonial days (Andersson & Boyer, 1970; NABE, 2016) and is existent in many schools throughout the United States in different models, which include 90/10 (students are taught in the target language most of the day or the whole day, and the rest of the day in English), 50/50 (students receive instruction in the target language and in English the same amount of time throughout the day) (Block, 2011), one-way enrichment, two-way enrichment, alternate-day, dual-language, and two-day/two-day (Fitzgerald, 1993). In the following sections, I will discuss the benefits of and the need for bilingual education and the relationship between language and power.

### ***Benefits of and The Need for Bilingual Education***

Current technological developments allow for more effective and efficient communication between people—and countries—than in the past (de Jong, 2002; Freeman, et al., 2005; Hopkins, 2013). These advances have contributed to globalization, which permits individuals from all parts of the world to interact by taking action from afar (Aronin & Singleton, 2012; Hostler Stewart, 2005) and by considering the social and cultural differences of those with whom communication occurs. Thus, speaking more than one language is advantageous in several ways; the world is more accessible to bilinguals, and bilinguals perform better than their monolingual counterparts academically, socially, and economically (Fairclough, 2001). In addition, speaking more than one language has a positive impact on both children and adults, as bilinguals have higher cognitive abilities, develop stronger intellectual capacity, obtain higher mental flexibility, and develop into more effective communicators (Aronin & Singleton, 2012; de Mejía, 2002; Furlong, 2009; Hostler Stewart, 2005).

Children who have the opportunity to grow up speaking a language other than their native

one, or to learn one along the way, enjoy the many advantages mentioned above, as well as occupy positions where their native language is useful to them (Hamers & Blanc, 2000; Weatherford, 1986). However, just because there are bilingual programs available for children does not mean that all of them are of high quality, just as reading and mathematics programs vary in worth. Therefore, selecting the appropriate bilingual program, and establishing and implementing high standards for such program, is just as valuable as implementing efficient math and reading programs to attain high academic achievement (Arias & Casanova, 1993; Ghasemi & Hashemi, 2011; Hostler Stewart, 2005).

Though the exact definition of bilingual education is elusive, a good approximation states that it is education that takes place when a student receives instruction in two languages. Bilingual education has been present in many different models in schools since pre-colonial days. Among the many benefits to receiving bilingual education are that students gain access to technological advances in a global era, allowing them to expand their world. Further, bilingual education results in higher academic, social, and economic performance for students, more mental flexibility, and improved communication skills compared to their monolingual counterparts. However, effective bilingual education programs must be well established to produce these advantages.

### **Language and Power**

Perceptions of a language differ based on who speaks it and what language it is. According to Brisk and Harrington (2007), bilingualism in the United States is perceived in two ways: positively when an individual is bilingual and negatively when it is a group characteristic. More specifically, a second language is held in less regard when it is the individual's vernacular than when it is taught in elite enrichment bilingual programs or in a private school to



monolingual English speakers (de Mejía, 2002). One could interpret these statements to illustrate that individuals who speak more than one language are perceived to have higher levels of sophistication and refinement than those who belong to a group where only one language is spoken (Kjolseth, 1983). In other words, there is a tacit perception of higher power for bilingual individuals; therefore, language and power are not separate and independent matters. These disparities in perception, are “ideologies and structures . . . used to legitimate, effectuate, and reproduce unequal division of power and resources between groups which are defined on the basis of language” (Arias & Casanova, 1993, pp. 4-5), are alive and well. In other words, there are grave differences between groups of people considered to have power and others who speak specific languages. This dominance, however, is not valid. Instead, it is an artifact based on false ideas and beliefs that result in discrimination towards speakers of those certain languages.

In addition to the issues entwined within language, power refers to “relations among individuals or groups based on social, political, and material asymmetries by which some people are indulged and rewarded and others negatively sanctioned and deprived” (Arias & Casanova, 1993, pp. 4-5). The irregularities Cherryholmes (1988) refers to are as much about what individuals possess as they are about their characteristics. With such inequalities being present, power is inevitably exerted onto and among other individuals in multiple ways that specifically include knowledge, social structures, and language. Explicitly speaking about language, individuals can end up dominated through it by others who have become subjects of power (Cherryholmes, 1988). Further, language is not only a significant component of this domination, but it is also a substantial contributor to oppression (Fairclough, 2001). Language has the potential to oppress when a dominant language is used to silence or minimize the voice of those who speak languages regarded as lesser. This occurrence is especially present when unequal and

unstable relationships among individuals or groups exist. In such relationships, however, power only exists when both sides exert at least some degree of freedom and constantly struggle and strive to stay in control of the meanings they ascribe to their lives (Fairclough, 2001; Foucault, 1980).

Foucault (1980) asserts that there is a prevalent belief that English monolinguals will have better success than those individuals who are bilingual and bicultural and that, in fact, the latter will instead experience economic disadvantage, as being anything other than an English monolingual is an obstacle to achieving economic success. The way people speak and the orders of discourse they use also play a role in power relationships between institutions and powerholders in a society. In society, the relationship between language and power structures, and language itself, contributes to the replication and preservation of such structures (Fairclough, 2001). For instance, not knowing English at an acceptable level has the potential to have negative consequences for people and can result in lifelong and generational poverty because English, as a language of power, is closely related to the struggles to achieve social justice (Tsung, 2012). Furthermore, when people do not speak the language of the predominant group, or do not speak it well enough, struggles for power through language emerge. The difficulties, then, become evident as barriers that lead to individuals being silenced instead of being empowered. The silence comes as a result of people's native languages being devalued, and not allowed to be spoken or developed as part of their educational program (Borg, Cardona, & Caruana, 2013). Policies that exist in education, such as banning a language (overtly or covertly), are elements used to maintain power, and they extend to and result in students being marginalized and silenced because they belong to certain linguistic groups, stripping them of any potential power (Freire, 1993; Pérez Miller, 2003). Educators, therefore, have the responsibility

of encouraging and fostering students' use of their voice in a way that honors them instead of in ways that hinder them (Christensen, 2011). They can empower students through fostering and promoting the use of their native language, orally and in the written form.

Currently, grave class distinctions still exist in educational settings and are evidenced by the presence of culturally biased curricula (Christensen, 2011; Pérez Miller, 2003). When students manage to confront the situations that have put them in a space of oppression by entities or individuals with more power than them, it results in an empowerment to overcome them. It also has the potential of obtaining freedom from the negativity that kind of relationship represents (Freire, 1993), and a viable way to do so is through education. However, education can either empower or break students, so Freire suggests that education is best when it empowers students, as well as teachers, to achieve social change as they acquire knowledge. In addition, he poses the idea of revealing and divulging the disproportionateness of power so individuals can overcome unequal and abusive associations (Freire, 1993).

### ***Language, Power, and Foucault***

In this section, I discuss how language and power can operate, discipline, silence, and even create docile, disciplined subjects using Foucault's explanation of how power and discipline function together (Foucault, 1980, 1982, 1994b). Michel Foucault's work offers significant insight into the different power relationships that exist between and among individuals, institutions, and nations (Foucault, 1970). Within such relationships exist differences in power that affect, positively or negatively, those involved (Foucault, 1980, 1994b; Freire, 1970; Freire, 1993).

Just like there are oppositions to, for instance, the power of men over women and of parents over children (Foucault, 1982), there is resistance to domination of certain languages

over others. Historically, language and its role in the fabric of the world has undergone change and has shifted towards having high value in discourse (Foucault, 1982). Power relations that are not necessarily tied to political issues are prevalent within the human race and often “come into play among individuals, within families, in pedagogical relationships, political life and so on” (Foucault, 1970, p. 283). For example, weapons have historically been used by those with the most power, and these people have prevented those with less power from using them (Foucault, 1994a). Similarly, there has been dominance in language as seen in the relationship between cultures (Foucault, 1994b). The Anglo culture has exerted power, for example, over the Latino cultures (Foucault, 1977). In turn, individuals among the Latino cultures classify and compare themselves with others of diverse cultures (Cummins, 1988), which contributes to unfair and distorted perceptions of themselves. The differences in culture and perception of cultures have the potential to block economic, political, and social progress and lead towards a state of domination, which, in turn, results in freedom being eradicated completely from one group or, at a minimum, highly restricted (Foucault, 1994b). However, inequities of this type do not have recent origin, but have been propagated over time, and can be traced back to at least the 13<sup>th</sup> century, when royal representatives established, solidified, and expanded their power (Foucault, 1994a).

Another way to exert power is through discipline, social control, and surveillance (Foucault, 1994b). A starting point to attaining this type of power is attributed to a prison called the Panopticon. The architectural design of that prison allows for a figure of power to constantly supervise individuals over his subjects. Many different institutions, including prisons, hospitals, and schools, have implemented this type of configuration with the purpose of organizing its occupants in such a way that large numbers of people behave in an ordered manner around

established norms that specifically address what is standard and correct, and what should be done—or not done (Foucault, 1977, 1994a). Particularly in schools, discipline is evident in the punishment and reward system, the evaluation system, and the classification system—not only of students, but also of the adults within the organization—all of which closely resemble the judicial system (Foucault, 1994b). However, this resemblance to the judicial system is not manifested only in the concrete forms mentioned previously, but also in more abstract forms.

The structure of the Panopticon has also been established within language, as it relates to culture, as seen in the tacit drawbacks some cultures experience when faced with others that are more dominant (Foucault, 1994b). For instance, in schools within the United States, there are hierarchical and cultural differences between teacher and principal that afford the principal more power. Implicit with power comes discipline, which produces docile individuals. Docile individuals are those who are easily manipulatable, and who can be “subjected, used, transformed, and improved” (Foucault, 1977, p. 136). Due to the existence of this difference in power in the pedagogical relationship between teacher and principal, the teacher might become docile. This docility may be displayed by the teacher never questioning the principal’s qualifications to address and evaluate her teaching in, for instance, Spanish the same way the principal would evaluate those who teach in English because she lacks knowledge, and understanding of Spanish. This teacher’s silence is a manifestation of discipline, and therefore of obedience, putting her in a state of domination with respect to the principal (Foucault, 1977). A bilingual teacher who is disciplined into being a docile individual may concede to what is perceived to be the right thing to do, but her silence may result in a cultural sacrifice and in a negation of her identity, as well as that of the students she teaches.

## **Teaching and Learning Within the Context of Bilingual Education**

Dual-language (DL) programs in the United States are relatively new and function on a the purpose of creating bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural students (Gómez, 2014). Successful DL programs ensure that students do well academically and that their learning expands into their academic and personal lives (Brisk & Harrington, 2007). Brisk and Harrington (2007) further state that DL programs positively influence students in achieving the social goals of education, as well as in adding to the language diversity that already exists in the United States. Further, DL programs aim to provide high-quality education to students in a language that is not their native one. In order to teach a second language to students (both native and non-native speakers of English), it is vital that students in DL programs learn the second language through content-based courses such as science and math so that they can acquire vocabulary, learn language structures and functions, and increase comprehension in each of their target languages (Arias & Casanova, 1993). Furthermore, when language minority students participate in DL programs and, consequently, preserve their vernacular skills, their ability and competency in English and in other languages are enhanced via the literacy knowledge they acquire in the process (Arias & Casanova, 1993; Braine, 1987; Freeman & Freeman, 1998). Through content-based bilingual education, therefore, students achieve at high academic levels that expand beyond the context of school and enrich the students' overall lives.

In addition to the preceding elements, certain types of circumstances are necessary to ensure high achievement of students in the DL environments in which they learn. Several scholars (August & Hakuta, 1997; Brisk & Harrington, 2007; Gómez, 2014) analyzed the learning circumstances in which linguistically and culturally diverse students would learn best and concluded that the presence of seven conditions would be optimal. The first condition to

consider would be the climate of the school. When there is an encouraging climate in a school, it energizes all those involved and helps the personnel have a positive outlook on their work and take pride in what they do (August & Hakuta, 1997); how school climate affects individuals is not limited to staff, but is also seen in the school's student body. When students are in a school environment where they experience encouragement, they perform well and gain a sense of belongingness (August & Hakuta, 1997).

A second optimal condition for success in DL programs is school leadership (Freeman, et al., 2005). School leadership influences the creation of the aforementioned positive and encouraging school climate (August & Hakuta, 1997). The type of leadership that is conducive to such an environment is one where students of all backgrounds, teachers, specialists, secretaries, and custodians play a specific, valued, and important role that contributes to the effective functioning of the school and that is positively recognized and constantly encouraged for the specific things the leader notices them doing (Hipp, Huffman, Pankake, & Olivier, 2008). Additionally, having a customized learning environment for culturally and linguistically diverse students is tremendously beneficial to the students academically and personally (Freeman, et al., 2005).

The third condition for success in DL programs is the use of native language and the valuing of students' native culture in instruction (August & Hakuta, 1997; Cole, 2008). August and Hakuta (1997) note that bilingual students benefit when the native language, as well as the target language, is used in the classroom. Students' literacy development in the second language is greater when they take advantage of their native language. Contrary to some people's beliefs, using the heritage language does not get in the way of acquiring the target language; in fact, it

actually cultivates positive transfer of information between the two languages (Brisk & Harrington, 2007).

A fourth optimal condition (Brisk & Harrington, 2007) was a balanced curriculum that allows students to develop basic skills while encouraging them to think critically. Teachers can foster critical thinking and basic skills development through providing explicit instruction, providing opportunities for student-directed instruction, and incorporating instructional strategies that develop student understanding and enhance opportunities for them to practice and apply new learning (August & Hakuta, 1997). Since students in DL programs are learning in a language that is not their native language, they need more cohesive curriculum design and instructional delivery than what they would need if they were learning information in their native language. This is because when students learn content in their native language, they can fill in certain gaps on their own if there is a lack of cohesiveness of curricular planning and instructional delivery (August & Hakuta, 1997). Therefore, students in DL programs benefit from a balanced curriculum with cohesive thematic learning units that demonstrate continuity and connection between instructional ideas. Specifically, having cohesive thematic units is advantageous because the teachers provide opportunities for the students to preview, view, and review material, know what the topic of study is (which increases the students' confidence), and learn the content more easily. Additionally, thematic units allow students' knowledge and skills to transfer from one language to another. This transfer can be enhanced when teachers connect thematic instructional content to the students' lives. Teachers can also use pedagogical strategies, such as small group work, that enhances second language learning, fosters student engagement, and allows for effective differentiation.



Systematic student assessment is the fifth condition for achieving optimal learning circumstances for linguistically and culturally diverse students. Analyzing student work over time to evaluate growth and development is as essential as supporting systematic and frequent assessment because it allows educators to identify learner needs and use data to design instruction that remedies any deficiencies or provides enrichment as needed (Freeman et al., 2005; Reagan, 2002). Systemic student assessment is a combination of summative and formative assessments and formal and informal assessments (Arias & Casanova, 1993; DuFour & Fullan, 2013; Padilla et al., 1990), which are connected to curricular standards that students are expected to master. These assessments are used to identify students' academic and linguistic progress while providing additional information on students' social needs (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Karhanek, 2004).

The sixth condition that is essential for optimal learning for culturally and linguistically diverse students is staff development. Successful DL programs cannot be implemented without significant time being devoted to quality professional development where participants are intellectually stimulated with enriched knowledge (Block, 2011; Freeman, & Freeman, 1998; Freeman et al., 2005).

Lastly, the seventh condition is home and parental involvement, which refers to the importance of parents becoming actively engaged in the school and having the chance to discuss issues concerning not only their students, but also the school as a whole. Parental participation also denotes making a connection between school and home by learning strategies parents can use with their children at home (Howard & Sugarman, 2007). The multiple conditions that must be present all cohesively intersect to achieve a successful and effective DL program where learning conditions are optimal.

Successful DL programs require that all students' education be conducive to high achievement that extends beyond the school and is integrated into their personal lives with long-lasting effects. This kind of education engages all students in the learning of a foreign language that is taught through rigorous content and that is achieved through the support and permanence of the students' native language. When such elements are in place, optimal conditions for instructing students in DL programs. The conditions are easy to attain when there is rich school culture, school leadership is strong, instruction leads to critical thinking, learning through assessment is easily monitored, and when families and communities are involved in the students' learning.

### ***Bilingual Educators***

Bilingual educators are valuable assets in any school and a necessity where dual-language programs are in place in order to boost faculty language resources and keep academic work at high standards in the languages they teach (Alanís & Rodríguez, 2008). In addition, they are considered to be some of the most skilled instructors at teaching students who are first embarking in their bilingual journeys, especially those teachers who share the students' language and culture, as they are able to develop some of the most positive relationships with them (de Jong, 2002; Freeman, et al., 2005). This section is a brief discussion of what it can mean to be bilingual and the different levels at which bilingualism can be present, as well as ways in which bilingual educators can be positive influences in students' educational experiences.

Identifying who is bilingual is subjective, complex, and multidimensional because a person's expertise in a language can range from being native-like to being minimally proficient (Hopkins, 2013). One possible way to determine a person's level of linguistic expertise is through the individual's capacity to navigate linguistic skills that include "pronunciation, extent

of vocabulary, correctness of grammar, the ability to convey exact meanings in different situations and variations in style” (Baker, 1996, p. 7). Additionally, there is variation in the degree and function of bilingualism, which includes two receptive language abilities (listening and reading) and two productive ones (speaking and writing). Notably, a person may be highly literate within one situation and feel incapable of handling another (Baker, 1996). Such is the case for many students whose native language is not English and who attend public schools in the United States where they have not been successfully educated for more than 50 years (Souto-Manning, 2006b).

This unfortunate situation occurs because the majority of teachers are white middle class women who have not received adequate preparation to teach multicultural groups of students (Souto-Manning, 2011) and still perceive such cultural and linguistic diversity as a deficit (Darling-Hammond, 2002, 2006; Galman, Pica-Smith, & Rosenberger, 2010; Haddix, 2008; Sleeter, 2001). This perception is incongruent with the changing demographics in the United States, as large numbers of Spanish-speaking newcomers have arrived over the past 15 years. To mitigate the occurrences of not educating the students effectively, many consider having bilingual educators teaching CLD students to be of paramount importance. Like other teachers, bilingual educators have the potential to promote and help students achieve social and economic progress. Additionally, when the educator is bilingual, this individual is more likely to obstruct discrimination and inequality because they may have had similar experiences of prejudice against non-dominant languages (Brown & Souto-Manning, 2007; Freire, 1970; Tatum, 1992).

Since bilingual teachers are inclined to being proponents of bilingualism, a starting point towards neutralizing prejudices against non-dominant languages is fostering and encouraging the use of students’ heritage languages and teaching them that their heritage discourse is valuable,

even if it is completely different from that of the school (UNESCO, 1968). When the school discourse acts in opposition to the students' home experiences and promotes English-only practices, it results in adjudication not only of language, but also of components of the students' culture, as well as subjecting students in entangled political conflicts where they might have to choose what language to speak (Souto-Manning, 2006a, 2006b) and possibly face consequences if they speak the wrong language. Students of minoritized groups (such as those based on race and socioeconomic status) experience the most frequent occurrences of such marginalization in this country (Brisk & Harrington, 2007) and in other parts of the world (Brown & Souto-Manning, 2007; Souto-Manning, 2006b).

Unfortunately, in spite of the high need for and the benefits of having bilingual teachers, there are not enough of them, particularly in public schools, to meet the needs of the country's current demographics (Souto-Manning, 2011). In addition to being bilingual, however, teachers must have broad knowledge and understanding of ways in which to maintain students' bilingual and cultural identity (Brown & Souto-Manning, 2007) in order to avoid cultural genocide, which stems from overvaluing and promoting English-only practices (Cahnmann, Rymes, & Souto-Manning, 2005). Therefore, bilingual educators who are adequately prepared to teach CLD students have the attitude to promote inclusion and equality, as well as to foster, promote, value, and legitimize students' culture and language for their academic successes.

**Teachers.** There are two key ideas in this segment. First, there is discussion regarding the quality of teachers, the characteristics on which they are assessed, and the information they need to know to be effective in dual-language settings. Further, this section offers information on additional characteristics DL teachers benefit from having, including being highly proficient in the language in which they teach in order to create effective instructional design that positively

influences students in the dual-language programs.

Teachers are constantly and consistently evaluated via a variety of assessments to determine their teaching effectiveness (Brown & Souto-Manning, 2007; Souto-Manning, 2006a, 2006b). Teacher evaluation can be based on teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and values; personal traits; knowledge and expertise; credentials and certificates; and their effect on student learning. In particular, it is important for teachers of bilingual students to understand "literacy development; significance of being bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural; interaction between languages in a bilingual learner; knowledge needed to read and write; and factors affecting literacy development," (Brisk & Harrington, 2007, p. 2). When teachers have a deep level of understanding of the process, students benefit because the teacher's expertise lends itself to creating an effective learning environment for the students.

Many countries have expectations of students that are quite different from the expectations for students in the United States. In the United States, students may be expected to use rote memorization instead of having them learn through discovery. Additionally, when teachers of CLD students know and understand the differences between educational systems, they are more likely to achieve an educational experience for the students in which they have an opportunity to avoid confrontation with rules of language that are imposed by society (Elder, 1986). Further, reputable teachers of bilingual and emergent bilingual students have keen awareness of the fact that CLD students may perform differently than those whose first language is English. Culturally and Linguistically Diverse students often face challenges that may affect their performance in school, such as low literacy at home and additional responsibilities within the family, both of which may have an effect on them. Being aware of the presence of such challenges is valuable for teachers who work with all students in bilingual programs because

they can provide them with what is best regardless of the curricular content. What is most beneficial for the students includes designing instruction that helps them acquire literacy from authentic text while positively transferring knowledge from their native language to the target language (Arias & Casanova, 1993).

However, being a high-quality teacher is not enough when educating students in dual-language programs; being competent in the language of instruction is key (Brisk & Harrington, 2007). Bilingual teachers in the United States make unique contributions to the education of emergent bilinguals. They provide the students with quality education through the teacher's instructional design and application of practices that are cross-curricular. This instructional design, then, advances student meaning-making and achievement because of the safe environment they create for students to learn and practice language (Freeman, et al., 2005). Yet, Hopkins (2013) adds that even though having the knowledge, training, and certification is tremendously valuable, what comes instinctually to bilingual teachers when educating students in dual-language programs is paramount. Bilingual teachers have the advantage of being attuned to cultural nuances that monolingual teachers may not notice. The inherent understanding of culture that the bilingual teachers have cannot be taught, and it serves as a bridge to connect with the students at deep levels.

**Administrators.** This section focuses on three primary issues that principals of bilingual schools consistently encounter. These issues are specific to the need for flexible and progressive ways of thinking, the demands in time and motivation that are present in running a successful school/program, and the need for deep knowledge and understanding of the theory and research behind dual-language education in order to succeed at creating bilingual, biliterate, and biculturally proficient students.

As they are faced with challenges, school administrators—or principals—who lead schools with dual-language programs have to exhibit flexibility and open-mindedness to create successful schools (Freeman et al., 2005). Freeman et al., (2005) claim that the challenges schools face are numerous. To begin, they state that there is a shortage of bilingual teachers who have the required licenses and accreditations. Also, even if they have the required credentials, they may not speak the language in which they teach at an academic level. Fewer teachers are pursuing and achieving bilingual certification throughout the country, and there is actually a decrease in the number of bilingual people who are choosing to pursue teaching as a career (Freeman et al., 2005). Moreover, Hopkins (2013) affirms that principals are also tasked with establishing and cultivating cultural diversity in their schools, especially in two-way dual-language schools. Therefore, not having the necessary personnel—and the right type—to staff schools with dual-language programs is overwhelming, and principals must work creatively and ingeniously to fulfill that need. Also, principals have to deal with workplace conflict where individuals sometimes struggle to work together and collaboratively. Self-aware principals tend to proactively foster and promote an environment of camaraderie and respect for the wellbeing of their students. Another challenge that principals in dual-language schools face is that of achieving academic and social equity of the languages of instruction and of promoting equal status for both (Aguirre-Baeza, 2001) while pursuing high academic achievement, bilingualism, and biliteracy for all students (Freeman, et al., 2005; Potowski, 2007).

Principals who lead in dual-language schools commit extensive time and energy undertaking the multiple administrative requirements and responsibilities for which they are accountable (Block, 2011; Freeman, et al., 2005). Four responsibilities are discussed here. First, principals have to monitor how teachers plan and implement curriculum and how they transform

it for classroom instruction. A principal who remains aware of what is happening instructionally in a dual-language program becomes a key leader in providing stability for teachers, which results in positively influencing students, even if done indirectly (Freeman, et al., 2005). Thus, principals are responsible for attending professional development, which is the second undertaking, in order to remain current on instructional strategies and methodologies and stay aware of organizational strategies and opportunities for teachers and staff to also stay well-informed (Freeman, et al., 2005). Making sure that these professional development opportunities align with the goals, vision, and mission of the school and program is the responsibility of the educational leader (Freeman, et al., 2005). A third task in which administrators invest ample time and energy is distributing funding and resources in a way that supports both languages of instruction and that benefits the dual-language program as a whole. Additionally, it is imperative in all settings, but definitely in dual-language programs, that the principal provide positive and specific feedback to teachers about their noteworthy accomplishments (Aguirre-Baeza, 2001).

Lastly, in regards to bilingual education theory and research, principals have the obligation to be strong leaders who are “well versed in multicultural education and sensitive to minority issues and needs” (Aguirre-Baeza, 2001, p. 169). Furthermore, they have the responsibility of acquiring extensive knowledge of the latest and most effective instructional strategies for teaching in the target languages, as well as of being cognizant of the various models for bilingual education and selecting the one that best fits the school’s vision and mission (Aguirre-Baeza, 2001).

In summary, “the success of Two-Way Dual Language Schools depends upon the leadership of these schools” (Aguirre-Baeza, 2001, p. 169). Principals of dual-language schools have many duties and responsibilities, among which are being able to adapt and think broadly,



dedicating a significant amount of time to their programs (including dual-language programs), having a passion for and knowledge of pedagogically best strategies, and valuing and validating the home languages and cultures of all staff and students (Aguirre-Baeza, 2001).

### **Overview of Empirical Studies on Bilingual Education**

This section includes an overview of empirical studies in bilingual education so that the reader is able to develop a sense of the scholarly work in this area. Studies that have been conducted in the area of bilingual education—also referred to as dual-language or dual immersion education—have generated solid empirical evidence over more than 30 years on the positive relationship between bilingual ability and intellectual functioning (Aguirre-Baeza, 2001). The evidence points to several advantages of dual-language education, despite ongoing political opposition.

There is consistent evidence that supports the premise of bilingual education being beneficial for all groups who participate in it, promoting high levels of academic achievement for all, and promoting students' academic performance over time (Hamers & Blanc, 2000; Thomas & Collier, 1997b). Several scholars (Han, 2012; Lindholm & Aclan, 1991; Potowski, 2007; Thomas & Collier, 1997b; Thomas & Collier, 2001) declare that previous assumptions about bilingual programs being unfavorable for students are false. Moreover, Cummins (1982) and Thomas and Collier (1997a) assert that minority language students attain the highest academic achievement when they are educated in dual immersion programs and add that, when compared to students who have only received schooling in English, students who are educated bilingually also perform well high academically. Cammarata and Tedick (2012) state that students who have the privilege of reaching full cognitive development in two languages have cognitive advantages and increased cognitive skills as compared to students who only speak one language. Further,

researchers state that higher academic performance for people enrolled in bilingual programs is evident when English-speaking immersion students are given standardized tests and that immersion programs are beneficial for students regardless of the students' ethnic and socioeconomic background or academic/intellectual ability (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Christian, Montone, Lindholm, & Carranza, 1997; Genesee, 2004).

Thomas and Collier (2001) found that ELLs whose parents refused bilingual/ESL services showed large decreases in the areas of reading and mathematics by 5<sup>th</sup> grade when compared to those students who did receive these services by approximately 70%. This decrease led the researchers to have strong opinions about the disadvantages of eradicating the heritage language of ELLs—referred to as subtractive schooling—and of focusing on teaching only in English. They passionately advocate, instead, for additive schooling as an equalizer of opportunities between language minority students and those whose native language is English, offering the example of dual-immersion programs as fitting that category. Research by Valenzuela (1999) and Potowski (2007) states that dual-immersion programs not only promote ELLs acquisition of English while maintaining their high-level skills in their first language, and that additive bilingualism simultaneously promotes high levels of academic achievement and high-level skills in English for all participating students. In fact, after analyzing over 700,000 student records in five school districts, Christian et al. (1997) concluded that the most powerful predictor of academic success is formal schooling in students' native or heritage language. Thomas and Collier (1997a) were able to quantify that all children in their study were biliterate by third grade and that they had accomplished this because “knowledge gained in one language serves as a foundation and facilitates learning in the second language” (as cited in Pérez, p. 108). Thomas and Collier (1997a) state:

The first predictor of long-term school success is cognitively complex on-grade-level academic instruction through students' first language for as long as possible (at least through Grade 5 or 6) and cognitively complex on-grade-level academic instruction through the second language (English) for part of the school day, in each succeeding grade throughout students' schooling. (p. 15)

When students receive education in their native language in a context that fosters thinking and problem solving, the capacity to do so can be transferred to other languages as the students progress through the grades (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988). In other words, the stronger the students' heritage language, the stronger the new language due to a positive allocation of skills, knowledge, and concepts.

Studies demonstrate how proficient bilingual students perform better than their monolingual counterparts on tests administered at school. Specifically, findings in the study conducted by Collier (1995) indicate that the students who attended the Inter-American Magnet School (IAMS), not only outperformed students in Chicago Public Schools, but also across the state of Illinois. These findings generally mirror the results of Potowski's (2007) research on students who received bilingual education over the long term. Supporting these results are the studies by Cammarata and Tedick (2012) and Thomas and Collier (1997a), which identified that students who participate in well-implemented bilingual programs outperform their counterparts as they advance through the grade levels. In these studies, scholars were able to demonstrate how these results are not exclusive to native English speakers (who outperformed their counterparts schooled only in English in all measures after four to seven years), but that they also pertain to students who were former ELLs who outperformed ELL students who did not receive a bilingual education. Thus, studies demonstrate that there are multiple advantages to being educated in a

bilingual setting, including the preservation of tongues and the cultures they represent.

Dual-language schooling narrows achievement gaps for students who have been traditionally identified with some deficient narrative, as demonstrated by researchers such as Thomas and Collier (2001) and Vega (2015). This achievement gap has not only narrowed, but has also closed. A study by Han (2012) showed that students who started performing lower than their white native English-speaking peers in kindergarten benefitted from being in a bilingual environment and fully eliminated the academic difference that existed in math by the time they reached fifth grade. Further, beneficial attributes of dual-language learning can also be seen in the ways in which communities support these students when they participate in these programs. Whether the students are considered to be “at risk” or otherwise, these programs show high attendance at evening and weekend events, which indicates that the schools are fulfilling the needs of not only the students, but also of the community at large (Han, 2012).

Dual-language programs can also offer previously unimaginable opportunities, thereby allowing dual-language learners to discover ways out of poverty, find career options, and expand their worldviews. Thomas and Collier (2001) found that bilingual programs have considerable impact on students’ socioeconomic status as measured by the number of years in the program. In other words, the authors concluded that there was significantly less influence of poverty on the students’ language acquisition and performance, as well as on certain state assessments. Moreover, Thomas and Collier (2001) note that parents of language majority and language minority students view being bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural as a means to more career opportunities. Other advantages to student participation in bilingual programs include lower dropout rates (Stevenson, 2014), positive cross-cultural attitudes (Potowski, 2007), positive attitudes toward speakers of both languages, and breaking down stereotypes (Lambert, 1987),

and gaining skills such as learning to work, play, and speak with people from different backgrounds. As demonstrated by several studies, there are multiple advantages that bilingual education offers students, which include a more global outlook, the possibility of a more prosperous life, and an appreciation for diversity.

Thus, numerous empirical studies exist that demonstrate the multiple benefits of receiving a bilingual education. Some of these benefits are higher academic achievement, greater proficiency in the students' target language learning when their heritage language is promoted and fostered, better academic achievement in comparison to peers who are only taught in one language, reduction and elimination of the achievement gap between all groups of students, and lower drop-out rates and fewer effects of poverty.

Throughout this chapter, evidence has been provided about the benefits of bilingual education. Additionally, a historical overview demonstrated that there was an initial acceptance and expectation of bilingual education that became less palatable throughout the years. While support for and resistance to bilingual education have been documented through various legal processes, in this chapter, I have demonstrated the discursive rise and maintenance of a devaluing of one's native culture in favor of the language of the dominant culture. To that end, LatCrit theory highlights the generalized effects of marginalization on people of Latina/o heritage as a result of various social structures of oppression. Within education, there are still debates about whether bilingual education negates cultural pride and patriotism, even when research on the benefits of bilingual education remains abundant. Also, when students are faced with an erasure of their heritage culture, their learning suffers, their cultural pride can be eroded, and there may be moves made towards assimilation that would eventually make Spanish-speaking children monolingual. If that is the case, then Spanish-speaking people are placed in the

position of losing their language, losing access to information in their language, and dealing with a devaluing of their cultural heritage.

Key to resisting these social structures of inequities are the dual-language programs and the teachers who commit themselves to these programs. However, their success cannot be ensured if they are under the supervision of monolingual principals. This is because monolingual principals have limitations in how they lead and evaluate their teachers due to their lack of familiarity with the Spanish language. The best that they can do from such a position is to offer general feedback without being helpful at a more specific and nuanced level. For that reason alone, principals need strong professional training to at least understand how they can support dual-language programs, especially if they are monolingual themselves.

Despite the abundance of literature on the benefits of bilingual education, professional development for educational leaders and conversations about how dual-language program teachers negotiate their experiences while working with monolingual principals are needed. In the discussion, it is important to include how students and the instructional staff can be supported, and to identify barriers that arise for attention to be drawn to the ways in which dual-language programs can be successful. Additionally, studies focusing on Spanish-speaking bilingual teachers' experiences in a monolingual environment with monolingual leadership can demonstrate the various ways in which dominant cultural norms erase and devalue minoritized culture, language, and heritage. Such documentation is key, because simply having a dual-language program in a school is not enough for honoring the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Instead, further marginalization of such programs may only tokenize the programs without expanding their possible benefits.

## **Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, I began the discussion about bilingual education, situating it within its historical context. I then explained why LatCrit serves as an appropriate theoretical framework within which to frame the study. Next, I presented information about the benefits of and the need for bilingual education. I then offered a section that addressed power and its relationship to language, including a Foucauldian perspective. Further, I included how bilingual education is represented within the context of teaching and learning, focusing on bilingual educators such as teachers and administrators. Lastly, I offered a general overview of several empirical studies that specifically concentrated on bilingual education.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

The purpose of this ethnographic case study is to gain insight from the collaborative experiences of two Spanish dual-language teachers in a team within two different elementary schools in the Midwestern United States where the principals were monolingual. Two research questions guided this study:

1. How do the participants negotiate dual-language teaching under the instructional leadership of a monolingual principal?
2. In what ways do the participants collaborate with dual-language team members to align with expectations required by the monolingual principal?

### **Qualitative Research**

Qualitative research has long been connected with sociology, anthropology, education, history, and many other disciplines (Aronin & Singleton, 2012). Due to its broadness, there is no one single and accepted way of conducting qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, 2013; Saldaña, 2011). However, there are some basic shared understandings despite people situating themselves within certain paradigms of qualitative research. They include discovery and interpretation; the collection and analysis of data obtained from interviews, documents, and notes; and the production of rich, authentic, and honest material that helps construct accurate narratives.

It is common in qualitative research for the researcher to engage in extensive collection and interpretation of data through notes, interviews, photographs, observations, and documents (Flick, 2009; Saldaña, 2011), which the researcher has either produced or gathered from the participants. Having multiple sources of data is beneficial to the researcher, as well as to the



participant, because it facilitates triangulation, which can be defined as a blend of methods, theories, data, or researchers used to study one single entity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013; Holliday, 2012; LeCompte, 2000; Saldaña, 2011) and adds rigor, depth, and breadth to the results of the study (Flick, 2009).

Qualitative research can be conducted for various purposes, as described by Becho Sullivan and Bhattacharya (In Press):

Broadly speaking, qualitative researchers do not make the argument about generalizing findings from their studies as quantitative researchers do, because they do not set up their studies to be generalizable. Instead, qualitative researchers attempt to share in-depth rich, descriptive, analytical narratives and insights through understanding, interrogating, or deconstructing certain social structures, experiences, documents, phenomena, etc. (p. 12)

The purpose of this ethnographic case study was blurred between a need to understand, describe, and explore and a need to question certain conditions that could produce the experiences of the participants. In other words, in this study, the participants' experiences in a dual-language program while working in a majority-monolingual environment with a monolingual principal needed to be explored and understood in an in-depth manner. However, it could not be ignored that such experiences were also produced through the power differences that privilege monolingualism to dual-language learning, and therefore, created experiences of inequity. Thus, in this study, it was wise to remain vigilant and interrogate certain social structures of power to understand how the participants' experiences unfolded and how they had to negotiate their roles as educators and advocates of dual-language learning.

### **Theoretical and Methodological Framework**

The epistemology in a study helps to define how people understand the world in which

they live and with which they are familiar (Bhattacharya, 2017), as well as how they construct knowledge about the world. Epistemological understandings highlight how knowledge construction occurs between the knower and the object of knowledge. For the purpose of this study, LatCrit (a derivative of Critical Race Theory) was used as an epistemological, substantive, and methodological framework. Specifically, this study was informed by the tenets of LatCrit to help understand how the participants constructed meaning of their experiences. Simultaneously, LatCrit allowed for examination of the social structures that produced the experiences within the participants' specific contexts. Finally, it was imperative to explore, methodologically, how the tenets of LatCrit influenced the ways in which knowledge making occurred in this study.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is a methodological and epistemological tool used to understand race and racism, and their impact on racial minorities in the United States (Bhattacharya, 2017). Though Critical Race scholarship may differ in ways that include argument and emphasis, it generally includes two conjoint interests. First, CRT concentrates on understanding how white supremacy was created and maintained in the United States. Secondly, it seeks to change the bond that exists between law and racial power (Parker, 2002). Nevertheless, the systems of knowledge under CRT extend beyond race and intersect with other oppressions that people of color may experience, which could include sexism and classism (Crenshaw et al., 1995). Created partly by progressive intellectuals of color (Delgado Bernal, 2002), CRT influences LatCrit theory, which is the methodological framework of this study.

Specifically, as a spin-off and ally of CRT, Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit) was appropriate for this study because it focuses on how different approaches to race and civil rights do not take into consideration problems, experiences, and circumstances that are specific to Latinx. These approaches include, but are not limited to, bilingualism, immigration reform, and

the traditional black and white structure (Crenshaw et al., 1995). LatCrit is rooted in a complex court case, *Hernández v. Texas*, that took place in Jackson County, Texas, in the early 1950s (Espinoza & Harris, 1997; Parker, 2002; Stefancic, 1997). According to Valdés (2005), *Hernández* is the first “Supreme Courtcase to extend the protections of the Fourteenth Amendment to Latinos/as, and it is among the great early triumphs in the Latino/a struggle for civil rights” (Haney López, 1997, p. 59). Specifically, all people born or naturalized in the United States, including Latinx people, were able to obtain citizenship. Fortunately, the impact of the *Hernández* case has not been confined to the United States and has garnered global attention with the commitment and intention of the ruling to form partnerships to investigate and compare the subordination patterns that exist worldwide (Haney López, 1997). The significance of this case, however, is even greater. Valdés (2005) asserts that the *Hernández* case is when the Supreme Court first addressed the racial identity, specifically, of Mexican Americans. This particular group of people, Valdés (2005) adds, experienced the kind of discriminatory hostility that was taking place during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century against minorities in the United States. Such discrimination had to do with ethnic background, or its socially constructed variant, race. Race, as Haney López (1997) explains, has been “widely understood as something rooted in the biology of human differentiation” (Haney López, 1997, p. 66). Otherwise stated, based on physical attributes, socially constructed categories of race have been developed that have nothing to do with the actual biological make-up of any human being, given that the genetic make-up of all human beings is nearly identical. Since the dominant population did not construct Mexican Americans as a racial minority group in the United States during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, their experiences of discrimination could not have been labeled as racial discrimination because their status as a minority had not yet been socially constructed. Consequently, racial terminology

becomes a requisite in LatCrit Theory because it transcends the notion of racial oppression being exclusive to African Americans and includes Asians, Latinx, Caribbean Black, Native American, women, and children (Haney López, 1997). Furthermore, the inclusion of race in LatCrit theoretical discourses serves as a way to respond to the imbalances of racialization and turns out to be necessary since such theory seeks social justice (Espinoza & Harris, 1997). Therefore, LatCrit theory informed this study because LatCrit theory included issues specifically related to Latinx, the ethnic group to which the participants belong. Further, LatCrit informed the methodology in this study, as it assisted in conceptualizing the research design, as well as in collecting, analyzing, and representing data while interactions with the participants occurred.

Methodologically, LatCrit provided a lens for listening to and developing relationships with the participants when the researcher was considered to be an insider/outsider researcher. The researcher was considered a cultural insider because the researcher is a bilingual educator who has worked with monolingual principals. However, the researcher was an outsider when subjecting the participants to the researcher's gaze and the institutional gaze of inquiry, in general. Next, the researcher's approach to data collection, analysis, and data representation was informed by an ethics of care and power sharing generated from understanding how Latinx educators are marginalized by the dominant social structures of oppression. This means that the researcher was open to interviews that looked like conversations, where the participants were just as likely to ask her questions as she asked them. The researcher was also mindful of experiences of invisibility, inequity, and challenges faced by the participants that were mapped onto how LatCrit theorizes experiences of marginalization. Thus, LatCrit became a way of knowing, making meaning, and making sense of the participants' experiences methodologically and substantively.

## **Method**

Ethnographic case study was the chosen method for this inquiry. Case study is a type of research that creates a bounded system and which deeply focuses on a person, multiple people, an issue, or a place that the researcher studies in depth (Espinoza & Harris, 1997; Hernández-Truyol, 1997). In doing so, all parties involved know exactly what the parameters of the work are, what the researcher intends to investigate, and how the study is designed around an area in which the researcher is interested (Bhattacharya, 2015). The traditional practice of ethnography has been criticized for its Westernized gaze on non-western culture, since ethnography is a practice of understanding cultural ways of being and becoming of various people (Bhattacharya, 2017). However, the field of ethnography has been expanded to include a more critical lens where the notion of culture has been interrogated to include multiple gazes instead of the Western gaze on non-Western groups (Madison, 2005). Ethnography can be understood as a prolonged engagement of the researcher within the research context to understand and document the cultural dynamics of the context. Usually such engagement is considered rigorous if the researcher remains in the field for at least 18 months. However, because that was not possible for the context of this study due to the researcher's own resource limitations, this study was considered an ethnographic case study because it used ethnographic procedures within the context of a case study, without the full-length time engagement that is expected in an ethnography.

This particular study included two participants. During a case study, “each respondent is expected to provide a great deal of information ” (Weiss, 1994, p. 3). The information the participants provided was later analyzed by the researcher. Through interviews, one can learn about people's interior experiences, what they perceive, and their interpretations of those

perceptions; one gets to learn about their feelings and hopes, as well as about the world they live in (Weiss, 1994, p. 3). I, like Kvale (2007); Weiss (1994), am interested in learning about others. Kvale (2007) and Weiss (1994) claim that people can convey their experiences through language, which interviews enable. Because qualitative interviews yield rich responses that are not easily categorized, Kvale and Weiss's analysis focuses on interpretation, summary, and integration (Seidman, 2013). Therefore, using interviews to investigate and study the experiences of these particular participants who were under a leader who does not speak one of the languages they use to teach was most appropriate.

In order to create as accurate an understanding as possible about the participants' experiences based on what they said and what they had lived (Weiss, 1994), three open-ended interviews per participant were conducted over a period of 29 weeks and were geared toward establishing open, comfortable exchanges between the researcher and the participant, shaping the study as information arose and evolved. In addition to the interviews, other sources of data were utilized, which permitted data triangulation, thereby contributing to the credibility and accuracy of the work. These procedures are described in detail later in this chapter.

### **Subjectivity in Qualitative Research**

Subjectivities are an "amalgam of the persuasions that stem from the circumstances of one's class, statuses, and values interacting with the particulars of one's object of investigation" (Peshkin, 1988, p. 17). Subjectivities are not understood to be negative or detrimental in qualitative inquiry. Instead, it is essential that the researcher be aware and transparent about the values, beliefs, and assumptions that inform the study. Attempting to claim that the researcher somehow attained objectivity and was able to put distance between herself and the interactions in

the study would be intellectually dishonest. Therefore, the researcher must acknowledge and be aware of subjectivities to maintain the rigor and trustworthiness of the qualitative inquiry.

### ***Subjectivity Statement***

For most of my life I have been exposed to, or directly involved with, foreign languages. This experience started in 1975 when, at the age of three, I began attending a pre-school in my native Cali, Colombia, called Jack and Jill. I had my first formal exposure to English in an academic setting there, but I remember little else from my time there. A year after attending Jack and Jill, I started ‘big kid school.’ This was a private, Colombian /British school in the outskirts of Cali. A beautiful and extensive campus with grades Nursery through 11<sup>th</sup> grade (equivalent to K-12 in the United States), Colegio Colombo Británico became my second home between Nursery and seventh grade (U.S. eighth grade). Though my homeroom elementary school teachers were native English speakers, we learned some subjects, such as Spanish language arts, religion, and history, from native Spanish-speaking teachers.

During our years at Colombo Británico, my sister (who is two years older than me) and I traveled with our family to the United States for vacation on different occasions. From this point forward, being bilingual was useful and relevant. Being bilingual—or being in the process of becoming bilingual, as we were still quite young on our first trip—allowed us to communicate in ways and with people that would not have been possible otherwise. In other words, our world was expanding and our experiences were granting us opportunities that were only possible because we knew more than one language.

When I was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, my family moved to Madrid, Spain. There, my sister and I attended King’s College, a fully British school in rural Madrid. Moving schools is not easy, and moving to different cities and countries certainly presents extra challenges. However, the fact

that we spoke not only the language of our new home as native Spanish speakers, but also the language of the majority of instruction, mitigated some of the discomfort, anxiety, and uncertainty such a big move can generate in two adolescent girls. Though we stayed in Madrid only one year, it was an intensely lived one, with lots of exposure to more of the world through traveling around Europe and learning about different cultures. I took French as a foreign language and was exposed to the academic side of the language for the first time. During this time, being fully bilingual in Spanish and English allowed us to communicate with an incredible number of individuals because, as we learned through our experiences in Madrid as well as via our travels, many people in European countries spoke English as a second language, like us.

By the time we returned to Colombia, I was 15 years old and starting high school. This time, our parents enrolled us in Colegio Bolívar, a completely American school in Cali. I graduated at 18 and started college right away. In college, I exempted English because it was too basic and not geared toward bilingual students. This saved me time and saved my parents money, and it also gave me the opportunity to enroll in other mandatory classes. Once in college, my bilingual education ended, having turned into a Spanish-only experience. Yearning to continue with what was my norm, I enrolled in the French Institute, Alliance Française. My goal was to take up learning French as an extracurricular activity in Bogotá, where I lived then, and build on the knowledge that I had acquired in Spain. In addition to English, my father had informally exposed us to French, Italian, and Portuguese when we were growing up, so I already had a penchant for this new language I intended to formally learn. Though I am not proficient, I have a pretty solid basis, which has allowed me to communicate—this time also in French—when I have returned to Europe as a tourist.



Approximately ten years after moving to Spain, I moved to Italy to pursue a master's degree. Before doing so, I took Italian at Berlitz Language Institute for a few months and then dove in. When I completed my studies, I returned to Colombia with a level of proficiency in Italian high enough to teach at Berlitz, where I was hired. Shortly after returning from Italy, I moved to the United States where, due to new circumstances, I was forced to go through a career change. I went back to school to get my bachelor's degree in elementary education, then got my ESOL endorsement, continued with my master's degree, and am currently pursuing my doctoral degree. All of the latter experiences were in English, which is not my native language. However, because I have been learning English for the majority of my life, English is second nature to me, which allows me to navigate the academic world comfortably, at least in terms of language.

Through my doctoral journey, I have transitioned into a researcher. As researchers, we must acknowledge our assumptions, opinions, choices, and experiences. In order to conduct studies that are worthwhile in modern science, we must recognize that our subjectivities inevitably influence the research process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). In the particular context and content of my story, an appropriate definition for subjectivity is "the personal view of an individual" (Mruck, 2003). I am that individual, since I have deeply rooted beliefs and experiences related to the benefits of bilingual education versus monolingual education. I, unquestionably, believe that speaking more than one language opens doors, gives people opportunities they may not have had otherwise, makes it possible to communicate with people one would likely have never met, and makes life a lot more entertaining. Being at least bilingual opens people's minds, deepens their level of understanding of other cultures, and fosters tolerance (Schwandt, 2007, p. 280). As a result, I needed to be cognizant of these strong beliefs while working with the participants because their principles may have been different from mine. I

understood that I had to remain open-minded to differences of opinion among participants, and between participants and myself, as I conducted the study. I also valued the importance of building a trusting professional relationship with the participants in order to achieve a successful study. For this reason, I conducted frequent member checks with them to ensure that the information I had gathered, and the way it was portrayed, was exactly the way the participants intended for it to be understood.

### **Research Design**

This study was informed by ethnographic case study methods (Bhattacharya, 2009). It took place in the fall of 2016, continuing into the spring of 2017, and was based on two schools located in the Midwestern United States. During the data collection period of the study, two participants were interviewed using a recording device and manual note taking. Participants were solicited for at least three interviews each, two semi-structured (approximately one hour long) and one photo- and object-elicited (approximately one hour long) interview each. The interviews took place during a 29-week period. In addition to the three interviews for each participant, document analysis also took place. Data were collected and processed separately. Researcher journaling, member checks, and peer debriefings took place after each interview was conducted and after the documents were analyzed. This occurred during the data analysis phase of the study, which is described later in this chapter.

### ***Participant Selection and Gaining Access***

The study focused on the experiences of Spanish dual-language teachers who used to work in two different schools in the Midwestern United States where the principals were monolingual. Researchers “do not just collect and analyze neutral data; they decide who matters as data” (Reybold, Lammert, & Stribling, 2013, p. 699), making deep levels of reflection and

analysis a necessity. In order to gain a richer understanding of the experiences of the participants in their schools and their teams, this study was informed by two different sampling procedures, purposeful and criterion-based.

Purposeful sampling is based on the value of cases that have the potential to yield rich information and deep understanding that may not be achieved through random sampling (Reybold et al., 2013). Because the purpose of this study was to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of Spanish dual-language teachers led by monolingual principals, selecting participants who have worked in that context was essential for a successful study, so potential participants fitting these criteria were given primary consideration.

Criterion-based sampling takes place when the researcher creates “a list of the attributes essential” to the study and then “proceed[s] to find or locate a unit matching the list” (LeCompte, Preissle, & Tesch, 1993, p. 70). Thus, for participants to qualify for this study, they had to meet the following criteria: (a) self identify as a Latina (b) must have been a Spanish dual-language teacher, (c) must have taught in Spanish, (d) must have worked as a Spanish dual-language teacher in a school where the principal was monolingual, (e) must have performed such duties in a school in Midwestern United States at least in 2012-2013, and (f) must not currently be in a working relationship with or working in the same school as the monolingual principal.

I have learned that “qualitative research is a fusion of planning and discovery. Some research choices are deliberate and designed into the research process; others are spontaneous and provoked by circumstance” (Reybold et al., 2013, p. 700). Therefore, there was no rigid script to conducting this type of research. Considering the participant selection criteria, there was a strong possibility that I would know one or both of the participants through my professional connections because dual-language programs are rare, and having access to them allowed me to

draw from my own resources and professional network. Thus, the type of relationship I either already had or created with the participants played a valuable role in the information obtained during the process. For instance, when there is trust that has been achieved through a personal relationship with participants, attaining access to their world through interviews becomes easier and more efficient (Kvale, 2007). The participants and I being educators and sharing a passion for dual-language education facilitated the process of gaining access to their time and availability, which also allowed us to proceed with interviews.

Figure 1 explains how I selected the participants. The first step was to send out soliciting emails through my professional connection to dual-language teachers. Based on the responses received, I selected potential participants from a larger pool of teachers who met the criteria. One participant at a time and I, then, conducted an initial information meeting and discussed the study. In this meeting, I provided the details of the study and described the expectations, risks, and benefits of participating to the individuals, including the fact that they could leave the study at any time without penalty or prejudice. At that time, the participants reviewed the informed consent form. Based on the most information-rich participants who met the criteria for the study, the final two participants were selected. Then, I requested that the participants sign the informed consent form and gave each of them a signed copy once I had answered any and all questions they had regarding the study. Being clear and transparent about everything regarding the study facilitated the step of gaining informed consent. This, in turn, helped build trust, resulting in more depth of content, richness of data, and efficiency in our communication (LeCompte et al., 1993).

If more than two participants had agreed to take part in the study, I would have selected two and retained the others as potential replacements if attrition had occurred. If I had not

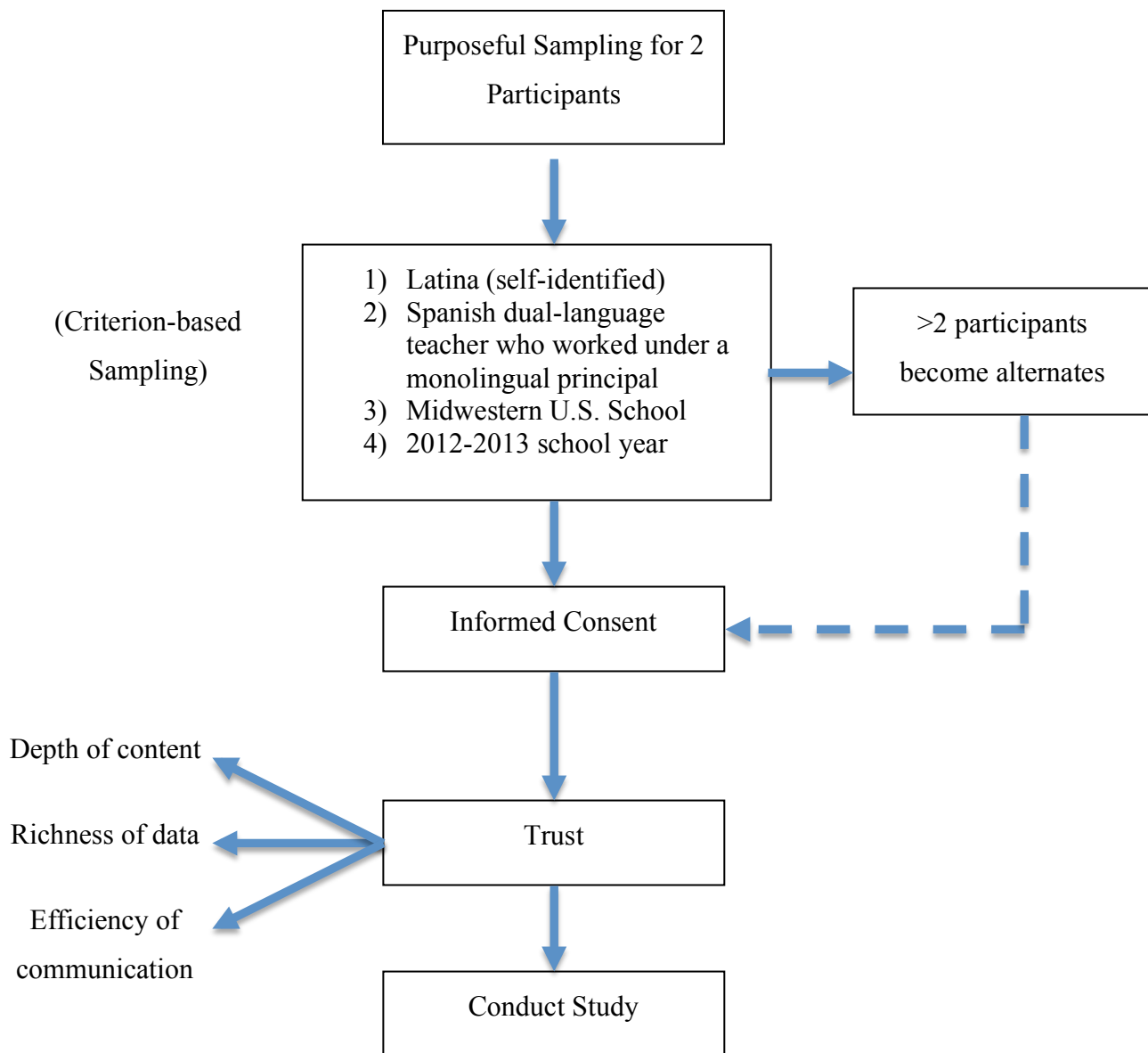


Figure 3.1. Diagram of participant selection process.

received any positive response to the initial contact with the possible participants, I would have started the process over, targeting other dual-language teachers in other school districts, continuing until I had successfully selected two participants.

One of the participants and I lived in the same city, so I collected data face-to-face at a mutually agreed upon site, a coffee shop. This coffee shop is a location to which both of us had easy and constant access. I conducted interviews at this site and used my personal iPhone to record them. The other participant was in a different state than me, so I used Skype and FaceTime to conduct interviews with her. Both participants had input on where to meet, even if they were out of town, which helped them feel comfortable and allowed me to conduct the interviews without interruption or disruption. I also gathered documents from both participants digitally, as they took pictures and sent them to me via email or text message.

### ***Membership Role***

In qualitative studies, a researcher can either be an insider or an outsider; adopting a completely neutral role is challenging (Creswell, 2007). In this type of study, it is common for researchers to belong to the social group they are interested in studying (Flick, 2009). This makes them an insider within their research, even before it has begun. Below, Schwandt (2007) explains what the insider viewpoint entails:

An insider perspective holds that knowledge of the social world must start from the insider or social actor's account of what social life means. To know the world of human action is to understand the subjective meanings of that action to the actors. (p. 152)

Put another way, an individual's world starts from within and is based on his or her experiences.

An individual's reality inevitably transcends how each individual perceives his or her

experiences, making it virtually impossible to be completely removed from the study and remain neutral. However, there are various benefits to being an insider within a study. These include having a greater understanding of the culture being studied, gaining access, and being able to work with the ways the participants create their truths, and the way they make meaning. In addition, working from an insider perspective can help facilitate the process of gaining access to participants, which can contribute to the participant reaching a higher level of comfort (Kidd, 1992; Platzer & James, 1997; Pugh & Brooks, 2000) and feeling safer during the research process.

Conversely, there are advantages to the researcher being an outsider (Bonner & Tolhurst, 2002; Kidd, 1992; Platzer & James, 1997; Pugh & Brooks, 2000). One is that participants readily share elaborate information that they may not feel comfortable sharing with a researcher working from an insider perspective. Another advantage is that the researcher is able to maintain a more analytical and critical approach and attitude toward the study. This may be because the researcher is not viewed as an internal threat or as someone who would use this information outside of the research study, within the insider community. The outsider perspective can also lead to fresh ways of organizing experiences and meaning making that might not be possible from an insider's perspective, potentially leading to important new analytical insights. However, there are numerous examples of qualitative research studies in which outsiders have failed to accurately describe participants and their culture, and in fact have done more damage than help when they have documented heavily distorted cultural norms from Western perspectives to the point where some communities consider research to be a dirty word (Smith, 1999/2012).

Being aware of the roles of both stances, my role as a researcher in this study was as an insider/outsider because I shared the area of expertise—dual-language education—with the

participants. Additionally, I worked from an insider's perspective due to my subjectivities with and experiences in the field of study. Consequently, I remained mindful of my role so as to refrain from giving opinions or shifting to the role of a consultant or coach with the participants because that could have compromised and contaminated the study. However, it is possible for researchers functioning from an insider's perspective to become immune to what they hear the participants say because of the similarities with their own lived experience (Platzer & James, 1997). In order to avoid this, I maintained constant awareness of my role and performance as an insider researcher through reflective journaling and through participating in peer reviews. I was also an outsider because I no longer operate within the same space of lived experiences as the participants. Therefore, as a researcher, I brought a shared insider understanding but the distance from the lived experiences allowed me to evaluate those experiences with both insider and outsider perspectives.

To conclude, qualitative researchers function from various membership roles within the context of their studies. They may occupy an insider or an outsider role, or both, depending on the research they are attempting to conduct. In this particular study, I was an insider/outsider because the participants and I shared an area of expertise, and I also operated from the perspective of the researcher, which was not a shared community with the participants.

### **Data Collection**

The data for this ethnographic case study was collected over a period of approximately 29 weeks (Appendix A). A pilot study I previously conducted influenced the design of this study. Thus, the majority of the data came from the information collected during the interviews. Specifically, data collection methods included semi-structured, open-ended, as well as, photo- and object-elicited interviews. Additionally, data included reflections on the researcher's journal



entries, as well as e-mail correspondence, lesson plans, and photos and objects the participants provided that enriched the data.

Table 1 below contains a number of pages, which were generated as raw data during the ethnographic case study. The final number of pages became definite once the actual data was collected.

Table 3.1  
*Data Inventory*

Source of data	Number of pages	Number of total pages
Two One-hour Interviews With Each Participant (four interviews)	17 pages per one hour of transcription	$17 \times 4 = 68$ pages
One One-hour Photo- and Object-Elicited Interview With Each Participant (two interviews)	13 pages per one hour of transcription	$13 \times 2 = 26$ pages
Peer Debriefing	Four one-hour sessions – 17 pages per hour per one hour of transcription	$17 \times 4 = 68$ pages
Researcher Journal Reflections	1 page per week (29 week study duration)	$1 \times 29 = 29$ 29 pages
Documents analysis	10 pages per participant	20 pages
Communication (e-mail, informal conversation)	3 pages per participant	6 pages
Member Check for each Interview (30 min. each)	10 pages per 30 minutes of transcription – 6 30-minute member checks	$10 \times 6 = 60$ pages
Total Pages		311 pages

### ***Semi-Structured, Photo- and Object-Elicited Interviews***

According to deMarrais (2004), an interview is a “process in which a researcher and participant engage in a conversation focused on questions related to a research study” (p. 54). More precisely, interviews are conversations that allow the researcher to gather in-depth information from the participants about the topic s/he is studying. Qualitative studies such as this one rely on the participant and the researcher already having or establishing a rapport because it facilitates and enriches the information-gathering process. When conducting interviews, though the researcher has a guide and is a guide in the process, such a guide is not a script that the researcher needs to strictly follow, since each participant is as unique as the interview experience itself. Through the process, the interviewee and the interviewer collaborate to construct and make sense of the stories that rise to the surface (deMarrais, 2004).

When using interviews, researchers “want the respondent to provide concrete descriptions of something he or she has witnessed” (Weiss, 1994, p. 66) or experienced. Since the purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of Spanish dual-language teachers within their schools and as part of a team, using a semi-structured, open-ended interview structure was appropriate. It allowed the participants to freely present their own situation, in their own words, and open up to an intimate personal interaction between researcher and participant with the purpose of obtaining quality data in the interview process (Weiss, 1994). In addition, selecting times and places where the participants were comfortable also positively affected the interactions between interviewee and interviewer (Alvesson, 2001; Weiss, 1994).

Considering key points to ponder while conducting interviews, I prepared some open-ended questions and included prompts, probes, and follow-up questions that were necessary in order to direct the participants to give more detail or fill in any gaps (Barriball & While, 1994),

resulting in richer, deeper content. Several guiding questions helped to focus the initial interview:

1. What are some of the reasons you became a DL teacher?
2. What are some strengths of the DL program at your school?
3. Will you describe a typical day in your life as a DL teacher?
4. Describe the role of the principal in your school.
5. Describe your role as a DL team member.
6. What are the dynamics of the DL team like, and what are its functions?
7. Tell me about a time when you felt supported at school.
8. Can you tell me about a time when frustration stands out in your mind?
  - a. How did you overcome the feeling of frustration?
9. What might be some of the typical phrases that I could expect to hear if I raised the issue of supporting Spanish teachers in the school?
10. Talk to me about how you prepared for formal evaluations by your principal that would take place during your instruction in Spanish.
11. What other information would you like to share with me about being a DL teacher working under a monolingual principal?
12. Is there anything else you would like to add that I have not asked?

When the first interview was over, we scheduled the second one. In this study, I used two different interview formats because “although each interview will have its own internal logic, there are various frameworks that the interviewer can use to provide depth to the exploration of a topic with an informant” (Weiss, 1994, p. 73). How the participants responded in the first interview informed how the subsequent interviews were designed and executed. Simply stated, I

made the necessary decisions to make the interviews as possible based on the results of each preceding interview. For example, after the first interview, if I decided that an area of inquiry I had failed to ask about would be helpful to discuss for the purposes of the study, I made sure to investigate that topic in subsequent interviews.

Additionally, because I wanted to further personalize the interview process, having the participants share objects or photos that had meaning to them within the context of the research topic allowed me to explore their experiences from a different perspective, and from a deeper and more personal level. Various authors agree that interviewing using photo and object elicitation has become a frequent practice in the qualitative research world (Harper, 2002; Hoskins, 1998). John Collier, a photographer and researcher, is believed to have first mentioned the term *photo elicitation* in a paper around 1957 (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013; Flick, 2009; Hoskins, 1998). Photo elicitation is a form of eliciting conversation with participants using images such as photographs as part of an interview (Harper, 2002). Though the definition may be simple, the result of adding photographs to interviews is much more complex. Adding more than words to the interview process allows participants to produce richer narratives or answers. By referencing the images, the participants are able to extract deeper meaning from the symbols that lie before them than from memory alone. Yet, the meaning that the participant gives to the image is more important than the image itself (Harper, 2002; Prosser, 2007) and is heavily based on the participants' interpretation and subjectivities (Prosser, 2013). Elicitations can be researcher or participant driven. Researcher-driven elicitations might include a researcher's selection of pictures with which the participant and the researcher engage in conversation. Participant-driven elicitations would involve the participant selecting images based on a prompt provided by the researcher. The researcher and the participant then engage in conversation using the images that

the participant has selected. This becomes a powerful process because the participant can reveal information that the researcher did not consider asking in her semi-structured interview session.

This elicitation process, however, does not only apply to photographs. It also applies to objects that are different from those given in other types of interviews; the purpose of these objects is to provoke responses in people (Harper, 2002). When participants select and refer to objects to create or complement their stories for an object-elicited interview, they already have a connection with said objects that is quite complexly intertwined and that, generally, cannot be unraveled (Woodward, 2015). Consequently, due to the nature of photo- and object-elicited interviews, researchers have the opportunity to take a deep look into participants' lives. For the purpose of this study, the participants self-selected objects and photos that spoke to them in any way and that served as support for conducting the interview; the photos and objects also served to stimulate their thinking in order to tell their stories (Hoskins, 1998). I provided participants with the following prompts for object and photo-elicited conversations:

- Bring photos or objects that represent you as a Latina dual-language teacher.
- Bring photos and/or objects that represent your experiences as an educator.
- Bring photos and/or objects that represent you as a member of the dual-language team.
- Bring photos and/or objects that represent a typical day for you as a dual-language teacher.

I provided the following line of inquiry when the participants shared photos or objects for elicited conversations. During the interviews, I used these questions or directives about the objects or photographs as a guide:

1. Please describe this object and explain why you chose to bring it today.
2. Tell me about the connection between this object and your experiences as a DL teacher.

3. Tell me about specific experiences that are connected to these pictures/objects.
4. Is there anything else you would like to share about this object?

I transcribed each interview during the week it was completed to ensure the information and experiences were fresh in my mind. I also performed member checks with the participants for the purpose of accuracy soon after the transcription was completed. Additionally, I performed preliminary data analysis in between interviews and any other data collection methods to inform subsequent interviews.

### ***Document Analysis***

Document analysis, according to Flick (2009), refers to the practice in qualitative research of analyzing and interpreting data that originates in studying relevant documents. Flick (2009) categorizes these sources of data into public records, private documents, interview transcripts and others attained from video recordings, and photographs. Public records can include political and judicial reports, television scripts, and minutes of a meeting, while private documents may include medical records, school records, and journals.

In this study, the documents analyzed were lesson plans, curricular documents, e-mails, and journal entries. They were appropriate sources of data for this study since they were documents “that the researcher had no hand in shaping” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 38), and they yielded valuable information and a deeper look into the daily experiences of the DL teachers.

### **Data Management**

Qualitative studies involve the gathering, managing, and analyzing of multiple sources of data. As illustrated in the data inventory, the data that were used, organized, managed, and handled during this study were interviews, transcripts of the interview recordings, documents, the researcher’s journal, member checks, and peer debriefings.

After gaining verbal consent from the participants, I recorded all interviews using the audio recorder of a password-protected iPhone through an application called Memo. Recording allowed me to focus on the content and the dynamics of the session, as well as gather the exact words and tone of the conversation (Charmaz, 2006). The recording device was positioned in a way that was inconspicuous so as to alleviate any uncomfortable effects it may have had on the participants. Once an interview had concluded, I downloaded it onto my personal laptop and imported it into a web-based transcribing system called oTranscribe. I then transcribed the interview on a computer using MS Word, and then I conducted member checks with each participant. According to Kvale (1996), member checks—also referred to as member or respondent validation—allow a researcher to get feedback on findings, as well as to corroborate that the information gathered gives an accurate depiction of what the participant intended to communicate.

I then transcribed, coded, labeled, dated, and filed all interview recordings and transcripts to be used for future reference. Any documents that the participants shared with me were filed, backed up, and protected. I protected the names of the participants by assigning pseudonyms to each one and concealing all names on the documents to maintain confidentiality.

### **Data Analysis**

Based on information I gained from a pilot study that I conducted as part of a class project, I analyzed the data using inductive analysis techniques. In doing so, I started with the most concrete components of the data and progressed until I achieved more abstract units of information (Bhattacharya, 2014). The ultimate goal in this process was to establish a set of themes that started as raw data, and, through multiple levels of abstraction, transformed into larger categories (Mejía, 2014) and culminated as themes.



Continuing the data analysis in this study, I utilized a coding strategy often used in the beginning stages of the data analysis process called in vivo coding. According to Saldaña (2013), in vivo coding is one of several coding methods that can be used during initial rounds of sorting through data. In vivo coding is a process in which the direct quotes of the participants are used as the initial layer of sorting through the data. An in vivo code may be one word, a phrase, or even a full sentence (Saldaña, 2013). Each in vivo code is “taken directly from what the participant himself says and is placed in quotation marks” (Brenner, 2006, p. 363). I decided to use this coding method (Appendix B) over others because it keeps the data rooted in the participant’s own language and uses their own voice (Saldaña, 2013), keeping it authentic and the story alive. I analyzed the interviews and the documents using this method, even though “there is no single tried-and-true method of analysis or strategy for presentation of findings” (Weiss, 1994, p. 152). It is at the discretion of the researcher to decide which data analysis method fits the needs of the study best, and in vivo coding allows for patterns, categories, and themes to develop naturally. Specifically, during the coding process, the participants’ words and ideas connect to the concepts and categories that appear during the analysis (Saldaña, 2013). In other words, “the coding schemes of qualitative analysis are designed to separate the data into groups of like items” (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 10). The data analysis process started for me, as suggested by Weiss (1994), right at the moment when I began to listen to the interviewees’ words, and perhaps maybe even from an earlier point of conceptualizing the study. From that point forward, my goal remained to understand the interview material and to try to gain clarity about what I was listening to, what I was learning, and what questions I still had, which helped me shape future interviews.

The process of in vivo coding as a First Cycle coding method, which is essentially the first round of coding as described by Saldaña (2013), continued on to further sorting and categorizing procedures. First, I copied the transcription of every interview I conducted with Participant 1 into one single document so as to have all the data in one place. Then, using Microsoft Word for Mac and the interview transcriptions and documents, I identified codes by highlighting them. Once I coded all three interviews, I saved the final product under a name that would help me easily identify the participant's data, such as Participant 1 - Int. 1-3-1<sup>st</sup> Cycle Coding. On that document, I deleted everything from the interviews except the codes that I had found, completing the First Cycle coding. Next, I proceeded with Second Cycle coding, which is a second round of deeper and more focused analysis (Saldaña, 2013). With the document that contained the First Cycle Coding as the base, I created another document titled Participant 1 - Categories – dd.mm.yy. I preserved the First Cycle Coding information and added a table at the top of the document with the two research questions as headings. I then looked at the codes and started identifying categories, which became subheadings of the same table. Under each of the subheadings, I copied and pasted the codes that supported each of the themes, and in turn, informed the research questions.

During Second Cycle coding (Appendix C), I reorganized and reanalyzed the findings I obtained during the first cycle. Within the Second Cycle coding, I used two coding methods, Eclectic Coding and Pattern Coding and/or Focused Coding (Saldaña, 2013). Eclectic Coding is a process through which generic codes that “are ‘first-impression’ phrases derived from an open-ended process are identified” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 5). This type of coding was appropriate for my study because it facilitated the process

of attributing more significant meaning to the data. Pattern Coding develops “the ‘meta-code’—the category label that identifies similarly coded data. Pattern Codes not only organize the corpus but attempt to attribute meaning to that organization” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 209). Focused Coding “searches for the most frequent or significant codes” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 213) to develop the most relevant categories in the body of data. Both Pattern Coding and Focused Coding fit effectively into the in vivo process and assisted in developing codes into categories, allowing me to organize the body of data I already had and to make meaning of it as I placed the data into similar groups (Saldaña, 2013).

The second cycle of coding also offered more focus on the codes identified within the first cycle. Therefore, based on the outcome of the second cycle of coding, I was able to group codes into semantic units that could be called “categories.” In other words, categorization was a process of “grouping those summaries into a smaller number of sets” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 69). Grouping categories allowed me to look through, across, and within each of them to identify broad general patterns that later became themes and informed how the research purpose and questions were addressed.

If, during the process of identifying categories and themes, I realized that there were some data that did not clearly fit into any particular group or were uninspiring, I used the “touch test,” a “strategy for progressing from topic to concept, from the real to the abstract, and from the particular to the general” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 249). This process assisted in elevating, or perhaps revealing, the true meaning of those codes. Particularly, the “touch test” helped to identify conceptual and abstract elements that could not literally be touched and that required high-level thinking. If the concepts the codes exemplified components that could have been touched, I modified the wording to elevate

them to higher constructs (Saldaña, 2013). This process was successful with some, but not all, of the codes. When it did not work with some codes, I excluded them from the findings, but kept them as part of the overall study and as reference in case I wanted to return to them later. The process of data analysis was not linear, but iterative, which is demonstrated in Figure 2. I repeated the whole process described above, in an identical manner, with the data from Participant 2.

### ***Document Analysis Protocol***

In qualitative research, it is important to collect documents that offer additional context to the study in order to gain a deep understanding of the participants' experiences. In this case, the participants were encouraged to share relevant documents they felt might further explain their experiences. These documents were not published in the study report if they had identifying information that could not be concealed. However, if there was no danger of revealing the identity of the participants or any other associated people, if appropriate, some documents are shared in this document with the participants' written permission. Examples of documents are, researcher reflection journal, instructional resources, assessment tools, and lesson plans.

In this study, documents were analyzed and explored for common themes and patterns. Themes and patterns were investigated with the following analytical focus:

- Evidence of experiences that connect to teaching in a school with a dual-language strand
- Evidence that the leadership of a monolingual principal in a dual-language school has had an impact on the participants' experiences as a dual-language teacher teaching in Spanish, and as a member of the dual-language team



*Figure 3.2.* Data analysis cycle.

## **Data Representation**

Data representation is a way to reflect experience in some format of narrative documentation (Warren, 2001). However, based on previous experiences and a pilot study I conducted, I represented my findings using narrative configuration, which is “the process by which happenings are drawn together and integrated into a temporally organized whole” (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 5). Representing the data in this manner allowed me to portray the participants’ experiences in a way that flowed and accurately represented their perceptions as they negotiated the demands of their monolingual principals while they taught in either a bilingual classroom or a Spanish classroom. In order to support the narrative that I produced, I integrated excerpts from the interviews and other data sources as evidence of the findings. In addition, the narrative voice reflected a co-constructed voice that demonstrated a shared understanding between the researcher and the participants.

## **Reciprocity and Ethics**

There were many ethical considerations that I needed to be aware of as I conducted this research. Some of those issues pertained to maintaining confidentiality of the participants, and others related to reciprocity. Reciprocity is “a social behavior—a mutual give-and-take, an exchange of gifts or services,” which is especially important in “field studies where the researcher is accorded the privilege of access to the lives of those he or she studies” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 249). I was fully aware of the extensive time and effort the participants exerted so that this study could be conducted, and I consider that invaluable. To reciprocate, I offered the participants my professional consulting time for free for any advice and guidance as they pursue their own studies and career advancement.

In addition to reciprocity, I was sensitive to ethical considerations such as negotiating entry to the field site of the research, involving participants in the study, gathering data that was personal and emotional and that revealed elements of the participants' lives, and asking participants to give considerable time to my project (Creswell, 2007). Having first-hand experience with other participants from an earlier pilot study of a similar nature increased my level of awareness and sensitivity regarding these issues.

In order to follow ethical guidelines and protect the participants in my study, I sought the approval of an Institutional Review Board (IRB) before starting my research. Qualitative interviewing requires researchers to follow professional ethical codes that have been established as federal and university human subjects regulations that protect study participants from physical and emotional damage (Schwandt, 2007, p. 259). Because the participants shared sensitive and personal information, keeping their names and the information they shared confidential was of high priority in my study. One way to achieve confidentiality was assigning each participant, school, and school district a pseudonym, fictionalizing details that could possibly render the participants identifiable, and using discretion when discussing my study.

Further, in order to build rapport with the participants, before the study began and during the phase of obtaining consent, I fully informed them about their role in and the purpose of the study. I clearly shared the possible and perceived risks that they could face. Since the participants shared information that was not all positive about the principals with whom they had worked in the past, being identified and having negative professional repercussions was a risk they face. Consequently, in order to mitigate such risk, I decided to work with participants who no longer have any connection to the principals with whom they used to work. Moreover, I informed them that they were free to leave the study at any point without penalty, as well as to

remove the approval to use any and all documents or data collected, relieving some of the pressure and apprehension about participating in the study due to the risks they may face.

### **Trustworthiness and Rigor**

Even though positivists have often questioned the trustworthiness of qualitative research, there are multiple ways in which qualitative researchers work with issues of trustworthiness and rigor (Polkinghorne, 1995). Tracy (2010) offers eight conditions for quality in qualitative research. These conditions are referred to as the “Big-Tent” Criteria for Excellent Qualitative Research: worthy topic, rich rigor, sincerity, credibility, resonance, significant contribution, ethics, and meaningful coherence. Aiming to produce and attain a high quality study, I carefully considered Tracy’s criteria throughout the study, each of which is addressed in the paragraphs below.

There is limited or no research specific to school administrators who are bilingual and biliterate in DL schools. This makes the research topic in this study worthy of pursuing in the education field as it is relevant, timely, significant, and interesting, something Tracy (2010) advocates as part of her quality criteria. Rich rigor was established by being engaged in this study for an extended period, during which time I collected “sufficient, abundant, appropriate and complex” (Tracy, 2010, p. 840) data using current and research-based literature that was also the base for the data analysis. One can argue that the study was rigorous based on the fact that it required a great deal of time and a significant commitment to the process, both from the researcher and the participants, as well as being grounded in a theoretical framework, LatCrit theory. In addition to rigor, as the researcher, I achieved sincerity in this study through continuously reflecting on and interrogating my subjectivities towards the topic at hand. In



addition, I have included transparent and elaborate documentation regarding the methods of the study in Chapter 1 as well as a subjectivity statement in this chapter.

To strengthen credibility, I made sure that every person who was approached as a potential participant was given the opportunity to decline participation. To facilitate this process, I produced a clearly written document that stated the purpose of the research and the questions that guided the study, and I also documented the characteristics of the ethnographic case study in a way that matched its purpose to ensure believability. In the context of the findings, I wrote with rich descriptive and analytical details so that the information could be transferable, consistent, accurate, and trustworthy (Tracy, 2010). Also, by providing thorough descriptions of the ways in which I collected and analyzed multiple sources of data, I made clear how those sources of data were used to construct meaning and knowledge in this study through constant comparison and triangulation. Triangulation, according to Golsfshani (2003), is a procedure researchers use to evaluate the assertions and claims they make from the data once they are attained from different sources or methods and then looked at from multiple angles. Collecting data from multiple sources, such as interviews and documents, required me to triangulate information, shedding more light on behaviors and information I may not have identified at one given point of data collection or analysis. Using a variety of data sources and triangulating the information also helped to portray a rich, analytical, descriptive, and accurate picture of the participants' experiences (Schwandt, 2007), as well as towards discipline-specific ways of establishing trustworthiness (Tracy, 2010).

One data source that I included in this triangulation process was a researcher journal. Journaling is a continuous process that takes place throughout the course of the research and helps to ensure trustworthiness and rigor (Piercy & Benson, 2005). Because it was easy to get

sidetracked or overwhelmed by the process of conducting qualitative research, using a researcher journal was a way to remain critically reflective, mitigate distractions, and bring awareness to how I processed negotiations, meaning making, and influences of my subjectivities. Further, to increase credibility, I engaged in active relationship building with the participants so that the meanings derived from various data analysis procedures were verified by the participants. The findings of this study reflected a co-constructed understanding between the participants and me. I also became involved in peer debriefing, where I discussed the findings and my analytical insights with a peer or with my dissertation supervisor to make sure that I was considering the information gathered from multiple perspectives, being sufficiently critical, and interrogating my positionality and assumptions.

The act of reaching the sensitivities of multiple audiences by producing aesthetic representations, realistic overviews, and findings that can be transferable is referred to as resonance (Shenton, 2004). In order to attain resonance in my study, I composed a narrative based on narrative inquiry that flowed as it authentically depicted the thoughts and sensitivities the participants experienced. By conducting this study, I hope to provide a significant contribution to the limited literature on this research topic within the field of education. It will be a practical instrument of reference for principals and school administrators that will assist them in understanding and deciding what the most appropriate setup for their DL schools is based on what the participants experienced. Because ethics “constitute a universal end goal of qualitative quality itself” (Tracy, 2010, p. 846), I was judiciously mindful of the participants’ well-being during the course of this study. I also respected and considered others I worked with throughout the process of writing this dissertation, including my major advisor, committee members, and any other sponsors of my work. In addition, I complied with procedural or categorical ethics,

which are covered by the IRB, and I was truthful and transparent regarding the study, its potential risks, as well as, in what I publish to avoid doing the participants any harm (Tracy, 2010). To comply with one of the last criteria that Tracy (2010) highlighted—meaningful coherence—I addressed the purpose I stated for my study and aligned every part of the research with every other part so that the research questions, theoretical and methodological framework, research design, data collection, analysis, and representation were aligned with each other.

Qualitative research encompasses a multitude of approaches and ways to study social life in authentic and natural settings (Tracy, 2010). In order for qualitative research to be effective and of quality, there are guidelines to follow, which include a methodology and design that are suited to the research questions, a clear plan for data collection and analysis, a theoretical framework, and findings that fuse the study together (Saldaña, 2011). Consequently, applying the methods and techniques outlined in this section assisted me in making strong arguments for trustworthiness and rigor, and hence, credibility.

### **Chapter Summary**

In this chapter I reminded the reader of the research purpose and questions. I then situated this study within qualitative research. Next, I discussed LatCrit theory as an epistemological, substantive, and methodological framework for this study. I specifically discussed how LatCrit theory informed the ways in which I engaged as a researcher, built relationships with the participants, and highlighted certain aspects of their experiences against the backdrop of the tenets of LatCrit theory. Next, I discussed the research design as an ethnographic case study, and justified why the design was considered in such a way. Following, I offered a detailed narrative about various types of data collection methods, approaches to data management, data analysis, and data representation. Additionally, I discussed issues of ethics and reciprocity. I concluded the

chapter by exploring ways in which issues of trustworthiness and rigor were addressed by using certain disciplinary standards established in qualitative inquiry.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Findings**

This study is grounded in the theoretical framework of Latinx Critical Race Theory (LatCrit). Several proponents of this theory contend that the effects of racial discrimination far transcend the black/white binary of CRT, and expand to invisibility and/or discrimination based on issues beyond race (Liendo, Stefancic, & Delgado, 2012; Parker, 2002; Valdés, 2005). These scholars work propound measures for improvement of discriminatory immigration rules and bilingual schooling, as well as protecting language and gender rights, among others (Liendo et al., 2012; Parker, 2002; Valdés, 2005). These issues are prevalent across many aspects of our lives, and education is not an exception. Thus, within U.S. education system, Latino teachers are a group of educators that must constantly negotiate their place as role models for the increasingly minority Latino student body within the majority white school system (Duarte, 2000).

The two participants for this study— Silvia and María Isabel—were selected primarily because they taught in Spanish in dual-language (DL) programs within elementary schools that were led by monolingual principals. They also matched other important selection criteria for this study—both self-identified as Latinas who are bilingual, and had similar jobs during the same years of 2013 and 2013. Further, from being familiar with the participant prior to conducting the study, I can indicate that Silvia and María Isabel are reflective, critical thinkers who are capable of offering illustrative descriptions that can give insight into their lived experiences.

The premise of this study is that teachers can provide valuable understanding concerning DL programs, as they are the primary executors of lessons in classrooms. This makes them authorities of their own experiences, and such knowledge results in substantial information for scholars seeking to postulate measures for the improvement of DL programs. The two

participants and I worked collaboratively during this study, and they helped me understand crucial aspects of their lives as DL teachers as they recalled the experiences that had shaped their perceptions of the program. During the course of our conversations, both participants stated that they valued the opportunity to speak on issues that are important to, and affect, teachers working under circumstances similar to their own.

At the outset, I provide a descriptive illustration of each participant with the purpose of sharing some of their background information. Further, I also provide narratives of each participant's experiences while negotiating DL teaching. I write these using narrative inquiry as a way to value their stories, looking through an interdisciplinary interpretive lens that revolves around participants' chronicles and stories (Kim, 2016). To conclude, I present the similarities and differences between the two participants in a cross-comparison format. The way in which the findings of a qualitative dissertation is presented varies greatly, depending on how the researcher has analyzed and understood the data, and cannot be categorized as not generalizable truth that can be replicated.

Silvia and María Isabel are close in age, both in their early 30s. They had graduated from college less than two years prior to taking on their role as DL teachers. During the time under purview here, they had both struggled in the non-traditional educational setting of DL. The findings in this chapter represent these two participants' lived experiences in terms of attitudes, beliefs, and values pertinent to their position as teachers of academic content in Spanish in DL programs where the principal not speak the language in which they provided instruction. While conducting the interviews and interpreting the resultant data, I gathered rich information. The participants provided generous and evocative details, shared with the intent of reaching readers that are, or might have been, in parallel circumstances.

The pattern of Silvia's experiences is classified into three themes: (a) To Be or Not to Be (a DL Teacher)... That is the Question!; (b) There *is* an "I" in Team; and (c) ¡Por supuesto que sí hay discriminación! María Isabel's pattern of experiences is also divided into three themes: (a) The Blind Leading the Blind; (b) You're Mexican, Play Basketball AND Have Straight As? No way!; and (c) You Will Teach in Spanish. Good Luck! The cross-comparison of both participants is also classified into three themes: (a) Good in Theory: The Blatant Manifestations of Inequity; (b) That Was Personal: Discrimination is Alive and Well; and (c) The Silver Lining: Empowerment after the Struggles.

Working with the themes enumerated above, I elaborate on the experiences of the participants in the following sections, and then highlight cross-case similarities and differences. I write in first person for each of the participant's thematic narrative because this enables me to stay close to the data, and represent their experiences using verbatim excerpts from the interview. Each case narrative is created with a title for the entire case, and then elaborated with thematic pattern. These titles and thematic patterns were verified by both participants. The opening part of each case narrative is an orientation with the participant, and is followed by illustrations of the patterns of their experiences. Recall that in Chapter 3, I have discussed the process through which these thematic narratives were created.

### **Silvia: How About More of You and Me, and Less of Me, Me, Me?**

My name is Silvia. I was born in the West Coast of the United States. I am the only child of Mexican parents and, thanks to them, am bilingual. I am forever grateful to them for having raised me that way in spite of the pressures that Latinos like them faced while assimilating into the Anglo world at the expense and risk of their own cultural erasure. I am 32 years old, and people say I am pretty and petite. When I wear certain colors, some say that these look good on

me with my dark brown hair, and my dark tanned skin. Though I may come across as reserved to casual acquaintances, my friends say I am super outgoing with them. They are amazing people, and we get together as often as our busy schedules allow. Some of our favorite things to do together are traveling, going to ball games, going out to dinner, or just relaxing while enjoying an adult beverage. I make sure to balance, as best as I can, work and leisure, as well as my physical and mental wellbeing, because I believe these are all key to living a full life. Though I work 10-hour days on average, spending quality time with the people who matter to me is my absolute priority.

When I started teaching in DL, I had only been a teacher for one year since I had just graduated from college, and was getting ready to start my eighth year as an educator. I was the first in my family to graduate from high school, but I wanted so much more. So I went to school and got a Bachelor's degree in education. However, I knew there was still a lot more to learn, so I joined grad school and got a Master's degree in education, focusing on curriculum and instruction. Yet, I wanted to go further and so I returned to grad school, this time securing a license to become a building administrator. I value hard work and am committed to doing my best for all my students. As well, I appreciate working together instead of in isolation. That is why I value collaboration much more than individual gains—more of us working together, and less of us working against each other.

***To Be or Not to Be (a DL Teacher in the U.S.)... That is the Question!***

Once I became a DL teacher, my job and my goal were to make as much a difference in the lives of my Latino as in my Anglo students I was very excited to be a part of such an innovative initiative, a DL program in our school district. However, reality could not have been farther from my ideals. There were three main reasons why being a DL teacher turned out to be



exasperating: lesson planning was much more involved, demanding, and challenging than I had expected; the DL program lacked the necessary staffing to be successful; and communication within the whole system was fragmented.

Soon into my transition from teaching ELLs, I hit the first wall—lesson planning. I knew that my chosen profession required a lot of work, but the amount of lesson planning we faced was simply monumental. I say *we* because I worked with another teacher, with whom I shared the responsibility for a number of students—42, to be exact. Half the day I had a group of 21, while my counterpart had the other 21, and then we switched the two groups. I taught the Spanish component for a primary grade teaching reading, math, and science in Spanish to both sets of students.

Figure 4.1 Registro de progreso and Los animales y sus hábitats

Math Concepts	Full	Winter	Spring	Comments	Conceptos matemáticos	Estado	Iniciado	Progresando	Completado
Rectangles, cubes, cylinder, rectangular prism, pyramid	Goal 8/8				Rectángulos, cubos, cilindro, prisma rectangular, pirámide	Objetivo 8/8			
Demonstrates above, below, under, behind, beside, in front of, left, right	Goal 9/9				Demonstrando: encima, debajo, detrás de, al lado de, al frente, izquierda, derecha	Objetivo 9/9			
Fractional Vocabulary	Goal 8/16				Vocabulario de fracciones: entero, mitad, tercio, cuarto, quinto, sexto, séptimo, octavo, noveno, décimo, undécimo, duodécimo, decimotercero, decimocuarto, decimoquinto, diez y ses	Objetivo 8/16			
Place Value	Goal 6/7				Lugar posicional: centésimos, décimos, unidades, decenas, centenas, millares, decenas de millares	Objetivo 6/7			
Measurement	Goal 10/10				Medidas: centímetro, metro, pulgadas, pies, yarda, perimetro, area, kilogramos, gramos, litro	Objetivo 10/10			
Ordinal Terms	Goal 12/12				Uso de los términos ordinales: primer/primero, segundo, tercero, cuarto, quinto, sexto, séptimo, octavo, noveno, décimo, undécimo, duodécimo	Objetivo 12/12			
Money	Goal up to \$100				Dinero: Contar el valor de monedas y billetes variados (sí/no)	Objetivo hasta \$			

Unidad 2		Los animales y sus hábitats	
Unit Overview		T2	
1	Lectura en voz alta	Lesson Planner	T12
	La ecología y los ecosistemas		T130
	Vocabulario	Preparación	T46
	Un lugar en un árbol		T51
	Relaciones con el tema		T68
	Conoce al autor y al ilustrador		T68
	Relaciones con el tema		T86
2	Lesson Planner	T102	
	Vocabulario	Preparación	T122
	Abren paso a los patitos		T127
	Conoce al autor/ilustrador		T142
	Relaciones con el tema		T142
	Relaciones con el tema		T162
3	Lesson Planner	T178	
	Vocabulario	Preparación	T198
	Un cuento del regreso de los lobos		T203
	Conoce al autor y al ilustrador		T220
	Relaciones con el tema		T220
	Relaciones con el tema		T242

Figure 4.1. These images are samples of some of the materials Silvia used to teach language (left) and science (right) in Spanish.

As I embarked on my journey as a DL teacher, my expectations about the program were countless. I could not wait to help students learn Spanish as a foreign language, as well as preserve it as a native tongue. Given my background, I also looked

Figure 4.2 Palabras de uso frecuente

lista de palabras de uso frecuente 3 grado

hombre	clase	participar	puede
cosas	hice	también	
algunos	día	primavera	
dinero	animales	mamá	
estrellas	cae	volar	
altos	ayuda	preguntó	
blancos	había	valor	
bien	agua	mañana	
estaban	casa	pueblo	
gente	contó	rápido	
dijo	al	vivían	
barro	está	niños	
azul	llevaban	pierna	
contar	otras	tierra	
dice	relato	por qué	
flores	tienen	tira	
granja	mapa	plumas	
historia	personas	todos	
moneda	reglas	plantas	
él	suave	visitar	
hace	para	señorita	
ganan	mundo	todas	
come	miles	palabra	
abajo	niñas	difícil	
juego	poco	metió	
mar	tareas	playa	
gracias	nadan	reía	
este	necesitan	luz	
cajas	pero	tiempo	
amigos	quién	lejos	

Figure 4.2. One of the many tasks Silvia had to complete was devising lists of words that would align with the curriculum, and that would help students increase their vocabulary.

forward to working with students and families I knew would benefit from having someone like me in their corner. Having my own classroom—yet one that was not in the mainstream, working in a traditional setting, where English was the only language of instruction—was a dream come true.

We were not exactly language teachers, but teachers of academic content in two different languages. My counterpart and I put a lot of effort into trying to collaborate and plan, which was

both exhausting and frustrating because we did not have equivalent resources. It was infuriating, especially because my English counterpart had all the resources to plan, obviously, because we were in an English-speaking country. Unlike her, I had to build my lessons from scratch because I was the only Spanish-speaking teacher at that time, and there was no support in the form of resources or guidance. I remember spending a lot of my time trying to create a curriculum map for the grade I taught—researching, and coming up with requisite material without having any guidance other than what I had learned in college. I also had to delve deeper into the curricular standards because these were in English, which meant they were not valid for instruction in Spanish. The resources for creating lesson plans to teach in English were far better and comprehensive than those for teaching in Spanish. The second wall related to staffing, which was a major shortcoming. Specifically, it is quite difficult to find bilingual educators and it was not an exception in our DL program. The challenge was not limited to the classroom, but spread to other areas such as intervention and coaching. Our students had specific and additional needs compared to those in traditional settings because there was a foreign language in the education mix in our case. However, we did not have specialists, such as bilingual interventionists, to provide those services. Naturally, the staffing challenge became increasingly difficult as we added higher grade classrooms to the program. By not fixing the problem before adding more grades, it felt like the people in charge of the program did not value Spanish education enough to fix what was wrong, and continued it as if everything was okay.

Figure 4.3 Registro de evaluación

Estudia  
Maestra  
Registra  
Parte II

Place the book in front of the student. Read the title and introduction.  
Introduction: Un niño y su mamá fueron a comprar al mercado. Lee para ver todo lo que pusieron en la canasta.

INDEPENDENT INSTRUCTIONAL

Source of Information

Page	Text	E	SC	E	S
2	-Vamos a comprar tomates -mamá dijo.				
3	Yo <sup>puse</sup> <del>puse</del> los tomates en la canasta.				
4	-Vamos a comprar cebollas -dijo mamá.				
	Yo <sup>puse</sup> <del>puse</del> las cebollas en la canasta.				
	-Vamos a comprar papas -dijo mamá.				
	Subtotal				

Figure 4.3. This is an example of a tool used to identify what the specific needs of the students were, and was used to form small groups, and to differentiate instruction.

We reached a point where there were more speakers of Spanish as a foreign language teaching in Spanish than there were native Spanish-speakers teaching it. Now, don't get me wrong! The issue I had with this was not that Spanish was not these teachers' native tongue, but that they lacked competency in the language. Many of these teachers had not mastered the level of Spanish required to teach *in* Spanish. It was insulting! This made me wonder whether having teachers whose English was not strong enough would have been acceptable as well. How dare they? This was an obvious sign of how much the Latino culture was devalued. There is no way

anyone in the district would have allowed for less than highly qualified teachers to be in any other position. But when it came to Spanish, it was acceptable. Having staff members that were not adequately qualified to be part of a program such as this one was a disservice to its students, and an offense to those of us who were.

Wall number three was communication. The instructional leader in our school was supposed to be a liaison between the school and the district. However, that link was not strong because she neither believed in nor fully appreciated what the Spanish components were doing in their classroom—because she did not understand the language or the curriculum. The information and messages that needed to go to the district were fractured, and this resulted in district administrators not being able to move forward in doing what they needed to do for the program.

It all became a vicious cycle where the teachers did not know what to do, but would not give the principal any feedback either. One reason might have been that we just wanted to be left alone. Or, perhaps the level of frustration became paralyzing. Whatever the case may have been, it resulted in the obstruction of the opportunity and ability to communicate. Our principal—who was monolingual—had no idea how to help the teachers, and other school administrators were informed about what was going on only partially. The communication problems that existed between the school and the district, and between the principal and the teachers, ended up affecting the dynamics of the DL team.

Overall, my experience was one where I found myself struggling to find ways to teach my students in a program that was obviously unstructured, instead of focusing on being the teacher they deserved. Besides, I drifted aimlessly due to the lack of necessary support required to perform a job effectively. Because of this, and to my dismay, if I came across someone

wondering whether to be or not to be a DL teacher in the United States, I would respond with, “Hmmm...that is the question... Hear me clearly when I unhesitantly say, NO! Not under the conditions and circumstances under which this particular program was developed and is, even after all these years, being implemented.”

### ***There is an “I” in Team***

Before the DL program was established in this school district, there was a profound desire to start it from all quarters (district administrators, school principals, parents, teachers . . .). Everyone was pumped about the possibilities, including me. I could not wait to be a part of this program which, to me, was a big deal. I thought we would be able to create bilinguals at a minimum and, in doing so, make the world more accessible to the students to some extent. However, I quickly realized that the way the program was being set up was not ideal. It was isolating resources, unsystematic, lacked instructional leadership, and resulted in high teacher attrition.

My experience working with a monolingual principal and other monolingual instructional staff in a DL setting was challenging, to say the least. It was upsetting and I was lonely, and the isolation weighed heavily on me. The monolingual staff was not able to help me, either by skill or choice, and deliberately expressed it: “Well, you're dual language, I can't help you.” “Well, it's Spanish. I can't really help you.” When I would talk to, for example, the instructional coaches, this is what it would sound like:

“What standards will we be using in the Spanish classrooms?”

“Uh, I have no idea.”

“What do you mean? We have stuff for the English classrooms, so I just need what I must teach in Spanish.”

“Right, but I don’t know. I don't speak the language. I don't know how to help you.”

“Well, I understand that, but it's still teaching. It's still the standards. We still are trying to improve student academic achievement, and you're not, you're not, you don't wanna help me!”

It was upsetting because, contrary to what those words implied, I was immersed in my job, and even helped create the program. Therefore, such arguments were also disappointing because I like learning from others and offering my knowledge to help them, and this was clearly not the case here. One of the goals we had for our DL program was to embrace and promote diversity, creating a society of students that had numerous characteristics. Those exchanges, at the end of the day, had a significantly different connotation. Not only did they not help anyone grow, but also promoted gaps that still needed to be closed for the program to move forward. These were some examples of people who, though on the same boat, did not want to row together, making it a frustrating and cloistered experience for me.

I wish to highlight to another instance here: there were many people that my counterpart could collaborate with, but I did not have that luxury because I was teaching in Spanish. It was always, “Well, good luck!” meaning that I was alone in this, and that I needed to figure things out on my own. Even when there were two others teaching in Spanish at one point, the collaboration between us was limited because we never saw each other since we taught different grades. Ideally, when teachers go into DL programs, they have a team to assist them. Instead, based on my observations and experiences, I concluded that teachers in the DL programs went into survival mode when they did not receive the guidance and leadership they needed. This resulted in them forming a bond that could have been positive or negative implications. In the

case of our program it was the latter, where they would only talk to complain, reinforcing the lack of team cohesion.

Figure 4.4 Indicadores dinámicos del éxito en la lectura

Indicadores Dinámicos del Éxito en la Lectura 7a Ed.<sup>1</sup>  
Tercer grado

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_ Maestro/a: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Escuela: \_\_\_\_\_ Distrito: \_\_\_\_\_

	Indicador 1 Principio/ Otoño		Indicador 2 Medio/ Invierno		Indicador 3 Final/ Primavera	
Iniciales de la Examinadora						
Fecha						
Fluidez en la Lectura Oral IDEL	Correctas (medio)	Errores (opcional)	Correctas (medio)	Errores (opcional)	Correctas (medio)	Errores (opcional)
Fluidez en el Recuento Oral	(puntaje de en medio)		(puntaje de en medio)		(puntaje de en medio)	
Fluidez en el Uso de las Palabras	(opcional)		(opcional)		(opcional)	

Figure 4.4. This was one of the resources that Silvia found after her research efforts, and an example of how she helped create the program.

Aside from being upsetting and divisive, the program was also established unsystematically. Speaking about the very beginning, I knew there was a lot to be done, and that we would all have to come together to work through the challenges that occurred. I thought it did not matter because we were all committed. Even though my principal was monolingual, I felt we could work around that because DL programs are not just about language, but also about culture and other factors. So I felt that if she was on board with the program, she was on board with everything else it required. However, my principal being monolingual resulted in disadvantages beyond what I had imagined. Further, the other people involved in the development of the program were, like her, monolingual administrators who had never been teachers in DL classrooms. When I reflect upon it now, I realize that the issue was not really only about monolingual principals not understanding the program. It was also about all the others involved



in creating something they just didn't understand, nor were invested enough to follow through. It seemed that they just wanted the program up and running—but were not willing to deal with its teething troubles. Although this was a new program and its full scope not clearly defined, it was launched by the authorities.

This was not the only school where the DL program was implemented at this time. Hoping that I would not face similar negative issues at another school, I branched out and obtained a transfer to another school after my first year. To my dismay, I found out firsthand that this school too was facing analogous woes. Eventually I moved out of DL into a different building, but continued to cooperate with all the DL teachers. My conversations with them persisted on the subject of how principals were out there making decisions without having a clue about DL. In fact, the state of the program remains the same nowadays: It is flawed and lacks well-defined structures, and teachers continue to feel frustrated and disappointed, though more than eight years have passed since it started.

The nightmare has continued since Silvia left the program. Their troubles could have been dealt with by a strong leadership. Yet, there was none. The primary complaint of the teachers was that the school principals only played the roles of supporters, and that was just not good enough. When I worked in the program, my colleagues and I believed the principal had to strike a balance between being a cheerleader and an instructional leader. In our experience, they were everything but that. We realized that our principals would not be instructional leaders because they could not—they did not have the capacity to do it. You cannot be an instructional leader to everyone in your school if you do *not* understand one of the languages of instruction. When you are in charge of a building it requires managing, and being an instructional leader to everybody. Just as we teach all students, principals must lead *all teachers*, no matter where they

are in their career or in what language they teach. In other words, the principal I worked with might have been an instructional leader for the teachers teaching in English, but she needed to go further. She needed to be the instructional leader for the DL teachers that taught in Spanish too. Teachers need training and support on how to use a language to teach academics, just as principals need that training to understand how to become instructional leaders within the DL classrooms. In other words, an administrator well and truly needs to realize that not knowing a language is not an excuse not to be an instructional leader to *all* teachers!

We should not forget the important role that a principal plays in the development of every aspect within a school; this includes the relationship between the principal and all the teachers. This bond with principals is important, and their continuous support necessary, because education is not static. In my experience with the school's DL program, the lack of such positive rapport was detrimental to the point where teacher attrition increased, bringing devastating effects to the program. Such high teacher turnover resulted in the need to start the same process over every year and stability continued to elude us, let alone success. Today, I wonder if administrators have started looking at the reasons behind such high attrition; and whether they conscientiously reflect on how the lack of their leadership skills results in teachers leaving the program. My relationship with the principal is surely a case in point. Shortly after joining the program, I became an expert in my field thanks to the long hours of research I put into the planning, course structure, and curriculum. My principal trusted me to do what was right by our students because she did not know any better. This placed a huge burden of great expectations on me. However, a new problem arose hereafter. The more conversant I became with the program, the more insecure and intimidated she became—as if she was threatened by my knowledge. The trust changed to me having to constantly prove myself to her... with no team to rely on.

In other words, the school and district administrators' lack of deep understanding of the DL program, paired with their non-existent interest to understand it, resulted in unacceptable leadership. I recalled the saying, "There is no I in team." However in my case, it turned out to be exactly the opposite: there was no cohesion among the staff, which led to the Spanish components desperately wanting to jump ship. I was not the exception. I got out of the program and never looked back!

***¡Por supuesto que sí hay discriminación!***

Discrimination in DL settings is not unusual. This is evident in the preconceptions that exist about the roles Latinx are expected to fill, in conjunction with how they battle the resistance of Anglos to wrestle for equitable space in the field of teaching. In other words, Anglos expect Latinx to fill roles such as janitors, lunch servers, and others that are not professional jobs. DL platform, however, can be a powerful springboard to balance and counter some of the negativity.

During my time in DL, I felt discriminated against. I also witnessed it in the attitude of the non-Latinx monolingual speakers of English towards DL teachers on the Spanish side. Perhaps this was because they failed to comprehend how people of my race or cultural background can function in any role other than that of a para, lunch lady, or school janitor. They did not see that, regardless of the role we played, we represented cultura, conocimiento, aprender, equipo y diversidad. Yet, here I was, the teacher that was seen as different by my colleagues and the staff. I was the bilingual one. I was the one whose parents came from Mexico. I was "the Mexican," even if I had come from anywhere else in Latin America. I was not one of them. I was othered.

In the Anglo world, there are expectations of the roles Latinxs play; when they transcend these roles, there is opposition. For example, it is not uncommon for paraeducators to be Latinxs.

They play a significant role in supporting students in various capacities. They spend long hours with students who have special language, developmental, or physical needs. In spite of the difficult work they do, paras are not required to have a college degree, and there is no specific certification needed to do their job. To be a teacher, at least a Bachelor's degree is necessary.

As long as Latinxs stay within the boundaries of expected roles such as paras, everything is fine. The problem begins when Latinxs occupy roles socially perceived to be reserved for Anglos. For example, when students would say to me, "Well, you look like the ELL para," I understood that they were talking from a place of partiality and preconceived notions. They associated the way I look, and some of the things I did, with what they were used to seeing in paras. Perhaps some even wondered if I was the janitor or a lunch lady, as they passed me in the hallways. I do not really fault them; it must have been difficult for them to see me as the highly educated, fully licensed teacher that I am, who happens to be occupying the same space as a white teacher, simply because of the roles they are used to seeing Latinxs play.

As I became more cognizant of students' perceptions, I felt that I had a responsibility to improve their limited vision. The more I interacted with them, the more they connected with and looked up to me. I knew that I had to set an example and advocate for Latinx because there were few people "like them" within the school and district to represent them. I found that there are many Caucasians, and some African Americans in teaching roles, but not too many Latinx. In spite of my best efforts, to this day many students still think I am a para. In my opinion, the more Latinx occupy roles of Anglos, the more the latter's preconceptions will block our advancement, perpetuating the resistance Anglos have toward our place in teaching.

Since I had the opportunity to access the higher education domain, I was a vetted and legitimate educator. Sadly, that was not everyone's perception of my role. For example, when

referring to students transitioning to my classroom, one could hear an English teacher say, “They just go to Spanish next door.” That was inappropriate and aggravating! The program was designed such that the Spanish half and the English half complemented each other to create a holistic system for participating students. . Yet, comments like these made it seem that being taught in Spanish was less important than being taught in English. The implication was somehow that the Spanish component was less valuable, less respectable, and less acceptable. Clearly, the message was that my classroom, in comparison to the English one, was not important. It was as if students just came to my classroom to kill time, and the other classroom was where true learning took place. I was the teacher who did not understand what was going on, according to my peers and others in the program. I was the teacher students went to for “specials.” I was *that* teacher, the one who spoke Spanish. This went on until I could not take it anymore, and needed to find a solution, at least in the jargon we used. After talking about it, my counterpart and I decided to call each other’s classrooms “your homeroom” and “my homeroom.” This, at least in theory, made the two equals. What happened in practice was a different story altogether.

As a new teacher, I had no way of preempting the struggles I later faced. I was determined to be an agent of change, but the way the program was implemented made my goal nearly insurmountable. Not only did I feel devalued by how easy it was for the monolingual white professionals to dismiss the needs of Spanish teachers, I also knew their flippant attitude had great impact on the students we taught. After all, students are young and impressionable, easily influenced by teachers at school.

Remembering all this upsets me now. When I look back on how my students were affected by the workings of the DL program, it almost kills me. They *all* deserved the best, but not all of them got what they should have. There was a palpable difference in the value given to

one language over the other, and to one culture over the other. Thankfully, I had the best students in the world, and remembering our time together puts a smile on my face.

I can still recall a particular incident with José. He was a bright-eyed little boy whose native language was Spanish. He was funny, and I could always count on him to make me laugh. One winter morning—it was freezing outside—I came into my classroom all bundled up, wearing a heavy jacket, hat, gloves, and scarf. The heater in my classroom had been acting up that week, so it took me longer than usual to adjust to the climate difference. I felt so comfortable indoors in my heavy winter outerwear that I completely forgot to take these off before my students arrived. As soon as he entered the classroom, José looked at me with his beautiful, big, brown eyes, and asked in a soft, yet uncertain tone:

“¿Dónde está Ms. Silvia?”

“Aquí estoy, José.” I replied, smiling.

“¡No, la Ms. Silvia de verdad!” His tone grew increasingly distressed.

He kept staring at me with doubt and fear in his eyes, his mouth quivering as if he was about to cry. Confused, I dug into my bag and grabbed the tiny mirror I sometimes carried with me, and... Oh, my! I realized I looked more like Hoth Wampa from Star Wars than myself, so I quickly shed all the heavy winter layers.

“¿Ya me reconoces?” I asked.

His whole demeanor changed, and he let out a big sigh to show that he was relieved to see “the real” me. This was hilarious to me because, though I had heard that our students “hang us in the classroom closet” when they go home and take us back out the next day, expecting us to be the same exact way they left us, it had never happened to me. Well, that day it did, and what

little José saw was *not* the Ms. Silvia he had “left hanging in the closet” the night before. Oh, my little ones... I miss them!

However, in order to do the best for my students I had to constantly battle for the position I had been hired to fulfill. This was exhausting to me, and prejudicial of them. The English teachers did not have to endure that, they just taught. Not me. I was fighting for the rights of all the students involved in the program so that they would receive the kind of education we had committed to them. I was also dealing with having to prove myself and establish that I, indeed, deserved and had a right to be the person running that classroom, making the lesson plans, and teaching the students. For crying out loud, I was teaching for mastery of standards and concepts because I was teaching academics. I was teaching them skills that they needed, and the language I did this in should not have mattered. Language of instruction should not have been a factor in providing or denying students the best possible resources and experience.

In other words, Anglos in the teaching realm are used to believing that Latinx should only occupy positions that are inferior to theirs. When Latinx break the mold, their reaction is to resist. They reject the idea of Latinx occupying the roles they believe are meant only for them. In fact, not only do Anglos cringe at this idea, but they also try to oppress Latinx once the latter have reached a position of “equality.”

If all the stakeholders in the DL program dared to look at it through the lens of possibilities instead of barriers—especially for the sake of the students—they would discover a world of opportunity. Through DL programs, we can utilize the gifts that diversity offers, which may put a dent in the discrimination rampant today. On the DL platform educators can, at the very least, tap into the importance of every language, every culture, and everything else in the spectrum. For example, it could help validate language and cultural diversity, and promote

understanding about how rich and varied the Latin American countries and their cultures are. This would also contribute to closing gaps that generate an environment of discrimination within education. It is not an easy task, and it is not simplistic. However, DL programs offer a platform that promotes tolerance and understanding in a gradual way: (i) through teaching about the different dialects that Spanish speakers around the world share; (ii) the different educational systems that teachers may have been involved in when they were in their country of origin; and (iii) many of their traditions that are the same as, or different from, what students are used to in the U.S. The bottom line is that a significant decrease in discrimination is important and necessary in order to create well-rounded citizens who are fully prepared to face the world, and not just the city in which they live. DL programs are one way to ensure this.

I love Spanish, and I believe that preserving one's native language is incredibly important. Language is a part of your cultural make-up, and preserving it is one way to prevent cultural erasure. It helps define who you are. It is critical in shaping your identity. With the DL programs, we were within reach of the wonderful opportunity to teach in and through Spanish, and close the gap that exists in academic achievement between subgroups such as Latinxs and white students. Are we there yet? Will we get there? I would hope so. Looking back, I used to feel lucky that, because I was bilingual, I was able to see the big picture. I did not have to choose one language over the other. I could write my lesson plans in whatever language my pencil produced on paper or flew off my fingers onto a keyboard. I had no boundaries between the two languages. I would tell myself, "I mean, I'm bilingual! I'm gonna use the language however the heck I wanna use it!" My lesson plans, for instance, were in a mix of Spanish and English. The language in which I wrote things was not necessarily tied to the language I was going to use to teach my lessons; it was just the way my bilingual brain worked. Those who were not bilingual



did not have the advantages that I did. “This is just beautiful!” I would think. But was it really? I now know that with my positive self-talk, I was only fighting to get by, and forcing myself to believe I could manage. The truth is that it was a constant battle, and it hurts even to this day.

If I reveal today that I was a DL teacher once, people that I know, but that I am not close to, are like, “Oh, you were in a DL classroom?” When I share that I used to be a DL teacher, the frustration of my colleagues who still are in DL comes up again, and I do not want to say, “Ooooooh, it was the same way when I was there.” There are also times when people I work with now—and who do not know I was in a DL program at one time—discuss various aspects of the program in front of me. I just choose to keep quiet and listen. At this point in my career, it is like, I don't know whether or not I want to say that I was a DL teacher. Sad!

Going back, after three years as a DL teacher, I had had enough. The struggles and challenges were such that I got burnt out and really did not feel it was worth it. Yes, I do feel some level of guilt for leaving because it was a noble cause on paper, but I just could not be part of that charade anymore. Although I moved on to different endeavors within the same school district, I continue to maintain the relationships and friendships I formed during that time. I still interact with teachers that I used to work with in DL; we go out for dinner or because we do whatever it is that we need to do for different things- this is very vague. Some day we might end up either at the same school within our small district, or outside it. Whatever the reason for being in the same room with these professionals, it is not unusual for the topic of DL to come up.

All things considered, my experience has taught me that Anglos perceive Latinxs as inferior, be it by intellect, ability, culture and/or language. This demographic unit is left in a battle to belong and fit in a place that is already theirs by education, by birth, or by choice,

among other rights. Though I wish things were different in the United States of America—and it hurts to accept this—¡por supuesto que *sí* hay discriminación!

### **Researcher's Note**

This concludes the thematic narratives of Silvia's experiences. In the following section, I present María Isabel's narratives. She titled her stories *It's Juan, Not One!* I begin with an orientation of María Isabel, using her own words before discussing the thematic narratives of her experiences. As in Silvia's case, I have created her thematic narratives by curating her own words from her interviews.

### **María Isabel: It's Juan, Not One!**

My name is María Isabel. I was born to Mexican parents in the West coast of the United States. I am the only girl of their three children. I was not the first one in my family to graduate from high school, but I was the first one to attend and graduate from college. I did so three times: I have an Associates of Arts degree, and Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Education. Though my parents are now proud of the education I pursued and attained, this sentiment was not present all along, and my journey was not void of resistance from them. To my satisfaction, the journey I undertook has paid off, and ended up paving the way for many others in my family who have followed in my footsteps.

Because I am tall with an athletic build, I have been involved in sports my whole life. I am now 31 years old, and am single. One of my favorite things to do is going to my nephews' and nieces' programs, sporting events, and participating in anything that relates to them. I also enjoy spending time with the rest of my big family. People who know me would say that I am charming and jovial, and that I look younger than I am. I enjoy dressing up, doing my make-up and my hair to go out and not miss any social event. However, I am also outdoorsy, and love a

good pair of sweatpants, and a comfortable pair of sneakers while sporting a high and messy bun or ponytail.

I became a DL teacher after the school district where I got my first job presented the program to me. It was an initiative that was developed by only a few people who decided to start it. They had valuable viewpoints, and the heart and passion to start a DL program. I fell in love with the idea! I was excited back then. Everybody was willing to do anything to make the program successful. If it came to resources or research we needed, or meetings we had to attend, everybody was on board and willing to do whatever it took to make it work.

Today, I am still a full-time teacher at the elementary level in the West Coast. However, I have not been involved in DL teaching since I left the Midwest. I would be unhesitant to say that I was born to teach. I am fully committed to educating children, and am especially inclined towards teaching in the early elementary grades. I am a passionate educator, a hard worker who keeps the best interest of my students at heart, and their wellbeing is my priority. As a Spanish teacher, I take pride in correct pronunciation, cultural heritage, and thinking of us as a community, and not as individuals only, where Juan, is not one, but many. As well, in our struggles and accomplishments we are forever entangled.

### ***The Blind Leading the Blind***

When the DL program was established, we could not contain our excitement! Soon, however, four major issues and struggles became evident. These were, in no particular order of importance: the lack of guidance from the principal, the absence of effective feedback, unavailability of adequate resources, and the neglect towards one particular group of teachers and students. It all hit us like a ton of bricks!

At first, everything seemed wonderful. My principal was a valuable asset who made everything possible for us. She was open to communication, and I could count on her to guide me when I was struggling, either with teaching, or with trying to get the resources that would allow me to do my job successfully. I was able to go to her and tell her that I was lacking in some areas, and she would arrange for me to attend meetings so that I could network with other people and gain understanding of what was going on. The principal actually went to one of these meetings with us, and it was *amazing!* This gave us the opportunity to talk about what was going on, and to solve problems together. These conferences were all over the country—New Mexico, New Orleans, etc.—and every time we attended one, it rejuvenated us. It gave us new energy because, when we came back, we were excited, and we wanted to make things happen. I always felt like I could choose my safety net. I could always go back to my principal and, no matter what I presented to her, she would come back with a positive response. She always had some sort of solution to offer, even if it was not exactly the one I had hoped for. The problems started because though the teachers continued to attend training sessions, she stopped!

She should have attended all these sessions we went to. She should have been there because, afterwards, we had so much additional knowledge that she lacked. We were teaching her instead of her helping us out. For us, those trips ended up becoming more like free vacations. We would only go to maybe, the first or second day of the training—sometimes they would last a week—because we were not learning anything new. So after a while, we lost interest. Soon, we realized that sending us to conferences had become a pattern for our principal. Every time we went to her for support because we were struggling or were frustrated, she would deflect our attention and send us somewhere for professional development. However, our capacity remained limited because the trainings were mismatched and not enough at this stage. When we got stuck

and went to her, her response was, “Oh, there's a different meeting... Go here.” Moreover, she also wanted me to maintain the same pace as my English partner, so when I would share my struggles, she would tell me to “come up with something...”—even when I could not. It was an impossible position to be in—like a sink or swim situation. It went on like vicious cycle, and every time a new teacher joined the program, the same thing happened: “Oh, they do not know how to teach the language? Here's a meeting.” She would also come back with, “Well, I don't know how to speak Spanish,” “I'm not a Spanish speaker,” “I don't know how to support you.” This made me wonder where that somebody who would show us the way *was*! It was not my principal, for sure. I felt that she assumed that I was trying to find an easy way out because what I asked for or suggested was not what she thought I should have. It affected my attitude as a DL teacher. I invested a lot of time and energy trying to prove myself to her, instead of actually doing research to try to become a better teacher for my students. I was caught in a funnel of research between what was best for the kids and research to prove my point to her. It quickly became clear to me that the reason for her behavior was that she could not help me. That was challenging! Hearing those phrases was depressing, not only for me, but also for the team. It killed any motivation or heart that we had to teach the language. It was not uplifting. It was the beginning of the end!

In spite of all of us working really hard to make sure that the DL program did not fail, we lacked the resources to give it the necessary cohesiveness. After a while, I was completely lost! Apart from my principal not understanding the differences between teaching in Spanish and in English, and the difficulties the DL teachers had to endure, the team started to feel trapped in a chain reaction: Somebody had a great idea, and then somebody else would come up with an idea that contradicted their idea. Then, we just had a whole bunch of ideas that were not cohesive, and

that did not really match all the research that we had done. We had a lot of information but we did not know what to do with it because our end goal for our students was blurry. There was all this stuff, but nothing ever got resolved, so we ran around like chickens with our heads cut off. We went around in circles trying to find a purpose for the meetings, which was never clear. We sat there and spun our wheels about curriculum, about assessment, about finances, logistics, and retention... Everything was always half-assed. We had no idea what we were doing.

Though lost, we were also well aware that things were not right. Yet, our hands were tied because it was the principal who was in charge and she called the shots. For instance, if she told us that we needed to teach a particular curriculum, we would teach it. If she said we needed to do certain assessments, we would do them. Though she was well-versed on the logistics to operate a DL program, and knew what was needed to run it, it was evident that she did not have the knowledge about how to guide the teachers who were teaching the language [Spanish].

Working with a principal who not only did not speak Spanish, but also lacked the pedagogical expertise to teach it, was far from ideal because she was not able to offer me substantive and relevant feedback on my instruction. It got to a point where, to be honest, I did not prepare for observations anymore. I would just go in and teach my regular lesson. The feedback I received was always based on my students' behavior. It was never on content because she did not understand what I was saying, which meant she did not know what I was teaching. I would constantly hear, "Well, your class is very well behaved," and those words undermined my efforts. She did not know what to tell me, and it made me feel like I was doing nothing. I wanted feedback. I *needed* feedback. I wanted to know how I was doing as a teacher, and not just as a classroom manager. It made me wonder if I would have gotten a bad evaluation if my students were not well behaved, even when I was still teaching the curriculum and they understood the

content. I was *very* frustrated! My principal's disengagement was pretty obvious when she came to my classroom to observe me. You could tell by her body language that she did not really care. She would turn away from me, and stare at things that I had up on the wall. Because she did not understand what the kids were saying, or what I was saying, she could not give me support, suggest strategies, or ways to improve. That did not feel good. I worked hard, and I needed validation. A simple, "Hey, you're doing a good job" would have gone a long way. However, this never came because nobody actually knew what I was teaching or what the students were learning. I did end up doing something about it; however, the route I took should have never been an option. As a desperate measure, I decided to have my assistant, or my paraeducator, at the time—who was bilingual—observe me because she knew a little bit about the content, and I felt more comfortable asking her for feedback than asking the principal. Thus, the lack of valid feedback from the principal ended up being the first huge issue and challenge that all of us, as DL teachers, faced.

The second set of challenges and struggles was the inadequate resources available to us. We questioned whether students would be able to actually acquire knowledge of a second language with what we had in place. There was no definite model to follow. In the grade I taught, students followed one system. As we expanded, every grade did something different, so the students were pushed and bounced back and forth between different systems. They must have been confused because we kept telling them that the system worked differently every time they went to a different grade level. We did not stick to one idea. We did not have one main focus. We went into our roles blindfolded. We had no idea what to expect because we did not have any guiding questions, which we could have gotten from the principal if she had had the requisite background. She was the leader and the one who needed to have given us the questions

we were trying to answer, and the information we were to be looking for. However, we got nothing.

To make matters worse, the instructional materials we were provided with were substandard, and required a lot of work from the teachers to make them somewhat appropriate to teach in Spanish. Why would they do that? Why was it acceptable for students to learn in Spanish using materials that were not authentic? Any person who speaks basic Spanish would have seen that the resources they handed me were a joke. For instance, I would find grammar mistakes in the texts. Further, we had to teach the letter H, and the lesson had this whoooole routine of how to teach the letter H. The lesson would have the students say the sound looooud, and have the students say the sound loooooow... So there was a whole week of teaching the H sound in Spanish. IN SPANISH! The issue was that, in Spanish and without exception, the letter H is silent. As absurd as it may seem, these were the kind of resources I had to work with. It was upsetting, and I was pretty much alone to deal with it. So, not knowing any better, I would go on Google and type “dual language programs,” and would read whatever I found. I just needed something! To illustrate: a typical day in my life as a DL teacher revolved around planning. I would get up early in the morning, go to school, see what I needed to teach that day, redo the whole lesson, find resources, and figure out activities for the students to do because the curriculum was just teaching everything wrong. I had to do all this because the lessons were direct translations from English, which was upsetting. In other words, the lesson plans in the materials the school district gave us were not written for teaching in Spanish, but for teaching in English. There was nothing authentic about them, and clearly, nobody thought that to be an issue. I had to go in and redo the whole thing, without the necessary skills to do so effectively.



What was the alternative, though? What changes needed to happen in the selection of materials so that we would teach valid content to the students? We, clearly, had no idea.

Other things that took place regarding instruction and teaching were: Each school year, the district would give us instructional materials and tell us, “Okay, you’re going to teach this...” “You’re going to teach that...” The idea was that, when my students went to the English-speaking room, they would know what was being taught and would catch on. In theory, it sort of made sense. However, when you and your counterpart are not teaching the lessons in the same order, there is no connection between what is being taught in each of the languages. The materials were never the same because somebody always found new research that proved that the next set was better. Twelve people, including me, would get together and look into what was being offered. We all dug into the different options, and decided what the strengths and weaknesses of each were. We would hear, “Look, but I found this,” or “Maybe we could use this one instead.” That is how we chose what we would use to teach, but we had no knowledge about what would truly be best for a DL program. This cycle continued, and every year we had brand new, out-of-the-box instructional materials. I acknowledge that having these inferior materials was better than having nothing because there had been times when I had to create entire lessons from scratch, without the guidance of a program. Nevertheless, having them did not make it less exhausting. Yet I was there for *five* years!

Soon after starting to use whatever we were given or had selected, we would realize it was terrible. In hopes of making sense of what we had to work with, at one point, the principal gave us two days off, and we went to Starbucks and sat there. We grabbed some books and some other things, went through the standards, and broke them down. I do not know where we got the knowledge to handle the task, but we finally decided what the students needed to know in

Spanish. We were only relying on what we thought was right. We had to then type it up present it to the principal and the other officials in the program. It was nerve-wracking. The pressure was high because we were trying to give the Board of Education (BOE) in the district what they wanted, since they were, ultimately, the ones who had approved having a DL program in the district. So, if the members of the BOE said that they wanted the students to be able to say their ABCs in Spanish, we taught it. I really did not know who was sending that message to us, but whatever they told the principal to do, we did. We were then stuck with fixing problems. This was year one, and year two was not any better. Though another Spanish teacher joined the program, we had no idea where we were going. We would sit there and stare at each other. We all yearned to have a roadmap to move our students from point A to point B. It would have made the DL program a lot stronger.

The last of the challenges and struggles concerned the neglect of one group of teachers and students. Not only were the priorities of the program far removed from the needs of the Spanish teachers, they were also distant from those of the students participating in the program. So much so, many times I felt invisible—as a Latina teaching in Spanish, and as the Spanish component. Many other needs took precedence over ours, so the quality of what we were teaching was not urgent. I felt that the leaders of the program could have said something like, “Oh, we'll find resources,” or “I'll help you research.” Instead, they completely shut down the Spanish teachers. I was afraid that if there was not a good grasp on what the program needed on the part of the school district, the same struggles we were facing would be perpetuated. Of course, this was affecting our students directly! We could not teach them the proper strategies. We could not teach them the language. We were teaching them their ABCs. We were just teaching the most basic things, like colors, and numbers. As well, ,we were teaching our students

to read in Spanish using the system that is used to teach reading in English (where the consonants come before vowels). If I had known better and had taught in Spanish the vowels first, and then the consonants, my students would have received much better instruction. It just felt like everything was backwards. I felt like I was doing the students a disservice by following English pedagogy when I taught them because that was how the materials were. However, the worst part was that I could only do so much, and the results showed it. In the data, we did not see what we wanted to see, so it was back to, “Oh, crap! Now we're stuck again!”

To make a long story short, I spun my wheels a lot working with a monolingual principal. Monolingual leaders are less than ideal in DL programs because they do not understand the struggles those teaching in the foreign language face. As a result, there is no guidance, and no valuable feedback from them, leaving the teachers adrift. Not having authentic, and academically sound, materials to teach in Spanish was insulting, burdening us with excessive planning. This not only was a reflection on the inadequate materials, but was also a clear demonstration of the neglect that students and teachers alike had to experience. In contrast to how I felt at the start of my experience as a DL teacher, the feeling of being supported changed, and my enthusiasm slowly died. We did not know what we were doing, but our passion for DL kept us going, and we did not care if we were doing it wrong. At least we were doing something. We were strong. We wanted to improve the program, but it was terrible. Clearly, it was the blind leading the blind.

### ***You're Mexican, Play Basketball, AND Have Straight As? No Way!***

Growing up in a traditional Mexican family in the United States was fraught with circumstances that I shall explain later, that went against what was expected of a Mexican girl like me. In the midst of such conditions, I had to overcome prejudices related to misconceptions about the Spanish language (my native tongue), combat the beliefs that were prevalent among

many—including my own family—of what a Mexican female’s goals should be in life, and find a way for all of this not to be perpetuated in my Latino students.

Spanish was all I knew when I was growing up. This language, therefore, has an important place in my life, and has played different roles at different times. Though I grew up speaking Spanish, many friends spoke the language in a way that was completely different to mine. Throughout my childhood and into adulthood, it was pretty clear to me that Spanish was seen in a negative light. As my personal and professional life developed, there was this message floating around all the time about something being wrong with people who spoke Spanish. Even today, people talk about how Spanish is not a *good* language. It is hard to navigate those comments and prejudices, trying to figure out how to continue speaking Spanish and not be ashamed of it. It is also difficult not being affected by how people perceive you because of the language you speak or the culture to which you belong.

Figure 4.7 Quinceañera



Figure 4.5. This is María Isabel’s bouquet and tiara from when she had her Quinceañera, a Mexican tradition.

For example, in my personal experience, it has been evident that people think that being a native Spanish speaker automatically makes you an ignorant person. Much as you want to fight against that idea or would like to ignore it, it does affect you. As a consequence, towards my late childhood, I always wanted to be like the Pochos—Mexican individuals who do not speak Spanish. They were the cool ones because of the way they dressed, acted and talked. Sadly, the idea of not speaking Spanish being cool was not all in my head.

Figure 4.8 Ropes and Flowers



*Figure 4.6.* This is one of the items used during María Isabel's parents' catholic wedding ceremony, and represents one of the ways in which her family is traditional.

Figure 4.9 Tying the Knot



*Figure 4.7.* This is a picture of when María Isabel's parents tied the knot in the Catholic Church.

In the area where I grew up, and even when I traveled to different places, I would tell people that I did not speak Spanish so that they would talk more to me! If I started speaking in Spanish to them, they would ask to speak to somebody else, implying that they preferred to talk to someone who did not speak Spanish. I do not know how to explain it. It is just the way people perceive you if they know you speak Spanish. I would hear that being Mexican and speaking Spanish was bad. When I heard things like that, the feeling was so awful that I wished I did not speak my own mother tongue. I wanted to hide the fact that I spoke it. The prejudice was everywhere, including in my own grade school classrooms with my teachers. They would look at me like, “Well, you speak Spanish. How do you have straight As?” Or like, “You are, you're not supposed to know this. You, you're speaking a different language.” That was just terrible! When are people going to realize that speaking Spanish does not mean that you are dumb? I was a straight-A student! The more shocking part was that I spoke English as well. I can only imagine what students who did not speak English had to deal with. I think that if teachers were more educated, they would understand that just because you do not know a language (in this case English) does not mean you are not smart. Nothing is farther from the truth. Thankfully, I was able to combat those thoughts and, as I grew older, I started to get to a place where I would not feel like I needed to lose my Spanish identity in order to fit in. I realized it was not necessary. After wanting to hide the fact that I spoke Spanish for the longest time, I decided I wanted to speak proper Spanish and proper English because I wanted to show people that I was educated; that I was smart!

Because many parents have encountered the same discrimination that I speak of above, they do not teach their children how to speak Spanish. Take me, for example. Many people assume that I am an English monolingual because I belong to the generation of people whose

parents did not usually teach their children their native language. Even though it is not right, I do not judge their choice. I, myself, have experienced people telling me, “Oh, do you speak Spanish? You must be, like, uh, in poverty,” or “I can't believe you speak Spanish,” not meaning it as a compliment. And they have gone on with, “You must be low income,” and “Your parents must be, like, coming just straight from Mexico.” What parents would like their children to be exposed to such slurs?

To add insult to injury, many people believe, even to this day, that Mexican Spanish is the only type of Spanish there is. It is not! There is more to it. Even within the same culture, the way people speak varies a great deal. Non-Spanish speakers need to know that Mexican and Spanish are not the same thing. Spanish is the language we speak, but there are many other countries where it is spoken as well, and differently. Similarly, English in the United States is different from English in the U.K., Australia, and Ireland, though it is the same language. The same happens with proper and casual Spanish. When you go to school, for example, you learn proper Spanish; you learn how to speak it, and how to have a conversation. However, it would not be uncommon for students to meet somebody that does not know proper Spanish, and feel lost. It is important that people gain knowledge about the different cultures and dialects that exist within the Latino communities to form a clearer understanding of the people, and are able to build stronger, more meaningful relationships with others.

Though the narrative above speaks loudly about the burden I carried, I found ways to change that millstone into resiliency, making me the person I wanted to be instead of the one I was expected to become. This materialized through two advantages I had at the tip of my fingers: I was a skilled basketball player, and an excellent student.



I *love* basketball. I always had a passion for it, and I am grateful for all that it gave me. In Junior High School, I started getting more and more into the sport and became successful at it. I saw basketball as a way to reach my goals. However, what I knew was my ticket to bigger and better things, my parents saw as the end for me. In my dad's eyes, once I graduated high school, I would get a job, get married, have kids, and have a great life. What they had no idea about was that their thoughts were far from how I had imagined my life to be.

Figure 4.10 Path to Success



*Figure 4.8.* This is one of the many medals and trophies María Isabel won with her teams.

My dad was really confused when I started going to junior college. He questioned why I would want to do that. I was done with high school; I had a high school diploma, and that was enough for him. It was hard for my dad... and for me. However, I was not willing to give up my dreams, and I intended to direct my energies and abilities into getting all straight As, put my athletic skills to good use, and reap their benefits beyond high school too. When I told my dad I was going to college and also play basketball, his mind was blown. However, my mind was set. With my grades and athletic abilities, I knew I could get scholarships to help pay for college, so I persevered. My parents did not understand what the big deal was, or why I needed to go to college, but in my mind there was no other choice. Though my parents appreciated my straight As, basketball was just a game. To me, however, having such good grades and being an athlete were tickets to the life I had dreamed of. My parents rejected the idea of the sport, especially my dad, and when I, actually received scholarships to play basketball in college, reality set in, and he flat out told me, “No!”

That did not stop me. I was accepted in junior college and graduated with a Associates in Art degree. My parents dealt with this new reality the best way they could. It was difficult for my mom and dad to see me walking around in big shorts and a jersey instead of a ballet folklórico dress. “Mexican girls don’t play basketball,” they would say. However, I had decided to conquer any obstacle that came my way, and move forward in life by excelling academically and through the sport, going against the expectations that the majority culture has for Latinx in the United States I do understand my parents’ struggles as they tried to fathom the path that I took because their education was limited. I think my mom finished 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and my dad was pulled out of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. For them,

having a daughter graduate from high school was a huge accomplishment. However, I needed to go on, even if it was a point of contention between my dad and I. My journey continued. After junior college, I got into a huge fight with my dad because he thought it was enough, and I was not done going to school. I left the state where I was born to attend university in the Midwest. Leaving home under those circumstances was tough. My dad even took all my pictures down from the walls, which was a big deal in my house. He did not talk to me for the first six months after I left, and he *refused* to be in???any conversation where anybody brought me up.

Figure 4.11 One way to Conquer



*Figure 4.9.* This is a picture of María Isabel in her basketball uniform, front and center. Her parents keep it at home, inside a curio cabinet with other objects that are important, and a sign of pride to them.

Though I did not anticipate this, my personal journey came in handy when I joined the DL world. I realized that many of my students' parents felt the same way that mine did, and because I knew both perspectives, I was able to support them and mediate within their subjectivities. I discovered that they were confused when it came to steps that involved the educational process of their children. For example, they did not understand why they needed to show up for school conferences or other meetings if they were already bringing their kids to school. It was not clear to them why it was important for them to learn how to help their children with homework at home. To them, they were the successful ones in the family, and did not really grasp why they needed to do or learn further. They thought that simply bringing the children to school was enough.

Not only were my personal experiences beneficial in bridging these parents' beliefs with my expectations as a teacher, but I also had the advantage of sharing the culture and language with them. I think that made them more comfortable listening to me when I spoke about the idea of their children having goals that they might not completely understand. I shared my story with them, telling them that I could relate to their problems, and that things would work out just fine. I also worked with them so that they understood learning academic Spanish would open many doors for their sons and daughters. For example, we discussed how being able to read and write in Spanish could help their kids be more successful in life. This was an eye-opener for them, as they tended to take Spanish for granted because they just spoke the language with their kids all the time. This may be compared to the way my dad felt towards my basketball prowess, and his lack of understanding about the sport possibly helping me get through high school and college. As it turned out, it took me places and gave me unexpected experiences, just like knowing Spanish could do the same for my students.

The students at the school were my people, and I certainly did not want a repetition of my troubles with the DL program for them. I had every intention of teaching them how to retain their culture and language, and how to keep speaking Spanish while not being ashamed of it. If someone, including my teachers, had explained all this to me when I was growing up—as I was doing for my students now—I would not have been so ashamed of my roots. I would not have *felt* ashamed. I would not have felt I *needed* to lose my Spanish heritage in order to be accepted. I would have just been proud of who I was. That is why I did not want anyone else to feel that way, let alone my students.

So experiencing rejection, discrimination, and prejudice against my native language due to the misconceptions of others, has continued throughout my life. However, my resiliency has remained stronger and more powerful than the hatred. Fortunately, I was blessed to work with students and their families in a way that allowed me to bridge their own preconceptions with the beauty of their potential reality.

### ***You will Teach in Spanish. Good Luck!***

Contrary to popular belief, there is a significant difference between what speaking Spanish and teaching it entails. People may be quite fluent in a language, but have no idea how to teach it. That was me! Being a teacher of Spanish without having the necessary training was harder than I thought because my principal was monolingual and lacked the skills to provide the kind of support I needed. In addition to not having the type of leadership that would have helped me grow as a teacher, the DL team was dysfunctional.

As I recalled earlier, I came across the opportunity to be part of a DL program right after I graduated from college. I was ready and excited to get my first job. After being interviewed and offered the job, I realized that I was selected because I was bilingual, which put me above other

candidates who were more qualified than me. Being bilingual, and having the chance to share my language and culture with others, sounded wonderful. The idea of teaching Spanish to English monolingual students intrigued me, and the possibility to see their growth blew my mind. Besides, I would also be working with native Spanish speaking students and families, which sounded like having the best of both worlds.

When I saw the job opening, I applied for it. They hired me—just like that. I did not even have to prove that I was qualified to teach in Spanish. In fact, I had no background in teaching the language; my only qualification was that I *knew* Spanish. Those who hired me simply asked if I thought I could teach in Spanish. As this was my first job, I was eager, and I loved the idea of the DL program, so I said, “Of course I can!” I took the plunge and accepted the job. I soon realized that I was in over my head, so I had to teach myself how to teach Spanish. For example, I had to learn when to introduce the vowels, when to introduce the consonants, what sounds to introduce first, and everything else there was to learn.

I would share information I gathered about the way Spanish is supposed to be taught with my principal. Her attitude was often unemotional and gave me the impression, “Okay, you are the Spanish teacher. You're the one that's facing your struggles,” leaving me disconcerted. I had many, many needs, and so did the other Spanish components in the program. The non-Spanish participants, on the other hand, made assumptions that needed to be addressed. For instance, there were times when people would approach me to ask,

“Here, can you translate this?”

“NO! I actually cannot translate this! I do not understand these words. I do not know these words in Spanish! The only difference is that I can speak Spanish and you can't!”

They assumed that because I spoke Spanish, I had the requisite academic level and fit to teach in the language. My principal was not an exception to this assumption. I made an effort to make sure she understood that being bilingual did not mean I knew what I was doing. Instead, she saw the situation completely differently and said, “Well, you speak Spanish. Go teach it.” However, the needs that I had far exceeded what I was getting from her; and things were no longer as peachy as in the beginning.

Thinking back, I am pretty sure that it all boiled down to her not speaking Spanish and not fully understanding the situation we were in. If she were bilingual, she probably would have had a different reaction. We needed somebody to hold the reins of our situation as Spanish components of a DL program, and not make the fact that they did not speak the language an excuse anymore. We needed somebody to tell us what we were going to do, but that did not happen. I felt as if all eyes were on me because nobody else knew how to speak Spanish, at least the first year I was there. They relied on me a lot, and would ask why we could not do this or try that—and I had no idea why. I did not have the tools to explain certain things. I did not have the training to answer certain questions. Being in that position without any kind of proper training to handle it, or any kind of support, was annoying and terrifying!

To make matters worse, there were times when I felt intimidated by my principal. To illustrate, she would often speak to me like I was a child—like I did not know anything. Her tone was condescending, which I believe had to do with her insecurities about not knowing what she was talking about. I felt like trying to call her out on it would have been, to a certain point, disrespectful. After all, she gave us all the knowledge she had, and could not give more. Any teacher going into a situation like the one I did, however, should be outspoken, and not be afraid to stir the pot, whereas I was. I felt the fear of not knowing, and was inexperienced. I feared

losing my job, and of people saying, “Oh, she is not good enough, so we are going to hire somebody else.” That fear of loss was always there and it was real. Losing my job scared me. Others saying, “Well, she cannot do it,” scared me. Or just them making me feel like I was not good enough for the job made me feel insecure.

Like me, my principal ran out of possibilities. It was not like the first year anymore. We could no longer go to her for ideas. Her background and training were simply not enough. We did not have any guidance. We did not have any leadership. I felt that principal had a lot of faith in what we were doing, and trusted us, but she trusted us a little bit too much. Since we did not receive any direction, we just did whatever we felt like doing.

That was not an ideal situation for anyone, and to make matters worse, I had no one else to rely on. For example, I had no one to turn to about how to best implement strategies that were mentioned at the trainings. The ideas that I had formed from the initial conferences were dwindling. “Hey, look at this! This is what we found for you!” or “This is what we are going to do,” were words I never heard from the people I worked with. The few times somebody did offer something were not ideas of great quality; however, I felt obligated to use these because it was better than nothing. I reached a point where I did not know how to move forward. As the program moved along, the support we felt we had at the beginning was gone. I say *we* because that was a common feeling among the so-called team, which was small, and as I said earlier, dysfunctional. It was really quite interesting. In it were some people that I was more comfortable talking to than others, but in general, I really could not go to anyone for support when it came to talking about the content I was teaching. Now that the principal was out of the picture as a resource, we had to rely on each other even though we were not teaching similar content or the same grades. That was more of an oxymoron than anything else. Also, I was expected to rely on



others who had less experience than me, because I had already traveled a long way during my first year. Not that I had reached a comfortable point, but I did know more about what was going on than the newbies.

Yet, my English counterpart consistently supported me. She was always willing to solve problems with me any time I presented my challenges or issues to her. She would help me in every possible way, including with presenting my information to the administrators, and to the principal, because I was not confident enough at the time to do it myself. Except her, I did not have anybody to turn to and say, “Hey, can you help me out with this?” or, “I’m having a hard time teaching this lesson, can you help me out?” She was the only one who was there for me and tried to help. Having such intermittent support perturbed me because, when you are teaching, you want to rely on somebody that has more experience than you, or knows more than you. This was not the case. The dynamics of spinning our wheels continued. Still no support. Still no training. Still no north.

Our meetings were a mess. Much of what I said fell on deaf ears. People would dismiss my opinions or thoughts. At times I felt they were judging me. This affected me so much that I would often not say anything, because I felt what I said was not considered important or validated by the people who made up the English component of the program. I was petrified to speak up because of my lack of knowledge and being the only Spanish DL teacher at the time. This being my first teaching job, I really did not even know the basics of being a good teacher, let alone that of being a good Spanish teacher. Others had a lot more experience than me, and they knew exactly what being a good teacher entailed. I felt like, perhaps I was doing something wrong since that was not clear to me at all. The teachers on the team also intimidated me. It was my first year teaching! I would share with my counterpart what I felt they needed to know, and

she would speak for both of us. Because what I was dealing with as the only Spanish component at the time did not directly pertain to them, there was an attitude of, “Well, we do not have time to deal with this.” In hindsight, I feel like if I had stood up for what I believed and knew at that time, they would have paused to listen and consider what I had to offer.

To conclude, there is a lot more to teaching Spanish than simply speaking the language. It not only involves knowledge of teaching methods, but also formal training to do it well. In addition, consistent and effective support from the people at the head of the programs—in this case, the principal—is necessary to succeed. They require preparation, training, cultural and linguistic knowledge and awareness, in order to exercise the type of leadership that will propel a program forward, instead of making it plummet. When program leaders have the necessary knowledge, they are able to guide their teachers, and establish a *real* team. Without these conditions being met as a minimum, the Spanish components in DL programs will end up like me, hearing the words: “You *will* teach in Spanish. Good luck!”

### **Discussion: Cross-Case Comparison**

In this section, I compare and contrast the experiences that Silvia and María Isabel shared about their journey as DL teachers working with a monolingual principal. Based on the information they provided in the narratives above, I summarized the recurrent details that form patterns warranting attention. The broad thematic recurrences are: Good in Theory: The Blatant Manifestations of Inequity; That Was Personal: Discrimination is Alive and Well; and The Silver Lining: Empowered After the Struggles.