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Resisting (and Reproducing) Language Domination in a Bilingual Kindergarten Classroom

Roxana Gamble

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Abstract

In modern U.S. society, English is considered the language of power while Spanish is considered a minority language, unfit for academic or professional settings. These macro-level power inequalities are evident in micro-level interactions between students and teachers in mainstream schools. Dual language education programs, however, attempt to challenge this ideology by elevating the status of minority languages and their speakers. In this study, I use an ethnographic/discourse analysis approach to examine how one teacher's practices in a dual language kindergarten classroom work to both reproduce and resist dominant ideologies about Spanish. Through participant-observation, interviews, and audio recordings of naturally-occurring speech, I identify three distinguishable practices: modeling Spanish, positioning students equally, and creating possibilities for cooperative learning. After analysis, I find these practices were, for the most part, effective in raising the value of Spanish in the classroom, and thus rejecting dominant ideologies about English as the only acceptable language of instruction. However, no matter how hard the teacher tried to create a tolerant environment, there were still instances where the hegemony of English persisted and dominant language ideologies were reproduced instead of resisted.

Keywords: bilingual education, language ideologies, discourse analysis, language socialization, linguistic domination, resistance

Introduction

In modern U.S. society, the prevailing language ideology is one where Standard English is valued and Spanish (and Spanish/English code-switching) is stigmatized. According to this ideology, English is the language of power while Spanish is a minority language, unfit for academic or professional settings (Urciuoli 1996). Speakers of Spanish are positioned in a subordinate status to speakers of English, and this sociopolitical struggle is played out in the daily interactions of education.

According to the US Census, nearly 12 million school-aged children speak a language other than English at home. These students are either empowered or disabled by schools depending on the extent to which those schools reproduce or counteract the power relations that exist between their home language and English in society (Cummins 1986). Schools function as a primary source of children's socialization to US culture. This means a school's efforts to either perpetuate or resist the dominant ideologies about English and Spanish have a huge impact on children's attitudes toward those languages and their speakers. Unfortunately, "when the majority group wishes to keep a minority group in a subordinate status, school rules are subconsciously used to maintain the hierarchical relationship" (Ovando, Combs, & Collier 2006: 136). This is certainly the case in mainstream schools where the minority status of Spanish is reflected by the curriculum content, classroom activities, assessment practices, and everyday interactions between teachers and students.

Thankfully, alternatives exist to mainstream education. One such alternative is two-way immersion or dual language programs. By providing academic instruction in both English and Spanish (or other minority language), these programs at least implicitly challenge the prejudiced belief that English should be afforded a higher status in schools. Because dual language

programs ideally elevate the status of minority languages and their speakers, they “can be understood as contesting the legitimacy of monolingualism in Standard English as the unquestioned norm in mainstream US schools” (Freeman 1998).

Such a powerful goal raises questions about the classroom practices that work to accomplish it. Children’s attitudes toward and their use of language are influenced by the language ideologies that are implicitly or explicitly taught to them, for example by their teachers. So what ideologies are actually being communicated by teachers and larger school environments in dual language programs? And what are the practices through which teachers communicate those ideologies? The reality of messages being communicated to students can be found by studying the day-to-day practices and interactions of the teacher.

In this study, I use an ethnographic/discourse analysis approach to examine how one teacher’s practices in a dual language kindergarten classroom work to either reproduce or resist dominant ideologies about Spanish. This year-long project uses La Paz, a dual language elementary school in the Midwest, as a case study to analyze how (and to what extent) certain teaching practices value or fail to value Spanish. Through weekly participant-observation, I focused on how minority language students (Spanish-dominant speakers) are positioned relative to majority language students (English-dominant speakers) in classroom interactions. Through interviews and audio recordings of naturally-occurring speech, I focus on instances where dominant or resistant language ideologies are (explicitly or implicitly) expressed by the teacher and students.

Literature Review

The elements at play in this study are threefold: (a) the dominant language ideologies about English and Spanish and their speakers, (b) how children are socialized into those

ideologies by schools, and (c) how dual-language programs can be considered sites of resistance against those ideologies. Anthropologists and educators have studied each of these elements in detail, and their work provides the theoretical orientation for my study at La Paz.

Language Ideologies

Definition. All languages (and dialects) are equal in linguistic terms; no matter if it's English, Spanish, Swahili, or American Sign Language, each language allows its community an equally efficient means of communication. So, how is it that certain languages are afforded lower or higher status in society? This happens because languages do not exist in a vacuum; they are socially charged and deeply intertwined with culture. A major part of culture's relationship with language can be understood by studying language ideologies. For the purposes of this study, I draw on Woolard and Shieffelin's (1994) work to define language ideologies as "beliefs and attitudes which link social structures and forms of talk." Language ideologies are the reason every linguistic resource (every code choice, grammatical choice, word choice, and pronunciation) is loaded with social values (Heller 2007). Because of language ideologies, the way people use language can index everything from their age, gender, and social class, to their race, ethnicity, and group affiliations. Some speakers use this indexical quality of language to their advantage in negotiating and expressing their identities. For example, in Bailey's (2001) study of Dominican-American high school students, he shows how the teens exploit various registers, accents, sociolects, and words in both English and Spanish to project the identity of "not-white, hispanic, but not fresh-off-the-boat" teens. Studying language ideologies allows scholars to connect micro-level speech practices to questions that operate on a larger scale like cultural identity, morality, power, inequality, and social stereotypes (Ahearn 2012).

Dominant ideologies about English and Spanish. It is important to note that language ideologies almost always serve the interests of a particular social group (Kroskrity ctd. in Ahearn 2012). One way a powerful group can maintain its power is by encouraging language ideologies that label their own language as “standard” and other languages as sub-standard. Lippi-Green defines this Standard Language Ideology (SLI) as: “a bias toward an abstract, idealized, homogenous spoken language which is imposed and maintained by dominant bloc institutions and which names as its model the written language, but which is drawn primarily from the spoken language of the upper middle class” (2012: 67). In the U.S. this ideology prizes a hypothetical construct of English spoken exclusively by white, highly educated, wealthy Americans. Clearly this is far from representative of America’s actual population. Despite its impossibility, the myth of standard language is so widely accepted that it has become part of our cultural heritage. The message is clear: English is the language of power and Spanish is not.

This ideology is spread through a process of language domination, or “well-accepted arguments which are used to legitimize the values of the mainstream and to devalue the non-conforming language” (Lippi-Green 2012: 70). In the U.S., speakers are promised benefits if they learn to speak English, and threatened with disadvantages if they continue to speak Spanish. A speaker who persists in speaking Spanish risks having her privileges and rights ignored. Every day she encounters the message that “no one important will take you seriously if you talk like that” and comes to view Spanish as a barrier to her economic security. On the other hand, she is assured if she speaks English, she will be taken seriously and gain opportunities for employment, success, and recognition (González & Arnot-Hopffer 2003).

These ideologies about English and Spanish have been internalized by many bilingual speakers. In a study of Puerto Ricans in New York, Urciuoli (1996) found that their language use

changed depending on the social situation. They used English in formal, authority-directed situations (like conversations with social workers or school administrators), but they codeswitched into Spanish only in intimate, familiar settings. Instances when they had to communicate “across inequalities of race, class, and authority [were] the situations in which ‘good English’ becomes most crucial” (Urciuoli 1996: 107). The everyday interactions of the Puerto Ricans in her study were influenced by the ideology that English is the language of power while Spanish is a minority language, inappropriate for academic or professional settings.

Sociopolitical consequences of these ideologies. Ideologies which have that great an effect on speakers’ interactions are surely reflections of larger societal struggles. For example, in Urciuoli’s study, the two codes (languages or dialects) are hierarchically related to each other. One code is labeled the prestige code and the other is labeled the low status code. The prestige code tends to be used in situations where there is an official purpose, such as speaking with authorities, schooling, or writing. The low status code tends to be limited to informal and domestic situations like conversations with family and friends (Ahearn 2012; Garrett 2007).

In order to maintain this hierarchy of languages, a system of domination must exist to raise the value of the prestige language and devalue the minority language. Such a system would be called a linguistic hegemony. Because English is considered the superior language and Spanish is considered inferior, one could argue a hegemony of English rules in the United States (Shannon 1995). Hegemonies operate by persuading minority groups to consent to their own domination. The dominant group uses propaganda to convince minority groups to accept the dominant group’s language as standard (Bourdieu 1991; Lippi-Green 1997). According to this argument, the subordination of “non-standard” languages is simply the natural way of things; it’s in the best interest of society as a whole. These kind of arguments can be seen in the U.S. in

the form of policies which fight to make English the official language in some states. These policies cite “commonsense” ideas like “one language unifies and strengthens a nation; a nation ought to have one official language. Because English is the key to success in the U.S., it’s obvious that English should be that language” (Heller 2007; Bailey 2007; Gonzalez & Arnot-Hopffer 2003; Krashen 2000). These arguments can be extremely persuasive, especially when they are repeated in schools, on television, in movies, in books, in the workplace, and any other place where one could encounter political propaganda.

With the constant barrage of the hegemony of English, it’s little wonder why Spanish speakers feel pressure to abandon their language in favor of English. Unfortunately, if a minority language is devalued enough, it can eventually lead to language shift or even language death. One famous example of this is Kulick’s (1992) study of language shift in Gupan, Papua New Guinea. In Gapun, adults were almost all bilingual in their ancestral language, Taiap, and the lingua franca, Tok Pisin. The children in the village, however, only seemed to be acquiring Tok Pisin. The parents didn’t think they were causing their children to shift languages, but Kulick shows how cultural shifts toward modernization may have influenced their language socialization practices. With the advent of Christianity in the village, Taiap became associated with backwardness and paganism while Tok Pisin became associated with Christian values and modernity. These associations were implicitly socialized to children and they were prevented from becoming fluent in their ancestral language, and only acquired the dominant language. This process is in some ways similar to the pressure for Spanish speakers to shift to English. I do not mean to imply that the linguistic assimilation of Spanish speakers in the U.S. may lead to the language death of Spanish, but the negative language ideologies toward Spanish in the U.S. have real consequences which need to be reversed.

Language Socialization

Definition. In order for the hegemony of English to continue, it must constantly be renewed and defended. This is accomplished through language socialization. There are many different working definitions for language socialization, but for the purposes of this study Garrett and Baquedano-López's definition will serve: "the process through which a child or other novice acquires the [language] knowledge, orientations, and practices that enable him or her to participate effectively and appropriately in the social life of a particular community" (2002: 339). In other words, learning a language and becoming a competent member of society are parts of a single process (Ochs & Schieffelin 1984). Garrett (2007) explains that through language socialization, a child comes to understand: (a) how her community organizes linguistic resources and, (b) the politicization of those resources. So, while acquiring languages, a child also acquires her society's dominant ideologies about those languages. Children's ability to understand the social structures associated with different linguistic resources is crucial to their production of "locally intelligible subjectivities."

Schools as socializing institutions. Schools function as a major source of children's socialization to U.S. culture. Children's attitude toward and use of language is influenced by the language ideologies that are implicitly or explicitly taught to them, especially by their teachers (Bourdieu 1991). This means schools are in a prime position to reinforce the hegemony of English. Schools assign value to language and literacy resources and regulate access to them. Schools give language legitimacy because they are institutions linked to the state. They "serve as spaces within which specific languages and specific linguistic practices (ways of speaking, reading, and writing) come to be inculcated with legitimacy and authority" (Martin-Jones 2007: 172).

One might believe education is a meritocratic, and therefore democratic, opportunity for minority students to access to social success. Unfortunately, schools traditionally reproduce existing social hierarchies. Choices are made in schools to cater to those who are already privileged (i.e. monolingual speakers of English) (Heller 2008). Like all dominant institutions, schools participate in the reproduction of the hegemony of English through a two-step process. First, they devalue all language that “is not (or does not seek to be) politically, culturally or socially marked as belonging to the privileged class,” and second, they validate the language of the privileged class (Lippi-Green 1997: 68). So, by stigmatizing Spanish and celebrating English, educational institutions symbolically dominate Spanish-speaking students. When the linguistic and cultural values of minority children are negated in this way, it leads to poor performance and educational failure (Cummins 1986) as well as insecurity and even shame (Tse 1998a).

How are dominant ideologies communicated by schools? Both explicit and implicit messages play a part in a child’s socialization. A teacher never has to come out and say “English is better than Spanish” for that message to be communicated to her students. The minority status of Spanish is reflected in many subtle ways in the classroom. One major reason for this is the minimal professional development in Spanish literacy that is offered to teachers (Beeman & Urow 2013). This lack of teacher preparation makes it hard for teachers to encourage students to value Spanish. Teachers are expected to take advantage of opportunities for professional development in mainstream instruction, but training on supporting multilingual students is rarely available or, if it is an option, it’s never required. This leads to teachers using traditional practices in their classrooms which fail to value Spanish and contribute to the hegemonic domination of English.

A common mistake in classrooms of the past (and also laws of the present) has been a belief in subtractive bilingualism. This is the ideology that a student's minority language knowledge is not useful, and the goal of education should be to "fix" the child's language so she can speak "good English." This approach disregards minority students' lived experiences and previous knowledge (Rymes 2003). It also forces teachers to think of students as stereotypes of their culture instead of "discovering them" as individuals (Ovando, Combs, & Collier 2006). Traditional instruction repeatedly positions minority language students in subordinate roles relative to the authoritative, English-speaking teacher, further reproducing the power relations that exist between English and Spanish in society.

Mendoza-Denton's (2008) study of Latina high school students in California presents a perfect example of minority language students' negative experience in a mainstream school. In this school, students with a Spanish language background were funneled through an ESL program which categorized them by English proficiency. Though the ESL courses counted for credit, they did not count as part of the college preparatory track required for entry into California universities. Due to their placement in the ESL program, the majority of Latino students never moved on to mainstream classes and were ineligible to attend four-year universities. The Latino students' Spanish language knowledge was seen as something to be eradicated in favor of the English skills required to succeed in a mainstream classroom. This is a clear devaluation of Spanish and validation of English as the language of success and intelligence.

Another way this struggle is reflected is in the lack of multilingual resources and assignments which take advantage of minority students' full repertoire of linguistic resources.

These realities communicate the message that Spanish is not valued—and that's the ideology which gets socialized by mainstream schools.

Bilingual Education

Sites of resistance to dominant language ideologies. If mainstream schools effectively support the domination of English, then bilingual education programs can be seen as a challenge to that domination. Even though hegemony works to make it seem like the dominant way is naturally the only way, this idea must constantly be renewed and defended. This means within a hegemony there is room for dominated groups to recognize, resist, and even overcome their domination (Bourdieu 1991).

Members of a minority group can reject their inferior status in one of two ways: either by assimilating, or by reappropriating the “negative” characteristics of their identity. Many Spanish-speakers choose assimilation (meaning they abandon Spanish) because they internalize the idea that English is the key to success. Bilingual schools, however, create an alternative to assimilation because they redefine Spanish as equal to English and create a space where minority identities are expected, tolerated, and respected (Freeman 1998). A primary goal of bilingual programs is to reject the negative positioning of minority language students. Instead, they work to elevate the status of minority students and the languages they speak so that all students, regardless of background, can participate more or less equally.

Many studies of bilingual programs have been conducted in the U.S. and worldwide. One such study is Jaffe's (2007) exploration of how minority language movements counteract dominant language ideologies in Corsica. Historically in Corsica, French was the dominant language and Corsican was the devalued minority language. Much like U.S. schools, Corsican schools believed bilingualism hindered children's process of learning to be monolingual in the

dominant language, so instruction was only offered in French. In the 2000's, however, attitudes shifted in Corsica and bilingualism came to be seen as a cognitive and cultural benefit. Bilingual schools were implemented and worked to teach French and Corsican as equally valuable codes, thus raising the status of Corsican and challenging the domination of French. Similar programs in the U.S. have been found to be effective at offering the same challenge to English domination (González & Arnot-Hopffer 2003; Rymes 2003; Shannon 1995; Tse 1998a; Freeman 1998; Cummins 1986; etc.).

Classroom practices. No matter how effective these programs might be, when one language has a minority status in society, it's an uphill battle for teachers to contend with negative ideologies about that language, and toward bilingualism and bilingual speakers in general. So, what practices and teaching strategies aid them in this battle to elevate the status of a minority language and its speakers?

Freeman's (1998) two-year study with the Oyster Bilingual School in Washington DC offers some insight. Freeman argues Oyster educators constructed an alternative to mainstream education with their dual language policy, multicultural curriculum content, student-centered classroom interaction, and culturally sensitive assessment practices. These practices neatly align with the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education as suggested by the Center for Applied Linguistics (Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers 2007).

In all dual language or bilingual programs, the most effective way to raise the status of a minority language is for the teacher to actually speak that language. By modeling Spanish (and directing students to use it as much as they are able), teachers position Spanish as equally legitimate and important as English. Teachers can also communicate the value of Spanish by ensuring equal availability of materials (books, textbooks, music, etc.) in both languages, and by

encouraging parents and the community to support Spanish at home. Finally, teachers in bilingual programs base their practices on the idea of additive bilingualism instead of subtractive bilingualism. Instead of viewing a bilingual student's minority language as something to be "fixed" and replaced with English, educators value students' previous language knowledge and experience. Teachers affirm their students ethnolinguistic heritage and use it as a base upon which to build new knowledge (Ovando, Combs, & Collier 2006; Beeman & Urow 2013).

In this model, minority language students are engaged in a dynamic partnership with the teacher. Instead of positioning students as passive, subordinate learners, the teacher encourages active, cooperative learning. When groups of linguistically diverse students are encouraged to learn from each other, they are socialized into expecting and respecting diversity, and will learn to treat each other as equal (Freeman 1998). In an ideal bilingual classroom, whether students speak Spanish, English, or a mix of the two, they all have an equal right to participate in the classroom discourse. The teaching strategies which encourage this type of classroom environment reject the power relations that exist between English and Spanish in society. Instead, they elevate the status of Spanish and its speakers, effectively resisting English language domination.

Methodology

This study used an ethnographic approach to examine teaching practices and student-teacher interactions in one kindergarten classroom at a dual-language immersion public school. I focused on both formal, teacher-directed instruction and informal student interactions in the classroom. The study lasted for a nearly a full school year; I began observations in the beginning of September and continued until the end of March. I practiced participant-observation during these site visits, alternating between the role of researcher, student, and teacher's assistant. I took

fieldnotes and obtained hours of audio recordings of naturally-occurring discourse in the classroom and other sites of the school day, such as recess and lunch. The goal of this approach was to gain a deep understanding of the cultural norms of the classroom and gather data about the messages being communicated to students about Spanish and English.

Background Information- Part of a Larger Study

This study was part of a larger research project being conducted by Dr. Kristina Wirtz at the same site, titled “Learning to be bilingual in a dual language school.” The central research aim of Dr. Wirtz’s study was to “characterize the relationship between bilingual and emergent bilingual children’s use of and attitudes toward what are commonly understood (and formally taught) as two separate codes, Spanish and English” (Wirtz 2013). By focusing on the informal, peer-to-peer communicative practices of the students, Dr. Wirtz’s research questions: “to what extent and in what contexts do children use [Spanish and English] as discrete codes, rather than engage in more flexible practices that depart from monolingual norms and forms, such as interlanguageing, translanguaging, or polylanguageing?” (Wirtz 2013). As a research assistant to Dr. Wirtz, my study is a contribution to her larger, ongoing project. Data for this study was collected primarily by me, but my analysis draws on data collected from Mrs. Reyes’ class by Dr. Wirtz as well.

Site Description

The school. The school under study (for which I will be using the pseudonym “La Paz”) is a public K-5 magnet school serving a high-poverty, urban population of about 350 students in a large school district located in the upper Midwest. The school receives U.S. Department of Education Title I funding for school-wide basic programs to serve children of low-income families, and approximately 80% of the school’s students qualify for free or reduced-cost lunch.

The school, in existence for six years, promotes dual-language immersion through “equal time” in each language for all academic subjects, with the goals of developing “balanced bilingualism” and pride in Hispanic language and culture. Because of a general scarcity of elementary-certified teachers trained in second language instruction, children in most grade levels move between two teachers’ classrooms to receive instruction in English from one and in Spanish from the other.

Mrs. Reyes’ class. In the particular kindergarten class under study, however, a single teacher, Mrs. Reyes, instructs in Spanish for the first part of the day (from the students’ arrival until recess) and in English for the second part of the day (from after lunch until dismissal). The students attend a “special” activity like art, music, library, or gym for up to one hour every day with a separate “specials” teacher, who instructs only in English. In the classroom, there are three different physical areas which the students can occupy: their desks, the mat, or the centers. The daily routine is structured around these three areas, and different types of instruction occur at each. Start-of-the-day activities, teacher-directed reading, and introduction to new material happens with all students seated closely together on the mat, facing the teacher and her easel. Structured practice of new knowledge (science experiments, individual reading, working in the math books, etc.) happens at the desks, which are arranged in groups of varying size, and are changed often throughout the year. Hands-on application of new knowledge happens at the centers, which are rotating stations where the students work in small groups to complete tasks involving different materials depending on the subject (whiteboards for writing, balancing scales or dice games for math, velcro word-boards with matching pictures for reading, etc.). The language of instruction in all three areas depends on the time of day—Spanish in the morning and English in the afternoon. Subjects are taught during these times so students receive math and science instruction in Spanish, and language arts and social studies instruction in English. Mrs.

Reyes also finds time to teach a short Spanish literacy block at the end of the Spanish half of the day.

Population

The students. The school's student population is racially diverse and includes children from Spanish-speaking, Spanish-language heritage, and English-speaking households. The school's admission policy seeks to maintain roughly equal proportions of these groups. While Latin American, Spanish, and Caribbean national heritages are represented at the school, the majority of Hispanic students at La Paz are of Mexican heritage. Non-Hispanic students in the school are primarily white, African-American, or multiracial/multiethnic. In the particular kindergarten class under study, there were 20 students; 10 English-dominant and 10 Spanish-dominant (according to my own observation of their speech practices).

The teacher. Mrs. Reyes has been teaching kindergarten at La Paz for all six years that the school has been open. She was born in Mexico and moved with her family to Michigan at the age of six. Growing up, she spoke Spanish at home, but attended rural schools where she was expected to speak only English in the classroom. As a result, she didn't learn to read and write in Spanish until she took Spanish courses in college. Mrs. Reyes earned her degree at a local university in Elementary Education and Spanish. She has specialized endorsements to teach in Spanish and in early childhood classrooms. She is also the assistant director of a summer school program for children of Mexican migrant workers. All of this experience attests to Mrs. Reyes' fluent bilingualism and excellent Spanish language instruction skills.

Data Collection

The project tracked an opportunity sampling of students from one kindergarten class (20 students total) and their teacher. Studying kindergarten is ideal because it serves as the starting

point of a child's school socialization. In compliance with Western Michigan University's HSIRB-approved protocol, informed consent was obtained from guardians of 18 students in the class and from school staff working with the class. The study lasted for nearly the full 2013-2014 school year, with weekly observations beginning in September and ending in March. Ethnographic and discourse data was collected from observation, audio and video recording during the school day, and from informal interviews with students and the teacher.

Observation. Every Monday for the duration of the study, I spent the Spanish-instruction half of the day and part of the English-instruction half of the day (5-6 hours) in the classroom doing intensive observation and participant-observation. Depending on the activity, I alternated between several roles: observer, participant, and facilitator. In the classroom at times when Mrs. Reyes was giving formal instruction I served as an outside observer, taking detailed notes about her teaching practices and the reactions of her students. During center activities, I frequently took on a teacher's assistant role, facilitating one of the stations (in Spanish only) and making sure students stayed on task. During lunch, recess, and other free time in the classroom, I took on a participant role and talked freely with the students both in Spanish and English. I took detailed fieldnotes for every observation.

Audio and video recording. Another method of data collection was recording naturally occurring discourse using a combination of handheld recorders, video and microphone arrays, and recorders worn by individual students. Over the course of the study, I obtained over 60 hours of audio and video consisting mostly of teacher-directed instruction and students talking during group work times in the classroom. Much of this audio was recorded by setting a recorder on a table, always with students' knowledge and assent. Beginning in October, I also did recordings of ordinary classroom, lunch, recess, and hallway activity by having individual students wear a

smaller audio recorder on a lanyard around their neck, sometimes for up to an hour at a time. As part of Dr. Wirtz's larger study, we also recorded video of recess and lunch periods. My goal with these recordings was to sample ordinary interactions between the students and staff during the school day, throughout a variety of activities.

Informal interviews. The final method of data collection was informal and semi-formal interviews with Mrs. Reyes. Both Dr. Wirtz and I interviewed Mrs. Reyes about differing topics at various points throughout the school year. These interviews included questioning and playing samples of recorded student interactions to Mrs. Reyes and getting her interpretation and opinion on them. The goal of the interviews was to hear Mrs. Reyes' reflection on language learning and use.

Data analysis. All relevant audio and video recordings were transcribed using the software InqScribe. These transcriptions and typed fieldnotes were organized, coded, and analyzed using the Atlas.ti qualitative analysis software platform. Coding focused on moments explicitly addressing attitudes about language and speakers, language contact phenomena such as code-switching, and examples of different teaching practices from Mrs. Reyes which either raised or lowered the value of Spanish in the classroom. These themes were examined across many instances of classroom interaction, and then a subset was selected for closer discourse analysis. The subset consisted of interactions on the mat from February and March. By this time in the school year the norms of classroom interaction were part of an accepted routine (as opposed to the beginning of the year when norms were more often explicitly taught as the children grew accustomed to school life). By narrowing my analysis to interactions on the mat, I focused on teacher-directed discourse which highlights the ideologies communicated to students.

Discourse Analysis Framework

The ethnographic/discourse analytic approach I took to study Mrs. Reyes' class serves as a link between the micro-level context of student-teacher classroom interactions and the macro-level context of social, political, and historical processes in which the school exists. "A primary goal of critical discourse analysis is to describe, interpret, and explain how macro-level sociopolitical struggles between social groups play out in micro-level spoken and written texts" (Fairclough qtd. in Freeman 1998). Schools are institutions that have a dominant presence on the macro-level of broader society. But schooling also permeates children's everyday experiences, thereby shaping micro-level interactions that accrue, over time as socialization and identity formation. By studying the "micro-level spoken and written texts" produced by members of this particular institution (students and teachers), we can relate their discourse to larger discourses about the sociopolitical struggle between Spanish and English in the U.S.

Results

Ideal Plan (the Goal of La Paz)

In order to answer the research question—how do one teacher's practices in a dual language kindergarten classroom work to either reproduce or resist dominant ideologies about Spanish?—it helps to first understand the goal of the school where that teacher works. Mrs. Reyes' classroom practices are not the only things that socialize students into certain ideologies; the entire school environment contributes to this socialization process. Dominant and resistant language ideologies are reflected in the school's policies, curriculum content, assessment practices, resource availability, family/community involvement, teacher training, etc. Like any institution, there are differences between what La Paz officially claims to accomplish and what it actually accomplishes. For this reason, I will quickly detail the supposed norms of interactions—

the “ideal plan” of La Paz—before I explore the actual practices I observed in Mrs. Reyes’ class.

The school’s mission statement presents four goals which constitute La Paz’s ideal plan:

1. All students will be proficient in their first language
2. All students will be proficient in their second language
3. All students will perform at, or above grade level in all academic areas
4. All students will gain and appreciate a multicultural perspective

These are admirable goals which certainly challenge the norm of monolingual English in US schools. La Paz does work to accomplish these goals through its multicultural curriculum content and dual-language program.

Two-way immersion. La Paz promotes dual-language immersion through “equal time” in each language for all academic subjects, with the aim of developing “balanced bilingualism” (in accordance with the school’s first two goals). As the principal of the school explained to parents in her Kindergarten Orientation presentation:

“50% of the students' day, they will receive instruction in English, and 50% of the day they'll receive instruction in Spanish...what we do here at La Paz is we immerse the students in their other language. So, whether that's English or Spanish, that means we put them in the water and we don't translate. That's what it comes down to, we don't translate. If someone's having a hard time, we stay in that language of instruction that whole time and eventually they will get it.”

With this program, there is an expectation that students will take Spanish and English equally seriously and work hard to become proficient in both. Because teachers will not translate, students who enter La Paz as monolingual English speakers are likely to be frustrated during the half of the day when the language of instruction is Spanish. At this point the teachers and

families must work together to socialize the students into the ideology that Spanish is, in fact, valuable and worth struggling for. Mrs. Reyes always tries to communicate to her students that learning Spanish is worthwhile:

“We talk about how important it is to learn in two languages, or how cool it is to learn two languages. So, making it a positive thing, like, ‘You know two things, you know two languages. Wow, that's great. It's way more fun to know both.’”

Community support. For this socialization to be fully effective, however, it must occur at home as well as in the classroom. During Kindergarten Orientation, the principal urged parents to read, listen to music, and watch television with their children in Spanish. Parents were also advised to purchase a Spanish-English dictionary and become familiar with quality Spanish-translation tools online. The principal stated that the goal of these activities should be to “send the message to your child that, for you as well, Spanish and English are both equally important.” While these are good suggestions of activities to show support for Spanish at home, they only go so far. English-speaking parents could bring home Spanish music or books, but without understanding Spanish, the parents would be unable to connect to the material in a meaningful way with their child. No matter how many Spanish songs or television shows they play, without any extra effort or support, the message these parents would be sending their child is that English is still more important to know than Spanish, and especially in the immediate context of their family relationships.

English-speaking families at La Paz are faced with the difficult task of trying to avoid socializing their children into dominant language ideologies. The teachers at La Paz have training, resources, and support systems for resisting the hegemony of English, but at home,

parents face this uphill battle alone. In earlier years, the school offered classes for parents who wished to learn Spanish, but this program no longer exists. So, while it is part of La Paz's ideal plan that parents elevate the level of Spanish at home, families who speak no Spanish are not provided many resources or support systems from the school to help them in that endeavor.

Gaining a multicultural perspective. The final part of La Paz's ideal plan is for students to gain and appreciate a multicultural perspective. As Mrs. Reyes put it, the goal is for her students to "build empathy for people who are different from [them]" and gain "exposure to other cultures." The population of La Paz is certainly diverse enough that students will gain exposure to "people who are different from them" simply by interacting with their classmates. The teachers encourage all students (regardless of their linguistic or cultural background) to see themselves and each other as equally legitimate participants in the classroom discourse. In and out of the classroom, the teachers and staff work to create an environment at La Paz that is accepting of all students.

Observed Practices

In accordance with the Center for Applied Linguistics' Two-Way Immersion Education Guidelines (2007), Mrs. Reyes worked in all modalities to provide instruction to her diverse students. She made use of demonstration, hands-on applications, multimedia visual aids, patterned songs, chants, and stories, and countless other practices. While these general teaching practices were meant to benefit all learners, I will focus specifically on the practices which worked to raise the value of Spanish and position language minority students as equal participants in the classroom discourse.

In the following sections, I detail Mrs. Reyes' three most distinguishable Spanish-valuing practices that I observed over the last year: modeling Spanish, positioning students equally, and creating possibilities for cooperative learning. Each of these practices was the result of a conscious effort by Mrs. Reyes. For the most part, these practices were effective in raising the value of Spanish in Mrs. Reyes' classroom, and thus rejecting dominant ideologies about English as the only acceptable language of instruction. However, no matter how hard Mrs. Reyes tried to create a tolerant environment, there were still instances where the hegemony of English persisted and dominant language ideologies were reproduced instead of resisted. For each of the following sections I provide excerpts from interviews, audio recordings, and summaries of fieldnotes to show typical examples of when each practice either valued or failed to value Spanish and Spanish-speaking students.

Language use. As the school's "two-way immersion" classification suggests, the students were fully immersed in the language of instruction during the Spanish and English halves of the day. This allowed Mrs. Reyes one of the most effective practices to raise the value of Spanish in her classroom: simply speaking Spanish without having to translate. Mrs. Reyes presented herself to her students as a role model of a native Spanish speaker who views bilingualism as an asset. The guiding text for La Paz's new curriculum, *Teaching for Biliteracy*, urges teachers to maintain the language of instruction with absolutely no codeswitching or translating (Beeman & Urow 2013). Mrs. Reyes takes pride in her adherence to this "rule:"

"I don't code-switch, I don't go back and forth. I stay in Spanish. Sometimes I have the kids translate for each other, but it's not like I'm going into English. They know the morning is Spanish, right after lunch is Spanish, and then we say our 'Adios español' and they know I'm going right into English."

Modeling Spanish without translating or codeswitching sent the message to her students that Spanish *is* a serious language fit for academic settings. If a bilingual teacher were constantly offering translations for English-dominant students, the students would learn to wait for the translation instead of recognizing the equal importance of Spanish and making an effort to understand it. That type of interaction would be in accordance with dominant language ideologies that expect non-English speakers to bear the burden of communication alone and constantly accommodate to English-speakers. By making a conscious effort to never translate or codeswitch with her students, Mrs. Reyes effectively resisted those dominant ideologies and positioned Spanish as a valuable, important language for learning.

Another way Mrs. Reyes raised the level of Spanish in her classroom was by encouraging her students to speak it as well. At a kindergarten level, students are obviously not expected hold full conversations in their second language, but they are expected to repeat common words and phrases. Over the course of the year, Mrs. Reyes used many repeated words and phrases to establish classroom routines. Also, because math was taught exclusively in Spanish, students in her classroom were expected to know math terms like numbers and words related to addition in Spanish. The only instances when Mrs. Reyes explicitly asked students to give their answers in Spanish were when the answer was a common word or phrase like a math term which she knew the student had the ability to offer in Spanish.

Every other instance when a student offered a comment in English during Spanish-instruction time, Mrs. Reyes accepted it. She did, however, implicitly correct the students by repeating their answers or comments back to them in Spanish before moving on. Below is a typical example of this practice in action on the mat one morning between Mrs. Reyes and Sarah, who entered La Paz as a monolingual English speaker.

(K1-AM-mat 3-10-14)

Mrs. Reyes: *hoy es el día diez*

?: *diez*

Mrs. Reyes: *el diez de marzo de dos mil*

?: *catorce*

Mrs. Reyes: *Catorce. Sí, Sarah?*

Sarah: In ten days it's going to be Spring

Mrs. Reyes: *Aha, va llegar la primavera, muy bien*

[English translation]

Mrs. Reyes: Today is the tenth

?: ten

Mrs. Reyes: the tenth of March of two thousand

?: fourteen

Mrs. Reyes: fourteen. Yes, Sarah?

Sarah: In ten days it's going to be Spring

Mrs. Reyes: Aha, Spring is coming, very good

Here Mrs. Reyes accepted Sarah's comment in English ("It's going to be Spring") as a relevant contribution to their conversation about the date. Within one response, Mrs. Reyes praised Sarah for her contribution ("Aha, very good") and modeled the Spanish translation of her comment ("*Va a llegar la primavera*"). While it's not an explicit demand that Sarah provide her comments in Spanish, it is an implicit correction of her English speech. This practice redirected students to use Spanish as much as they were able. When asked why she always repeats students' answers back to them in Spanish, Mrs. Reyes responded:

"It's the whole idea of 'I'm gonna give it to you in Spanish because hopefully if I give it to you enough, you'll pick up the sentence frame, or you will try to use some of the words that are there.' So, if they can give me the word in Spanish, I accept it. If they know it in English, good. If I can help them by giving them the phrase, good."

Because Mrs. Reyes spoke only Spanish during the Spanish half of the day, students were encouraged to make an effort to also speak Spanish. Their English comments were accepted as a good sign they were engaging in the Spanish lesson, but Mrs. Reyes also made sure to provide

them with the necessary vocabulary and phrasing they would need to attempt the same comment in Spanish. For example, in the excerpt above, Mrs. Reyes' response equipped Sarah with the Spanish word for Spring (*la primavera*) as well as the grammatical structure in Spanish for talking about something which will arrive (*ir a + infinitive verb*).

While modeling Spanish and redirecting students to speak it are practices that resisted dominant language ideologies, there were also instances in Mrs. Reyes class when these practices failed. A major issue at La Paz is that not all teachers and staff are bilingual like Mrs. Reyes. This means that when a non-Spanish-speaking teacher or staff member popped into the room to speak with Mrs. Reyes, the conversation would take place in English, regardless of whether it was the Spanish-instruction half of the day or not. Urgent announcements over the intercom were also made in English because it was the default language all teachers and staff would be sure to understand. When these English-speaking teachers or announcements interrupted the Spanish-instruction half of the day, it sent a message to Mrs. Reyes' students that it is more valuable and important to speak English than Spanish. These interactions also reproduced the dominant ideology that English is, and should be, the "standard" which everyone speaks and understands.

Positioning students. Another of Mrs. Reyes' practices that raised the value of Spanish and Spanish speakers was positioning students as equally legitimate participants in classroom interactions. This practice comes from the idea of additive bilingualism. Educators who believe in additive bilingualism value students' previous language knowledge and experience and use it as a base upon which to build new knowledge. Mrs. Reyes was certainly a believer in this idea:

"I've always had the idea that being bilingual is about what you have linguistically. It's not about one language or the other language, it's about what can you use from both that

helps you become a successful learner... I feel like some teachers don't see that... there's some that just believe there's this whole idea of the 'blank slate,' like [students] just come in with nothing. And I always get so frustrated because, unless they come in mute and didn't have any communication with anybody, okay, that to me is a blank slate. But when they refer to kids that come in I always like to say they have 'limited resources' or they haven't built their resources. So, for the first two months, I'm always just trying to figure out what they know, and whether they know it in Spanish and English. I feel like you have to know what they know linguistically in order for you to be able to build on that.”

The first way Mrs. Reyes valued students of all language backgrounds was by giving Spanish-dominant students equal opportunities to participate in class activities. One typical example of this practice is an interaction which occurred every morning at the mat, where the language of instruction was always Spanish. There were several activities which formed the morning mat routine: singing the days of the week and months of the year, saying the day's date, moving the hands on the “weather clock,” and adding a straw to a cloth chart on the board that had a pocket for the one's place and a pocket for the ten's place. Every morning Mrs. Reyes would choose Spanish-dominant students who were struggling academically to complete these tasks in front of the class. The following excerpt is an example of one such student, Silvia, completing the straws activity.

(K1-AM-RecG1 2-24):

Mrs. Reyes: Silvia, *puedes poner un popote en nuestro, en nuestro*

?: *{{Había treinta y cuatro*

Mrs. Reyes: *{{En nuestra bolsa? Bolsillo. SqG1, ya terminastes? Rápido por favor. Oops, cuidado, levántalo por favor. Ya está. Y cambia el número, ahora tenemos treint- cuantos, cuantos unidades tenemos?*

Several voices: *treinta y cuatro*

Mrs. Reyes: *Estoy preguntando a Silvia. Cuantos hay?*

Silvia: *Cuatro*

Mrs. Reyes: *Muy bien entonces tenemos cuatro unidades.*

[Mrs. Reyes: Silvia, can you put a straw in our, in our
?: {{There were thirty-four
Mrs. Reyes: {{In our bag? Pocket. SqG1, did you finish? Quickly please. Oops, careful, lift it up
please. There it is. And change the number, now we have thirt- how, how many units do we
have?
Several voices: thirty-four
Mrs. Reyes: I'm asking Silvia. How many are there?
Silvia: Four
Mrs. Reyes: Very good, so we have four units.]

This interaction elevated Silvia's status in several ways. Mrs. Reyes provided her the opportunity to demonstrate her Spanish fluency and knowledge of something the other students did not necessarily know. Although several other students offered an answer to Mrs. Reyes' question, she only accepted Silvia's answer, then repeated Silvia's answer back and praised her. This gave Silvia as well as the other students the opportunity to view Silvia as successful. Repeated positioning of Silvia (and other Spanish-dominant students) as successful in the classroom interaction allowed all of the students, including Silvia, to think of Silvia as an equal participant who had important contributions to make to the class.

Another way Mrs. Reyes positioned students equally in her classroom was by creating an empathetic community. In accordance with the fourth goal of La Paz's mission statement, Mrs. Reyes encouraged students to build empathy for their classmates with different linguistic backgrounds. In an interview she explained:

“One of the things I did talk to them about was, you know, you might not understand me for half of the day, but the kids who don't understand a lot of English don't understand me for the other half of the day. So half the day you're gonna struggle, and half the day the person next to you is gonna struggle. I said it's not something we can fix within a week. You're not gonna understand me the first week, or the first month, or maybe even the

second month. But as long as you watch what others are doing and— I say this to the Spanish kids—if you can help, help them. Just kinda build a community.”

Sending these kinds of messages to students socializes them into viewing each other as equals in a struggle to acquire a second language. Here the process of acquiring Spanish is positioned as equally legitimate and worthwhile as the struggle to become proficient in English.

Cooperative learning. The final practice that raised the value of Spanish and Spanish speakers was cooperative learning. Cooperative learning occurs when students are positioned as valuable sources of knowledge for their classmates’ learning. Mrs. Reyes was careful to construct environments where her students could learn from each other. When students were all seated together on the mat during the Spanish-instruction half of the day, Mrs. Reyes made an effort to position the students who were proficient in Spanish as resources in the English-dominant students’ learning. She accomplished this by frequently calling on Spanish-dominant students to explain concepts or answer questions about the lesson.

Below is an extremely typical example of this dynamic unfolding on the mat one morning. Part of the morning routine was for one student to turn the hands on a “weather clock” to match the weather outside that particular day. All three students in this interaction were Spanish-dominant speakers, though Alejandro and Yatzil often struggled to express themselves in front of the whole class.

(RecG1-2-24-14)

Mrs. Reyes: *A ver, Alejandro, puedes hacer el tiempo para nosotros por favor? Como está el tiempo afuera? Está cayendo el nieve, so está nevando y está nublado verdad? Déjalos así, muy bien.* (high pitched) *Qué significa cuando está nublado?*

?: Uhh::

Mrs. Reyes: *Qué significa, Yatzil? Qué significa “nublado?”*

(Yatzil is silent)

Mrs. Reyes: *A ver, Joaquin, le puedes ayudar?*

Joaquin: *Está nublado porque um, nunca va a mirar el sol*

Mrs. Reyes: *Porque no se mira el sol. Hay muchas nubes que están tapando el sol. Muy bien.*

[Mrs. Reyes: Let's see, Alejandro, can you do the weather for us please? How is the weather outside? Snow is falling, so it's snowing and it's cloudy, right? Leave them like that, very good. (high pitched) What does it mean when it's cloudy?
?: Uhh::
Mrs. Reyes: What does it mean, Yatzil? What does "cloudy" mean?
(Yatzil is silent)
Mrs. Reyes: Let's see, Joaquin, can you help her?
Joaquin: It's cloudy because, um, you're not going to see the sun
Mrs. Reyes: Because you don't see the sun. There are lots of clouds covering the sun. Very good.]

In this interaction, Mrs. Reyes clearly positioned the three Spanish speakers as potential resources of knowledge for English-dominant students who still might not understand the meaning of "*nublado*," a word that they encounter frequently during the morning routine at the mat. Mrs. Reyes posed the question "What does 'cloudy' mean?" to Alejandro, then to Yatzil, giving them both an opportunity to demonstrate their Spanish knowledge. Unfortunately both students froze up, so Mrs. Reyes called upon Joaquin to serve as a model of not only Spanish, but confident academic Spanish. He answered with a complete sentence and Mrs. Reyes' affirmed his answer by repeating it back, elaborating on it, and praising him for his contribution. Interactions like this one position Spanish-speakers as legitimate participants in the classroom and use students' previous language knowledge as a resource to teach Spanish learners.

When students were not all seated together on the mat, they were split into small, linguistically diverse groups at their desks or at learning centers. The members of each group were strategically picked by Mrs. Reyes to position students as language resources for one another. The desk groups always included two Spanish-dominant students and two English-dominant students. As Mrs. Reyes put it, the goal of this grouping was for students to be able to apply their budding second language skills:

“That's the biggest thing with either language, if they're not using it then they're not going to be able to apply it. It doesn't have any value for them. And that's one of the reasons, when they're in stations, I tell them to be at a one [quiet noise level], but my expectation isn't really a one. If they're sitting there talking about random things, are they getting their work done? Yeah? Well, then okay, that's what it is. [...] They're helping each other, because if I pair them with someone who might be struggling, I've already coached how to help.”

Mrs. Reyes strategically placed the students in diverse groups with the expectation that they will serve as resources for each other. In theory, this was a wonderful plan to elevate the status of Spanish speakers in the classroom. However, the most common interaction within these diverse groups was something like the following example with three Hispanic girls who each had a different language background. The focal point of this recording was Raquel, who was bilingual. Raquel was seated between Ana, who was nearly Spanish-monolingual, and Amelia, who was English-dominant. In this excerpt, the students were at their desks during the Spanish-instruction half of the day and Mrs. Reyes was asking them to find the right page in their math workbooks so she could start the lesson.

(K1-AM-RecG2-math 3-10-14)

Mrs. Reyes: *página número*

Raquel: *Yo ya estoy en la página*

Mrs. Reyes: *dos cuarenta y siete*

Raquel: *dos cuarenta y siete*

Mrs. Reyes: *dos cuatro siete*

Raquel: (?) *la página tan rápido*

Ana: *estás en acá?*

Raquel: Ana, *dos cuatro siete*, because- (turns to Amelia) copy me because look, *porque es* two four

Amelia: I know I know I know

Raquel: You guys hurry up, Miss Reyes is starting

Mrs. Reyes: *Listos? T's grupo está lista, D's grupo está lista*

Amelia: I can't find it

Raquel: Somebody need to help you, okay?

[Mrs. Reyes: page number

Raquel: I'm already on the page

Mrs. Reyes: Two forty-seven

Raquel: Two forty-seven

Mrs. Reyes: Two four seven

Raquel: (?) the page so fast

Ana: Are you on this one?

Raquel: Ana, two four seven, because- (turns to Amelia) copy me because look, because it's two four

Amelia: I know I know I know

Raquel: You guys hurry up, Miss Reyes is starting

Mrs. Reyes: Ready? T's group is ready, D's group is ready

Amelia: I can't find it

Raquel: Somebody need to help you, okay?]

So, even though Mrs. Reyes seated Raquel next to Amelia in the hopes that Raquel would provide her with opportunities to apply her budding Spanish skills, Raquel instead accommodated to Amelia's strong English skills. Ana asks Raquel in Spanish what page she's on and Raquel responds to her in Spanish, then turns to help Amelia and switches into English ("Ana, *dos cuatro siete*, because- copy me because look, *porque es* two four"). Every utterance from Raquel after that point is in English, despite the language of instruction being Spanish at the time.

This kind of interaction between Spanish-dominant (or bilingual) students and English-dominant students was by far the most typical interaction I observed in Mrs. Reyes' classroom. Much like the teachers and staff at La Paz, not all students could speak Spanish, but most students had at least some base in English. This caused the default language of communication between linguistically diverse students to be English. No matter if the language of instruction was Spanish, the Spanish-dominant students consistently codeswitched to English in order to accommodate to their English-dominant tablemates. The majority of the time Spanish-dominant students spoke Spanish it was either to Mrs. Reyes or to a fellow Spanish-dominant student. In the case of cooperative learning, Mrs. Reyes' attempt at resisting the hegemony of English

backfired and instead worked to reproduce dominant ideologies that English is the more important, valuable language to know.

Discussion

Interpretation of Findings

Based on the previously explored literature, the results of this study were expected. True to the claims of bilingual education scholars, La Paz served as a site of resistance against the hegemony of English. The school's policies and Mrs. Reyes' practices worked in most cases to raise the status of Spanish and Spanish speakers, and to contest the legitimacy of monolingual English as the only language fit for US schools. Unfortunately there were limits, produced by the micro-dynamics of classroom and school interactions that reflected and reproduced dominant macro-societal patterns and attitudes.

My original research question was "how do one teacher's practices in a dual language kindergarten classroom work to either reproduce or resist dominant ideologies about Spanish?" From the results it's clear that the teaching practices Mrs. Reyes used (modeling Spanish, positioning students equally, and creating possibilities for cooperative learning) worked in theory to resist dominant ideologies. However, by studying the micro-level interactions between students, it became clear that some of these strategies fell short of effective resistance in practice.

Even though Mrs. Reyes tried very hard to create a classroom environment where Spanish was valued, the pressure of the hegemony of English was often too strong to resist. Mrs. Reyes tried to speak only Spanish during the Spanish half of the day, but many of the English-dominant teachers and other adults in the school did not speak Spanish, which made it impossible for Mrs. Reyes to maintain Spanish when speaking to them, even in the presence of her students. A similar dynamic unfolded in the interactions between Mrs. Reyes' students. The

majority of the Spanish-dominant students had some English language knowledge, whereas the majority of the English-dominant students did not have the same in Spanish. This caused Spanish-dominant students to constantly code-switch into English to accommodate their English-dominant classmates...regardless of Mrs. Reyes having strategically placed them with those classmates to serve as a Spanish resource!

The discrepancies between Mrs. Reyes' ideal plan and the actual practices of her students can be explained by the hegemony of English in the US. As young as five years old, Mrs. Reyes' Spanish-dominant kindergarteners have already begun to internalize and act on the ideology that English is more valuable than Spanish. They already recognize that languages other than English are stigmatized—or at least less useful—in mainstream US society. Like the Puerto Ricans in Urciuoli's (1996) study, some student's parents speak Spanish at home, but are required to speak English for work or for conversations with English-speaking authorities. English is what the students hear on the television, in movies, and in the popular music that they listen to. Everywhere Mrs. Reyes' students go, they encounter propaganda that convinces them to accept English as the “standard” language of the US (Bordieu 1991; Lippi-Green 1997).

The more they encounter these messages, the more they are socialized into accepting the subordination of their own Spanish language. Although La Paz and Mrs. Reyes go to great lengths to create an environment in which English and Spanish are valued equally, the same conditions simply do not exist outside of the school (or even among the students themselves in their social interactions, as data collected in the wider study abundantly shows). Mrs. Reyes was fighting against forces beyond her control. No matter how hard she tried to create a counterhegemonic classroom environment, dominant language ideologies often persisted and were reproduced in the interactions between students.

Implications

My findings are significant because they highlight the struggle of bilingual educators in trying to counter the negative consequences of reigning ideologies about Spanish. There is a serious need for greater support for bilingual schools, programs, teachers, families, and students. My project at La Paz joins a host of other case studies which uncover the struggles of those involved in the communities of bilingual schools. Hopefully, as the number of similar studies grows, those in charge of language laws and policies will no longer be able to ignore the evidence that bilingual education is a worthy endeavor which requires the full support of those involved.

Suggestions for Further Research

Further research is needed about the language attitudes students actually develop as a result of being socialized through a bilingual program. In kindergarten, the students are too young to have developed a solid metalinguistic awareness of why and how they use language the way they do. A longitudinal study would be useful to track whether children's attitudes toward Spanish change for the positive the longer they spend in a bilingual program. Too, it's important to remember that children are not passive members of the classroom, submissively receiving knowledge/culture. They are agents who negotiate their own knowledge and position in the classroom. A project like Dr. Wirtz's, which focuses on student-student interactions instead of teacher practices, would also provide useful information about how children develop either dominant or resistant language ideologies.

Conclusion

Millions of students in the US speak a language other than English at home. Everywhere these children go, they are faced with the ideology that their home language (and their identity as a speaker of that language) is inferior to English and English speakers. A hegemony of English socializes people into believing that other languages are not worth learning in an academic setting. Bilingual education programs, however, challenge this hegemony and instead work to elevate the status of minority languages and their speakers, effectively resisting English language domination.

Over the course of a year, I observed exactly how one bilingual teacher's practices attempted to resist the dominant ideologies about English and Spanish. She tried to create environments and situations where Spanish would be valued, and the students would be socialized into ideologies that view Spanish as important. However, outside forces (the hegemony of English) still shaped how the students in Mrs. Reyes' class interacted in ways which fail to value Spanish and reproduce dominant ideologies about Spanish and English. In conclusion, the macro-level sociopolitical struggles between Spanish and English in the U.S. where both resisted and reproduced in the micro-level interactions I observed between Mrs. Reyes and her students.

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