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by

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**Language Ideologies in a Bilingual Fourth Grade Classroom: A  
Research Proposal and Reflections**

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**Language Ideologies in a Bilingual Fourth Grade Classroom: A  
Research Proposal and Reflections**

**by**

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**Report**

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## **Abstract**

# **Language Ideologies in a Bilingual Fourth Grade Classroom: A Research Proposal**

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In order to illustrate, I begin this report with an account of some of my experiences as a bilingual teacher, instructing curriculum designed to elicit student reflections their language ideologies and engaging praxis. The data includes student responses to a writing prompt and interview which elicited their language ideologies. Some of the student comments were striking due to their recognition of the higher status of English. The student-collected data aided me in evaluating my curriculum and instruction and inform my future practice. My report ends with a proposal to investigate these issues more deeply by conducting a study on student language ideologies.

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## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Language Ideology

Gonzalez (2005) defines language ideologies as belief sets that are connected to our social status, in which the exercising of power and the reproduction of inequitable social relations are implicated. Linguistic ideology can also be understood as a process in which tensions arise between multiple conceptualizations, creating contradictions in individuals' beliefs and the need for community contestation (Woollard & Schieffelin, 1994).

Ruiz (1984) documents a history of a language-as-a-problem orientation in language planning in the United States, connecting this pervasive orientation to the Bilingual Education Act and the creation of Transitional Bilingual Programs in order to solve the 'problem' of language differences in the United States. The language-as-a-problem orientation includes a range of deficit ideas regarding language users of languages other than English, posing bilingualism as a 'need' for subordinate language users, as well as associating these language users with social problems.

Current literature reveals Ruiz' (1984) language paradigms to still be relevant. Escamilla (2006) contends that this language-as-problem orientation has become institutionalized by school policies and practices and is responsible for the pervasive belief that Spanish-speaking emergent bilinguals' supposed underachievement is caused by the Spanish language. Garcia and Torres-Guevara (2010) note that the U.S. Latino students are commonly viewed as linguistic problem. Thus, the ways in which U.S. Latino students utilize their bilingualism are deemed non-standard and are stigmatized. Consequently, students' complex, bilingual practices are cognitive and educational resources that are largely undervalued and underutilized by educators.

Just as the language-as-a-problem orientation has continued to be discussed and redefined in current research, so has Ruiz' (1984) proposed alternative, language-as-a resource, which views all languages as resources that can be utilized in the creation and implementation of academic programs which foster the development of bilingualism and biliteracy for students (Escamilla & Hopewell, 2009).

Valdés' (2003) study on the language ideology of foreign language departments is helpful in identifying and defining prevalent linguistic ideological themes, which she contends are institutionalized from elementary school up to higher education. The ideologies of "nationalism (one language, one nation), standardness (a commitment to linguistic purity and correctness), and monolingualism and bilingualism (assumptions about the superiority of monolingual native speakers)" identified will aid in my analysis of student language ideologies (Valdés, 2003: 7).

In Lopez' (2011) examination of the language ideologies of first-graders in a two-way dual language program in Texas, she found that, confronted with contradictory ideologies from different contexts, students sometimes reproduced and sometimes resisted dominant ideologies that maintain the hegemony of English. Lopez analyzed students' ideological stances towards bilingualism, Spanish and Spanish users as positive or negative, using observation and analysis of talk around literature lessons that elicited the students' beliefs about language.

Another important study of the language practices and ideologies of emerging bilingual students focused on fifth graders in a two-way, dual language classroom (Fitts, 2006). The researcher analyzed how the students and teachers reproduced or resisted the inequitable status quo. In Fitts' analysis, she problematizes the ideology of equality prevalent in the school, showing the ways in which it resists (as it was intended) the status quo, and also how it risks reproducing it. The researcher illuminates how the teacher's language separation policy is premised on the unrealistic notion of parallel

monolingualism, and it creates unintended consequences, such as more restriction and less student autonomy in the Spanish language classroom.

Ironically, the separation of languages exists to make sure that the hegemony of English doesn't prevail and that Spanish is used and developed equally. However, the efforts at assuring this unfortunately resulted in an emphasis on 'standard' Spanish and the denigration of students' varieties of Spanish. Fitts concludes that a third space should be created in which US Latino students may freely express themselves, and their ways of speaking are recognized and valued.

Although Lopez' (2011) and Fitts' (2006) studies involve two-way dual language classrooms, the insight into student language ideologies is germane to any bilingual classroom setting.

## REFLECTION

The student and teacher reflections on language ideologies included in this report, were inspired in part by my experience as a classroom teacher at Elworth elementary school wherein the administrator and many faculty members did not believe in the value of a bilingual education. Despite this environment, I attempted to create an inclusive classroom culture that equally valued Spanish and English. This struggle led me to graduate school and has subsequently influenced my research interests. Reading the extant research on language ideologies and conducting a humble qualitative research study on bilingual teacher language ideologies caused me to question what students' language ideologies are and how teacher curriculum and instruction might impact them.

This reflection will focus my evaluation of my experience guiding students with the activities—a discussion and writing prompt related to the book, *La Mariposa* and student interviews. As a teacher of Spanish-speaking bilingual students, I hope to foster positive ideologies about Spanish and Spanish users, by creating a classroom educational experience which values and builds upon all of my students rich, cultural, linguistic and cognitive resources. Furthermore, as my students and I grow and learn together, we form relationships based on mutual respect and caring. As a role model, it is extremely important that I think critically about my language use, particularly considering my positionality as white, middle class, English-dominant, bilingual teacher, so as not to reproduce the hegemony of English in my classroom. Thus, actively resisting the hegemony that I perceive and engaging in the praxis cycle is imperative for me to create the sort of life-affirming, positive educational experience that all students deserve. Furthermore, I always try to learn as much about my students as soon as possible, so that I can build a connection with them and concomitantly plan my curriculum and instructional choices in a way that builds on their strengths and meets their needs.

I began to engage in the learning activities with my students, on the fourth day of school. In order to guide students in learning how to analyze the elements of plot, such as problem and resolution, I read Francisco Jiménez' autobiographical picture book, *La Mariposa*. The author, who lived in a camp where other families of migrant workers lived, recalls his experience as a monolingual Spanish-speaking child in a classroom environment, wherein, English was the language used. Shortly after Francisco begins to find solace in a new friendship with a bilingual student, his teacher reprimands them for speaking Spanish, and the boys quit playing together. As Francisco grows increasingly withdrawn and disengages from class, he watches a jarred cocoon displayed in the classroom and begins drawing pictures of it. When the butterfly finally emerges, Francisco creates a beautiful drawing of the butterfly, for which the teacher later praises and rewards him. Pleased with his teacher's new kindness and proud of his work and recognition from the class, Francisco emerges from his cocoon and begins interacting with peers and engaging in school activities.

As I began the lesson, I realized that *La Mariposa* would likely elicit polarized language ideologies. In the ensuing class discussion and analysis of the plot of *La Mariposa*, a couple of students identified Francisco's problem to be that he did not speak English. Probing further, I asked, "What problem did that cause?" One student responded that this prevented Francisco from talking to the other students and the teacher. Then, Michelle countered that Francisco did play with and talk to another Spanish-speaking student, but he stopped because he got in trouble with the teacher. Perhaps triggered by Michelle's comment, Julia said that she thought that Francisco's main problem was that his teacher was mean to him when he spoke Spanish.

Although I agreed with Julia, I remained quiet and waited to see how the others responded. Some concurred, but others maintained that speaking Spanish was Francisco's main problem. A debate ensued, which I guided by asking such questions as, "Was speaking Spanish a problem for him outside of school? When Francisco became proud

and happier later, was it because he learned English?” After the students answered, realizing that the resolution did not involve him learning English, they finally concluded that Francisco’s problem was not only that he could not speak English, but also that his teacher’s treatment of him caused him to devalue Spanish.

I generally try to let students arrive at their own conclusions, but I also often provide alternate perspectives. Accordingly, prior to the whole group discussion, when I overheard a student tell his partner that Francisco’s problem was that he didn’t speak English, I asked the student if the problem could also be that the teacher doesn’t speak Spanish. Afterwards, I started rethinking my question, afraid that I might have revealed my own beliefs, thereby limiting that student’s opportunity to arrive at his own conclusion.

As my students and I analyzed the plot of *La Mariposa*, one of a series of books in a thematic unit on encountering prejudice and overcoming challenges, I realized that a writing prompt would be a perfect ending to my current lesson. It would provide an authentic personal narrative writing exercise related to the thematic unit, aid students in connecting personally with the character, and enrich their comprehension of the story. Thus, after the class discussion about the plot ended and our plot analysis was completed, I asked students to write a connection to the character Francisco, offering the prompt:

Escribe acerca de una vez que te sentiste como Francisco...que una experiencia causó que no valoraras el español, o puedes escribir como te sientes diferente de Francisco...puedes escribir sobre una vez que estuviste orgulloso de hablar español.

*Write about a time that you felt like Francisco...that an experience caused you to not value Spanish, or you can write about how you feel different than Francisco... you can write about a time that you were proud to speak Spanish.*

Ruminating after delivering the writing prompt turned my thoughts to a consideration of how the activity could be used in a research study. First, if conducting research, my prompt and delivery would need to be carefully planned and executed. If I were to use *La Mariposa*, I might simply ask students to write, “I am like Francisco because,” or “I am not like Francisco because,” rather than explicitly tell them to write about similar experiences with language. Furthermore, the prompt that I actually gave my students set up a dichotomy that left little room for more nuanced experiences, causing students to write about either feeling bad or proud. My wording suggests that Francisco devalued his Spanish, but perhaps, I should have let the students interpret Francisco’s experience. However, I was not overly concerned about my imperfect prompt because, when I teach, I like “teachable moments,” or spontaneous, unexpected learning opportunities. Inevitably, some decisions are cursory and could be improved. My remedy usually is a determination to do it better next time.

Despite the flawed writing prompt, the student learning objectives were reached. Students easily connected to the text, suggesting an understanding of the character and plot. Their responses were fascinating to me, providing insight into their beliefs about language and their experiences with school. Considering it was only a few days into the school year, I was surprised and pleased that not a single student struggled with the task. Some of my students struggle with oral and written communication and often require the instructions to be repeated and provided in writing. However, before providing such accommodations, I noticed that two of these students began writing immediately, and the others seemed to be comfortably reflecting. No one sought help. All planned and wrote logical connections. Perhaps the relevance of the story and the writing prompt, as well as the engaging discussion, provided the motivation and scaffolding necessary for my students to be successful. All seemed to have ideas about language that they were eager to express.

Despite our previous discussion of the book and my students' stated conclusion regarding Francisco's conflict, many students recalled times when they, like Francisco, were "triste," or sad, because they could not speak English. Some even concluded that they were happy after finally learning some English. Others did not include any resolution. After my initial read of all of the student responses, I categorized their reflections by those who wrote about a time they devalued their Spanish, and those who did not. Subsequently, I identified the narratives ending on a positive note, and of those, the number of responses that mentioned learning English as the source of the positive outcome.

Out of twenty responses, eleven students responded to the prompt to write about a time they devalued Spanish. Ten responses were narratives, and nine of those related students' experiences at school. Most mentioned experiences in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade. Only one student wrote about second grade. This was interesting considering the details and strong emotions expressed in many of the negative responses.

Six of the nine students expressed negative emotions that were mostly of sadness, with no mention feeling better. One of these latter students, Celia, expressed being very annoyed.

En el primero grado no sabia casi nada de ingles y los otros sabían un poco mas de la clase. Mis: Lopez Me moleste y no me sentía bien. Mi conexcion con Francisco fue que una maestra me dijo no no no hables mucho ingles en la clase por favor. Me moleste mucho.

In first grade, I didn't know any English and the others from the class knew a little more. Ms. Lopez I got very annoyed and I didn't feel good. My connection with Francisco was that a teacher told me, no, no, no, don't speak much English in class, please. I got very annoyed (the bold faced words were emboldened by the student, who retraced the words several times).

Another student, Ricardo, recalled being laughed at by his classmates for not being able to read, write, or speak English. He repeatedly mentioned being called dumb throughout his one page narrative. Ricardo concluded with the assertion that, despite the teacher sending a student to the office and promising to teach him English, the bullying continued.

Also writing about a time he devalued Spanish, Juan started his narrative by stating that he used to feel good about speaking Spanish, but when he came to the United States, everyone spoke English. He couldn't understand anything and was very confused. Then, when he started kindergarten, his father told him to make English-speaking friends, so that he could learn the language. Eventually, he became friends with a boy that spoke English sometimes, and so, Juan occasionally asked him to teach him words. At the end of Juan's story, it is unclear how he felt.

On the other hand, the five other students who did not express an emotional shift in their narratives, all expressed sadness or anger. Alfonso also ended his response by mentioning English, without stating how that made him feel.

Alfonso: Cuando yo fuy a 2 grado no me gustaba ablar ingles porque no sabia hablar tan bien. Yo pensaba que se ivan a burlar de mi y luego me ponía sentir triste y luego aprendi mucho ingles.

When I went to second grade I didn't like to speak English because I didn't know how to speak well. I thought they were going to make fun of me and later I became sad and later I learned a lot of English.

Although Alfonso did not explicitly express feeling happier in his concluding sentences, he seems to connect his fear of being made fun of for speaking English poorly to his sadness, suggesting that learning English resolved this problem.

Three students, Umberto, Amelia, Maria, and Areceli suggested a shift in either their emotions or their beliefs about language. For example, Umberto shared that he thought it was “mal,” or bad, to speak in Spanish “porque aquí tantos ablan ingles” (because so many people speak English here). However, Umberto changed his mind because someone—he couldn’t remember who—later told him that it was good to speak in Spanish.

Another student, Amelia, wrote about disliking school because she couldn’t speak English. After her mother refused her request to switch schools, she befriended some Spanish-speaking classmates. However, Amelia’s teacher “caught” them speaking Spanish and reprimanded her and her friends, which made her unhappy. Then, Amelia asked her older sister to help her learn English. After learning some words, she felt happy. As I read Amelia’s brief narrative, I wondered if she was one of the students who initially insisted that Francisco’s problem was that he couldn’t speak English. For a later, personal narrative assignment, Amelia chose to develop this seed story into a much more detailed account. I began to realize that her experience likely influenced how she understood Francisco’s problem.

Similarly, in Maria’s negative experience with using Spanish at school, she expressed feeling better after learning some English.

Todos los niños se reían de mí excepto Isuly. Ella fue muy buena ella me ayudó con un poco de inglés y yo me sentí feliz. Pero el maestro no entendía español y las reglas eran no hablar español. Entonces yo no dije ninguna palabra. Pero hablé con Isuly. Mi papá me enseñó más inglés. Yo mejoré en mi inglés.

All of the students made fun of me except for Isuly. She was very good she helped me a little with English and I felt happy. But the teacher did not understand Spanish and the rules were to not speak Spanish. So, I didn’t say a word. But I spoke with Isuly. My dad taught me some English. I improved my English.

Like Ricardo, Maria recalls being teased for not speaking English. However, Ricardo's narrative included many more details about being bullied and involves no resolution. On the other hand, despite feeling happier after learning English, Maria concludes her story by sharing how the experience silenced her in class.

Araceli also wrote about initially feeling "sad" at school because she could not speak English. She also recalls eventually feeling happy, but not because she learned English. Araceli's Spanish narrative, oddly titled, "Tame to bejabe," (Time to Behave) briefly relates how she was unhappy in class with an English speaking teacher, but she soon moved to a bilingual classroom.

Y alli ise amigas. Me gusto mi maestra. Ella nos dejaba coloriar tambien nos enseñaba y ablaba en español."

And there I made friends. I liked my teacher. She let us color also she taught us [in Spanish] and spoke to us in Spanish.

When I first read Araceli's response, I overlooked the curious title, perhaps distracted by my amusement at the importance Araceli seemed to place on being allowed to color. When I asked Araceli, a month later, she could not recall why she chose that title. Usually, Araceli really struggles with verbal and written expression, but she later developed this short, simple response, into a detailed, reflective and poignant personal narrative. After reading Araceli's story resolution, which did not involve learning English, I speculated that she might have been one of the students who initially agreed with Julia's assessment that Francisco's problem was not that he did not understand English.

Two students, Arturo and Dulce, did not indicate to what prompt they were responding. Although neither student explicitly talked about valuing or devaluing Spanish or English, both wrote about negative experiences in school. Arturo wrote that in the first grade, a student made fun of how he spoke very little.

Un niño se estaba riendo de mi como hablaba poquito. También un niño me decía que me miraba negro y me dijo yo soy orio y le dije a la maestra.

Also a boy told me that I looked black and I am an oreo and I told the teacher.

I wondered if Arturo's account of being racialized by another student suggests that he understood this to be linked to his status as a speaker of Spanish, since he was responding to the prompt about devaluing Spanish.

The other student who wrote about a negative experience, Dulce, shared:

Estaba llorando porque no podía escribir y los demás sí y Luego peleé con una Amiga.

I was crying because I couldn't write and everyone else could and Later I fought with a friend.

When I asked Dulce if she was referring to her inability to write in English, she explained that she couldn't write in any language. Confused, I asked her which prompt reminded her of this experience, and she clarified that was saying she was proud to speak in Spanish. However, she was unhappy because she couldn't read or write.

Another student, Michelle, also wrote about a negative experience with language at school, without identifying the prompt to which she was responding.

Yo cadaves adlo así 'The cat is also chistoso.' y Cuando todos piensan que tengo ¿dyslexia! Pero yo les digo que no! Y me sentí triste.

Every time I speak like this "The cat (did something funny)." When everyone thinks I have dyslexia! But I tell them that I don't! I felt sad.

Later, Michelle mentioned that she thought that she was tested for dyslexia because she mixes Spanish and English. Michelle's association of codeswitching with dyslexia was interesting considering that the majority of my students frequently codeswitch in class. Though I sometimes require products such as essays or tests to be completed in Spanish or English, I do not have a language separation policy, or any other policy that would limit codeswitching.

Out of twenty total written responses, seven addressed the prompt about feeling different than Francisco, or being proud to speak Spanish. For example, Carla declared that she was proud that Spanish was her first language. Continuing, she explained that her friends and family all speak Spanish, so she is always happy speaking it. Three other students, including Michelle, all wrote about a time they befriended someone because they could speak Spanish. Michelle added, “Hago muchos amigos por mis lenguajes” (I make many friends because of my languages).

Translating for family members was another source of pride for some students. Elena wrote about proudly helping her mom complete English forms that the school sent home, and Lizet felt proud to help her older brother with his high school Spanish homework. Mayra expressed liking Spanish “porque es divertido saber palabras nuevas” (*because it is fun to learn new words*), and she likes speaking English, “porque cuando vaz a lugares que gente abla nigles i tu los entiendes” (*Because when you go to places where people speak English and you understand them*). A couple of other students also made vague comments about places where people speak English. I am curious where those places are and which are considered to be non-English speaking.

Of the positive responses, only three students, Mayra, Michelle, and Jennifer, mentioned being happy that they spoke English. The other four students only spoke of their pride or happiness in speaking Spanish. After reading these positive comments about language, I wondered if reading a story which presents bilingualism positively, like *Pepita Habla Dos Veces*, would increase the number of student responses denoting pride in bilingualism. Reading the latter would also assist students in envisioning alternate perspectives and recognizing the ways that bilingualism has been positive in their lives.

My students’ written responses provoked a critical reflection on my instruction, inspiring me to approach plot analysis in a way that recognizes the validity of multiple perspectives. In an autobiography, the author is not constructing an objectively definable character problem and creating a story arc. The author is sharing his or her own

understanding of internal and external conflict. Since students' stories, like that of Francisco Jiménez,' are autobiographical, reading the students' written responses provoked my realization that a purely objective understanding of a character's problem is highly improbable. Thus, I should not reject students' beliefs that the root of their own problem, or Francisco's, was their inability to speak English. Another reality is the reader's understanding of a character problem, which is tied to the reader's own beliefs. As the reader, I am not wrong in understanding Francisco's problem to be his mistreatment for speaking Spanish and his resulting feelings of alienation. As a reader and teacher, I can try to offer examples of alternative perspectives that would allow a richer understanding of a character's or individual's problem.

A month after the aforementioned writing prompt, I began to plan the student interviews. However, after recent restrictions on teacher autonomy school-wide, due to district policy in reaction to low standardized testing scores from the previous year, it became very difficult for me to initiate anything new in my classroom, including the interviewing of my students. Teachers were supposed to follow the sequence of Student Expectations (SEs) that the district instructional planning "guide," laid out. These SEs determined the order in which state objectives were taught and specified the genres in which the students should be reading and writing. For example, the SEs for the week that I read *La Mariposa* addressed character and plot analysis and required a specific genre. Furthermore, the plans required us to teach a new genre each week in a seemingly arbitrary order. District and administrative scrutiny resulted in "walk-throughs," or observations by district supervisors and administrators, tedious, mandatory paper work that we were expected to complete promptly, and the directive to turn weekly lesson plans in for approval. Sincere efforts at compliance were initiated to follow the district SEs and the mandate that my teammates and I teach the same exact lessons on the same day. Those failing to do so were reprimanded.

Some of the “walk-throughs” were conducted by the Solutions Team. As the name implies, the team seemed to visit with a preconceived notion that we, the teachers, were a problem that they must solve. During the first “walk-through,” the three individuals popped into my room at the start of my writing lesson. They hovered near my doorway for less than ten minutes—just long enough to hear me read the leads, or the opening sentences, of three mentor texts and talk to my writers briefly about the objective. As the students began to explore leads with partners, I looked up at my visitors. Two stared at me blankly, while the third had an expression that resembled that of a tourist trying to understand the locals' incomprehensible chatter. My principal later confirmed my suspicion, admitting that the three visitors did not speak Spanish.

Yet, even though the visitors did not understand a word I said, they found a “solution” for my approach to teaching leads. Apparently, the three opening sentences that I read, were two sentences too many. My principal relayed that the visitors prescribed that I teach one type of lead per lesson, explicitly directing the students to interpret the leads in simple terms (i.e. an introductory sentence with dialogue, is a dialogue lead). Accordingly, the Solutions Team disapproved of my decision to let student pairs initially explore, analyze and describe the leads on their own. Despite leaving my class without evaluating my students' performance, the visitors concluded that my lesson plan was too rigorous. Finally, the visitors advised me to talk to the students like writers. Despite my frustration with the Solution Team's apparent low expectations of my students, I laughed heartily at this last remark, since I was doing precisely that, in the brief period that my monolingual observers evaluated me. When my principal and I discussed this, I invited her to take a look at my students' writing notebooks, so that she could see their achievement—the variety of effective leads that my students added to their narratives during that same lesson. My administrator expressed her confidence in my ability and told me to “take it with a grain of salt” if the advice was not helpful. Her comments followed a lengthy communication of all of the other

“solutions” that the district supervisors had offered based on their observations of our five classes. Furthermore, this discouraging discussion occurred at 4:30, after the regular, school wide meeting. While the principal’s desire to be supportive was genuine, her actions contradicted her words. My teammates and I walked away frustrated and exhausted. After such criticism about a revision lesson that we all taught and that was aligned with the SEs, I was too intimidated to interview my students or to do anything that strayed from the Curriculum Road Map and our team plans.

Finally, in late October, an opportunity to introduce the interviews arose when the reading SEs called for biography. Disregarding the writing SEs, I chose to do a biography genre study, during which students interviewed adult family members and subsequently wrote biographical essays. In preparation, students read an article about how to conduct oral history interviews, watched a mentor mother-daughter interview, and formulated questions. I modeled the interview process before sending students off to practice interviewing each other. Then, after the students conducted their interviews over the weekend, the students spent the following week writing expository essays about the family members that they interviewed. It was during this time that I finally began the interviews. However, lengthy, after school meetings were held Tuesday through Thursday, and my Friday afternoon, parent-child literary club meetings, as well as my adjustment to the new restrictions on my autonomy, curtailed the number of interviews that I was able to complete before the biography unit ended.

During the last few days of the unit, when my students were finally ready to effectively work on their projects independently, I conducted three interviews. I had not carefully planned the order in which the students would be interviewed because I had initially thought that I would be able to interview all of my students during the two-week unit. Although my selections were not premeditated, I did not chose students at random.

On the day I was to conduct the first interview, I scanned the room looking for a candidate. My eyes rested on Julia, who was fastidiously revising her essay. I suddenly

recalled the class discussion of *La Mariposa* and Julia's rejection of her classmates' assessment that Francisco's problem was that he did not speak English. My speculation that Julia's language ideology might contrast with many of her classmates sparked my interest in interviewing. An additional consideration that influenced my choice was her status as a top performer in my class. Although her peers were still drafting, Julia had already begun revising. The following day, I chose to interview Gonzalo when I noted that he had been reading independently for about thirty minutes. Long periods of uninterrupted reading often frustrate Gonzalo since he reads on a first grade level in English and Spanish. The interview would likely be a welcome break for him. On the final day of the biography unit, still intrigued by Michelle's unforgettable written response, which revealed her perception that her codeswitching had resulted in a dyslexia evaluation, I decided she would be my last interview.

The three students that I selected all have an advanced oral proficiency in Spanish and English, and their reading and writing proficiency levels range from beginner to advanced in both languages. While Michelle is a very extroverted and social child, who loves starting and engaging in class discussions, Gonzalo and Julia are both quiet students, who rarely offer unsolicited commentary in class. Yet, during the 10-15 minute interviews, all three students were open and forthcoming. I asked each student the questions in Appendix A, took notes, audio-recorded and transcribed the interviews.

At the beginning of the interview, I asked the three students how they use Spanish and English at home. All responded that they speak Spanish at home. Julia added that she sometimes "mixes" Spanish and English at home, but she asserted that at school, her tendency is to use either Spanish or English. Although Julia does codeswitch in class occasionally, she usually speaks in Spanish or English without codeswitching.

Some of the most interesting comments were the three students' responses when I asked them if they could give me an example of a time when it is inappropriate to speak Spanish.

Gonzalo: Yes. When they tell you not to speak Spanish.

Shannon: Who tells you not to speak Spanish?

Gonzalo: The teacher or principal. When I was in third grade, and I went in trouble, and she told me that—to tell her the story. But, um, I told her in Spanish, and she told me to talk in English, um, only in English with her.

Shannon: Why do you think the principal wanted you to speak to her only in English?

Gonzalo: She was mad.

The former principal likely did not understand Gonzalo when he spoke in Spanish and might have asked Gonzalo to speak in English so that she could understand him. A consideration of this was not apparent when Gonzalo responded. Perhaps the message he perceived was that English was the language of disciplinary referrals and anger. Or, perhaps he just thought Spanish made the principal angry. Whatever Gonzalo perceived, his quick response suggests that he did observe how each language was used and quickly recalled his inference to his support his claim.

In contrast, when I asked Michelle the same question, she offered examples of when she thinks it is inappropriate to speak in English, stating, “When I was second grade in the summer, when I went to Mexico, um, I was talking in English, and they were like, what the...they like didn’t understand me.”

Julia simply responded, “No,” to the same question.

Next, I asked students if they could give me an example of a time when English is inappropriate. Julia responded, “No, it’s like the language that almost everyone speaks... nowadays. Like in the United States most of the people speak English instead of Spanish.”

Gonzalo also stated that it is never inappropriate to speak in English.

Gonzalo: It’s always okay to talk in English because almost the half of Texas have Spanish, and um, other states and cities have more Spanish than English.

Shannon: So, you think that in Texas there are more English speakers than in other states, and you think that there are more Spanish speakers outside of Texas?

Gonzalo: Yes.

When I asked Gonzalo to explain his thinking, he told me about a conversation he had with his Vietnamese friend, who speaks Vietnamese and English. When Gonzalo inquired why his friend didn't learn Spanish, his friend told him that more people speak English, such as the Japanese and the Chinese.

In response to the same question, Michelle responded, "Sometimes when my mom talks to me in Spanish, and then I repeat it in English, and she, um, she says, talk in one language. Because sometimes I mix them together." Michelle's response does not seem specific to English, but rather reveals that Michelle's mother seems to disapprove of codeswitching. This may explain why Michelle thought her codeswitching caused her to be suspected of being dyslexic. Michelle's response helped me better understand her language use in the classroom, although it also raised more questions. In class, she almost exclusively responds in English, even when we are speaking in Spanish. I have started asking her to repeat her answer in Spanish. Yet, it has been a bit of a dilemma because I try to let students be autonomous with language. I do not wish to limit their access to all of their linguistic resources, and I also do not wish to risk sending the message that the ways that they speak are wrong. On the other hand, I also want students to continue to develop each language, which I fear Michelle won't do if she only speaks in English. She is very fluent in Spanish, and easily switches when I request it. Now, understanding her seemingly negative view of codeswitching, I am worried that by asking her to switch to Spanish, I might be drawing attention to her "mixing," of languages. In addition, I might also be unwittingly reinforcing the idea that codeswitching is bad, an idea with which I do not agree.

Most intriguing to me was Michelle's revelation that people in Mexico did not understand her English. In light of her oral English dominance in class, I thought that her

comment about responding to her mother's Spanish by repeating what she says in English, reveals that she is English dominant everywhere, not just in the school context. Or, I wondered if Michelle's high proficiency in both Spanish and English makes her unaware which one she is using. Or maybe, she was expecting people in Mexico to be bilingual since so many people in her school and neighborhood speak both Spanish and English. Alternately, Michelle's use of English in Mexico might suggest that she believes it to be a language understood everywhere.

Next, I asked students if they think that bilingualism is important. Gonzalo promptly responded, "No, because English is going to teach you more because if you know English you are going to be good at tests and school."

Michelle and Julia both responded affirmatively to the same question, sighting friendship and better understanding of others, much like their earlier responses to the writing prompt suggested. However, Julia added, "Because you don't just think one language is better than the other." This statement, along with her earlier contribution to the class discussion about Francisco, when she suggested his problem was that his teacher treated him poorly, suggests she values both languages.

My next question was about students' families. Despite Gonzalo's assertion that he doesn't value bilingualism, he said that his family does think bilingualism is important. His mother would like him to learn both languages [Spanish and English], but she said it is his choice which languages he uses.

Michelle and Julia also expressed that their families valued bilingualism, linking it to success. Julia referred to the promise of "a brighter future." Michelle said her mother believes that "you can get good grades if you have two languages because otherwise you just take Spanish tests." Michelle's comment suggests that the alternative to "having two languages," is knowing only Spanish, as indicated by her "otherwise" comment. Furthermore, this comment seems to associate Spanish-test-taking, and perhaps Spanish,

with poor grades, and implicitly, English with good grades, which echoes Gonzalo's statement linking success in school to English.

After I asked the students if they thought bilingualism is valued at Alamo Elementary, I was fascinated by the speed with which they were able to respond with logical inferences and supporting examples. Michelle concluded that bilingualism is valued at Alamo Elementary because she hears "people talking in both."

Julia similarly responded, "Yes, [Alamo Elementary values bilingualism] because you can learn both languages here."

Gonzalo also formed an answer based on his assessment of Alamo's language policy, but he understood that policy very differently than Julia, arriving at an opposite conclusion. Without hesitation, Gonzalo responded, "English is more important because fifth grade is mostly English." Interestingly, with the exception of a new fifth grade teacher, who thought that he was being hired for a dual language position, the other fifth grade bilingual teachers instruct their students in English with minimal to no support in Spanish. Gonzalo's accurate assessment of the fifth grade language policy, his understanding of his experience with the former principal (who told him to speak only English with her), and his recollection of his conversation with his Vietnamese friend, explain a great deal about why he appears to value Spanish over English.

Two of my interview questions were basically the same as the prompt that I gave the students a month earlier. First, I asked the three students if they could ever recall a time that they felt bad about using Spanish or English. Only Michelle replied affirmatively.

Michelle: I didn't feel proud when I was in class with Ms. Richards and I was talking like "*The cat hizo algo chistoso*" because I did both. I mixed them together [Spanish and English], and that's why I didn't want to speak in one of those.

Shannon: You didn't want to speak in which language?

Michelle: Either...or both because...uh I just had to make a decision.

Shannon: Did the teacher or students did or said anything that caused you to feel bad about the way you spoke?

Michelle: No

Shannon: Why did mixing the languages make you feel bad?

Michelle: Because that make me... like other people--like a person that just speaks English just knows the half of what I said and the person that just know Spanish just know the other half.

Shannon: How would that be different if you spoke only in Spanish? How much would the English speakers understand then?

Michelle: I would try to *repetirlo* (repeat it), like in English.

My conversation with Michelle was enlightening for several reasons. First, if I were conducting this interview for research, I would not have questioned Michelle's logic when she explained why "mixing" languages made her feel bad. As a teacher though, regardless of my own opinion, I try to gently challenge students' reasoning, as my response to Michelle indicates. I was not attempting to understand why she felt badly about codeswitching at that moment, I was merely seizing an opportunity to engage her in critical thinking and to challenge her.

Next, when I asked my interviewees if they recalled a time when they felt proud about speaking either or both Spanish and English, only Julia recalled such an experience. However, all three students' replies were consistent with their written responses. Gonzalo wrote that he was not like Francisco because he "never felt bad about Spanish." He did not mention ever being proud to speak either language. Similarly, in the interview, he couldn't recall a time when he felt badly about using either language. This is interesting in light of the opinions Gonzalo previously expressed about the importance of English.

Julia's responded that she felt proud when she of a English-speaking girl whom she recently befriended.

I was glad I knew both [Spanish and English] so I could understand her. And sometimes I thought about speaking Spanish too... so I could teach her some Spanish.

In her written response, Julia had recounted another time that her ability to speak Spanish helped her befriend a girl who eventually became her best friend.

Michelle also mentioned making a friend due to her bilingualism, as she did in the written response. In the interview, she recalled the same negative experience that she wrote about—'mixing' Spanish and English in class—but she didn't mention her suspicion about the incident causing her to be tested for dyslexia.

Only Michelle and Gonzalo responded to my final question. After I asked if there was anything else they would like to say about bilingualism, they offered the following comments:

Michelle: I always hope that Mexicans and los Hondureños and all the people that speak Spanish can speak English and that all the people that speak English can learn Spanish one day. Because when I went to Mexico and Honduras, I teached my cousins how to speak English.

Gonzalo: I think almost the whole world wants to like learn English more than Spanish.

When I first I read *La Mariposa*, I barely knew my students. By mid-October, when I began conducting the interviews, I knew my students very well and had comfortable rapport with them. Yet, I utilized different ways of talking with and guiding each student, based on my perception of their social and academic needs. When Gonzalo claimed that there were more Spanish speakers in states other than Texas, I didn't

challenge him, since he usually struggles to express his thoughts verbally and in writing. The interview with him was almost magical, in that he effortlessly and thoughtfully responded to each question by offering examples and supporting evidence without my solicitation. I did not want to interrupt such successful communication. Moreover, I was afraid any challenge to Gonzalo thoughts might lower his confidence. Yet, when I interviewed Michelle, I unknowingly switched my communication style. I usually communicate with each student differently, based on our unique relationships. Thus, the interviews, which included questions from my research proposal, were not conducted as they would be in a research study. Instead, they more closely resembled the individual conferences that I hold with students during writing class.

During student conferences, some students, like Gonzalo, offer very short answers to my questions. I often have to help them clarify their answers. In contrast, these interviews seemed to really engage the students and elicit longer and more thoughtful responses, so these interviews presented a new and inspirational experience. At the conclusion of the final interview, my mind was racing with new ideas about how to utilize interviews as an instructional tool and a reflective learning experience for myself and for my students. Although it will be a slow process, I am eager to continue to interview my other students.

The interviews also provided a much deeper understanding of my students' beliefs about language and the etiology of their conclusions. For example, Michelle mentioned codeswitching, or as she calls it, "mixing," in her written response and twice in her interview. Her associations were negative. She described being scolded by her mom for codeswitching at home, and feeling bad about "mixing" in class. She connected this language use to her dyslexia evaluation.

The insight I gained into my three students' beliefs about language and the opportunity for them to learn about interviewing through an authentic interview experience with me, as well as the students' guided reflection and possible increased

metalinguistic awareness, made the interviews a valuable learning experience for my students and me. My new insight will inform my curriculum and instruction. For example, I now realize that many of my students observe how frequently Spanish and English are used and by how many people, and these observations seem to contribute to how they value each language and how they perceive that others value languages. During the interviews, the three were quick to judge whether bilingualism was valued at Alamo Elementary. They made two different but accurate assessments. Julia and Michelle concur that bilingualism is valued at Alamo, supporting this belief with the observation that bilingualism continues to be the norm at the school. Gonzalo felt English was more important. He supported his inference by accurately observing that, in the fifth grade, the teachers and students speak mostly English. I now realize that the frequency with which I use Spanish and English will likely be observed by my students and might influence how they value each, or at least how they believe each to be valued by me. I already suspected as much, but I wasn't sure how aware students were regarding this matter. After reading students' connections, and again after the interviews, I was reminded to continue to monitor and critically reflect on how I use language in my classroom.

A review of students' comments has also helped me understand how they draw conclusions. In all fourth grade content areas, students are expected to make logical inferences and provide supporting evidence. Thus, when students discussed why one language or both were valuable, or why Alamo does or does not value bilingualism, I was able to assess their ability to draw logical conclusions.

Reflecting on the value of the activities—the class analysis of the plot of the book, *La Mariposa*, the writing prompt, and the student interviews—I feel as though I am evaluating the experience from two different perspectives—graduate student and teacher. Sometimes, I can smoothly integrate these perspectives, and other times, my thoughts seem to vacillate between two separate ways of understanding my experiences. While I was teaching, I was also assessing how my actions and words would be different if I were

conducting research. Yet, the thought patterns of an elementary school teacher overshadowed my other line of thinking. At any given moment, I was simultaneously monitoring student engagement and behavior, assessing their comprehension of the content, their use of language, etcetera, and immediately speaking or acting upon these ongoing evaluations—engaging in praxis. For example, as I guided a discussion about the plot of *La Mariposa*, I decided that in the future, I would use the same book and have a similar discussion, but I would like to guide the students less. As I considered this, I began to suspect that such a change might be beneficial to my current lesson—not just for research purposes. Thus, I added an impromptu partner discussion about a question I posed. As the lesson continued, in between drifting between students and conferring, I engaged in a cursory analysis of my lesson plan and an evaluation of my performance up to that point. I was critically reflecting on my instruction throughout the lesson, heightening my awareness of my words and actions, and resulting in some impromptu revisions to my instruction.

The challenges in carrying out the activities described in this lesson resulted from district scrutiny the resulting curricular and time constraints, which impinged upon my ability to engage in praxis teaching. During the first couple months of school, my teammates and I grew increasingly discouraged by the new, seemingly draconian district policies. These district interventions constrained but did not halt my ability to carry out reflective practices and allow my data to inform my planning. However, language ideologies project could not be realized had full compliance with the new policies continued. Eventually, our fourth grade team relaxed our effort to follow the SEs, and praxis teaching became less difficult. Despite the challenges, this experience positively impacted my curriculum and instruction from August 26, the day I read *La Mariposa*, to the present. My understanding of my students' language ideologies increased and my perspective was broadened, enhancing my ability to evaluate and improve my

performance, and likely positively impacting student achievement. I hope that others can learn from my experience.

## RESEARCH PROPOSAL

### Statement of the Problem

For four years, I was a bilingual fourth grade teacher at Elworth Elementary<sup>1</sup>, a large school in an urban district in central Texas. The staff and students often reproduced dominant ideologies that normalize monolingualism and problematize the use of languages other than English, casting the users of other languages as individuals with deficiencies. After reviewing the literature on language ideologies and interviewing teachers this past year, I began to realize how pervasive such ideologies are (Escamilla 2006; Escamilla & Hopewell, 2009; Garcia and Torres-Guevara, 2010; Ruiz, 1984; Valdés, 2003).

The former principal of Alamo Elementary, another bilingual public school in the same district as Elworth, recently decided to abandon the two-way dual language program that they had begun and was considering terminating the dual language program altogether. The principal stated that the English dominant students were not improving enough. This statement reveals a tacit acceptance of the hegemony of English, and the elevated status of English users. The apparent concern for the well being of English speakers without equal attendance to the well being of native Spanish speakers, or Spanish-dominant emergent bilinguals, serves to reproduce societal inequities and undermine Alamo's proclaimed bilingual/bicultural language ideology. Furthermore, the upper elementary grades are still technically following a transition model with varying amounts of instruction in Spanish, depending on the teacher, ranging from all Spanish instruction in one third grade class, to English instruction and assessment with some oral Spanish support in a fourth grade classroom.

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<sup>1</sup> This and all subsequent names are pseudonyms.

As a fourth grade bilingual teacher, I will foster a classroom ideology of multilingualism and multiculturalism, in which all languages and varieties are valued as resources to be utilized and developed. First, I intend to examine the developing language ideologies of my students, while also providing them with opportunities to express and reflect on their beliefs about languages and language users. Throughout the year, I will use literature, film and other lessons and discussions as strategies to elicit discussions about social inequities related to language use and users and to foster positive orientations towards the Spanish language and Spanish language users. Students will engage with me in reflection and analysis of our own beliefs about languages and language users throughout the year.

### **Research Questions**

What are the language ideologies of my emergent bilingual, fourth grade students?

What instructional strategies successfully foster language ideologies that recognize languages as valuable resources?

### **Positionality**

Although I do not consciously identify with the hegemonic ideologies associated with the dominant culture, I am a white female bilingual teacher with a middle-class upbringing. As a teacher, a role traditionally seen as one of expert, with students as subordinates, my role is already problematic (Freire, 1993). My position puts me at risk of unwittingly reinforcing the imbalance of power and potentially subordinating my emergent bilingual students. Thus, in addition to my selection to conduct ethnographic PAR research based on my theoretical framework, I have also chosen this approach to the study because it is the most ethical and democratic research method in this context, reducing the risk of reproducing power differentials and subordinating my students.

## **Methods**

Recognizing the tensions inherent in the role of teacher-researcher, my methods will include learning activities that would serve the dual purposes of a teacher and researcher. The lessons address the state learning objectives, the TEKS, and provide an opportunity for me to systematically collect and analyze data gathered on student language ideologies, in order to contribute to the extant research.

In addition to a language ideologies framework, I draw from Freire's (1993) critical pedagogy and from participatory action research (Cammarota & Romero, 2006). Thus, the creation of my language ideologies curriculum—designed to elicit student reflection and on their language ideologies and foster positive orientations towards Spanish and Spanish users—is premised on the idea that by critiquing and understanding social inequities, students can become empowered to change their worlds. A critical pedagogy approach requires teachers to break from traditional pedagogies, which entail the transmission of teacher-valued knowledge to students. Instead, teachers must learn about their students' realities and value students and their family and communities' knowledge. Together, teachers and students co-construct new knowledge, and engage in praxis, cyclical process of raising awareness, reflecting and acting (Freire, 1993).

Similarly, participatory action research (PAR) understands that schools can reproduce power inequities, but also embraces schools and formal pedagogies as potential tools for resistance (Cammarota, 2009). Yet, in PAR, the scientists, or co-researchers are composed of community stakeholders, such as, but not limited to, teachers and students, who construct knowledge and organize change together. In Cammarota and Romero's (2006) action research with Tucson high school students in the Social Justice Education Program, drawing from the work of Freire (1998), they create a critical literacies, curriculum that includes students and teachers as co-creators of knowledge, which they can use to identify social injustices in their lives and to design and implement solutions.

Thus, the activities that I have designed and my daily curriculum and instruction during the study period, will build on Cammarota and Romero's (2006) philosophy and liberatory educational framework designed for Latina/Latino students, which includes social justice "teaching [of] content that directly counters racism and racist stereotypes...[and instilling] a critical perspective on the hegemony they [the students] experience" (Cammarota & Romero, 2006: 22). I will begin my efforts to comprehend my students' beliefs about language by taking measures to limit my influence. Then, in the second stage of my research, with a focus on praxis, my purpose will shift. The data analysis will be co-researched with my students, with a new goal—engaging students in reflecting on their own beliefs and empowering them as experts and co-producers of knowledge.

My study participants will be my twenty-two fourth-grade, Latina/o, emergent bilingual students, and the site will be Alamo Elementary School. Semi-structured interviews and participant-observation will be the principal means of collecting the data, which will also include: field notes, photographs, and student products, such as written and verbal narratives, theatrical performance, and artwork, and any other verbal or written texts that reveal student language ideologies. The interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed. Other conversations and activities around beliefs about language and language users will be audio or video recorded when possible. Each student will be interviewed twice about their beliefs about language and language users. I will begin conducting the interviews near the beginning of October, during lunch and independent reading times, and I will interview students again in May.

Shortly after the interviews have concluded, I will read *La Mariposa* by Francisco Jimenez and guide the students in a plot analysis, focusing specifically on the character's conflict. After the class discussion, which should elicit student beliefs about language, students will write a connection to the character Francisco, responding to the prompt:

Escribe acerca de una vez que te sentiste como Francisco, o una vez que te sentiste diferente que el.

*Write about a time that you felt like Francisco, or a time that you felt different than him.*

The following week, I will do a similar activity, using *Pepita Habla Dos Veces*. In the story, Pepita often has to translate for others (from Spanish to English), but after becoming frustrated, she decides to only speak in English. However, Pepita learns to value her bilingualism and begins to speak in both languages again. After I read the story, students will respond orally to a prompt that will connect Pepita's experience to their experiences. In pairs, students will discuss one or both of the following prompts:

“A time when something happened that caused me to not value my bilingualism was when...

A time when something happened that caused me to value my bilingualism was when...

Next, the pairs will be asked to share in a whole group discussion. Finally, students will write a personal narrative about one of the experiences that they discussed. The activity is designed to create a space for students to start exploring their experiences and beliefs about language use. I will not guide students to think a certain way, and I will make it clear that all opinions are all valued.

As the year progresses, the activities that I will create will grow increasingly focused on critically examining dominant narratives and ideologies, with a focus on languages and language users. In November, I will also start reading aloud *Silvia and Aki*. We will explore language ideologies, linguisticism and other forms of prejudice in our discussions related to the book. I will take notes on students' comments and collect any entries in their reading response journals that reveal students' beliefs about language.

In January, students will write personal narratives about experiences they have had with linguistic or other forms of prejudice. Then, students will form teams and write

a script for a short skit, using their personal narratives, if they are comfortable sharing, or realistic fictional narratives loosely based on their experiences. The students will perform these skits in the outdoor school amphitheater, in front of an audience of their choice (depending on the goals they determine and their comfort level). Throughout, the study, as written texts that provide insight into students' language ideologies are produced, I will analyze the texts with students during our teacher-student writing conferences (a regular practice in writing workshop). We will record students' analyses.

Also, students will learn how to conduct research and will engage in interviewing, observing and analyzing the data they gather around school, their communities, and their homes, regarding language uses and users. This data is purely for classroom purposes, and will not be part of my study. However, these practices serve an important practical function, which is that students' learning process will directly connect between our research study and with the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills). This will also help students become more skilled co-researchers, as we analyze the data we collect on their language ideologies.

In the beginning of April, students will watch the documentary, *Speaking in Tongues*, and will respond orally and in writing to questions I will create which explicitly ask students about their language beliefs and how they think the film does/ does not influence their beliefs. Then, students will collectively decide on what ideas they would like to share with the next fourth grade class, based on their research findings and a collective goal. They will create a product, or product(s), in the medium of their choice, to present their ideas to the upcoming, fourth grade bilingual students.

Data analysis will be ongoing and guided by the language ideologies theoretical framework. I will transcribe and photocopy the transcriptions of the interviews, as well as make copies of each of the student's writing responses to the activities, so that the students will also possess a file of their own data. In mid-May, students will use their files to analyze their own language beliefs and reflect on how or if the activities

influenced their ideologies. I will create clear instructions and a rubric, and any other lessons necessary to build to this culminating project. I cannot finalize the plans for that yet, as the ongoing analysis of my co-researcher students and myself will inform what the final reflection and analysis project will look like. The students will collectively decide what to do with the data, or rather, how they will use it to guide the next fourth grade bilingual students.

Like Lopez (2011), I will use a coding system that will categorize the data as positively or negatively (or probably somewhere in between) oriented towards bilingualism, Spanish and English, and language users of Spanish and English. Additionally, I will cull the data for other themes and evidence of reproduction of or resistance to dominant ideologies found in the literature.

My study will be limited to the classroom setting, although given more time, and less competing demands, I would also like to collect data at the homes of some focal participants. The nine-month length of the study and the division of my attention to other thoughts and tasks, as the classroom teacher, will also limit my perspective and the data gathered.

However, despite the aforementioned limitations, this study has significant potential to gain insight on students' language ideologies and the potential of creating curriculum that fosters positive student language ideologies and identities as language users. Furthermore, the student research project and the alignment with state objectives across content areas, serves the dual purpose of providing rigorous and authentic learning experiences for students to promote academic achievement.

In light of the centrality of the role of language in the cultural and social production achieved through educational processes, this study is significant to the fields of anthropology and education (Wortham & Reyes, 2011). Furthermore, as scholars increasingly critique the school system's reproduction of inequities, they assert the importance of ethnography and anthropological insight in improving teaching and

schooling experiences for students (Rolón-Dow, 2004). Some call for teachers and anthropologists to work together (González, Wyman, & O'Connor, 2011; Jewett and Schultz, 2011) to generate new, broader understandings of education, while continuing to understand the complexity of educational processes, as cultural productions, shaping and shaped by the sociocultural and political contexts within which they are embedded.

My study responds to this call, as well as Cammarota's criticism of the "contrived separations between knowledge-based subjects and objects, between researchers and the researched, and, most importantly, between activists and anthropologists...in order to dissolve this duality by studying people and understanding how actions can improve the conditions of their existence" (Cammarota, 2008:47).

## **Appendix A**

### **Student Language Ideology Interview Questions**

1. How do you use Spanish and English at home? And at school?
2. In third grade, how did you use Spanish and English in the classroom?
3. Can you give me examples of a time when using Spanish is inappropriate?
4. Can you give me examples of a time when using Spanish is inappropriate?
5. Do you think that bilingualism is important? Why or Why not?
6. How does your family feel about bilingualism?
7. Do you think bilingualism is valued at Alamo [Elementary]?
8. Can you tell me about a time when something happened that made you feel badly about your bilingualism?
9. Can you tell me about a time when something happened that made you value your bilingualism?
10. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your beliefs about bilingualism?

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