

*Full Length Research Paper*

# Latina Dual Language Teachers' Pedagogical Practices: Transnational Perspectives

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The Abstract is provided in Four Languages: (a) Arabic; (b) English; (c) Mandarin, and (d) Spanish.

This ethnographic study explored how the linguistic repertoires of K-2 Latina dual language teachers shape their pedagogical practices within public education on the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, the *frontera* (Anzaldúa, 1987; Staudt, 2008). Within a transnational context, pedagogical practices related to language use were analyzed drawing from theories of Funds of Knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992; González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005), which values culturally developed pedagogies. The continua model of biliteracy (Hornberger, 2003) offers a theoretical lens through which to see teaching practice in complex bilingual settings. Drawing from sociocultural theory (NLG, 1996; Hornberger, 2004), data collection and analysis of interviews, observations, and artifacts, showed the intertwining of language and identity in practitioners' narratives and practices. Within the borderlands, bilingualism and biliteracy practices illustrate both structure and agency. Bilingual educators benefit from practice that incorporates the full range of linguistic repertoires. The findings painted a portrait of how DL teachers' languages, literacies, and identities intertwined to shape their pedagogical practice. The individual and collective stories of DL teachers, indicate that teacher preparation programs need to provide ample opportunities to explore identity formation, develop academic Spanish skills, and increase knowledge about the structure and implementation of bilingual education program models.

**Keywords:** Dual language education; bilingual education; teacher identity; transnational

## العربية

استكشفت هذه الدراسة الإثنوغرافية كيف تُشكّل المراجع اللغوية لمعلمي اللغة الثانية في اللغة اللاتينية من الفئة K-2 ممارساتهم التربوية في التعليم العام على الحدود بين الولايات المتحدة والمكسيك (Anzaldúa, 1987, Staudt, 2008). في سياق تعددية الجنسيات، تم تحليل الممارسات التربوية المتعلقة باستخدام اللغة من النظريات الخاصة ببنوك المعرفة (مول، أمانتي، نيف، وغونزاليز، 1992؛ غونزاليز، مول، وأمانتي، 2005)، التي تُقدّر المعتقدات التربوية المتطورة ثقافياً. يقدم نموذج المستدام من اللغات الثنائية biliteracy (هورنبرجر، 2003) قراءة نظرية التي من خلالها تتحدد رؤية واضحة لممارسة التدريس المعقدة في الفصول ثنائية اللغة (التي تدرس باللغتين). وقد أظهرت البيانات المجمعّة اعتماداً على النظرية الاجتماعية والثقافية، التي تشمل مقابلات، وملاحظات، براهين ميدانية ان تداخل اللغة والهوية في سرد وممارسات المعلمات قد أثقلت خبراتهم. ان الممارسات اللغوية و التي تعتمد على ثنائية اللغة اظهرت البناء اللغوي في داخل الأراضي الحدودية (NLG، 1996؛ هورنبرجر، 2004)، استفاد معلمي التعليم ثنائي اللغة من الممارسة التي تتضمن مجموعة كاملة من المراجع اللغوية. لقد رسمت النتائج البحثية لدراستنا تلك صورة لكيفية تشابك لغات معلمي المواد الثنائية اللغة، ومعرفتهم المهارية في تدريس القراءة والكتابة، وهويات في تشكيل ممارساتهم التربوية. تشير القصص الفردية والجماعية لمدرسي المواد ثنائية اللغة إلى أن برامج إعداد المعلم تحتاج إلى توفير فرص كبيرة لاستكشاف تشكيل الهوية، وتطوير المهارات الاسبانية الأكاديمية، وزيادة المعرفة حول بنية وتنفيذ نماذج برنامج التعليم ثنائي اللغة.

الكلمات الأساسية: تعليم اللغات المتعددة، تعليم ثنائية اللغة، هوية المعلم، التحول

## Mandarin

这篇民族志研究探索了在美国与墨西哥交界地区，也就是边界区（frontera）(Anzaldúa, 1987; Staudt, 2008)

的公立教育中，K - 2 年级拉丁裔双语女教师的语言系统如何塑造了她们的教学实践。在这样一个跨国背景下，我们用知识

储备理论 ( Funds of knowledge ) (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992; González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005), 分析了教学实践中语言的使用。这类理论注重文化发展的教学法。延续性双语读写能力模式 ( The continua model of biliteracy ) (Hornberger, 2003) 提供了一种在复杂双语环境下审视教学实践的理论视角。我们基于社会文化理论 (sociocultural theory) (NLG, 1996; Hornberger, 2004), 分析了从采访、观察、和教学物品中所收集的数据, 并且展示了教学实践者们在其自述与实践中的语言与身份认知的交互。双语主义和双语读写在边界地区的实践展现出了结构 ( structure ) 与能动性 ( agency )。双语言教学者在结合了完整语言系统的实践中获益。此篇文章的发现描绘出了双语言教师的语言, 读写能力, 和身份认知如何共同交互以塑造她们的教学实践。这些关于双语教师个人和集体的故事表明, 师范类教育需提供充足的机会让教师来探究身份认知的塑造, 提升学术西班牙语技能, 并且增加关于双语教育模式的结构与应用方面的知识。

**关键词：**双重语言教育；双语教育；教师身份认知；跨国的

### **Spanish**

Este estudio de naturaleza etnográfica, exploró como el repertorio lingüístico en los grados párvulos, primero y segundo del nivel primario, en maestras latinas dan contorno a sus prácticas pedagógicas dentro de la educación pública en los límites fronterizos entre México y los Estados Unidos. (Anzaldúa, 1987; Staudt, 2008). Dentro de un contexto transnacional incluyendo prácticas pedagógicas relacionadas al uso del lenguaje fueron analizadas a través de teorías de fondo de conocimiento. (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992; González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) y de cuyos valores culturales se promovieron prácticas pedagógicas. El modelo continuo de lectura y escritura en ambos idiomas (Hornberger, 2003) ofrece una lente teórica mediante la cual se ven las prácticas de enseñanza en ambientes complejos bilingües. Derivando de teorías socioculturales, (NLG, 1996; Hornberger, 2004), Mediante la colección de información, análisis de entrevistas, observaciones, y artefactos, se demostraron la interrelación entre lenguaje e identidad en narrativas y prácticas de maestros novatos. Dentro de las fronteras del bilingüismo y prácticas en la lectura y escritura, se ilustran ambas, estructuras. Los educadores bilingües se benefician de las prácticas que incorporan el rango completo de repertorios lingüísticos. Los resultados obtenidos, ilustran un portal de como los maestros en programas de doble inmersión, incluyendo lectura y escritura, e identidad, se entrelazan y dan forma a las prácticas pedagógicas. Las historias individuales y colectivas de maestros en programas de doble inmersión, indican que los programas de preparación de maestros necesitan proveer oportunidades amplias a fin de explorar la formación de la identidad, el desarrollo académico de las habilidades en español e incrementar el conocimiento acerca de la estructura e implementación de los modelos de programas de educación bilingüe.

**Palabras claves:** Programas de doble inmersión, educación bilingüe, identidad del maestro, transnacional.

### **Introduction**

There is a recent trend in U.S. bilingual education to encourage dual language education, pushing teachers to follow an agenda which promotes bilingualism and biliteracy (Palmer & Martínez, 2013). Dual language programs integrate native English speakers and speakers of another language, providing instruction in both languages for all students; two-way immersion programs promote bilingualism and biliteracy, grade-level academic achievement, and positive cross-cultural attitudes (Lucero, 2010). Collier and Thomas (2009) described that in dual language programs, teachers support their students socioculturally through a bilingual/bicultural curriculum, providing a context for students to develop cognitively, linguistically, and academically through both languages for at least six elementary school years.

Profiles of different successful two-way immersion programs show this program model effective overall, where children do learn English and another language, usually Spanish, while

achieving academically (Lindholm-Leary, 2001, 2005; Christian, 2011; Christian et al., 1997). The objectives of implementing the program are to produce bilingual, biliterate and multicultural children, who develop critical-thinking skills and demonstrate high academic achievement (Baker, 2006; Ramos, 2007; Alanis & Rodriguez, 2008; Palmer, 2007).

Schools around the country are increasingly implementing dual language education and it is imperative to focus on the in-service teachers' identities and their practice to increase retention. Montague (2005) stated that throughout South Texas and much of the southwest, the two languages of instruction in dual language programs are English and Spanish. Through this study, I inform other dual language (DL) teachers by emphasizing the teaching practice, focusing on how language use is based on ideologies, proficiency, and resources. The focus is on DL education because it is a program in which the long-term goals are for students to develop bilingualism,

biliteracy, and cross-cultural interactions. Regarding the bilingual certified teachers in this study, I refer to them as Latinas, from Mexican backgrounds as I acknowledge that writing about Latinos as a group, given the diversity among Latino subgroups, may present challenges to researchers (Gándara & Contreras, 2009).

### **Bilingual Certified Teachers and U.S. Schooling**

Regarding the teachers, given that Latinas are a minority group which makes up a small percentage of the teaching force in the United States, few researchers have focused on the identities and practices of Latina teachers in general. However, some have focused on the identities of pre-service bilingual teachers (Brochin, 2010; Varghese, 2000), while other have examined novice bilingual teachers (Guerrero, 2003; Hernández, 2010; Prieto, 2009; Weisman, 2001). In the area of research on dual language, Pérez (2004) and Freeman (1998) conducted notable research in DL schools; however, their focus was the whole school, not the teachers in particular. Lucero (2010) and DePalma (2010) conducted studies with kindergarten and first grade DL teachers, yet the focus was not on Latinas specifically and the teaching context was not the border region.

Teachers' experiences are shaped by processes of instruction and interaction that evolve within bilingual education (Morgan, 2004; Vargas & DePyssler, 1998). Teachers bring their experiences, identities, values, beliefs, and attitudes when they enter their classrooms and having a clearer understanding of their lives can make them more effective with their students (Nieto, 2003). Language choice, usage, and teaching involve complex issues of political power, cultural identity, and social status. Bilingual education is not just a useful pedagogical tool that addresses the learning needs of diverse students, but also a sociopolitical tool (Hornberger, 2004; Pérez, 2004).

It is teachers who implement bilingual education policies, but most of the time, teachers create, contest, change, and transform policies, as they enact their pedagogy (García, 2009). Currently, the American educational system represents a diverse student body and promoting bilingualism for students is one way of embracing English while not denigrating other languages (García, 2005). For this reason, this study represents a venue for dual language teachers to reflect on the multiplicity of their identities and illustrate how linguistic repertoires influence pedagogy.

### **The Purpose of the Study**

This study seeks to contribute by portraying the identities and pedagogical practices of in-service Latina practitioners who teach in DL programs within the U.S.-Mexico border region. There is a need to carefully examine how linguistic repertoires and language learning experiences influence and support the pedagogical practice, specifically language use during literacy instruction, of DL Latina educators serving Spanish-English bilingual communities. For many teachers, social justice is the motivating factor underlying their choice to teach; a growing awareness of the unequal treatment received by their students'

families and communities explains the commitment of teachers (Nieto, 2003). The findings from this study can inform pre-service and in-service DL teachers by providing information from a practitioner's perspective. Furthermore, Latinas are a minority group which makes up a small percentage of the teaching force in the United States; findings can inform teacher preparation programs that prepare educators to become bilingual certified by showing the significance of how linguistic profiles influence the teaching practice of Latinas especially in borderland contexts.

Adopting a sociocultural perspective, this study explored the linguistic profiles and pedagogical practices of K-2 Latina DL teachers seeking to highlight conceptions and pedagogical practices related to language use. The participating DL teachers were U.S.-based and taught in the context of public education at the elementary level. The findings paint a much needed portrait of how bilingual certified teachers developed multiple identities and enacted them through their pedagogical practices. By drawing from ethnographic methods, including life history interviews, observations, and artifact analysis, there is potential to explore how bilingual teachers develop views about teaching and learning.

I explored DL teachers' pedagogical practices within the context of the U.S.-Mexico border region. The borderlands are a unique context for the formation and practice of bilingual teachers. Mexicans are by far the largest Hispanic-origin population in the U.S., accounting for nearly two-thirds (63.3%) of the U.S. Hispanic population in 2015 (Pew Research Center, 2017). The U.S.-Mexico border is a zone where the people who live on each side share many life experiences regarding schooling, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds. Within the context of the borderlands, ideas about language are fluid (Anzaldúa, 1987; González, 2005).

### **Theoretical Framework**

A sociocultural perspective is used to theorize the pedagogical practices of Latina dual language teachers in the U.S.-Mexico border region. The following frameworks will be drawn on to discuss dual language teachers' literacy and biliteracy practices: New Literacy Studies (NLG, 1996; Street, 1984; Street, 1993), the Continua of Biliteracy (Hornberger, 2004), and Funds Of Knowledge (FOK) (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992; 2005). These frameworks allow me to explain the practice of borderland Latina DL teachers in the K-2 grades. Next, I present the research questions explored in this study and then elaborate on the theories which served to analyze data collected. The main research question was: What are the linguistic identities and pedagogical practices of Latina K-2 dual language teachers on the U.S-Mexico *frontera*? Other questions were:

1. Why do DL teachers prefer to teach in Spanish, English or both?
2. What are the teacher-student language interactions during instruction in a DL setting?

3. What are the DL teachers' perspectives regarding how their bilingualism/biliteracy influence their teaching practice?

New Literacy Studies (NLS) is a theoretical framework, which is central to understanding the literacy practices of people; in this case, my focus is on dual language teachers (DL). NLS proposes that literacy and its functions depend on the social context and cultural meanings that users give to them. The concept of literacy practices (Street, 1993), includes literacy events and also the ideologies associated with the use of literacy. The ideological model of literacy (Street, 1984) proposed by scholars in NLS (Barton & Hamilton, 2000; Street, 1984) situates literacy within its context of use, in its sociocultural context. Language and literacy practices can be explored in depth through ethnographic studies. Some scholars (Hornberger, 2004) have theorized biliteracy and its relationship to bilingual teachers.

Hornberger and Link (2012) discussed that an orientation to translanguaging and transnational literacies in classrooms with students from diverse cultures and linguistic backgrounds can provide practitioners with a fuller understanding of the resources students bring to school. Translanguaging takes place across teachers and students for the following purposes: to mediate understanding by using translation; to construct meaning where children use other language for understanding; to include or to exclude other children; and show knowledge such as new words (García, Makar, Starcevic, & Terry, 2011).

García (2009) argued that despite curricular arrangements that separate languages, the most prevalent bilingual practice in the bilingual education classroom is that of translanguaging. Students appropriate the use of language, and although teachers may plan when and how languages are to be used, children themselves use their entire linguistic repertoires flexibly.

Considering bilingualism and biliteracy as a resource, the continua model of biliteracy offers a lens through which to see teaching in bilingual settings. The continua of biliteracy (Hornberger, 2004) framework situates teaching by considering the following contexts of biliteracy: global, social, cultural, and political. The continua mode depicts the development of biliteracy along intersecting first-second language, receptive-productive, and oral-written language skills.

Teachers' knowledge of and level of comfort with the vernacular of both languages, as well as knowledge of the standards forms of both languages, will contribute to learning success (Hornberger, 2003). This idea of having knowledge of vernacular Spanish and occasionally using it during instruction was evident with some of the participating teachers. Whether teachers deliver instruction in English or Spanish, teachers' positive attitude towards students' use of Spanish not only legitimizes the linguistic resources students brings from home, but it also allows for their academic and social development (Hornberger & Link, 2012).

Hornberger (2003) found that Normalistas aspiring to be bilingual educators were more likely to ethnically identify as Mexicano rather than a Mexican American; the familiarity with structures, scripts, and vernacular forms depend on experience with schooling in Mexico and the U.S. Marisol was a teacher who had been schooled in Mexico and she consistently spoke Spanish to her students during instruction. Marisol was a normalista with ten years of teaching experience in Mexico, prior to completing her alternative teacher certification program.

A Funds of Knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992; González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) perspective values the pedagogies of the home which are culturally developed. This knowledge from Mexican households is acquired through lived experiences and encompasses rich cultural and linguistic capital. FOK is meant to inform teachers on how to better understand their students and families. A FOK viewpoint can provide insight into the cultural resources that Mexican-origin teachers develop in their households in the borderland region. Furthermore, as practitioners, integrating children's FOK into the school setting is an approach that opens up teaching opportunities by creating meaningful and authentic learning situations for the students.

González, Moll, and Amanti (2005) suggested that families' knowledge and life experiences furnish the basis for the cultural system from which Mexican-origin children emerge. Using such knowledge within the curriculum can help build constructive relationships between teachers, students, and parents. Moreover, building on students' existing knowledge, in part acquired from their household on both sides of the border, is a way of recognizing the value of cultural identity. One interesting finding was that during instruction, teachers made connections to Mexico and in several occasions the students were the ones making connections to Mexico, prompted by a teachers' question. González et al (2005) found that becoming aware of the cultural resources that exist within U.S.-Mexican community enables educators to become more creative in their teaching and to build on that knowledge.

Hornberger (2003) highlighted that bilingual teachers are products of their own cultural upbringing, schooling, and professional preparation: thus, the moment-to-moment decisions they make about language used emerges from these sociocultural contexts. The notion of context permits examining language use in context and recognizes multiple identities available for participants. García (2009) emphasized that bilingual educators must recognize the value of translanguaging practices. It is common for bilingual teachers to hide their natural translanguaging practices because they have been taught to believe that only monolingual ways of speaking are valuable. Teachers in dual language settings reconstruct two geographical spaces that have linguistic boundaries, yet the children themselves create their third spaces with translanguaging; Translanguaging practices negotiate and build more dynamic bilingual identities (García

et al., 2011). There are ways in which school practices (e.g., translanguaging) surrounding literacy and bilingualism have paid attention to the traditionally less powerful ends of the continua of biliteracy (Hornberger, 2003).

Two-way programs separate the use of the two languages; in this case both English and Spanish develop. This notion of language separation in dual language programs has been challenged recently by García's (2011) research on translanguaging or micro-alternation of languages; the author suggests that bilingual educators must learn to build on translanguaging to meaningfully educate and draw on the entire linguistic repertoire of all students. Dual language teachers support their groups socioculturally through a bilingual/bicultural curriculum, providing a context for students to develop cognitively, linguistically, and academically through both languages for at least six elementary school years (Collier & Thomas, 2009; Hamayan, Genesee, & Cloud, 2013).

### Methods

The research design of this study is ethnography (Barton & Hamilton, 2000) and case study (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). This methodology is appropriate to examine the linguistic identities of teachers since ethnographic work focuses on the everyday meanings and uses of literacy in specific cultural contexts. According to Heath & Street (2008), in language and literacy studies, ethnographers most often choose classrooms as their focus. Ethnography is a suitable design to examine how teachers' identity and language practices are intertwined. Dyson and Genishi (2005) articulated that in language and literacy studies in the interpretive tradition, researchers are interested in how teaching and learning happen through social participation. Moreover, the context shapes language use, for example: the purpose for communicating, the language used, and the demographic qualities of participants such as age, gender, culture, and social class.

The teachers selected the location where the interviews were to be conducted. The interviews were recorded with the informants' consent for analysis purposes. Only one interview took place at a local coffee shop and the other 20 interviews were done in the participating teachers' classrooms. Interviews took place after school and occasionally during planning periods. I conducted three in-depth semi-structured interviews with each teacher, resulting in 21 interviews spaced three to four weeks apart. Thirteen interviews were conducted in English, seven in Spanish, and one was bilingual. The teachers decided what language they wanted to be interviewed in and I requested to have the last interview in the language they did not teach in. Due to teachers' time constraints and availability due to professional and personal responsibilities, most interviews averaged the duration of one hour and were substantiated with many informal interviews and conversations during my classroom observations.

### Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection consisted of ethnographic methods which included life history interviews with each participating teacher, and classroom observations in all seven K-2 dual language classrooms. These observations were documented by writing extensive field notes (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995), integrating thick description. Following Seidman's (2006) three-interview series as a guide, interview one was focused on the life history to establish the context of the participants' experience; interview two focused on the details of the teaching experience to allow participants to reconstruct the details of their experience within the context in which it occurs; interview three was about the reflection on the meaning of their teaching experience. Three in-depth semi-structured life history interviews were conducted with each teacher. The interviews were audio recorded for analysis purposes.

Upon securing IRB approval, data collection consisted of (a) 21 in-depth interviews with the dual language teachers; (b) classroom observations focusing mainly on teachers' language use; and (c) collection of artifacts/documents (e.g., photographs; school newsletters, brochures, newspapers, flyers, schedules, advertisements for school events). Weekly classroom observations lasted 15 weeks, the seven classrooms were observed periodically, once a week on average. This time in the field during the fall semester of 2013 was dedicated to participant observation, informal interviewing, and artifact collection. The focus of the spring semester of 2014 was member checking with the seven participating teachers.

Dyson and Genishi (2005) described data analysis as the process in which one transforms data including field notes, interviews, and artifacts into findings. I began such process by closely reading the transcribed interviews to write reflective memos, which led to preliminary coding of all data as I thought about how the literature related the data. The twenty-one interviews were transcribed using software (Gear Player), and I translated interview and observational data from Spanish to English as needed. After the initial open coding, analytic codes were developed to group pieces of data into categories of relevant information in order to address the overarching research question guiding the study. When many examples are analyzed, common threads or themes are found, meaning some of the categories and subcategories frequently recur (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). Themes were identified by using a manual color-coding process of data. Data were analyzed in light of the research questions and theoretical framework guiding this study.

### Research Site and Participants

This study took place among grade K-2 dual language teachers in a public school district in Texas. This local school district is small, consisting of five elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school; some of these schools are located in semi-rural areas. The teachers in this study work in the smallest elementary K-5 school, *La Escuelita* (all names are

pseudonyms), where there is one strand of the dual language program model. This school district is located in a *colonia*, which implies its location on the outskirts of town, with a high level of poverty, and a high presence of immigrants, although the majority of the children are U.S. citizens. The U.S. Census Bureau (2017) provided the following demographic data about *Desierto Esperanza* (pseudonym), the small city in Texas where I conducted the research: population of 6,321 persons, 86.4% of these persons are of Latina/o origin; Furthermore, 82.9% of the population speaks a language other than English at home, mostly Spanish. The persons who are living at the poverty level comprise 38.6% of the community. The purposeful sample included seven participants who were selected because they were Mexican-origin Latinas, Spanish-English speakers, DL educators at the early elementary levels (K-2) in a small school district in the El Paso region. For each grade level, two teachers were partnered, one teacher provided instruction in Spanish while another one taught in English.

### Findings

This manuscript reports on partial data collected from a larger study conducted with K-2 DL teachers. The second grade teachers constantly negotiated their identities as they drew from their linguistic repertoires in English and Spanish, which varied widely. The teachers ranged from being closely tied to Spanish and Mexico to being more identified with the U.S. and English. Within the context of the U.S.-Mexico border, varying degrees of bilingualism and biliteracy development result from constant meaningful experiences with two languages. Furthermore, the frontera provided ample opportunities to engage in two languages throughout the community. Language learning, language use, and language ideologies were shaped by the family environment, schooling experiences, and transnational trajectories. The levels of bilingualism and biliteracy in both teachers covered a broad spectrum, although they held the same teaching credentials.

In conjunction with teacher interviews, classroom observations revealed that pedagogical practices were influenced by the linguistic identities of the teachers. Instruction delivery at La Escuelita supported some guiding principles of DL education; for example, language separation was determined by having two teachers and two classrooms (Lindholm-Leary, 1990; 2001; 2009). One significant role of the DL program is guiding language interactions to integrate language and content (Cloud, Genesse & Hayaman, 2000; Thomas & Collier, 2012); therefore, teachers need to be skillful at designing a classroom environment where children participate in dialogue. Data reported from interviews captured the participants' teaching philosophies and attitudes towards language teaching and learning. Observational data reported examples of how teachers delivered instruction in English and Spanish in DL settings, and their willingness or refusal to accept contributions in the "unofficial" language of the day.

The data also illustrated the dynamics of children's language use as they responded in English, Spanish or some

combination of these two languages, and a glimpse of their ability to develop early literacy in English and Spanish was captured. During the interviews, the teachers shared their teaching trajectories and philosophies, to give insight on how they viewed their roles in their classroom, what outcomes they wished to accomplish as practitioners, and how they perceived their pedagogical practice. The teachers' beliefs about language learning were exemplified by the language they preferred to teach which was partly based on their language proficiency positioned within the continua of biliteracy (Hornberger, 1989; 2003). The teachers' positions along the continua were determined by self-reporting, along with my informal evaluation of language proficiency displayed during interviews and classroom observations. Teachers' language use during instruction exemplified their attitudes towards translanguaging practices (García, 2009) during instruction.

### Case Studies

Next, I developed a case study for two second grade bilingual teachers, Marisol, and Marissa. This approach allows me to highlight key aspects of their pedagogy while analyzing how their linguistic profiles and philosophies shaped pedagogical practice in borderland DL classrooms. For both second grade DL teachers, I developed the following sections: teacher background, classroom setting, teacher-student language use, and implementing pedagogy.

#### *Marisol Case*

Marisol taught the Spanish component of the DL program. As a native speaker of Spanish who was schooled entirely in Mexico, she was very knowledgeable and comfortable in Spanish. Although Marisol preferred to teach in Spanish, she had previously taught a self-contained section where she was responsible for teaching both English and Spanish. She communicated with the parents of her students mostly in Spanish. Marisol communicated with most colleagues in Spanish, but with her partner teacher, Ms. Marissa, she always spoke English because that was Marissa's preferred language. In regards to future professional plans, Marisol expressed having an interest in earning a master's degree as an instructional specialist in bilingual education.

A pesar de que estudié la carrera de contabilidad, en el mismo período de tiempo me fui a la normal de Durango porque estaban ofreciendo clases de verano intensivas. Estaba estudiando en el tecnológico y a la vez estaba estudiando en los veranos, saliendo de la preparatoria yo me fui a estudiar la normal para maestros en [cuatro] veranos. Trabajé diez años en Juárez dando clases en primaria, básicamente clases de segundo y primer año... Llego aquí a Estados Unidos, un sistema totalmente diferente, muchas cosas novedosas para mí en cuanto a educación porque para empezar los recursos que yo tenía en México cuando trabajaba en Juárez eran ¡nada! Gis y pizarrón, los libros de texto gratuito y es todo. Cuando llego aquí que trabajo en Escuela Internacional empecé

gracias a Dios con buena suerte cubriendo a una maestra por cuatro meses, a mí el programa se me hacía padrísimo porque yo daba mi instrucción el 80% del tiempo en español.

(Marisol, Interview, 11/1/13)

Marisol held a bachelor's degree in accounting from Juárez, Mexico and while she attended college to obtain this degree she also enrolled in a teacher preparation program. Marisol attended la normal para maestros during four intensive summer sessions in another part of Mexico, where her mother was from; Marisol's mom had also become a teacher by attending la normal para maestros. Marisol taught at the elementary level for ten years in Juárez and this teaching experience combined with learning English as a second language in El Paso (as an adult) allowed her to complete an alternative certification program to teach in the U.S. Marisol's first teaching position in the U.S. was as a substitute teacher in a public school that implemented the DL program school wide. She really enjoyed that temporary teaching assignment because she felt very lucky and competent since she provided 80% of instruction in Spanish.

Marisol experienced a sharp contrast between the educational system in Mexico and the U.S. She noticed the differences regarding instructional resources between public schools in Mexico and in the U.S.; she mentioned that in Mexico, she only had chalk, a chalkboard and the free textbooks provided to each student. Prior to becoming a bilingual-certified teacher in the U.S. Marisol had taught at the elementary grade level in the public school system in Mexico. Some of the material differences between both systems of public schooling were instructional resources such as having computers in the classroom, a classroom library, a projector, maps, and access to the school library, to name a few differences.

In the U.S., Marisol had previously taught third grade during seven years and that was the first year she taught second grade. She mentioned that she was a (transitional) bilingual teacher previously in contrast to her current assignment as a DL teacher. She explained how the implementation of the program has changed in the last few years in her school. In the past, there was more emphasis in Spanish instruction since the percentage of English increased gradually, for example from 20% to 30% of the time. Marisol expressed that the DL program at her school had been 50/50 for the past three years. Additionally, Marisol expressed that the previous school year they were switching on a weekly basis, but then they were told by the school district that by following that model, students missed out on a week of instruction in the language they were not proficient in. Based on this reasoning, during my observations, students in the DL strand switched every day.

**Classroom setting.** There were twenty students in Marisol's class, and her classroom was a print-rich environment, where the large majority of materials displayed were written in Spanish. On the green chalkboard, on the left hand side there

were laminated pictures of templates for graphic organizers labeled in English, as they were handed out in a workshop. On the far right side, the learning objectives were written in Spanish and listed as follows: lectura, escritura, language arts, ciencias, matemáticas, and estudios sociales. In front of the board, on the left side there was a small book shelf with books about science concepts written in Spanish. On the right side of the board, there was a projector and a collection of large colorful maps (e.g., U.S. map, world map) that Marisol rolled out as needed during instruction. This classroom had teacher-created word walls in Spanish for vocabulary in matemáticas, lectura/artes de lenguaje, ciencias, and estudios sociales. There was a teacher-created chart titled Resolver un problema and this chart explained a four step process for solving a math problem.

The calendar math area, which had no rug, had a calendar with the months of the year labeled in Spanish; there was a clock, enlarged pictures of U.S. coins, and a valor de posición chart (place value for ones, tens, and hundreds). Moreover, there was a number line, a number chart from 1 to 100, and a poster with the numbers 1 to 100 represented in symbols and written out in Spanish as well. The teacher's desk was located in a corner in the back of the classroom right next to the kidney-shaped table for small group instruction, which I saw her use when she tested reading fluency in Spanish. The students sat in small groups and they had the alphabet written out on strip of paper stuck on their desks. There were a couple of large wooden bookshelves in the back of the classroom for the textbooks used by the second graders during Lectura and Estudios Sociales.

**Teacher-Student language use.** During my observations, Marisol delivered instruction in Spanish and the students addressed her in Spanish as well. The students called her *miss* or *maestra*. The students' conversations were in Spanish, but I noticed that when Marissa's students switched to this classroom, there were more conversations in English among the students. On more than one occasion, Marisol reiterated that she was lucky to be teaching in Spanish.

Obviamente me siento más cómoda en el español que es mi idioma nativo y tengo la suerte de que sí me pusieron el componente español. Pero digo, si un día me dicen [enseña] el componente inglés pues... también [lo enseño] o sea no puedo decir que no.

(Marisol, Interview, 11/1/13)

Marisol felt more comfortable teaching in her native language, Spanish, and she said that during her teaching experience had mostly taught the Spanish component of the DL program. She realized there was a possibility for her to someday be asked to teach the English component of the program, and if that were to happen she would not refuse that assignment. I observed that Marisol communicated with her students in Spanish. She would sometimes switch to English for regulatory purposes when addressing an English-dominant child.

During one social studies lesson, Marisol had passed out a printout of a U.S. map and she pulled down one of the classroom rolled maps (which was labeled in English) to show her students where that state of Texas was located in the U.S. map. The students were to identify the state of Texas on their maps. Then the follow up activity was for students to write a detailed description about a holiday they celebrated in the community or some special occasion they celebrated at home with their families.

Marisol: ¿En dónde vivimos? Pongan una x en el mapa de Texas, ‘pos sí ¿’pos dónde más?

Marisol: escriban algo que celebran en la comunidad

Alumna: ¿aquí o en México?

Marisol: aquí, donde vive

Alumno 1: en México celebran el...

Marisol: no me diga, escríbalo

Marisol: piensen ¿qué es algo que celebran en su casa muchachos, cumpleaños, Navidad, Día de las Madres?

Marisol: ¿Qué es algo que celebran en tu familia?

Alumno 2: Father’s Day

Marisol: muy bien, pero póngalo en español. El Día del Padre.

Alumno 2: Día del Padre

(Marisol, Fieldnotes, 9/26/13)

The example shows the strong presence of Spanish during language interactions between the teacher and her students. Marisol was in front of the classroom when she showed the map to her students and brainstormed ideas about holidays or celebration the students could write about. One of the students asked if she should write about something she celebrates in the U.S. or in Mexico. This is one of several examples I witnessed where students realized they were part of Mexico because of their parents’ background or because of the proximity to Mexico. Even when Marisol used the colloquial word in Spanish ‘pos instead of pues when she answered the student’s question, that speech was clear to these students in the border region, but it would probably not be clear if she were teaching in another place. Because of the proximity of this borderland school district to Mexico, there are many varieties of Spanish used, including colloquial, academic, and regional varieties of Spanish. In border region such as this one, there tends to be an influence of English in spoken Spanish and the celebration of American and Mexican holidays seem to blend as well. This medley of language and customs results from the contact between the two border cities which the teachers and students have connections to. Marisol walked around to monitor what holiday the students were writing about. One student said in his house they celebrated Father’s Day and Marisol gave him positive feedback and the name of the holiday in Spanish, Día del Padre, asking the student to write it in Spanish.

#### **Implementing pedagogy: Literacy experiences with print.**

In Marisol’s classroom there was a focus in developing the ability of writing paragraphs in Spanish and reading was encouraged in both languages and this was consistent with her

opinion that it is the school’s responsibility to teach the structure of language, to teach it formally. During language arts, Marisol’s students usually read a story as a whole group and everybody took turns reading aloud. These stories came from their *Tesoros de Lectura* textbook in Spanish. Usually the next activity was for students to talk and write about they had read.

...vemos treinta minutos de artes de lenguaje en inglés. Ese es el período en que ellos reciben inglés, en lo que es lectura. En español es una hora, ahí va combinado ortografía, lectura y escritura.

(Marisol, Interview, 11/20/13)

During language arts instruction, Marisol commonly used graphic organizers which she drew on the board, and the students participated as a whole group to categorize information. Then the students would copy the completed graphic organizers in their notebooks, sometimes students got a printed version of the graphic organizer they used; then they would fill it out and glue it on their notebooks. Graphic organizers were used for students to practice summarizing skills, to compare and contrast, and as a foundation for writing paragraphs with detailed information. Sometimes as soon as the students finished the graphic organizer or a paragraph they had to write, they took it to Marisol and she would grade it. I noticed that students who completed their assignments first, were asked to read a book for a few minutes while the rest of their classmates finished and they actually did. Students read library books or reread stories from their reading textbook.

The students were asked to read a book of their choice. The students were reading library books in either English or Spanish and a few students were rereading stories in Spanish from their textbook (e.g., *Vacas Escritoras* and *La Canción de Babú*). Most students read in small groups or with a partner. I noticed that a few students were reading Dr. Seuss’ books in English (*Hop on Pop* and *Fox in Socks*), they had checked out the same titles. While the students were reading independently, I walked around asking the students about their stories and the teacher was calling one student at a time to test their reading fluency in Spanish.

(Marisol, Fieldnotes, 10/18/13)

It was common practice that during a language arts lesson, the teacher took on a scribe role as she wrote a paragraph on the chalkboard based on students’ input. The information students provided was mostly based on some graphic organizer (e.g., bubble map, double bubble, circle map) they had completed in a previous lesson. This time, the students’ contributions were based on information they had summarized about *Lucha contra el fuego*, a story in their reading textbook. The graphic organizer they had worked on earlier was a circle map.

Marisol asked her students to take out their language arts notebooks and to find their circle map about firefighters. On that circle map, there were six details that the children would



use to write a paragraph. The children took turns to provide details from their circle maps to the teacher. As she wrote the paragraph on the board, the children copied it on their notebooks. The teacher walked around the classroom to briefly check children's writing.

Marisol: el título comienza con mayúscula, la U es mayúscula, es grande. Se pasan una línea y van a dejar la sangría

Javier: ¿cuál es la sangría?

Marisol: pasa una línea y deja la sangría

Marisol: (a otro alumno) pasa una línea y deje la sangría

Marisol: (a otro alumno) tienes que empezar en la línea rosa, bórrame esto y empieza en la línea rosa

Marisol: (a otro alumno) no, no lo copiaste bien, eso no dice ahí [en el pizarrón]

Marisol: (a toda la clase) no se les olvide poner su punto final.

(Marisol, Fieldnotes, 10/18/13)

Every time I observed Marisol's classroom, there were paragraphs written in Spanish on the board, I noticed she constantly modeled different kinds of writing for her students. On the excerpt presented above, it is visible how Marisol approached teaching grammar and spelling rules to her second grade students. On several occasions, I observed that once the teacher finished writing the paragraph on the chalkboard; she walked around the classroom to monitor her students' writing. Since the students had worked on the content of the paragraph as a whole class, she corrected some of her students as she mentioned details that students must keep in mind regarding the structure of writing. For example, she asked students to address different things: write the title with a capital letter (con mayúscula), indent the paragraph (la sangría), start writing on the margin of the paper (la línea rosa), and observe punctuation rules (punto final). Marisol wanted her students to develop the skills to write well-developed paragraphs while they observed the grammar and structure of standard written Spanish. Marisol occasionally used a colloquial word in Spanish during instruction or allowed her students to say colloquial words in Spanish because she explained that was how some of the students' parents spoke at home and naturally the children picked up the same kind of speech. Nonetheless, when it came to writing, Marisol was very strict as she emphasized for her students to learn academic writing in Spanish.

### Marissa's Case

Marissa taught the English component of the DL program in second grade. She expressed that her bilingualism and biliteracy were not fully developed due to her schooling experiences in an English-only setting during the 1960s. Additionally, she had been raised as a monolingual English speaker and she explained she understood her parents' motives for these decisions. Marissa shared that she learned Spanish during college through coursework, by watching novelas (soap operas), and reading comics at the time when she was going

through her bilingual teacher preparation. These opportunities allowed Marissa to learn some Spanish, but not enough to give her a strong foundation in speaking and writing academic Spanish.

I got into education because of my coach. She was Anglo, but she pushed us "You all need to go to college" and she was a good role model for me... When I was a sophomore, I said "Ok, I'm gonna go into teaching," that was my goal to be a teacher. I remember everybody kept telling me "You have to go into bilingual ed" and when I went to my advisor, I told him "I'm going to go into teaching". He said "Ok, you're going bilingual" and I said "Ok, I'll do bilingual," I didn't know what I was getting myself into. I wasn't very strong with my Spanish. You had to take Spanish courses, that's when I started learning how to conjugate. When we took our courses in education we had to recite a certain poem in Spanish, and do other things. We were so embarrassed because there were a lot of the people from Mexico and they were very strong with their Spanish, when we did it in front of them, they were giggling and laughing. We felt so bad because we were trying our best to say it in Spanish. But then it was our turn and we had to recite in English, they felt bad because they had the strong accent. That was my luck, to go into bilingual education.

(Marissa, Interview, 10/24/13)

Marissa was encouraged by a high school teacher to attend college and decided to become a teacher when she was a sophomore in college. Marissa shared that she had been able to attend college because she received a grant from the local university; she also mentioned that probably because of her last name she had been told to go into bilingual education and that was why she became certified as a bilingual teacher. During her teacher preparation program, Marissa struggled with coursework in Spanish because she was not proficient in the language. She also mentioned the tension she experienced while taking courses at the local university, where students like Marissa who were stronger in English had difficulty with assignments in Spanish and students who came from Mexico who were stronger in Spanish had a hard time speaking English. Marissa concluded that it was her "luck" to go into the field of bilingual education. She did not mention having plans to pursue a master's degree, probably because she mentioned being close to approaching retirement. Marissa shared that upon retirement she would still like to continue working with children and as an option she might consider volunteering at a school for tutoring students.

**Classroom setting.** There were 21 students in this second grade classroom and students sat in small groups. This classroom usually felt very cold. The environmental print in Marissa's classroom was in English and it consisted of teacher-created charts with vocabulary words for science, social studies, and math. There was also a chart titled problem solving and it was a for step process to solve math problems

and a poster which outlined the steps of the writing process. On the far left side of the green chalkboard there were objectives written in English for the following subjects: LA, Ortografía, Lectura, Science, Math, SS. Some objectives were written in English and some in Spanish. Some of the words written in Spanish were not written in standard Spanish, for example, “escribera” (escribirá) and “leera” (leerá). (Marissa, Fieldnotes, 9/20/13).

On the right hand side of the board there was a poster with the rules and consequences. There was a calendar for students’ birthdays, which was a poster in the shape of a castle. The calendar math area had no rug and the students stayed at their desks when they reviewed math concepts during calendar. The calendar included a calendar with the months of the year labeled in English and the days of the week had different shapes to practice pattern recognition. Additionally, in this area, there was a clock, a number chart from 1 to 100 and enlarged U.S. coins next to a small dry-erase board where students created different ways of counting money.

The teacher’s desk was in the back of the classroom and right next to it, there was a small shelf with Marissa’s teaching books, for example, the ELPS booklet and the TEKS flip chart. This is where she kept the books the teachers at her campus were required to read as part of professional development and she kept some other teacher resources as well. Next to the Marissa’s desk was her kidney-shaped table. I usually sat that table when I observed her classroom. When a student misbehaved in class, she sent them to this table or she separated the student’s desk from their small group. Although I did not observe Marissa test the reading fluency of her students, she had the sheets and small white calculator to do running records at the kidney table.

**Teacher-Student Language use.** During my observations in Marissa’s class, she talked to her students in English most of the time, except for the small portion of the day when she taught reading in Spanish. When she taught reading she followed the stories from *Tesoros de Lectura* and the students took turns reading out loud. The follow up activities were provided by the book as well, usually comprehension questions to be covered after reading the story. These questions were answered orally. The students would sometimes speak Spanish among themselves in this class, and although Marissa had expressed that “students need to be taught in their first language until they are very strong” because she agreed “that if they’re strong in their first language, it’s going to transfer to English” (Marissa, Interview, 10/24/13), on a few occasions I observed that Marissa told her students to speak in English even when they talking to their peers about the activity they were working on. The second graders spoke to Marissa in English, unless it was the 60-minute period allotted to reading instruction in Spanish. I noticed that her students always called her Ms. Marissa, not miss, teacher or maestra.

This was a traditional class, which was usually teacher-centered, although students sat in small groups. There was one

occasion in November when I observed some group work and it was interesting to see how the students worked together to brainstorm ideas while they helped each other to understand new vocabulary words. Marissa was teaching a social studies lesson about needs and wants and she began the lesson with a whole group discussion and then she transitioned to an activity where students had the opportunity to work in groups. She wrote the following question on the board: If you were on a deserted island, what would you need?

Student 1: Food  
Student 2: water  
Norma: clothes  
Girl: house

The teacher walked around giving each of the four small groups a blank sheet with one of the following words written on it: food, water, clothing, shelter. The students were told to talk to their peers and together create a list of items that could be found on a deserted island and it would serve the purpose of providing food, water, clothing, and shelter. As Marissa walked around to monitor the activity she said “talk to your peers” and as soon as some students started talking in Spanish within their group, she said “English.” The students continued their conversation at a slower pace upon switching to English upon the teachers’ request; however, a couple of words in Spanish were still present in the students’ conversations as demonstrated by the way the groups reported back the list they had created.

Group 3 Clothing

Girl: leaves, sticks, cocos, vines to close the body  
Marissa: what do you mean?... Yes, to clothe the body  
Marissa: what would you do with the leaves?

Hilda: stick [using her hands to represent sowing] them together with the sticks

Group 4 Shelter

Boy: sticks, branches, rocks, cocos, leaves

Sonny: what are branches?

Girl: son como palos

Marissa: [telling the whole class] stand up, spread out your arms, like the trees. Branches are pieces of wood hanging from the trees

(Marissa, Fieldnotes, 11/11/13)

The groups reported back to the whole class mostly in English because a few words like cocos (coconuts), and palos (sticks) were used. Marissa corrected a student when she said close instead of clothe and when a student asked, what are branches? Marissa decided to show the whole class explained the meaning of branches and used body movements to represent what branches are, but she did not translate the word to Spanish, she did not say ramas (branches).

**Implementing pedagogy: Literacy experiences with print.** Marissa taught the English component of the DL program and preferred to teach in English because that was her native language. She had delivered instruction entirely in English for

many years. In an interview, Marissa had expressed that a sixty-forty DL model would be ideal because students would be learning more Spanish and getting stronger in this language before transferring to English. At the beginning of the school year she expressed she was not happy about having to teach a portion of language arts in Spanish as a DL teacher, but said she would do it even if it meant students would have to correct her at times.

I did the monolingual portion, it was all English and I was comfortable. Now that I'm having to do Spanish, even when I write, the kids will correct me. I'll say "Oh, thank you for correcting me." I feel when they [the students] come here, they learn one style, and then when they go to the other teacher, they're learning another style. They're having to change so much I think it causes a little bit of confusion.

(Marissa, Interview, 10/24/13)

Regarding the fact that students received instruction from two teachers in two languages, Marissa felt this caused some confusion in the students, mostly due to being exposed to different teaching styles. It is also relevant to mention that during the year of the study, students were switching every day in comparison to the previous year when the students switched on a weekly basis.

Marissa liked to teach writing; she felt that was her strongest area, since she had previously taught fourth grade for about twenty years. She explained that in fourth grade, there was a big emphasis on writing because of the state-mandated testing and that is why she had requested a change of grade level to second grade, because she did not want to be in a grade level that required testing. Marissa mentioned that teachers need more training in how to teach writing in Spanish.

On one of the occasions that I observed Marissa's practice, in the beginning of the fourth week of school, the teacher was teaching in Spanish and the students were reading a story from their textbook *Tesoros de Lectura* in Spanish. The title of the story was *Mi Nuevo Hogar* and it was about a girl who moved to a new city with her family. The students took turns reading the story out loud. The vocabulary to be learned was included throughout the sentences of the story, for example: Me parecía que aprender otro idioma me daría sabiduría. Marissa and her students discussed the meaning of vocabulary words in Spanish. The vocabulary words the students were learning were written on the chalkboard: *paciencia, orgullosamente, practicar, preferido, sabiduría, and instalarse*. Marissa checked for understanding of the Spanish vocabulary as she asked the students: "enseñame, dame un ejemplo" (Fieldnotes, 9/17/13). The students tried to explain the meaning of the vocabulary in their own words or by using it in a sentence. The students understood the vocabulary pretty well, from this vocabulary list, the word that seemed to be more difficult for them to understand was *instalarse*. The way Marissa taught literacy in Spanish was by closely following the stories from the textbook

and having the students orally answer the comprehension questions that followed the story. Additionally, she supplemented the learning of vocabulary words by having the students actually show the class they understood the meaning of words. When Marissa saw a few students volunteered to explain the meaning of a word *instalarse* without defining it correctly, she gave a few examples to clarify its meaning for her students.

During my observations, I witnessed a few instances when Marissa's students took tests. When students took a test, it seemed like it was a very important task because students were required to be very quiet, and everyone covered their test paper. All students had to complete the test at the same pace, as Marissa read the test items for them. One time in September, I observed the students took a science test, which was written in English and had about 20 questions in a multiple-choice format. In preparation to take the test, Marissa passed out copies of the test and asked her students to write their name and the date on it while she walked around the classroom to check for this information. The second grade students used a blue folder to cover their answers as they completed the test. Marissa read each test item out loud and students were instructed to circle the correct answer.

Marissa: write your full name and the date please

Marissa: you're missing the date sir

Marissa: this is a test, please do your best

Marissa: [student's name], I can do without your humming

Marissa: don't write so big

(Marissa, Fieldnotes, 9/20/13)

For the first few questions, some students blurred out the answer rather than circling and the teacher seemed to be bothered by this and she firmly asked them to stop doing this (shhh, this is a test! circle your answer). After a while, students just circled their answers on the paper, but did not say it out loud. The teacher walked around showing some students the correct page.

The students started talking a little bit and the teacher turned off the lights and she waited for the class to become completely quiet. The test items were about science concepts; for example: Will the candle melt with the heat? The teacher drew a candle on the board when she read this question. Another question was which picture shows the hottest thermometer? As the teacher read the science test questions, some students needed further explanation. When there was a question that listed goggles as a possible answer and some students didn't know what goggles were, Marissa showed some goggles to her students. When a student asked about the meaning of the word bridge, Marissa gave a local example, she mentioned the Juárez-El Paso bridge which most students were familiar with:

Boy: what's a bridge?

Marissa: for example, on the weekends, some of your parents take you to Juárez and then to come back to the United States, you need to cross the bridge  
(Marissa, Fieldnotes, 9/20/13)

The previously mentioned example is significant because using transnational examples to illustrate vocabulary is very likely unique to classroom interactions that happen in a borderland context. In this second grade class, just like in Marisol’s class, the students made connections to the border region they are familiar with and for various reasons. Marissa provided an example that was very familiar to most students, some students constantly go to Juárez during the weekends to visit family members, go out to eat, get medical attention, or simply buy groceries. If this class was not taking place very close to the U.S.-Mexico border, the teacher would have probably mentioned a different bridge. DL language students seemed to quickly make sense of new information, especially when it was explained based on something they were familiar with.

Developing a case study for Marisol and Marissa allowed me to highlight several key aspects of their pedagogical practice which reflected their linguistic repertoires and philosophies in borderland DL classrooms. I explored the teachers’ academic backgrounds and their professional trajectories, including their teaching preparation, experience, and current assignments. I presented mostly observational data to highlight classroom episodes to explain how the teachers drew from their teaching background as bilingual educators in a DL classroom setting. In these instances, language interactions were significant, and they reflected teachers’ conceptualization of pedagogy. Next, the conclusion articulates why DL teachers can draw on their language and literacy practices, cultural resources and lived experiences to create a myriad of identity kits as bilingual practitioners who teach in DL settings in the U.S.-Mexico frontera.

**Conclusion and Implications: Dual Language Pedagogical Practice**

Bilingual Latina DL teachers drew on their multiple identities to perform their roles as teachers in their communities. Their dynamic bilingual repertoires came from their household’s resources, schooling experiences, and border communities. Teachers are viewed as cultural workers who make the world a better place and by daring to teach with competence, loyalty, clarity, and perseverance (Freire, 1998). Instruction delivery at La Escuelita supported some guiding principles of DL education; for example, language separation was determined by having two teachers and two classrooms (Lindholm-Leary, 1990; 2001; 2009).

Data reported from interviews captured the participants’ teaching philosophies and attitudes towards language teaching and learning. Observational data reported examples of how teachers delivered instruction in English and Spanish in DL settings, and their willingness or refusal to accept contributions in the “unofficial” language of the day. The data also

illustrated the dynamics of children’s language use as they responded in English, Spanish or some combination of these two languages. During the interviews, the teachers shared their teaching trajectories and philosophies, and how they perceived their pedagogical practice. The teachers’ beliefs about language learning were exemplified by the language they preferred to teach, partly based on their language proficiency positioned within the continua of biliteracy (Hornberger, 1989; 2003). Teachers’ language use during instruction exemplified their attitudes towards translanguaging practices (García, 2009) during instruction.

Figure 1 Components of DL Pedagogical Practices illustrates the art of implementing DL pedagogy includes the intertwining components of teacher background, classroom setting, teacher-student language use, and conceptualization of pedagogy, this amalgamation is what resulted in the everyday pedagogical practices observed in in K-2 DL borderland classrooms.

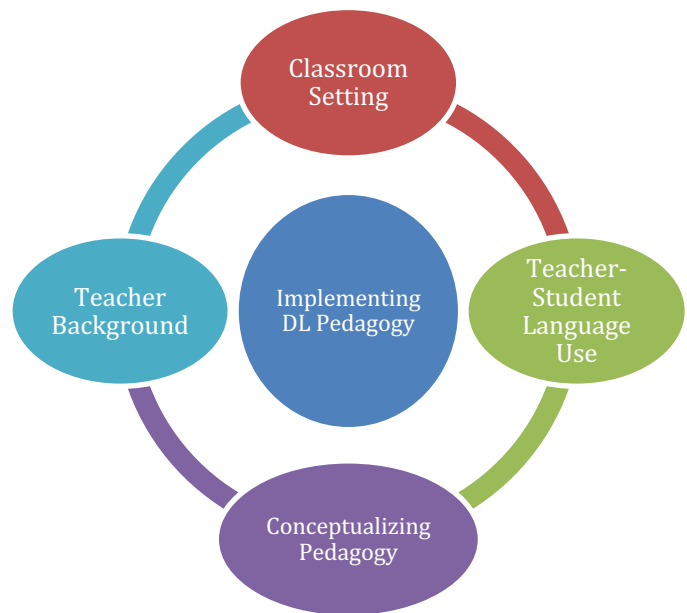


Figure 1 Components of DL Pedagogical Practices

As bilingual educators in a DL classroom settings, all language interactions were significant, as they reflected teachers’ conceptualization of pedagogy. In second grade, the two partner teachers were Marisol and Marissa. In the U.S.-context, Marisol had attended an alternative teacher preparation program, while Marissa completed a traditional teaching certification program. Marisol delivered instruction in Spanish and the students addressed her in Spanish as well. Marisol expressed she felt lucky to be teaching in Spanish, her native language. Marissa taught the English component of the DL program and preferred to teach in English because that was her native language. At the beginning of the school year Marissa had expressed she was not happy about the requirement to teach part of language arts in Spanish. In contrast, her partner

teacher Marisol taught the Spanish component of the DL program, and liked to teach in Spanish because it was her native language.

Regarding DL programs, Hornberger, (2003) expressed that faculty continually face challenging decisions touching implicitly on larger questions of power; Decisions arise about the distribution of English and Spanish in the program structure and the classroom and the co-existence of standard and nonstandard varieties of English and Spanish. Marisol and Marissa fall under the arrangement of having two teachers and two classrooms, which combined teacher-determined and time-determined language separation. This arrangement requires two teachers who are bilingual but who in effect function as a monolingual teacher, for this reason, the teachers' bilingualism and biliteracy do not need to be fully developed. It is possible to have two teachers who are only receptive bilinguals, but not completely literate to teach in two languages.

### **Bilingual Education Teacher Preparation**

The contribution that this study makes to these areas of bilingual education research is how the practitioners' identities influence how they facilitate language and literacy learning. Conducting research with under studied DL Latina practitioners provides an insider perspective. Pre-service teachers should examine existing case studies to look at how in-service teachers' conceptualizations might align with pre-service emerging teacher identities and philosophies for teaching (Taylor, 2013). Subtractive bilingualism tends to frame teacher preparation in the U.S., and instruction in English is often the focus (Cevallos, 2014). For example, Marissa reported having received no professional development on how to teach biliteracy while Marisol, who studied education in Mexico, had received specific courses for teaching Spanish literacy in her teaching preparation program. Researchers in the field of bilingual education have voiced the need for development in biliteracy for language considerations in the preparation of qualified bilingual teachers (Beeman & Urow, 2013; Blum Martinez & Baker, 2010; Flores et al., 2011; Guerrero & Valadez, 2011).

### **Conclusion**

I generated findings applicable to dual language programs in a borderland context. The importance of adhering to a program model (Lindholm-Leary, 2001) presupposes the equal distribution of time and resources. In practice, DL teachers negotiate and decide the distribution for time and simultaneously they are language resources. The findings of this study demonstrated that characteristics of in-service DL teachers included a mixture of language varieties, transnational literacies, and schooling experiences. The DL teachers entered the profession based on their histories; their stories are relevant since most Spanish-English bilingual education teachers are Latinas (Hernandez, 2010; Prieto, 2009). DL practitioners' lived experiences within the context of home, school, and community shaped their approaches to teaching and learning.

This work provides the basis to argue that bilingual teachers should be encouraged to discover the Funds of Knowledge found in bilingual borderland communities. In this study, the DL teachers had received limited coursework or professional development on how to teach biliteracy. This research strongly identifies opportunities to contribute to both preparation and practice that integrates identity formation, access to developing academic Spanish skills, and a deep understanding of the implementation of bilingual education models (Fuentes, 2015). This research drew from self-reported data and the observations of teachers' practice in DL classrooms, which are complex learning environments. Although the participants taught in English-Spanish bilingual programs, findings could reflect the experiences of DL teachers serving students from various linguistic backgrounds. This study explored teaching practices, with the goal of contributing to the preparation and retention of bilingual certified teachers. Bilingual educators benefit from practice that incorporates the full range of linguistic repertoires.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This research had limitations that need to be considered alongside the findings and implications. A limitation of the study is that it captured the lived experiences of bilingual practitioners in one school in one school district. In this sense, the study only represented participants who experienced the same educational context and DL program besides being from the same gender. The participants were purposefully selected based on their teaching assignment.

### **Future Research**

A future study could explore the same research question regarding the linguistic identities and pedagogical practices of Latina K-2 DL teachers but expand to include participants from other borderland school districts. An area for future research would be to follow new bilingual teachers as they move into DL classrooms and investigate how their practices exemplify teacher education coursework. Ethnographies of bilingual teachers' classrooms lives are imperative to record their narratives and observe their practices. Research is needed to study teachers from their point of view and within their teaching contexts (Guardia-Jackson, 2009).

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