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# Newcomer perceptions of identity and school membership: Program comparisons between English only and dual language immersion tracks

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NEWCOMER PERCEPTIONS OF IDENTITY AND SCHOOL MEMBERSHIP:  
PROGRAM COMPARISONS BETWEEN ENGLISH ONLY AND DUAL  
LANGUAGE IMMERSION TRACKS

By

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A capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
Requirements of the degree of Masters of Arts in ESL

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

English learners (ELs) are the fastest growing student population in the country (National Council of Teachers of English [NCTE], 2008; National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, 2002). In Minnesota alone, the population of English learners has grown more than 125% since 1997, from around 27,000 students that were classified as ELs to more than 70,000 students in 2013. Currently, ELs make up 8.3% of the student population (Soto, Hooker & Batalova, 2015). Nationally there were 4.85 million English learners enrolled in public schools during the 2012-2013 school year (Soto, Hooker & Batalova, 2015). English learners are a diverse group of students, ranging from students who were born in the United States to students who are recent immigrants or refugees.

At the same time, their markers of academic achievement (i.e., high school graduation rates, standardized test scores, and college attendance) are among the poorest in the nation (Gándara, 2009; MED, 2013). Although using standardized test scores to evaluate the progress of ELs can be problematic, since proficiency is an indication that they no longer are identified as English learners, it is still valuable to consider in the larger scope of the academic success and growth of ELs. In Minnesota, across the grade levels, only 27.2% of ELs were considered proficient in math in 2013, 11.7% were proficient in science, and 17.2% were proficient in reading (MDE, 2013). Perhaps more clearly, these low levels of academic achievement are further illustrated by low four-year graduation rates. In Minnesota, only 59.3% of English learners graduate from high school within four-years. In addition, while other student groups, including African



Americans, are making gains in their college graduation rates, Latinos have seen no progress in more than three decades (Gándara, 2009).

With the continued projected growth of English learners in the United States, it is imperative to identify alternative programs to meet these students' needs instead of expecting them to adapt to current models that are not working. In the United States, some research has shown the efficacy of DLI programs in closing the achievement gap between students whose home language is Spanish and those whose home language is English (Thomas & Collier, 1997, 2002, 2009, 2012). A program model based on the view of language as a resource, DLI programs bring together both English home language students and Spanish home language students with the goals of a) biliteracy/bilingualism, b) high academic achievement in both languages, and c) positive cross-cultural attitudes (Howard, Sugarman, Chirstian, Lindholm-Leary, 2007; Lindholm-Leary, 2005; Lindholm-Leary & Borsato, 2001). In DLI programs, the minority language is used as a vehicle of instruction for both groups of students, with the added benefit of increasing the value of bilingualism.

#### Role of the Researcher

I work as a seventh grade Spanish Language Arts and ESL teacher at a middle school in a mid-sized, urban district in the Midwest. The school has approximately 900 students from sixth grade to eighth grade. The student population is approximately 40% Hispanic, 25% African American, 27% white, and less than 10% Asian or American Indian. Out of all students enrolled, 70% qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. English learners make up 35% of the school population. Approximately 10% of ELs are

newcomers. That means there are twenty-five students in the school where I work who have a unique learning profile related to their status as recently arrived immigrants. They have literacy skills in their home language (L1s) and are transitioning to a new school where they receive a majority, if not all, of their instruction in English, their second (L2) or third language (L3). For the majority of ELs at the school, Spanish is their home language. In order to support the developing bilingualism of these students, the school has considered integrating the newcomer EL population into the DLI program.

A Spanish-English DLI elementary school was founded in 2007 in the district. The school started with two sections of kindergarten and each year, two sections in the consecutive grade were added. The program is a 90/10 transitional model, where students in kindergarten receive 90% of their instruction in Spanish, and 10% in English. English literacy is introduced in third grade, and by fifth grade, students have 50% of their instructional day in English, and 50% of their instructional day in Spanish.

In the fall of 2013, the program extended to the middle school. The middle school DLI program is a strand within the district's only middle school. The continuation program is in its second year, currently spanning the sixth and seventh grades. In the 2015-2016 school year, the program will extend to eighth grade. There are approximately fifty students enrolled in the Dual Immersion Program (DLI) in the sixth and seventh grades. The students receive 30% of their daily instruction in Spanish and 70% in English. Both language arts and social studies are taught in Spanish. The school day is broken into seven periods. Each student attends four core classes (typically English language arts, social studies, science and math) and three elective classes. For

students in the DLI program, the social studies in Spanish course is one of their core classes, while the Spanish language arts class fills the slot of one of their electives. The majority of the students have been in the program since its inception in 2007. There were eight additional students added to the program throughout the course of the 2013-2014 school year and seven additional students entered the program during the 2014-2015 school year, all of whom were recent immigrants to the United States from Spanish-speaking countries.

#### Background of the Researcher

I became a teacher because of the strong belief that education empowers. Influenced by the work of Paulo Freire (1970), I have always believed that teaching is a political act and, similarly, has a significant relationship to the power structures in a given society. As such, education can either be transformative, creating new social structures, or reproductive, maintaining current social structures. My question as an educator has always been how to create educational experiences that are transformative.

After working in the field of education for a number of years, I have become more aware of the structural limitations of empowerment through education. Particularly, I have seen those limitations while working with English learners. The language skills of English learners are typically perceived as a deficit — the students are labeled for their lack of English proficiency, told they need to catch up and, often, enrolled in remedial classes. Rather than using a "language as resource" perspective, acknowledging the social and cognitive benefits of bilingualism, school officials view these students through a "language as a problem" lens. From the point of view of the dominant culture, the

students have no cultural capital until they learn English (Bourdieu, 1977). Their home language skills are not valued and are not incorporated into their learning experiences. This view of bilingualism is very distinct from my experience as a native English speaker who learned Spanish as a second language. Coming from a place of privilege, my Spanish *and* English-language skills have a significant level of cultural capital, and growing up, I was often recognized for my bilingualism. This juxtaposition of my experience and my students' experiences has led me to explore the possibility of EL education as a transformative vehicle.

I have studied various educational program models that position language as a resource and work to empower the learner. This personal curiosity brought me to bilingual education and, particularly, dual immersion as a potential avenue toward equity and achievement for all students. DLI programs integrate bilingual education for Spanish home language students and immersion for English home language students. DLI is founded on the core tenet that language is a resource, and that learning requires both groups of students to act and interact with each other as language models (Hamayan, Genesee & Cloud, 2000, 2013; Howard, Sugermann & Christian, 2003; Linholm-Leary, 2004; Lindholm-Lear & Borsato, 2001; Montone & Loeb, 2000). DLI attempts to raise the perceived status of the non-English language and the status of bilingualism and biliteracy in general through formal instruction in the minority language (Mccollum, 1999; Pleten, 2005; Brooke-Garza, 2013; Reece, 2009; Hernandez, 2011; Barse & De Jong, 2008; Duff, 2012; Norton, 2010).

Currently, the DLI program in the school district in which I work is expanding to include grades six through eight. As a part of this expansion, I teach seventh grade Spanish language arts. The 2013-2014 school year was the first year of the DLI program at the middle school. Over the course of the year, five sixth-grade students came to the school as newcomers. We were faced with the decision of whether or not they should be enrolled in the dual immersion program. All of the students were literate in Spanish, able to read and write at about grade level and had had uninterrupted schooling experiences. Due to these factors, the decision was made to enroll these five newcomers in the DLI program. The introduction of the newcomers in the DLI program led me to question how their school experience, particularly related to perceived community membership, would be different or similar to other newcomers who were not in the DLI program.

### Guiding Questions

This study was designed to compare English learners in the DLI program with English learners in the English-only track in terms of their sense of belonging. There has been extensive research emphasizing the academic success of students as a result of DLI programs; however, little research has been done regarding the social outcomes of DLI programs, specifically in regards to newcomers' identity and school membership. In this research, I sought to answer the question: What are the differences between the ways newcomer ELs in the DLI program characterize identity and school membership in comparison to newcomer ELs in the English-only track? By conducting this research, I hope to gather information that will inform future program decisions about newcomer

ELs in the DLI program at my school, as well as other schools across the country that face a similar situation.

### Summary

In this chapter, I have outlined the importance of providing quality educational opportunities to the growing population of ELs. I have also outlined the program model where the study was conducted and described the personal motivation that sparked this research study. While many studies have focused on the academic benefits and success of DLI programs, for both Spanish home language and English home language students, few studies have addressed the relationship between participation in DLI and identity construction, specifically at the middle school level.

### Chapter Overviews

In Chapter One I introduce my research by establishing the purpose, significance and need for the study. I briefly introduce the context of the study, as well as the role, assumptions, biases and background of the researcher. In Chapter Two I provide a review of the literature relevant to identity and sense of belonging, and DLI programs, including middle school continuation programs. Chapter Three includes a description of the research design and methodology that guides this study. Chapter Four presents the results of the study. In Chapter Five, I reflect on the data collected and discuss the limitations of the study, implications for further research, and additional recommendations.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This study was designed in order to explore the potential social implications for newcomer ELs who participate in DLI programs. There has been extensive research emphasizing the academic success of students as a result of DLI programs; however, there is little research focused on the social outcomes of DLI programs, specifically in regards to students' sense of school membership and identity. The present work fills this gap by including the social implications of DLI programs, specifically the differences between the ways newcomer ELs in the DLI program characterize identity and school membership in comparison to newcomer ELs in the English-only track.

### Chapter Overview

To provide background for this question, this chapter reviews research related to DLI programs — specifically, research related to program models and goals — as well as middle school continuation programs and newcomer ELs in DLI programs. This chapter also explores selected research relating to identity, agency and communities of practice, as they relate to English learners in the United States.

### Dual Language Immersion Programs

#### Definition

Dual language immersion is a language learning model in which both linguistic minority and linguistic majority students benefit from the instruction and interaction; it is the combination of bilingual education for children in the linguistic minority and immersion education for children in the linguistic majority (Lindholm-Leary, 2001). Referred to as bilingual immersion, two-way bilingual immersion, two-way immersion,

or two-way bilingual, DLI is a program model that views proficiency in an additional language as a resource, rather than a deficit (Lindholm-Leary, 2001, p. 30). The structure of DLI programs provides inherent long-term benefits for both groups of students, the native speakers of the two languages of instruction (Cummins, 1984).

DLI programs meet defining criteria. First, instruction and classwork take place in two languages, with the minority language being used for at least fifty percent of the instructional day. There is a defined time during which each language of instruction is used; languages are not mixed and translations are not used. Another identifying characteristic of dual immersion programs is that both Spanish home language students and English home language students are together for most, if not all, of the content instruction. Both groups of students learn and work in both languages (Lindholm-Leary, 2005; Potowski, 2007).

Program Models. There are two main program models within DLI programs, 90:10 and 50:50. The most common dual immersion model currently is the 90:10 minority-language dominant model. In this model, the minority language is used 90% of the time in kindergarten and first grade, and English 10% of the time. In the second and third grades, Spanish is used approximately 70% of the time, while English is used 30% of the time. The amount of English instruction gradually increases each year, until it reaches 50% by fourth or fifth grade.

Different from this is the 50:50, or balanced model, with instruction half in Spanish (or a non-English language) and half in English from the onset. Within the balanced model, there are both the simultaneous model and the successive model. In the



simultaneous model, reading instruction in both languages starts in kindergarten; in the successive model, each student receives reading instruction in his or her L1 in kindergarten, and then reading instruction in the L2 begins in third grade. (Kohne, 2007; Lindholm-Leary, 2005)

### Goals of Dual Language Immersion Programs

There are three goals of DLI programs (Lindholm-Leary, 2005; Potowski, 2007). The first goal is that all students are to develop bilingualism and biliteracy. This means that both English home language and Spanish home language students will become bilingual, able to communicate orally, and biliterate, able to read and write in English and Spanish. Referred to as additive bilingualism, neither group of students loses their first language as they gain an additional language (Cummins, 1984). The second goal is that all students obtain high academic achievement in both languages that meets or exceeds grade level expectations. The third goal is that all students develop positive cross-cultural attitudes and behaviors.

There is extensive research dedicated to determining the success of dual language programs according to the goals of bilingualism and biliteracy for all participating students, high academic achievement for all, and positive cross-cultural attitudes and competency. Studies have consistently demonstrated that DLI students generally perform better than or equal to their non-DLI peers on academic achievement measures (Howard, 2003; Kohne, 2006; Lindholm-Leary, et al., 2001; Potowski, 2007; Thomas & Collier, 1997; 2002; 2009; 2012). The first longitudinal, large-scale study was done by Thomas and Collier, from 1982 to 1996. In this study, the researchers synthesized data from more

than 700,000 English learners in five large school districts across the United States. They compared student achievement levels across grade levels according to the type of language development program the students participated in. They found that by twelfth grade, English learners in the DLI program scored far better than all students who participated in all other programs, including developmental bilingual education, ESL through Academic Content, and ESL Pullout (Thomas & Collier, 1997).

In a later study, from 1996 to 2001, Thomas and Collier examined data from over 200,000 English learners. Again, they analyzed English language learners' long-term achievement on nationally standardized tests in English Total Reading and found that former ELs in 90:10 two-way bilingual immersion programs performed above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile, outperforming their counterparts in both 90:10 transitional bilingual and 90:10 developmental bilingual education programs (Thomas & Collier, 2002). The greatest difference between these two program models is that in 90:10 two-way bilingual immersion programs, the minority language is seen as a resource, whereas in 90:10 transitional bilingual programs, the minority language is seen as a scaffold. These students use their first language as a scaffold until they acquire adequate English language proficiency, at which point, the language of instruction shifts to entirely English. This data has been confirmed in numerous other studies (Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Collier & Thomas, 2014).

In addition to academic achievement at or above grade level, students who have participated in DLI programs have been found to have higher rates of high school graduation, college attendance, and enrollment in advanced classes (Kohne, 2006;

Lindholm-Leary, et al., 2001). In their research, Lindholm-Leary and Borsato find that Hispanic students who participated in DLI programs want college degrees at higher rates than the English home language students. Furthermore, preliminary findings suggest that the drop-out rate for Hispanic students in the DLI program is much lower than the average drop-out rate for Latino high school students nationwide (2001). While Kohne did not find a notable difference in the academic performance between students who had been in a DLI program and those who hadn't, when measured by California state tests and GPAs, she did find that both Spanish home language and English home language students who participated in DLI programs enrolled in advanced classes at much higher rates than their non-DLI counterparts (Kohne, 2006, p. 97).

While the academic successes of dual language programs has been widely researched, fewer publications examine the third goal of DLI programs: building positive cross-cultural attitudes and behaviors. However, studies have shown that when teachers are diligent about creating alternative spaces and discourses and emphasizing the equality between English and Spanish, there are instances in which alternative power dynamics have developed (Brooke-Garza, 2013; Fitts, 2009; Gort, 2008; Palmer 2008; Rubinstein-Avila, 2003).

#### Dual Immersion Middle School Continuation Programs

The number of DLI programs in the United States has grown considerably. As of 2006, there were 329 DLI programs nationwide. The majority of these programs are at the elementary level, as DLI programs in middle or high school are far less common. According to the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), in 2015, there were eighty-two

middle school DLI programs and seventeen high school programs in the United States (CAL, 2015). While there are some stand-alone secondary DLI programs, most middle school or high school DLI programs are continuation programs from elementary feeder schools.

The implementation of secondary DLI programs can be challenging. Limited access to standards-based curriculum and texts in the target language, low levels of teacher preparation and adequate qualifications, scheduling difficulties, differences in student proficiency levels, and uneven motivation throughout the period of adolescence are all challenges faced by secondary DLI programs. Researchers have made recommendations for program implementation in order to address these potential challenges (Cobb & Kronauge, 2006; Garcia et. al., 1995; Howard et. al., 2007; Hsieh, 2007; McCollum, 1999; Montone, et. al., 2000). First, programs are recommended to offer at least two classes in the non-English language. In many programs, those classes are Language Arts and Social Studies, as there are often quality materials in Spanish or the non-English language. Second, in terms of organization, there are both advantages and disadvantages to having students grouped in the same team or house, an organization structure typical of the middle school model. When students are grouped together, it can help to create a stronger sense of program identity, and there can be higher levels of teacher collaboration. However, at the same time, separating students from the rest of the school can lead to students feeling isolated, without as many opportunities to meet non-DLI peers. As it is very important for adolescents to feel a part of the “in” crowd, whether they are grouped together or not, it is necessary to build a positive community,

make classes worthwhile and challenging, and offer cross-program activities for DLI students. (Montrone, 2000; Bearnse & de Jong, 2008).

There is significant research suggesting that DLI programs are effective at the elementary level; however, there is less research focused specifically on the secondary level. Nonetheless, as secondary DLI programs continue to expand throughout the country, researchers have begun to investigate the impacts and potential successes of secondary DLI schools. Researchers suggest many potential benefits of secondary DLI programs are similar to those found in their elementary counterparts. Researchers expect that students at the secondary level who participate in DLI continuation programs will continue their development of bilingualism and biculturalism, as well as continue in achieving positive cross-cultural attitudes and cognitive flexibility. Furthermore, it is expected that dual language middle school continuation programs will prepare students for participation in high-level and advanced language courses in both high school and college (Montone, 2000).

#### Newcomer ELs in Dual Language Immersion Programs

One of the challenges facing DLI programs at the middle school level is attrition and late entries (Howard, Sugarman & Christian, 2003). It is recommended that schools establish specific criteria for late-entry candidates to participate in the program. Most frequently, these late-entry students are recent arrival English learners. If these students meet the specified criteria, there are many potential benefits, academically and socially, for them as they acclimate into life in the United States.

Research has shown that DLI programs can greatly increase the academic success of English learners (Thomas & Collier, 1997, 2002). Thomas and Collier found that education in the student's first language is the greatest determiner of student success. English learners who received four or five years of L1 schooling in their home country scored higher than those students who only received one to three years of schooling in their home country (Thomas & Collier, 1997, 2002). When students have uninterrupted schooling in their L1 in their home countries, they arrive to the United States at grade level. Unfortunately, when they are placed in English-only tracks, it takes them several years to reach sufficient English language proficiency to do grade-level work. This period devoted only to language learning is equivalent to interrupting their schooling for one or two years, after which they have to make greater gains than the average English-speaker in order to reach grade level. On the contrary, when students are placed in bilingual programs, such as DLI, they are given an opportunity to continue to learn content in their native language, while learning English in their other courses.

In their longitudinal study, Thomas and Collier (1997, 2002) found that DLI programs are the only program for English learners that fully close the achievement gap, while all other programs have, at best, closed half of the achievement gap in the long term. Placing recent arrival English learners who have had continuous schooling in their L1 in dual immersion programs allows them to continue to build on the knowledge and literacy skills already established in their L1 while giving them an opportunity to achieve English language proficiency, providing them with the greatest possibility of academic success.

Research has shown that students who have foundational literacy skills in their first languages will achieve higher levels of proficiency in a second or additional language (Briceno, 2013; Kohn, 2006; Ma, 2010; Yi-Cheng Hsieh, 2007; Williams, 2011). In other words, experience in either L1 or L2 can foster development in both languages. Cummins (1983, 1984) developed the common underlying proficiency model (CUP), which states that students have the ability to transfer skills and metalinguistic knowledge developed when acquiring the first language when working in another language. That is, there is a transfer of skills from L1 to L2. For English learners who are already literate in their L1, continued development of these literacy skills, provided through the participation of DLI program, will benefit their development of literacy and language proficiency in English. While the potential academic benefits for newcomer ELs to participate in DLI programs have been highlighted, it is imperative that potential social implications are addressed.

Bearse and de Jong (2008) explored secondary students' perceptions of their participation in their Spanish-English DLI program. Three major themes emerged from their data: students' attitudes toward the DLI program, attitudes toward bilingualism, biculturalism, and program identity and linguistic equity. Both English home language (EHL) and Spanish home language (SHL) students described their experience in the DLI program as positive and beneficial. Differences emerged between EHL students and SHL students in terms of student attitudes toward bilingualism and biculturalism. For EHL students, job opportunities and college preparation were noted as the primary benefits of bilingualism, while SHL students stressed the importance of Spanish for their

cultural identity and family. In their discussion about the differences in motivation in learning Spanish, they explain that the process of identity investment differs between the EHL and SHL students in their study. This difference could be explained by the fact that Spanish is a school language for EHL students, while Spanish is a language of the home for SHL students. Barse and de Jong (2008) explain that for the Latino students, “Their investment is in the symbolic value of Spanish, which is closely connected to their identity but not necessarily aligned with school” (p. 335). The authors conclude that as elementary DLI programs expand into the secondary level, educators must evaluate and analyze the distribution of academic, linguistic, and sociocultural outcomes for all students.

## Identity

### Defining Identity

Identity is defined in a number of ways in the social sciences. Essentialists view identity as static and unchanging, determined by factors defined at birth such as race, gender, or ethnicity (Pleten, 2005). Essentialists maintain that those who occupy the same identity categories are similar to one another and different from those groups who occupy opposing identity categories (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Pleten, 2005). Conversely, non-essentialists view identity as fluid and ever-evolving. Non-essentialists see identity as determined by many changing factors, one of which is language, which can either be seen as neutral or as a social construct rooted in power relations (Gee, 2001; Giles & Middleton, 1999; Li, 1999; Wenger, 1980). For the purpose of this study, identity will be discussed through a non-essentialist lens.



Identity has become an increasingly focal idea within the field of linguistics (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). The construction of identity, driven by many factors within society, is defined and discussed at length by many scholars (Bucholtz & Hall 2004, 2005; Gee, 1996; Nasir & Saxe, 2003; Norton, 1997, 2000). Understanding identity construction and its relationship to social structures, specifically as it relates to language, will help inform the conversation about language education as a potential avenue towards societal transformation.

Norton (1997, 2000) defines identity as how a person is able to understand his or her relationship to the world and its construction through time and space as well as how the person understands possibilities for the future. She ascertains that language is not only about exchanging information and argues that, in the process of linguistic interaction, speakers enact who they are and how they relate to the world. She states that the role of language is, “constitutive of and constituted by a language learner’s identity” (Norton, 2000, p. 5). Norton believes that language cannot be neutral, as it is constructed within social structures and hegemonies, and as it is through language that a person gains access to or is denied access to social networks and communities. As such, nor is language teaching a neutral process; but rather, highly political (Norton, 2000).

Furthermore, she states that the relationship between language, identity and power is inextricable. Norton (2000) defines power as, “the socially constructed relations among individuals, institutions and communities through which symbolic and material resources in a society are produced, distributed and validated” (p. 7). Language, as well as education and friendship, are components of symbolic resources, while material

resources are comprised of capital goods, real estate, and money. In her work, she refers to power as variable, not fixed within macro-structures of society. Power, like identity, is continually negotiated and renegotiated through social encounters between people with varying access to symbolic and material resources. It is through and by language that these social encounters occur.

Bourdieu (1977) asserts that “the structure of the linguistic production depends on the symbolic power relation between the two speakers, i.e., on the size of their respective capitals of authority” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 648). Prior to the act of communication, both parties must regard the other as worthy to speak with and worthy to be listened to (Bourdieu, 1977). This interaction, prior to communication, is determined by the symbolic power of the speakers. In this way, Bourdieu claims that one’s perceived symbolic capital has a direct impact on linguistic interactions. Furthermore, he speaks of language as, “not only an instrument of communication or even of knowledge, but also of power. A person speaks not only to be understood but also to be believed, obeyed, respected, distinguished” (p.658). It is through these linguistic interactions that one’s identity is defined and redefined. Every time someone speaks, they negotiate and renegotiate their sense of self, and therefore identity, in relation to the larger social world (Norton, 2010).

Bucholtz and Hall (2005) have created a framework for the analysis of identity. Broadly stated, they define identity as, “The social positioning of self and others” (p. 586). They recognize identity as relational; not located within an individual, but rather, identity is constructed through interactional and discursive processes. In their

framework, they have identified five principles that synthesize theories of identity from many traditions, and all are necessary to the study of identity. First, is the emergence principle, which is the view that identity is constructed through linguistic interactions. That is, identity is formed in specific encounters and is a social and cultural phenomenon. This view is supported in their research using the example of how transgender Hindi speakers use male or female pronouns to situate themselves within and in contrast to heteronormative structures. Further support for this principle was demonstrated in the use of AAVE speech characteristics by an Asian American man in order to disassociate himself with the white majority. In both of these instances, identities were realized through interaction. The second principle is the positionality principle. Historically, identity has been recognized through static constructs of gender, social class, age, or race. However, this principle redefines this idea, acknowledging that while macro-level categories influence identity, micro-levels, such as role in conversation or locally situated cultural position, also impact the construction of identity. The authors use interview data with high school students to illustrate how people in similar macro-level categories can position themselves differently. The third principle is the indexicality principle, which is related to how linguistic forms are used to construct identity positions (Bucholz & Hall, 2005). In this way, indexicality describes how participants place and define themselves within a given social interaction. That is, which categories, labels, or other linguistic structures are used within discourse that reflect specific values and cultural or ideological practices of participants. Fourth, is the relationality principle, which is based on the notion that identities are relationally constructed. Rather than focusing solely on

similarities and differences between participants, the relationality principle argues that not only should similarity/difference be considered, but so should genuineness/artifice, and authority/delegitimacy (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). Finally, the fifth principle is the partialness principle, which speaks to the level of agency in identity construction. The partialness principle was inspired by the postmodern critique, found in many feminist analyses, recognizing that there is a partialness of each narrative or claim to knowledge (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). It is argued that the very notion of reality is intersubjective and co-constructed. Identity is relational. It is co-constructed and situated within the cultural and ideological realities of self and other. Bucholtz and Hall explain the relationship between identity and agency. They use Ahearn's (2001) definition of agency, "The socioculturally mediated capacity to act." However, they continue that within their understanding of agency, social action is not limited to solely intentional actions, but also those of which that are completed out of habit, within the structures that constrain them.

Duff (2012), in her investigation of identity, agency and second language acquisition, defines agency as, "people's ability to make choices, take control, self-regulate, and thereby pursue their goals as individuals leading, potentially, to personal or social transformation" (p. 15). This definition of agency allows social actors to imagine and acquire new roles or identities. She explains the relationship between agency, power, and structures, stating that there is often a clear correlation between feeling in control over your life and having power as well as social and cultural capital.

While all of the notions of identity presented differ slightly, it is important to stress the commonalities shared by these researchers. First, identity is seen as fluid,

always changing, and is influenced by larger societal structures, including language, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, among others (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Norton, 1997; 2000). Secondly, identity defines how a person is able to understand his or her relationship to the world (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Norton, 1997; 2000). Identity involves how people position themselves within the world, and in turn, how that positionality is expressed through language (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). Finally, identity, as it is relationally constructed within social structures, is inevitably tied to power (Bourdieu, 1977; Norton, 1997; 2000). As such, a relationship exists between agency, defined as one's ability to act, identity, and power (Ahearn, 2001; Duff, 2012).

#### Identity, Language Education and Communities of Practice

Identity has been a common theme throughout research in linguistics and also more specifically in relation to DLI (Bears & de Jong, 2008; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Fitts, 2009; Freeman, 2000; Lee & Anderson, 2009; Lopez, 2010; McCollum, 1999; Orhmeier-Hooper, 2007; Pleten, 2005; Potwoski, 2004, 2007; Rubinstein-Avila, 2003). Researchers have sought to examine the construction of identity and the impact it has in language learning. In that vein, researchers have explored the concept of communities of practice to gain understanding in how student identities are constructed through language practices in the classroom (Boylan, 2002; Fitts, 2006; Williams, 2009)

Lave and Wenger (1991) coined the term "communities of practice," which refers to the interactions people have within a group over time, and argues that through those interactions, people develop certain roles and identities. Communities of practice are defined along three dimensions: a) what the community is about, as it is understood and

continually recreated by its members; b) how it functions, the social structures and practices shared by members; and c) what capability it has produced, the resources, such as routines, vocabulary, and styles that have been developed over time (Smith, 2009). The theory about situated learning and communities of practice provides a theoretical framework to explain the process of learning and identity construction as students transition, for example, from newcomers to old-timers, legitimate peripheral participants to full participants, within specific communities of practice. Lave & Wenger stress that, “The key to legitimate peripherality is access by newcomers to the community of practice and all that membership entails” (Lave & Wegner, 1991). This membership includes access to other members, information, resources, and opportunities for participation. Without such access, newcomers in the community are inhibited from legitimate peripheral participation, and thus, can be further marginalized and alienated from the community of practice. In the context of communities of practice within schools, marginalization could mean that students are denied access to important tools that facilitate learning, such as: access to the teacher, peers or classmates, curriculum and content, and opportunities to participate or share in class. Student learning is facilitated through these avenues; and therefore, denied access would directly impact student learning and overall academic achievement.

The concept of communities of practice as it relates to language learning and sense of membership was researched by Boylan (2002). She studied a small group of newcomer ELs at a Colorado high school. She sought to examine the ‘inbound’ or ‘outbound’ trajectories of newcomer ELs towards or away from the school community of

practice in one high school. Using qualitative methods, including interviews and participant observation, she investigated the factors that provided or denied the students access to legitimate peripheral participation, and the impact of their membership or lack thereof in the community of practice. She concluded that newcomer ELs experienced both marginalization and legitimate peripheral participation. She expounded upon various factors that determined each students' trajectory towards or away from full membership. She categorized these factors as either "newcomer initiated" or "non-newcomer initiated" (Boylan, 2002). Newcomer initiated factors included: individual motivation, classroom participation, and language proficiency. While non-newcomer initiated factors were defined as: access to classroom content, teacher expectations, segregation from the mainstream, and racism. Among her findings, when students were denied peripheral experiences, by old-time members, their peers or the teacher, they failed to engage in their classes (Boylan, 2000). Finally, she offers suggestions to educators for assuring that newcomer ELs are granted legitimacy and provided access to legitimate peripheral participation in their school community of practice. Her recommendations are structured within the framework of traditional ESL instruction, with the goal of moving students toward English language proficiency. She does not mention bilingual educational or DLI programming as an alternative to facilitate the assurance of providing access to legitimate peripheral participation.

Another study that uses the concept of communities of practice to situate English learner's investment and sense of belonging was done by Williams (2009). She explored the potential causes and solutions for high high-school dropout rates among Latino

students. The participants of this study were newcomer Spanish-speaking ELs who were enrolled in an intensive English newcomer program. As their English language proficiency increased, they transitioned to mainstream classes at the district's middle school. Williams posited that the extent of which students were invested and connected to the school community would impact long-term graduation rates. Therefore, the researcher sought to investigate the extent to which Spanish-speaking middle school newcomers' overall perceptions, expectations, attitudes, and investment toward the learning environment existed during their first 5 months of school in the United States. She used Lave and Wenger's (1990) concept of communities of practice as a framework to describe students' involvement and investment within school community. Her research focused primarily on the notion of acculturation, the process by which students conformed to the culture of the school.

The researcher found that the participants' level of investment increased as they progressed through the school year. Similarly, she found that as the participants' English language proficiency level increased, their participation in the classroom increased. At first, the students did not participate and were very apprehensive, but as they began to see themselves as meaningful participants in the learning community, they became more invested. As a result of this increased investment, students began to participate at greater levels.

Williams (2009) associates student participation with their level of investment; she argues that a sense of belonging or investment is a precursor to participation. She states in her findings that students maintained positive perceptions about the school and



learning from their arrival to the end of the study. Therefore, I believe that language was the barrier that inhibited them from expressing their desire to succeed and limited their full participation in the school community. This idea is corroborated by the fact that in her findings, she indicated that newcomer ELs are much less likely to ask their teacher for clarification. Instead, they rely on their classmates to clarify information. The author suggests that students' hesitancy to seek teacher assistance is due to a language barrier or to the students feeling intimidated by the teacher. In both instances, a lack of English language proficiency is a factor in their level of involvement in the school community.

Fitts (2009) examined the construction of third spaces in dual language schools. According to Fitts, third spaces are, "Hybrid learning spaces in which students' linguistic and cultural forms, styles, artifacts, goals, or ways of relating interpenetrate and transform the official linguistic and cultural forms of the school, teacher or classroom." In her study, she focused specifically on the creation of third spaces in the bilingual and bicultural communities of practice in a fifth grade DLI classroom. Fitts (2009) sought to investigate the relationship between Spanish home language and English home language students in regard to the community of practice established within their classroom. She found that many Spanish home language students remained peripheral members, while English home language students were central members. However, her study also highlighted that students did not remain stagnant in their position within the community; the positioning within the community transformed as the level of participation of peripheral students increased.

The concept of communities of practice has been utilized to explore the way in which student identities are constructed through language practices in the classroom, as well as how students position themselves or are positioned within the school community, and what factors influence their participation. While there has been research that has focused on newcomer ELs in English-only tracks as well as the relationship between Spanish home language and English home language students within a classroom, there have been no studies that compare the identity and sense of belonging among newcomer ELs in DLI programs and English-only tracks.

#### Summary

In this chapter, I defined the main tenets of DLI programs, and more specifically middle school continuation programs. I also outlined the benefits for including newcomer ELs in DLI programs. Additionally, the topics of identity and agency were discussed, specifically as they relate to language learning. Finally, the concept of Lave and Wenger's (1990) communities of practice was explored. While there is ample research that explains the academic benefits for newcomer EL participation in DLI programs, little research has been done regarding the social outcomes of EL participation in DLI programs. In this study, I sought to answer the question: What are the differences between the ways newcomer ELs in the DLI program characterize identity and sense of belonging in comparison to newcomer ELs in the English-Only track? In the next chapter, I describe the research design and the methodologies that I used for collecting and analyzing the data in this study.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This study is designed to explore the differences in how newcomer English learners in DLI programs characterize identity and sense of belonging in comparison to English learners in the English-only track. This qualitative case study followed English learners in the English only and DLI programs to obtain their views and perceptions of identity and sense of belonging. Data was collected through individual student interviews. The data was analyzed cyclically through discourse analysis in order to explore the question: What are the differences in how newcomer ELs in DLI programs characterize identity and sense of belonging in comparison to newcomer ELs in the English-only track?

### Overview of the Chapter

This chapter describes the methodologies used in this study. First, the rationale and description of the research design is presented along with a description of the qualitative paradigm. Second, the data collection protocols for semi-structured interviews are described. The final sections of this chapter discuss how the data was analyzed, which strategies were used to ensure internal validity, and the ethical considerations that were taken into account for this study.

### Qualitative Research Paradigm

Qualitative research is based on descriptive data; researchers strive to provide rich description through a holistic representation. In qualitative research, rather than manipulating or attempting to control the subjects or factors in the study, qualitative methodologies such as participant observation or interviews are utilized in order to

establish an emic perspective, finding the meaning and rationale through the cultural lens of the participants. Qualitative research is often cyclical, or process-oriented.

Researchers begin with a question, and through qualitative research methods, that question changes and evolves based on what emerges from the research (Mackey & Gass, 2005; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Qualitative research methods, specifically semi-structured interviews, were employed for this study in order to gain insight into participants' experiences, ideas, and beliefs.

### Case Study

A case study was chosen as a method to answer my question as case studies are holistic in nature and provide a detailed description of groups of specific learners within their classrooms (Mackey & Gass, 2005; Yin, 2009). This allowed me to attain insight into the cultural and linguistic practices of the students. While I was interested in the overall culture and practices of the entire class, I was particularly interested in the newcomer English learners in both the DLI program and the English-only track as I sought to answer my research question of how they characterized identity and belonging.

### Discourse Analysis

Discourse is often understood as the “ways of being in the world, or forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities, as well as gestures, glances, body positions, and clothes” (Gee, 1996, p. 127). As such, discourse includes not only speech, but all forms of communicative practice. Walsh (1991) explains that language exists within a greater structural context, “shaped by the ongoing relations of power that exist between and among individuals” (p. 32). Language, and in turn the

exchange of that language — discourse — provide a lens through which to analyze culture and society. Van Leeuwen (2009) states that discourse analysis, more specifically, critical discourse analysis, is based on the idea that language plays an important role in “maintaining and legitimizing inequality, injustice and oppression in society” (p. 277). Discourse analysis allows the researcher to dissect that language and position discourse within the larger social context. By utilizing discourse analysis, I was able to gain greater insight into the way the students characterized their identity and sense of belonging.

### Data Collection

#### Participants

At the time of the study, there were 25 newcomer ELs in the school, all in ESL levels 1, 2, or 3. Of the 25 students, 17 were native Spanish-speakers and had been in the country for less than two years. These 17 students were invited to participate in the study. As you can see in table 1, ten of the seventeen students agreed to participate, and permission from their parent or guardian was obtained.

*Table 1. Study Participants*

Student Name (Pseudonym)	Grade	Age	Time in the U.S.	Country of Origin	Program Participation
Ariana	8 <sup>th</sup>	14	1 year	Morelos, Mexico	English-only
Katrina	8 <sup>th</sup>	13	1 year, 10 months	Morelos, Mexico	English-only
José	8 <sup>th</sup>	13	1 year, 9 months	Toluca, Mexico	English-only
Ofelia	8 <sup>th</sup>	14	4 months	Morelos, Mexico	English-only
Juan	7 <sup>th</sup>	13	1 year, 8 months	Mexico	DLI
Abi	7 <sup>th</sup>	13	1 year	Morelos, Mexico	DLI
Gabriela	7 <sup>th</sup>	12	1 year, 2 months	Veracruz, Mexico	DLI

Veronica	7 <sup>th</sup>	12	10 months	Guanajuato, Mexico	DLI
Maria	6 <sup>th</sup>	11	1 year, 8 months	Mexico	DLI
Gerardo	6 <sup>th</sup>	11	4 months	La Union, El Salvador	DLI

At the time of the study, due to the initial stages of the DLI program at the middle school level, it only spanned sixth and seventh grades. This created a unique opportunity to investigate the differences in experience for newcomer ELs in the DLI program compared to newcomer ELs in the English-only track. Six of the ten students were in sixth and seventh grade, and qualified for participation in the DLI program, having had continuous education in their home countries and grade-level literacy skills in Spanish. All of these six students enrolled in the DLI program, which meant that they received instruction in social studies and language arts in Spanish. The four participants in eighth grade, not eligible to participate in the program due to the fact that the program had not yet reached eighth grade, received all of their instruction in English, with bilingual paraprofessional support. In addition, all ten students were enrolled in two ESL classes.

Ariana was a fourteen year old eighth grader. She was originally from Morelos, Mexico, and had been in the United States for one year at the time of the interview. Ariana was in the English-only track, but her younger sister, Abi, was in the DLI program.

Katrina was a thirteen year old eighth grader who was in the English-only track. Katrina was born in the United States, but had spent most of her childhood in Morelos, Mexico. She moved to the United States during the summer of 2013. She lived in the

United States with her aunt, and traveled to Mexico each summer to spend time with her mother.

José was a thirteen year old eighth grader from Toluca, Mexico. He had been in the United States for one year and nine months at the time of the interview. José was in the English-only track.

Ofelia was a fourteen year old eighth grader who had been in the United States for four months at the time of the interview. She was from Morelos, Mexico and was in the English-only track.

Juan was in seventh grade, and he was thirteen years old. He had been in the United States for one year and eight months at the time of the interview. He was originally from Mexico, and was a participant of the DLI program. His younger sister was Maria, who also participated in the study.

Abi was thirteen years old, and was in seventh grade. She was originally from Morelos, Mexico, and at the time of the interview, she had been in the United States for one year. Her older sister was Ariana, who was also a participant in this study. Abi was in the DLI program.

Gabriela was a twelve year old seventh grader who was originally from Veracruz, Mexico. At the time of the interview, she had been in the United States for one year and two months. She was also in the DLI program.

Veronica was a twelve year old seventh grader who was in the DLI program. At the time of the interview, she had been in the U.S. for ten months. She was originally from Guanajuato, Mexico.

Maria was eleven years old and was in sixth grade. At the time of the interview, she had been in the United States for one year and eight months. Maria was Juan's younger sister, and was originally from Mexico. As a fifth grader, Maria attended a non-immersion elementary school; however, when she entered sixth grade, she entered the DLI program at the middle school.

Gerardo was also an eleven year old sixth grader. He was originally from La Union, El Salvador. He lived in the U.S. from age six to seven; however, he most recently moved back to the United States four months ago. Gerardo was also in the DLI program.

#### Location

This study was completed during the 2014-2015 school year at a middle school in a mid-sized urban district in the Midwest. The dual language continuation program, which is a strand within the middle school, was in its second year, spanning grades six and seven. There are approximately one hundred students in the DLI program across the two grades. This is a relatively small percentage compared to the entire school population of more than 900 students. The school has a diverse student body, racially, linguistically, and socioeconomically. With 40% Hispanic or Latino, 25% African American, 27% white, and less than 10% Asian or American Indian students, 70% of the school's student body qualifies for free or reduced-price lunch and 35% of the students are designated as English learners (MDE, 2014).

While the majority of the English language learner population is classified as long-term ELs (i.e., enrolled in English language learning programs for more than six



years) there is a small, yet growing population of recent arrival, or newcomer, English learners. As you can see in table 2, in the 2013-2014 school year, the year prior to the study, there were a total of four sixth-grade, Spanish-speaking newcomers who qualified for participation in the DLI program, having had continuous education in their home countries and grade-level literacy skills in Spanish. During the 2014-2015 school year, the year in which the study took place, there were eight additional newcomer ELs who joined the DLI Program, three sixth graders and five seventh graders.

*Table 2. Newcomer ELs in DLI Program*

Name of Student	Grade in 2014-2015 school year	Grade (and year) joined DLI program
Junior	7	6 (2013-2014)
Gabriela	7	6 (2013-2014)
Juan	7	6 (2013-2014)
Eva	7	6 (2013-2014)
Abi	7	7 (2014-2015)
Veronica	7	7 (2014-2015)
Julio	7	7 (2014-2015)
Alberto	7	7 (2014-2015)
Elisa	7	7 (2014-2015)
Gerardo	6	6 (2014-2015)
Maria	6	6 (2014-2015)
Carlos	6	6 (2014-2015)

#### Data Collection Technique: Interviews

Semi-structured student interviews were conducted in order to gather data in regards to the students' sense of belonging and identity. Semi-structured interviews provide an outline of questions for the researcher, ensuring that there is continuity within

all of the ten interviews. However, semi-structured interviews also allow for flexibility, providing an opportunity for interviewees to express themselves freely, and for the interviewer to ask individual-specific questions (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 173). While individual interviews provide insight into the participants' experiences and sense of belonging and identity, stance is a key factor in understanding experiences as they are tied to identity formation in interviews. According to Du Bois (2007), stance is defined as, "a public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means, of simultaneously evaluating objects, positioning subjects (self and others), and aligning with other subjects, with respect to any salient dimension of the sociocultural field" (p. 163). In this way, the researcher must be aware of positionality and potential impact on the participant (Abdi, 2011).

For this study, a total of ten students were interviewed. Six of those students were ELs in the DLI program and four were ELs in the English-only track (refer to table 1). Questions asked related to their experience at the middle school, their adjustment to life and school culture in the United States, friendships, school participation and sense of belonging. The interviews were recorded and transcribed for further analysis. The interview transcriptions were analyzed using discourse analysis which is explained below.

## Procedure

### Participants

The participants of the study were all newcomer English learners in sixth through eighth grades, who had been in the United States for more than three months but less than

two years. There were a total of seventeen students that met these qualifications, and were invited to participate in the study. Out of the seventeen, twelve students, four in the English-only track and eight in the DLI program, volunteered and permission from their parent or guardian was obtained. In order to create a more balanced perspective between student participants enrolled in the DLI program and students in the English-only track, I chose ten students for my study. In the end, six of the participants were in the DLI program in grades six and seven, while the four eighth grade participants were in the English-only track. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all participants.

## Materials

### Questions for interviews

The ten individual interviews were semi-structured in nature. Semi-structured interviews provide an outline of questions for the researcher, but still allow for freedom and flexibility. The questions were categorized under five themes: introduction, comparing and contrasting former schools to current school, participation in school, English and Spanish, and DLI program. (See Appendix B for a full list of interview questions).

## Data Analysis

The semi-structured interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed using transcription conventions adapted from Eggins and Slade (1997) and Richards and Seedhouse (2005). Data analysis for this project was done using discourse analysis (Brooke-Garza, 2013; Duff, 2002; Hernandez, 2011; Lee, Hill-Bonnet & Raley, 2011; Reece, 2009; Van Leeuwen, 2009). For the first cycle of analysis, the transcripts were

coded using eclectic coding: both In Vivo and Emotion Coding. In Vivo Coding is a coding method that uses words or short phrases taken from the actual language found in the data. The benefit of using In Vivo Coding is that the process can allow a researcher to deepen understanding of participants' culture and worldview (Saldaña, 2013). Emotion Coding labels the emotions that the participant recalls or experiences, and is especially useful in studies that explore intrapersonal or interpersonal experiences (Saldaña, 2013). By combining both In Vivo and Emotion Coding, the researcher is able to look for patterns and themes in regards to students' feelings and perceptions, which are a main component in their overall sense of belonging at the school. During the second cycle of coding, I themed the data. According to DeSantis and Ugarriza (2000), "a theme is an abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent [patterned] experience and its variant manifestations. As such, a theme captures and unifies the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful whole" (p. 362). Themeing the data allows categories to emerge from the data, and connections, explanations, causes or consequences can be made regarding those categories (Saldaña, 2013). In this way, themeing the data allowed me to make connections between the experiences of each participant. I looked for overarching patterns and themes that emerged from all sets of collected data (Brooke-Garza, 2013; Duff, 2002; Hernandez, 2011; Lee, Hill-Bonnet & Raley, 2011; Reece, 2009).

### Ethics

Several measures were taken to ensure that ethical standards were upheld. First, a human subjects research form was completed, submitted and approved by Hamline

University. Upon approval from Hamline University, written permission was granted by the school principal. Then, parents received and signed a consent form which outlined the guidelines, procedures, and risk factors of this study. Students and parents were aware that participation was voluntary and that no negative consequences would occur if they chose not to participate. Furthermore, the identity of the participants was not disclosed under any circumstance during the research process or at any time; all research materials were locked in a secure location throughout the duration of the study.

### Conclusion

In this chapter, I described the methods used in collecting and analyzing data for this qualitative study, which sought to explore the differences in how newcomer ELs in DLI programs characterize identity and sense of belonging in comparison to newcomer ELs in the English-only track. Through the collection of this data, I was able to explore the possibility of DLI as a transformative language learning program model for newcomer ELs, specifically as it relates to the potential impact of participation in DLI programs on student's sense of belonging and identity development. The next chapter presents the results of this study and discusses the connection of the results to the guiding question.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

This study took place at a mid-sized urban middle school. Ten students were interviewed for this study. All of the participants were newcomer ELs, who had been in the US for less than two years. Four of the participants were in the English-only track at the school and received ESL services. The other six students participated in the Spanish DLI program in addition to receiving ESL services. The following themes are presented in order to answer the question, "What are the differences between the ways newcomer ELs in the DLI program characterize identity and school membership in comparison to newcomer ELs in the English-only track?"

### Themes

Three distinct themes related to community membership emerged from the data. These themes concerned a) perceptions of Spanish use in the school, b) students' classroom participation, and c) peer acceptance. Within each of these themes, sub-themes materialized from the data that demonstrated the differences between students in the DLI program and students in the English-only track.

#### Perceptions of Spanish in the School

The student body of the research site is comprised of 40% Latino students. Two out of the three administrative assistants in the main office are bilingual. Five out of the roughly 60 teachers at the school are fluent Spanish-speakers, and the majority of them are teachers in the DLI program. A few more teachers have basic Spanish skills, and use these skills to communicate with newcomer ELs. Although the students all attended the same school, it became clear through the data that the students in the DLI program

perceived Spanish in the school differently than students in the English-only track.

Within the broader theme of perception of Spanish in the school, three sub-themes emerged from the data: the quantity of Spanish speakers in the school, the desirability of Spanish, and the role of language in making friends.

Quantity of Spanish speakers in the school. Even though the students all attended the same school, their perceptions of how many people in the school spoke Spanish varied considerably. Many students in the English-only track commented on how “everybody speaks English” or “nobody speaks Spanish,” while students in the DLI program expressed, “almost everyone speaks Spanish” or “many people speak Spanish.” Maria, a sixth grade student in the DLI program, shared her experience at her current school, and compared it to her experience at an elementary school as a fifth grader participating in an English-only track.

- |                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Profesora:</b> ¿Y te acuerdas el primer día cuando llegaste a la escuela?                                                           | <b>Teacher:</b> And do you remember the first day when you arrived at school?                                                                                      |
| <b>María:</b> Sí. ¿En ésta o en la otra?                                                                                               | <b>María:</b> Yes. In this school or the other one?                                                                                                                |
| <b>Profesora:</b> Bueno, en la otra                                                                                                    | <b>Teacher:</b> Well, the other one.                                                                                                                               |
| <b>María:</b> Oh, sí me acuerdo.                                                                                                       | <b>María:</b> Oh, yes, I remember.                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Profesora:</b> ¿Cómo era?                                                                                                           | <b>Teacher:</b> How was it?                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>María:</b> Me da un poco de miedo, es que todos eran como americanos y no hablaban español y no podía comunicarme más que una niña. | <b>María:</b> I was a little afraid, it's that everyone was like Americans and they didn't speak Spanish and I couldn't communicate with anyone, besides one girl. |
| <b>Profesora:</b> Y aquí ¿te acuerdas tu primer día cuando llegaste aquí?                                                              | <b>Teacher:</b> And here, do you remember your first day of when you arrived here?                                                                                 |
| <b>María:</b> Sí.                                                                                                                      | <b>María:</b> Yes.                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Profesora:</b> ¿Y cómo sentías?                                                                                                     | <b>Teacher:</b> And how did you feel?                                                                                                                              |
| <b>María:</b> Bien, porque hablaba más español.                                                                                        | <b>María:</b> Good because people spoke                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Profesora:</b> ¿Otros niños?                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                    |

**María:** Sí, y los maestros.

more Spanish.

**Teacher:** Other kids?

**Maria:** Yes, and the teachers.

At Maria's previous school, where she attended fifth grade, hardly anyone spoke Spanish. She shared that she was afraid because nobody spoke Spanish. Her description of feelings about her experience at this school was similar to that of the students in the English-only track. When the students in the English-only track were asked what the first day of school was like, many of them shared feelings of nervousness or fear, stating that "everybody spoke English, and I didn't."

The use of indefinite pronouns such as *they* or *everyone* is an example of what Van Leewuen (2009) calls indetermination. Indetermination refers to the use of indefinite pronouns to refer to actors who are represented as unspecified. In the following dialogues, the interviewees are not referring to specific people, but rather, to an unspecified group of people. One student in the English-only track, Ariana, shared her experience on the first day of school when "by luck" there was a person who spoke Spanish and English in the front office and helped her communicate with the other office staff. When Katrina was asked why she felt nervous and afraid, she stated, "Well that I didn't speak English and everyone spoke to me in English." José, another student in the English-only track, echoed Ariana and Katrina's experiences.

**Profesora:** Ok. ¿Y te acuerdas el primer día de escuela cuando llegaste?

**José:** Oh, ¡sí!

**Profesora:** ¿Cómo era? ¿Puedes contármelo?

**José:** Estaba yo nervioso porque era un nervio, no sé, era

**Teacher:** Ok. And do you remember your first day of school when you arrived?

**José:** Oh yes!

**Teacher:** How was it? Can you tell me about it?

**José:** I was nervous because it was nerve-racking, I don't know, it



extraño llegar a una escuela donde todos hablaban inglés y yo no. Y a veces me quedaba pensando que tan fácil o qué tan difícil era aprenderlo.

was strange arriving at a school where everyone spoke English and I didn't. And sometimes I just thought to myself how easy or how difficult it was to learn it.

However, there was a difference in the way that students in the DLI program spoke about the number of Spanish speakers in the school. In contrast to her first school where she felt alone, Maria shared her experience at her current school, as a part of the DLI program. She explained that, “many people speak Spanish” and, “almost the whole school speaks Spanish.”

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| <b>Profesora:</b> | Y pensando en cómo te sentías al llegar aquí, o, al llegar a Minnesota, en comparación de cómo te sientes ahora, ¿dirías que sería diferente o igual?    | <b>Teacher:</b> | And thinking of how you felt when you arrived here, or, arrived in Minnesota, in comparison to how you feel now, would you say it's different or the same?   |
| <b>María:</b>     | Yo pensé que todo el mundo iba a hablar inglés, nadie iba a hablar español, pero luego mucha gente hablaba español, había personas que hablaban español. | <b>Maria:</b>   | I thought that everyone was going to speak English and nobody would speak Spanish, but then many people spoke Spanish, there were people that spoke Spanish. |
| <b>Profesora:</b> | Y la impresión de cuando llegaste a la otra escuela y que te sentías cómo sola, ahora en esta escuela, ¿cómo te sientes?                                 | <b>Teacher:</b> | And the impression when you arrived at the other school when you felt alone, and now at this school, how do you feel?                                        |
| <b>María:</b>     | Yo no me siento sola porque yo puedo decir mi lenguaje porque casi toda la escuela habla español y ya no me siento sola y ya puedo decir mi lenguaje.    | <b>Maria:</b>   | I don't feel alone because I can speak my language and almost the whole school speaks Spanish and I don't feel alone anymore and I can speak my language.    |

Maria contrasted her experiences, saying that “she doesn’t feel alone anymore.” No longer did she feel isolated for being one of two Spanish speakers; but rather, she was one of many. In fact, from her perspective, “almost the whole school speaks Spanish.”

Another student, Gabriela, reflected on her experience meeting “Americans” who speak Spanish. She described herself as surprised to see and meet English home language students speaking Spanish. Both Gabriela and Maria have both, to some extent, commented on the number of Spanish speakers at the school.

**Gabriela:** Pues, pues, porque la primera vez que llegué me sorprendió ver americanos hablando español, oh, hablan español. Y luego a veces me encuentro con personas así con niños que les veo pero nunca les he escuchado hablar y por primera vez que les escuchó hablar, hablan español... como un niño que usted lo conoce, no sé, no me lo sé su nombre. Pero nunca le he escuchado hablar y pues, una vez escuché, pero en inglés sino lo vi saliendo de la clase del español y yo me quedo, ¿habla español el niño? Y yo le pregunté a usted, y, qué padre.

**Gabriela:** Well, well because the first time I came I was surprised to see Americans speaking Spanish, oh, they speak Spanish. And then sometimes I meet people like with kids who I see but I’ve never heard them speak and the first time I hear them speak, they speak Spanish... like a boy that you know, I don’t know, I don’t know his name. But I had never heard him speak, well, one time I heard him, but in English, but then I see him leaving Spanish class, and I thought to myself, that boy speaks Spanish? And I asked you, and, how cool.

In the dialogue above, Gabriela expressed that there were many English home language Spanish-speakers at the school. Later in the interview, she described what it was like to learn that there were English home language students who spoke Spanish, and how that knowledge changed their interactions.

- Profesora:** Cómo si, si conocer o saber que personas o americanos hablan español, si eso ha cambiado, como, tu perspectiva o tus amistades, o...?
- Gabriela:** No les hablaba yo porque yo decía yo como les voy a hablar si no me entienden y si no les entiendo yo.
- Profesora:** Uh huh.
- Gabriela:** Luego con estos sí
- Profesora:** ¿Hablas con ellos cuando no estás en la clase del español?
- Gabriela:** Sí
- Profesora:** ¿Hablas con ellos en los pasillos y todo?
- Gabriela:** Sí
- Profesora:** Puedes contarme un poco de eso?
- Gabriela:** Como, los tengo en varios clases y luego en *lunch* también
- Profesora:** Okay. Umm, ¿tú piensas si no estuvieras en las clases del español serías amigos con ellos?
- Gabriela:** No. Porque no sabría que hablan español.
- Profesora:** Y cuando están juntos, ¿hablan español, inglés, los dos?
- Gabriela:** Ellos hablan los dos, pero yo solo español.
- Teacher:** Like, if, if knowing or knowing that people or Americans speak Spanish, if that has changed, like, your perspective or your friendships, or...?
- Gabriela:** I didn't speak to them before because I said how am I going to speak to them if they don't understand me and I don't understand them.
- Teacher:** Uh huh
- Gabriela:** Then, later with these ones yes.
- Teacher:** Do you talk to them when you aren't in Spanish class?
- Gabriela:** Yes.
- Teacher:** You speak to them in the halls and everything?
- Gabriela:** Yes
- Teacher:** Can you tell me a little about that?
- Gabriela:** Well, I am with them in various classes and then lunch as well.
- Teacher:** Okay. Umm, do you think that if you weren't in classes in Spanish you would be friends with them?
- Gabriela:** No, because I wouldn't know that they speak Spanish.
- Teacher:** And when you are together, do you speak Spanish, English, both?
- Gabriela:** They speak both, but I only speak in Spanish.

Although all of the participants in the study attended the same school, there were clear differences in their perception of Spanish within the school. The perception of students in the English-only track was that many people spoke English, while the

perception of students in the DLI program was that there were many Spanish speakers in the school, both students and teachers. This phenomenon could be explained by the differences in position in relation to the communities of practice within the school. Newcomer ELs in the DLI program were legitimate peripheral participants of the DLI community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1990). They were surrounded by students who were bilingual and who regarded Spanish as having higher symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1977). Whereas, the newcomer ELs in the English-only track were largely surrounded by students in the larger school community of practice; and therefore, they had less interaction with students who were bilingual or regarded Spanish as having substantial symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1977).

Desirability of Spanish. One of the other differences that emerged between the responses of DLI students and students in the English-only track was their perception of how Spanish was perceived in the school, or how much value was it granted (Bourdieu, 1977). In other words, how desirable was it to speak Spanish in school? Students were asked if bilingual students at the school preferred to speak Spanish or English. José, an eighth grader in the English-only track commented that, “it depends,” but then he shared an experience of students pretending that they didn’t speak Spanish.

- Profesora:** ¿Y tú piensas que los niños aquí en esta escuela, los niños que sí son bilingües, prefieren hablar español o inglés? ¿O qué prefieren hablar?
- José:** Pues yo creo que eso depende de cómo ellos quieran hablar porque algunos dicen que no les gusta hablar español, algunos lo hablan solo para poder comunicarse, y algunos pues creo que sí les gusta.
- Profesora:** ¿Por qué crees que algunos sí les gusta o no? ¿Qué son los factores?
- José:** Yo creo que a algunos no les gusta porque cuando algunos niños yo les hablaba en español y me decían que no hablaban español. Pero después, les fui hablando más y más español ya después ya me hablaban.
- Teacher:** And, do you think the students in this school, the students that are bilingual, prefer to speak Spanish or English? Or, what do they prefer to speak?
- José:** Well, I think that this depends on how they want to speak because some tell me that they don't like to speak Spanish, some only speak it to be able to communicate, and others, well, I think that they do like it.
- Teacher:** Why do you think some students do like to speak Spanish? What are the factors?
- José:** I think that some students don't like it because I spoke to some kids in Spanish and they told me that they didn't speak Spanish. But then after, I kept talking to them in Spanish more and more and after that they finally spoke to me.

José's comments about students' preferences of speaking English or Spanish were supported through personal experience. He shared that students pretended that they didn't speak Spanish when he tried talking to them. However, after José continued talking to them in Spanish, they eventually spoke to him in Spanish. This story reflected an attitude that Spanish was not a desired language of communication within the school. Furthermore, it corroborates Bourdieu's assertion that one's symbolic capital has a direct impact on linguistic interactions (Bourdieu, 1977). In this instance, José did not have the same access to symbolic resources as the other student; and therefore, the student did not regard José, at first, as worthy to be listened to (Bourdieu, 1977).

Ariana, another student in the English-only track, also stated that she did not think bilingual students in the school like speaking in Spanish. In talking about how it felt to need people to translate or interpret for her, she explained that she thought some people don't like interpreting because they don't like speaking in Spanish because they got tongue-tied.

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| <b>Profesora:</b> ¿Y cómo te sientes cuando tienes que pedir a otras personas que traduzcan para ti?                                       | <b>Teacher:</b> And, how do you feel when you have to ask other people to translate for you?                                                               |
| <b>Ariana:</b> Oh, pues antes sí me sentía...pero ahorita ya no.                                                                           | <b>Ariana:</b> Oh, well before yeah I felt...but now I don't.                                                                                              |
| <b>Profesora:</b> ¿Porque ya te has acostumbrado?                                                                                          | <b>Teacher:</b> Because you have become accustomed?                                                                                                        |
| <b>Ariana:</b> Sí, aunque luego yo pienso que no les gusta traducir porque hay personas que no les gusta hablar español.                   | <b>Ariana:</b> Yes, even though then I think that they don't like to translate because there are people that don't like speaking Spanish.                  |
| <b>Profesora:</b> ¿Y tú piensas que a la mayoría de los chicos que son bilingües aquí les gusta hablar español?                            | <b>Teacher:</b> And do you think that the majority of bilingual kids here like to speak Spanish?                                                           |
| <b>Ariana:</b> No. Porque como ellos hablan ya mucho inglés, ya cuando hablan español, se les traba la lengua y yo pienso que les da pena. | <b>Ariana:</b> No. Because now that they speak a lot of English, now when they speak Spanish, they get tongue-tied and I think it's embarrassing for them. |

Differently, students in the DLI program shared experiences of talking in Spanish with their friends who were non-newcomer ELs, both English home language students and Spanish home language students. As mentioned previously, Gerardo, a student in the DLI program responded when asked what language he and his friends spoke and why, he said Spanish, "because we like Spanish better." His answer was matter-of-fact. He didn't defend himself or defend speaking Spanish, he simply stated that they liked it

better. Another point to highlight is that he spoke on behalf of his friends, using the first-person plural pronoun, 'we,' signaling membership of that community. Gerardo shared that both he and his Spanish-speaking friends liked Spanish better. Similarly, Abi said, "hablamos español" [Translation: We speak Spanish], using the pronoun, 'we' and, similarly, signaling a sense of membership. Both Gerardo and Abi positioned themselves in affiliation with other Spanish-speaking students. This positionality is an indication of their sense of belonging. Bucholtz and Hall (2005) define identity as, "the social positioning of self and others" (p. 586). In this instance, Abi and Gerardo position themselves *with* the others, included in the community. Furthermore, this example is supported by Bucholtz and Hall's principle of indexicality, relating to how linguistic forms are used to place and define oneself within a given social interaction. They both define themselves as members and participants of the community.

Role of language in making friends. Language, as it is the building block for communication, plays an essential role in making friends (Norton, 2010). For middle school students, making friends is an extremely important component of their social and emotional well-being. During the interviews, all of the students were asked who their friends were, who they sit with at lunch, and also in what language do their friends prefer to speak, and in what language do they usually speak with each other and with the interviewee. It is typical for students in newcomer EL programs to stick together outside of classes. In fact, many of the students in both the DLI program and English-only track mentioned the other newcomer ELs as their close friends. One of the factors in this was that they often have many or all of their classes together, in order to ensure maximum

paraprofessional support. Gabriela explained how she met one of her best friends, Eva.

It wasn't until all of their classes were together that she began to talk more with Eva.

**Profesora:** Y...¿te acuerdas como se conocieron tus mejores amigos?

**Gabriela:** Sí...con Eva, sí

**Profesora:** Cuéntame.

**Gabriela:** Ella pues, bueno, al principio, no la hablaba porque ella en la primera hora, a ella le tocaba una y a mi otra y en la segunda también, pero ya del resto de los clases, éramos juntas.

**Profesora:** Okay.

**Gabriela:** Hasta que cambiaron completa si iguales todas las clases, la empecé hablar. le digo hola como estas, y tenemos conversación.

**Teacher:** And, do you remember how you met your best friends?

**Gabriela:** Yes...with Eva, yes.

**Teacher:** Tell me about it.

**Gabriela:** She, well, at the beginning I didn't talk to her because in first hour, she was in one and I was in another and in second hour as well, but then the rest of the day, we were together in all of our classes.

**Teacher:** Okay

**Gabriela:** Until they completely changed, yeah all of the same classes, I began to talk to her. I would tell her hi, how are you, and we would talk.

Students in the English-only track referenced not knowing English, or only

knowing Spanish, as a factor in making friends. Ofelia, an eighth grader in the English-

only track explained that she only had minimal friendships because she only spoke

Spanish.

**Profesora:** ¿Y tus amigos hablan español, inglés...

**Ofelia:** Español.

**Profesora:** ¿Y cómo lo ves aquí?

**Ofelia:** Pues, aquí...mientras ahorita que no más sé mi idioma, pues solamente tengo poquitos amigos, pero tal vez ya agarrando el idioma ya tenga más. Porque tengo mi internet, pero solamente con los amigos de México. Porque aquí casi no tengo, y

**Teacher:** And, do your friends speak Spanish, English...?

**Ofelia:** Spanish

**Teacher:** And, how do you see things here?

**Ofelia:** Well, here...for now because I only know my language, well I only have a few friends, but maybe learning the language more I'll have more. Because I have the internet, but only with my friends from Mexico. Because here I hardly have



pues si, a veces me quisiera  
ir a México y no estar aquí.

any, and well yeah, sometimes  
I wish I could go to Mexico  
and not be here.

Ofelia equated not having many friends to not being able to speak the language (English). Her comments reflected a perception that in order to fully participate within the social community at the school, she would have to first learn English. The distance reflected in her explanation can be discussed in terms of Lave and Wenger's (1991) community of practice. Ofelia did not see herself as a member of the community, not even as a legitimate peripheral participant of the community. Ofelia's remarks suggested that she did not have access to legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Ofelia's experiences were similar to Katrina's, another eighth grade student in the English-only track. When Katrina was asked about how she met her friends when she first arrived, she shared the role that knowing English played in that situation.

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| <b>Profesora:</b> | Y, ¿Quiénes son tus mejores amigas?                                                                                                                        | <b>Teacher:</b> | And, who are your best friends?                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Katrina:</b>   | Es Ariana, Vianey, Esperanza, Michelle, Adriana, creo ya.                                                                                                  | <b>Katrina:</b> | They're Ariana, Vianey, Esperanza, Michelle, Adriana, and I think that's it.                                                                                                     |
| <b>Profesora:</b> | Y, ¿Cómo se conocieron?                                                                                                                                    | <b>Teacher:</b> | And how did you meet?                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Katrina:</b>   | Pues como yo no hablaba, no hablo inglés aún, Carla estaba en las clases y pues ella tenía a sus amigas, y pues me presentó con todas sus amigas y de ahí. | <b>Katrina:</b> | Well, because I didn't speak, I still don't speak English, Carla was in class, and well, she had her friends, and well, she introduced me to all of her friends, and from there. |

Katrina expressed that because she didn't speak English, she depended on another student, who was also a newcomer at the time, but had already learned some English, to

help her make friends. It is to say, that knowing English was a precursor to being able to meet new people. Furthermore, later in the interview, she reflected on her experience at the school after being at the school for almost two years. Again, she referenced her knowledge of English as a factor of her feeling like a part of the community; now that she understood a little more English, she could talk with people. The reverse of this comment would be that without knowing English, she wouldn't be able to talk with people. The ability to understand and speak English was a factor in her sense of membership. Katrina's experience echoes the experience of the participants in Williams (2009) study. In both studies, limited English language proficiency was a factor that prevented full participation in communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1990).

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| <p><b>Profesora:</b> Y, ¿Te sientes como parte de la comunidad aquí en esta escuela? ¿Cómo te sientes?</p>                                   | <p><b>Teacher:</b> And, do you feel like you are a part of the community here? How do you feel?</p>                               |
| <p><b>Katrina:</b> Sí.</p>                                                                                                                   | <p><b>Katrina:</b> Yes.</p>                                                                                                       |
| <p><b>Profesora:</b> ¿Puedes contar un poquito sobre esto?...de por qué te hace sentir como parte de la escuela o parte de la comunidad?</p> | <p><b>Teacher:</b> Can you explain a little bit about this? About why you feel part of the school or part of the community?</p>   |
| <p><b>Katrina:</b> Porque ya ahorita como más personas me hablan y ya entiendo un poquito más el inglés, ya hablo con las personas.</p>      | <p><b>Katrina:</b> Because now more people talk to me and now I understand a little more English, and now I talk with people.</p> |

While many of the students in the English-only track expressed knowing English as a factor in making friends, that was not something that students in the DLI program expressed. In fact, students in the DLI program were able to make friends with bilingual English home language students. They did not see not knowing English as a hindrance to

making friends, but rather they used their Spanish as a resource. The majority of Abi's friends were English home language students she met in the DLI program. Abi and the other seventh grade newcomer ELs did not get along very well this year. She alluded to this in responding to the question, "What is something you don't like very much about this school?" On the recording, her voice lowered and she shared, "De las niñas" [Translation: The girls]. She further explained, "te miran 'así' y que hablan de ti" [Translation: They give you dirty looks and they talk about you]. Abi sought out different friends, other people who spoke Spanish from her classes. She sat with them at the lunch table and they spoke Spanish together.

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| <p><b>Profesora:</b> ...y entonces las chicas o los amigos que mencionaste, ¿ellos hablan español, inglés?</p> <p><b>Abi:</b> Español-inglés..</p> <p><b>Profesora:</b> ¿Los dos? ¿Y cuando están juntas qué hablan?</p> <p><b>Abi:</b> Joanne a veces habla inglés y las demás me hablan en español.</p> <p><b>Profesora:</b> Siempre?</p> <p><b>Abi:</b> Sí.</p> <p><b>Profesora:</b> ¿Y tú les hablas en inglés o español?</p> <p><b>Abi:</b> A veces en inglés lo que sepa.</p> <p><b>Profesora:</b> ¿Y te sientas con ellas en el comedor?</p> <p><b>Abi:</b> Con Joanne.</p> <p><b>Profesora:</b> ¿Con Joanne? ¿Y sólo ustedes dos u otras?</p> <p><b>Abi:</b> Joanne, Laura, Ali, Alberto, Amanda, Arie, y una niña, no sé cómo se llame.</p> <p><b>Profesora:</b> Ok. ¿Y en el comedor hablan</p> | <p><b>Teacher:</b> And so the girls or the friends that you mentioned, do they speak Spanish, English?</p> <p><b>Abi:</b> Spanish – English</p> <p><b>Teacher:</b> Both? And when you are together what do you speak?</p> <p><b>Abi:</b> Joanne sometimes speaks English and the rest talk to me in Spanish.</p> <p><b>Teacher:</b> Always?</p> <p><b>Abi:</b> Yes.</p> <p><b>Teacher:</b> And do you speak to them in English or Spanish.</p> <p><b>Abi:</b> Sometimes in English, what I know.</p> <p><b>Teacher:</b> And do you sit with them in the cafeteria?</p> <p><b>Abi:</b> With Joanne.</p> <p><b>Teacher:</b> With Joanne? And only you two or others?</p> <p><b>Abi:</b> Joanne, Laura, Ali, Alberto, Amanda, Arie, and a girl, I don't know her name.</p> <p><b>Teacher:</b> Ok, and in the cafeteria do speak mostly Spanish or</p> |
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<b>Abi:</b>	la mayoría en español o inglés? Joanne, Arie, Amanda, Alberto y yo hablamos español, ah y Laura.	<b>Abi:</b>	English? Joanne, Arie, Amanda, Alberto and I speak Spanish, oh and Laura.
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All of the students Abi mentioned, besides Alberto, are native English speakers in the DLI program. Alberto was a native Spanish speaker and also in the DLI program.

When Gerardo, a sixth grader in the DLI program, was asked what language his friends and he speak and why, he responded, “En español porque nos gusta más el español” [Translation: In Spanish because we like Spanish better]. The friends that Gerardo is referring to were not newcomer ELs, but rather Spanish home language students in the DLI program. Gerardo does not mention English at all when he talked about making friends. In fact, from his first day of school, Gerardo shared that he had felt, “Orgullosa, de todo en paz, de tener muchos amigos y amigas y muchos más que me ayudan a aprender” [Translation: Proud, totally at peace, because I have lots of friends and many more people who help me learn].

Students in the English-only track emphasized the importance of English in establishing peer relationships, even though many of them shared that they spoke mainly Spanish with their friends. They expressed ideas that bilingual students at the school preferred to speak English rather than Spanish. They also expressed notions that “everybody” speaks in English, and “nobody speaks in Spanish.” This perception of Spanish is markedly different from that of students in the DLI program.

Unlike the experience of the students in the English-only track, where they felt that English was necessary for them to make peer relationships, both Abi and Gerardo

were able to use their Spanish to make friends with both bilingual native English speakers and native Spanish speakers. In this way, they were able to use their Spanish language skills as a resource and a tool. Rather than focusing on their lack of English proficiency, as the students in the English-only track did, they didn't even mention it as a factor. There was an underlying assumption that they didn't need English to make friends because they could already make friends using their Spanish.

The students in the dual immersion program made comments about how many people spoke Spanish in the school. Maria stated, "Almost everyone spoke Spanish," and others shared stories of their English home language friends. The overall perception was that Spanish is a large aspect of school-life. Students in the DLI program did not speak to how they needed English in order to become part of the community, but rather, they were able to use their Spanish to create peer relationships and felt as if they were already a part of the community. Another aspect that differs from the responses of the students in the English-only track was that bilingual students, both English home language students and Spanish home language students, wanted to and did speak Spanish.

#### Classroom Participation

Another theme that emerged from that data was classroom participation, that is, to what extent do students understand the content, were able to express themselves, and able to access the teacher. Both students in the English-only track and students in the DLI program were asked how often they participate in class. The students were also asked to compare their participation in class now to their participation in class in their home

countries. Finally, students were asked to reflect on their experience (or what would be their experience) in classes in Spanish.

Overall, students in the English-only track expressed that their participation was minimal, and often times it was a result of a teacher calling on them to ensure that they share out.

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| <b>Profesora:</b> | ¿Con qué frecuencia participas en la clase, por ejemplo, cuántas veces levantas la mano para contestar algo?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Teacher:</b> | How much do you participate in class, for example, how often do you raise your hand to answer something?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Ofelia:</b>    | Pues cuando es en inglés en Matemáticas...sí, sí, he hablado. En ciencias casi no. Hablo con Miss. D. y a veces con Miss G. Pero mucho no, porque es en inglés y casi no les entiendo y quieren que diga en inglés y pues no sé. A veces me está traduciendo Mr. N. y es él que me ayuda a veces en mis proyectos también de estudios sociales. La maestra Miss. G. me traducía, decía cómo decirlo y yo lo decía porque tenía que participar. A veces me decían que no participara, pero también me sentía mal porque luego decían que porque yo no y ellos sí. Y por eso quería participar. | <b>Ofelia:</b>  | Well, when it is in English in Math...yes, yes, I have talked. In science, hardly at all. I talk in Miss D's class and sometimes with Miss. G. But not a lot because it is in English and I hardly understand them and they want me to say it in English, and well, I don't know. Sometimes Mr. N. translates for me and it's him that helps me sometimes with my projects for social studies as well. My teacher Miss G would translate for me and would tell me how to say the answer and then I would say it because I had to participate. Sometimes they told me that I shouldn't participate, but then sometimes I would feel bad because then they would say why don't I have to, but they did. Because of this I wanted to participate. |

In this dialogue, Ofelia mentioned that she would feel bad for not participating because, “they would say why don’t I have to, but they did.” The ‘they’ she was referring to is other newcomer ELs. Ofelia was one of the newer students, which could explain why she was treated differently than the students who knew more English. When Ofelia talked about her participation, it was never completely voluntary. First, she mentioned, “My teacher, Miss G would translate for me and would tell me how to say the answer and then I would say it because I had to participate.” She used the auxiliary verb, “had to” explain the reason for participating. She was obliged to do so. Second, she shared another experience, saying, “Sometimes they told me that I shouldn’t participate, but then sometimes I would feel bad because then they would say why I don’t have to, but they did. Because of this I wanted to participate.” Again, her participation wasn’t necessarily voluntary. She stated that she wanted to participate because other kids would complain and ask why they had to participate, but she didn’t. In this instance, it was pressure from her peers that elicited her participation.

Similar to Ofelia, Ariana also mentioned that her in-class participation was dependent on teachers calling on her to elicit her responses, as well as teachers or paraprofessionals translating for her.

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| <b>Profesora:</b> | ¿Y cuánto dirías que participas en la clase? ¿Tú piensas que participas mucho? | <b>Teacher:</b> | And how much would you say you participate in class? Do you think you participate a lot?  |
| <b>Ariana:</b>    | No. ¿En la clase? No.                                                          | <b>Ariana:</b>  | No. In class? No.                                                                         |
| <b>Profesora:</b> | ¿Por qué no? ¿Por qué respondiste tan rápido como “¡no!”?                      | <b>Teacher:</b> | Why not? Why did you respond so fast with, “no!”?                                         |
| <b>Ariana:</b>    | Porque yo pienso que yo no                                                     | <b>Ariana:</b>  | Because I don’t think that I participate a lot because there are some things that I don’t |

- participo mucho porque hay unas cosas que no entiendo y pues con Miss J. si participo porque ella me dice “Ariana” y le tengo que responder.
- Profesora:** Okay
- Ariana:** Y entonces eso sí entiendo a veces. Y en las demás clases no participo excepto con Miss G. que a veces si participo cuando yo estoy segura que es la respuesta correcta. Levanto la mano y el profe mientras me traduce.
- understand, and well with Miss. J I do participate because she calls on me, “Ariana,” and I have to respond to her.
- Teacher:** Okay
- Ariana:** And so that, if I do understand sometimes. And in the other classes, I don’t participate, except with Miss. G, which sometimes I participate when I am certain of the correct answer. I raise my hand and the teacher translates for me.

Both Ofelia and Ariana were dependent on others to help them participate in class, needing someone to translate for them. Their responses were in direct contrast to students’ responses from the dual immersion program.

In the case of José, his participation was a result of the influence of student-teacher relationships. In his interview, in response to why he wanted to participate in class, he responded, “Las ganas de que algunos maestros están pendiente de mí” [Translation: This desire that some teachers care about me]. Afterward, when he was asked why he doesn’t want to participate, José explained that it’s because he’s embarrassed. He said, “La pena, y a veces, pues, nada más es por la pena” [Translation: The embarrassment, and sometimes, well, nothing else except the embarrassment].

Students in the DLI program expressed more confidence in respect to their participation in their immersion classes. Juan stated, “Es diferente porque en español como tengo más confianza porque ya sé ese idioma y en inglés no.” [Translation: It’s different in Spanish because I have more confidence because I already know this language and not English].



Juan's statement contrasts to statements made by students in the English-only track, like José, who cited being embarrassed as the reason for not wanting to participate.

When contrasting their in-class participation in their home countries, responses were varied. José explained that at his school in Mexico, there wasn't a lot of student participation. He shared that, "No porque allá casi nunca participábamos. Solamente la maestra decía la tarea y todos la hacíamos" [Translation: No because there we hardly ever participated. The teacher would only tell us what the assignment was and we would do it]. However, Ofelia stated that she did participate more in Mexico because, "me sentía más en confianza con los maestros, mis amigos y porque hablábamos el mismo idioma" [Translation: I had more trust with the teachers, my friends, and because we all spoke the same language]. Ariana shared,

**Ariana:** Porque en México, bueno aquí no entiendo mucho y no sé de qué hablan y no he visto esos temas, pero en México como ya es mi lengua el español, yo ya entendía más y analizaba las cosas y participaba mucho.

**Ariana:** Because in Mexico, well here I don't understand a lot and I don't know what they're talking about and I haven't seen these topics, but in Mexico, as it's already my language and I already understand a lot, and I would analyze things and participate a lot.

When referring to their experience in Mexico, both students used language of ownership. Ofelia talked about the trust she had, used the pronoun "we" to describe that everyone spoke the same language. Similarly, Ariana referred to Spanish as "my language." There was a sense of ownership and belonging in both of these students' statements.

The students in the English-only track were asked if they thought it would be different if they were able to participate in Spanish. Ariana reflected on how she felt speaking in front of the class in English and then how it would be in Spanish, she explained,

**Ariana:** Cuando puedo exponer me da, bueno, no me da nervios, sino que me da cosa de que luego se ríen de mí. Pero eso no me importa mucho, porque yo estoy haciendo mi mejor esfuerzo. Y pues estaría bien. Estaría más fácil para mí exponer enfrente en español.

**Ariana:** When I can present in English it makes me, well, it doesn't make me nervous, but rather it gives me the impression that later they will laugh at me. But I don't care about that much, because I'm doing my best. And well, it would be good, it would be easier for me to be able to present in front of the class in Spanish.

Although she stated that it didn't bother her much that other kids would laugh at her, she mentioned it in her explanation. This mirrors José's comments when he cited the fear of embarrassment as deterring him from participating. Ofelia mentioned how she would become a better student. She stated that,

**Ofelia:** Pues sería más diferente porque sentiría que pondría más atención porque le entiendo más. Y pues a lo mejor, aumentarían mis calificaciones porque le voy a entender más al idioma.

**Ofelia:** Well, it would be different because I would feel that I could pay more attention because I would understand it better. And well, hopefully, my grades would improve because I'd understand the language better.

Gabriela, a student in the DLI program, explained the difference in having some classes in Spanish versus her classes in English. Her reflection supports Ofelia's hypothesis of how it would be to have class in Spanish. When describing her Spanish classes, Gabriela

said, “que entiendo todo y como que, no sé. Es más fácil para uno que habla español.”

[Translation: That I understand everything and like, I don’t know. It’s easier for a person who speaks Spanish].

Gerardo, a student in the DLI program, talked about how much he participated in social studies, one of his immersion classes taught in Spanish, “Es que a veces porque así a veces es muy duro de unas partes, pero después le voy entiendo. Y entonces cuando ya le entiendo levanto mi mano y lo digo” [Translation: Sometimes because sometimes some parts are really hard, but then I start to understand. And then when I understand, I raise my hand and I say it]. Gerardo, similar to Ariana, expressed that the material is often difficult. However, Gerardo’s statement conveyed a sense of confidence. He spoke in the first person, “I,” affirming his agency, his ability to take control, self-regulate, and pursue his own goals, in his Spanish classes (Ahearn, 2001; Duff, 2012). He was the one who is able to finally understand and raise his hand. Similarly, Gabriela spoke of her own agency.

**Profesora:** ¿Cómo te hacen sentir? Las clases.

**Gabriela:** Me gustan porque, en comparación sería si tengo alguna pregunta o algo, yo misma hacerla a la maestra y hasta allá ella me puede explicar a su manera para que yo entienda, y que si es una del inglés yo necesito apoyo y luego no me saben explicar

**Profesora:** Mhmm

**Gabriela:** Menos si hay alguien para traducirlo o algo así

**Teacher:** How do they make you feel? The classes...

**Gabriela:** I like them (classes in Spanish) because in comparison, if I had a question or something, I can ask the teacher myself and then she can explain it to me in her own way so I understand, and if it’s a class in English I need support and then they don’t know how to explain it to me.

**Teacher:** Mhmm

**Gabriela:** Unless there is someone there to translate or something like

that.

She compared them to her English classes, where she wouldn't have that same level of agency; instead, she would be dependent on someone else to translate or interpret for her. This lack of agency in her English classes that she explained is that same lack of agency that students in the English-only track alluded to when they talked about the need for others to always interpret and translate for them. This lack of agency inhibited them from independently pursuing their own goals, in this case, academic achievement (Duff, 2012).

One of the most poignant examples of this was when Ariana was explaining what it was like to work in a group with monolingual English speaking students.

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| <b>Profesora:</b> | ¿Te sientes por lo general como que perteneces a esta escuela que es tu escuela?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Teacher:</b> | In general, do you feel like you belong at this school and that it's your school?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Ariana:</b>    | A veces. Porque a veces yo participo en algunos equipos y a veces no. Por ejemplo en Tecnología nos tocó con una morena y una güera y Katrina, Marleni, Amanda, Ofelia y yo estamos en ese equipo y esas niñas la güera y la morena son las únicas que hacen. Pero, entonces ellas dijeron que ellas solitas iban a hacer todas las cosas, o sea, es que ellas hablan entre sí y no nos dicen que vamos a hacer nosotras. Y yo no entiendo. Porque ese proyecto está raro, además, en vez que ellas nos digan: "oye tú qué opinas sobre esto, o que le podemos hacer"... y pues ellas... | <b>Ariana:</b>  | Sometimes. Because sometimes I participate in some groups and sometimes no. For example, in technology, I was in a group with a black girl and a white girl and Katrina, Marleni, Amanda, Ofelia and I. We were in this group and these girls, the black girl and the white girl were the only ones doing the work. But they said that they were going to do everything themselves, or like, they would talk amongst themselves and not tell us what we were going to do. I don't understand. Because this project was weird, and besides, instead of them saying, "hey, what do you think about this, or what can you do," and well they... |
| <b>Profesora:</b> | ¿Y por qué piensas que no ..?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Ariana:</b>    | No sé...Pues ellas creen que                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

- nosotros no entendemos y así.
- Profesora:** ¿Y tú intentaste hablarles en inglés?
- Ariana:** Sí.
- Profesora:** O nomás usas como Marleni que sabe las cosas para traducir? Es la Marleni del octavo grado?
- Ariana:** Cuando yo no sé como decir yo le digo a Marleni que le diga las cosas que yo opino y ella se las dice. Y a ellas según les parece bien, pero no lo hacen. Y yo les digo algunas cosas que yo puedo decir y ya.
- Teacher:** And why do you think they didn't?
- Ariana:** I don't know. Well, they think that we don't understand. And that's it.
- Teacher:** And did you try to talk to them in English?
- Ariana:** Yes.
- Teacher:** Or did you just use Marleni to help translate? Is it Marleni in eighth grade?
- Ariana:** When I don't know what to say, I would tell Marleni to tell the girls what I thought, and she would tell them. And, according to them, it seemed fine, but they didn't do it. And I would tell them some things that I could tell them myself and that's it.

In this example, Ariana had limited control over what was going on in her group. Her lack of English fluency hindered her ability to participate in the group. She was dependent on the only fully bilingual group member to translate for her, and even then, the monolingual students in this story still had more power. Although Ariana could understand English very well and spoke it a decent amount, the perception of the monolingual English speaking girls is that she couldn't. The monolingual English speakers exhibited their power over her, by not regarding her symbolic capital is sufficient to be worthy of being listened to (Bourdieu, 1977). Similarly, rather than Ariana being a subject of her own story, her own education, she was an object in someone else's story; she had limited agency (Ahearn, 2001; Bucholz & Hall, 2005; Duff, 2012; Sewell, 1992). This example supports Norton's thought that language cannot

be neutral, as it is constructed within social structures and hegemonies, and it is through language that a person gains access or is denied access to social networks and communities (Norton, 2000). Ariana was clearly denied access to this community.

In each of the sub-themes that emerged in the data: the extent to which students understand the content, the ability to express themselves, and the ability to access the teacher, students in the DLI program characterized their experience very differently from students in the English-only track. Students in the English-only track often spoke of needing someone else, to translate and interpret for them, so they could understand the content and participate. While students in the DLI program expressed agency in their ability to understand, communicate their ideas, as well as receive help and additional instruction from the teacher.

#### Peer Acceptance

Another theme that emerged from the data was peer acceptance: to what extent are students accepted or perceived to be accepted within the school. The main question that addressed this topic was whether or not the students have ever been treated differently or felt as if they had been treated differently at school for either speaking in Spanish or not speaking English.

One of the clearest indicators of the differences in experiences between students in the DLI program versus students in the English-only track was when they were asked whether or not they felt that they had ever been treated differently or made fun of at school for speaking Spanish or not speaking English, all four of the students in the English-only track responded affirmatively, that yes, they felt that they had been treated

differently. This is in stark contrast to the experience of the students in the DLI program; only one of the six students had expressed that they had been treated differently at school for speaking Spanish or for not knowing English. When asked this question, two of the students in the DLI program simply said, “no.” They had nothing to say about the matter. Maria went on to explain that, “No. Los niños no me dicen nada que no hablo inglés.” [Translation: No. Kids don’t say anything to me about not speaking English]. Similarly, Gerardo describes how he feels at the school as, “Orgullosa, de todo y en paz, de tener muchos amigos y amigas y muchos más que me ayudan a aprender.” [Translation: Proud, totally at peace, because I have lots of friends and many more people who help me learn]. Another student in the DLI program, Juan, also replied, “no;” however, later in the interview, he expounded upon that sentiment.

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| <b>Profesora:</b> | ¿Y pensando en cómo te sentías al llegar aquí, y ahora cómo te sientes? ¿Piensas que es diferente, igual? O, ¿cómo? | <b>Teacher:</b> | And thinking about how you felt when you first got here to how you feel now, do you think it’s different, the same, or how? |
| <b>Juan:</b>      | Diferente, porque antes es de, me decían cosas por no saber inglés, pero si me siento con más confianza.            | <b>Juan:</b>    | Different because, it’s that, they would say things to me because I didn’t speak English, but now I feel more confident.    |
| <b>Profesora:</b> | Ok. ¿Y quien te decía cosas.?                                                                                       | <b>Teacher:</b> | Okay. And who would say things to you?                                                                                      |
| <b>Juan:</b>      | No, yo sentía que me decían cosas porque...no sabía inglés. Pero yo empezaba agarrar más confianza.                 | <b>Juan:</b>    | No, I felt like they were talking about me because...I didn’t speak English. But then I became more confident.              |
| <b>Profesora:</b> | Ok. ¿Y fue solamente por saber el inglés que piensas, o porque te hizo sentir más confianza?                        | <b>Teacher:</b> | Ok. Do you think it was only because you knew more English, or what made you feel more confident?                           |
| <b>Juan:</b>      | Porque estaba estudiando inglés y podía entender pocas palabras porque                                              | <b>Juan:</b>    | Because I was studying English and I could understand                                                                       |

también mis primos me empezaron a ayudar. Y empecé a agarrar más confianza con todo.

a few words also because my cousins began to help me. And I started becoming more confident with everything.

Juan initially said people would say things to him when he first got here for not speaking English. When the teacher asked him about this, he corrected her, negating that he was being mistreated by saying that he only *felt like* they were talking about him. Then he goes on to explain that, “he became more confident.” One could make the conclusion from this dialogue that because Juan became more confident, he came to the realization that people weren’t actually talking about him.

Students in the English-only track were able to articulate clear examples of when they had been made fun of or treated differently for speaking Spanish or not knowing English. Students explain that in class, in the hallway, and even at lunch, people would laugh at them, give them dirty looks, or even make comments to them. Ariana shared a story about a time that people treated her and two of the other participants in this study, differently.

**Profesora:** ¿Y alguna vez te has sentido que alguien te ha tratado diferente por hablar español?

**Ariana:** Sí

**Profesora:** ¿Cuándo?

**Ariana:** En las primeras clases cuando entré, nosotros nos sentábamos en... todos los que no sabíamos inglés: Katrina, José, yo y Enrique, nos sentábamos en una mesa, y ese entonces venía Miss P y nos ayudaba. Pero ya no vino, y entonces todos los

**Teacher:** Have you ever felt like someone has treated you differently for speaking Spanish?

**Ariana:** Yes.

**Teacher:** When?

**Ariana:** In the first classes when I got here. We were sitting at, all of us that didn’t know English: Katrina, José, myself and Enrique, we all sat at a table, and at that time Miss P came and helped us. But then she didn’t come anymore, and so



- niños se iban por allá. Y un día estábamos hablando y nos dijeron: "Es que los niños que no saben inglés siempre hablan". Entonces yo me sentí mal.
- Profesora:** Claro. ¿Y cómo respondió la maestra?
- Ariana:** Nada.
- Profesora:** Nada, ¿no dijo nada? ¿Lo escuchó?
- Ariana:** No sé, no me acuerdo lo que hizo la maestra, pero sí me acuerdo de lo que dijo el niño.
- Profesora:** ¿Y las otras personas cómo reaccionaron?
- Ariana:** Sólo nos voltearon a ver como estorbo, algo así.
- Profesora:** ¿Y cómo te hizo sentir eso?
- Ariana:** Pues me hizo sentir nerviosa y mal.
- all of the kids would sit where we were sitting. And one day we were talking and they told us, "It's that the kids that don't know English are always talking." Which made me feel bad.
- Teacher:** Of course. And how did the teacher respond?
- Ariana:** She didn't.
- Teacher:** Nothing, she didn't say anything? Did she hear it?
- Ariana:** I don't know, I don't remember what the teacher did, but I do remember what the boy said.
- Teacher:** And how did the other people react?
- Ariana:** They just turned around and looked at us like we were a nuisance, something like that.
- Teacher:** And how did that make you feel?
- Ariana:** Well, it made me feel nervous and bad.

It was clear from this example that the English learners in this story were singled out for not speaking English. It was notable that the aggressor in the story defined the ELs as "those kids who don't speak English." This statement was representative of the view of "language as a deficit," emphasizing what the students lacked, rather than focusing on the Spanish language proficiency they did have. This ideology and practice is in direct contrast to the view of dual immersion, which views language as a resource (Lindholm-Leary, 2001). Furthermore, Ariana stated that everyone else "just turned around and looked at us like we were a nuisance." This statement depicted a divided environment; explained by Van Leeuwen's (2009) notion of differentiation, it was *we*, who speak

English, and *you*, who don't. Differentiation explicitly differentiates a group from a similar actor or group, creating an "us" and a "them" (Van Leeuwen, 2009). Finally, this ideology is affirmed through the teacher's silence. At first Ariana said that the teacher did nothing, but then changed her statement, perhaps because of the interviewer's opinionated reaction, that she didn't remember what the teacher did. In either case, the fact that Ariana didn't remember is indicative of the teacher's lack of intervention.

José mentioned another example where he felt that he was treated wrongly by other students in class. His example highlighted a power struggle that existed within the school, between students or groups of students.

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| <b>Profesora:</b> | ¿Y alguna vez te has sentido que alguien te ha tratado diferente por hablar español?                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Teacher:</b> | Has there ever been a time that you have felt treated differently for speaking Spanish?                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>José:</b>      | Algunas veces.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>José:</b>    | A few times.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Profesora:</b> | ¿Puedes contarme un ejemplo, acordar de una vez?                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>Teacher:</b> | Could you give me an example of a time that you remember?                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>José:</b>      | Ah, pues a veces algunos me voltean a ver y me miran feo. A veces me pregunto por qué, pero a veces yo solo pienso que son porque nada más porque quieren poner territorio. Como si yo soy aquí tu jefe, pero yo nunca le pongo mucha atención a eso. | <b>José:</b>    | Oh, well sometimes they turn around and give me dirty looks. Sometimes I ask myself why they would do that, but then sometimes I think it's just because they want to claim their territory. As if I'm here, and in charge of you, but I never pay much attention to that. |
| <b>Profesora:</b> | ¿Y eso pasa en los pasillos, en el comedor, en las clases, o...?                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>Teacher:</b> | And does this happen in the hallways, in the lunchroom, in the classes, or...?                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>José:</b>      | A veces por lo general, pasa en las clases.                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>José:</b>    | Sometimes, mostly it happens in class.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Profesora:</b> | ¿Y cuando eso pasa, qué hacen los maestros?                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Teacher:</b> | And when it does happen, what do the teachers do?                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>José:</b>      | Pues algunos no ven, y pues...yo por lo menos trato de acercarme mucho a los                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>José:</b>    | Well some don't see it, and                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

- maestros para que traten de ver lo que pasa, porque si nunca lo ven, nunca me van a creer.
- Profesora:** ¿Y alguna vez tú has dicho lo que ha pasado a algún maestro?
- José:** Si.
- Profesora:** ¿Y qué les has dicho?
- José:** Pues, un tiempo fui a la oficina porque me molestaba y pues de ahí creo que les pusieron un alto o algo así, y, desde ese tiempo ya no me han molestado.
- well, I try to at least stay close to the teachers so that they can try to see what happens, because if they don't see it, they're never going to believe me.
- Teacher:** Have you ever told what's going on to a teacher?
- José:** Yes.
- Teacher:** And what did you say to them?
- José:** Well, one time I went to the office because they were bothering me and well, I think that they put a stop to it or something, and since that time they haven't bothered me anymore.

In José's story, not only does someone give him dirty looks, but then he concludes that they do so in order to claim their territory and power over him. José's lack of power is reiterated in his explanation of the teacher's role, stating that if the teachers didn't see it, they'd never believe him. Once again, José's story emphasized a lack of agency. He felt little control over his ability to make choices, take control, or self-regulate, limiting the possibility that he could acquire a new role or identity (Duff, 2012).

Ofelia shared an experience in which students treated her differently not for speaking Spanish, but for being Mexican. She described her dual-identity, explaining that she lived in the U.S. when she was a young girl, which she used to question why she was singled out as Mexican.

- Profesora:** ¿Y cómo te sientes cuando las personas tienen que traducir por ti o cuando las personas te traducen?
- Ofelia:** Pues algunas veces me da
- Teacher:** And how do you feel when people have to translate for you?
- Ofelia:** Well sometimes I get embarrassed because they stare

- pena porque se me quedan mirando, pero a veces digo, no, pues los mexicanos llegaron, no soy la última ni la primera...
- Profesora:** ¿Te sientes que perteneces a esta escuela? ¿Te sientes parte de la comunidad de aquí?
- Ofelia:** A veces sí y a veces no. Porque si he vivido aquí de más chiquita, pero a veces no, porque luego dicen “mira de otro país, son mexicanos”, siempre dicen “es mexicana”, “es mexicana.”
- at me, but sometimes I say, no, well, Mexicans came here, I’m not the last nor am I the first...
- Teacher:** Do you feel like you belong at this school? Do you feel like you are a part of the community here?
- Ofelia:** Sometimes yes and sometimes no. Because yes I did live here when I was younger, but sometimes no, because then they say things like, “look, she’s from a different country, they’re Mexicans.” They always say, “She’s Mexican,” “She’s Mexican.”

As revealed in the excerpt above, as Ofelia was describing whether or not she felt like she belonged, she began her explanation using first-person singular, ‘I.’ Then, she switched and explained why she sometimes didn’t feel like she belonged. In this explanation, Ofelia used the third-person plural pronoun, ‘they.’ She positioned herself as the object of the narrative, and ‘they’ as the subject (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). In this way, her identity, as it is constructed through linguistic interactions, is defined within the unequal power structures depicted by her own positionality (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Norton, 2000). Moreover, her self-efficacy was limited, as it was dependent upon the actions of the other students.

The experience of being made fun of or treated differently was shared among the newcomers in the English-only track. Katrina explained how she had been made fun of for speaking English.

- Profesora:** ¿Y alguna vez te ha pasado que la gente te ha burlado
- Teacher:** And have you ever felt like you’ve been made fun of for

- |                   |                                                                |                 |                                                                    |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                   | por hablar inglés?                                             |                 | speaking English?                                                  |
| <b>Katrina:</b>   | Oh, yo creo sí.                                                | <b>Katrina:</b> | Oh, I believe so, yes.                                             |
| <b>Profesora:</b> | ¿Por qué? Explícame, cuéntame.                                 | <b>Teacher:</b> | How come? Tell me about it.                                        |
| <b>Katrina:</b>   | Es que cuando terminé de hablar, como que se empezaron a reír. | <b>Katrina:</b> | It's that when I finished talking, it's as if they began to laugh. |
| <b>Profesora:</b> | ¿Y eso ha pasado en clases, en los pasillos?                   | <b>Teacher:</b> | And has this happened in your classes, in the hallways?            |
| <b>Katrina:</b>   | En clases.                                                     | <b>Katrina:</b> | In classes.                                                        |

Katrina responded confidently and quickly to this question, saying “Oh I believe so.”

She didn't doubt her answer, because it's her lived experience. After she had talked in class, in English, people had laughed at her. Katrina's aversion to participating in class could certainly be justified by her experience.

In all of these examples, the students explained not what they did, but what others did to them. Whether it was “they laughed at me” or “they gave me dirty looks,” or “they said this to me,” in every situation, the interviewee was the object of the action; never were they the subject, enacting their own agency (Duff, 2012). These stories are in direct contrast to María's statement, whose sentiment is shared amongst her newcomer EL peers in the DLI program, “No, nobody has ever said anything to me for not speaking English.”

### Conclusion

The purpose for this research was to investigate the differences between the ways that DLI ELs characterize their identity and sense of belonging in comparison to ELs in the English-only track. Through discourse analysis, themes emerged from the data that speak to this question. Each of these themes, perceptions of Spanish in the school,

classroom participation, and peer acceptance, all can be directly related to the notions of identity and sense of belonging. Within each theme, there were notable differences in the ways that students characterized their agency, self-efficacy and sense of belonging.

Clear patterns emerged within the way that students in the DLI program characterized their experience. They perceived Spanish to play a significant role within the school culture and their educational experience as a whole. They shared experiences where they were able to use their Spanish to communicate with teachers and build friendships with English home language and Spanish home language students. Furthermore, they expressed pride and contentment at the school, and an overall sense that they were not treated differently for speaking in Spanish or not knowing English.

Similar, yet contrasting patterns emerged within the way that students in the English-only track characterized their experience. They perceived English, not Spanish, to play a significant role within the school culture and their education experience as a whole. They often stated their English proficiency as a factor in making friends, participating in class, and interacting with peers in an academic environment. These students all shared experiences where they had been treated differently or had been made fun of for speaking in Spanish or for their lack of English language proficiency.

The experiences of newcomer ELs in the English-only track repeatedly reflected a lack of agency, their ability to act. Their lack of agency obstructed their access to move toward legitimate peripheral participants (Lave & Wenger, 1990). Instead, they were placed in a position of subordination by those in power, in this case, full-participants of the school community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1990). Power was exerted over them

by not valuing their symbolic power, specifically, their Spanish language proficiency (Bourdieu, 1977). This resulted in the marginalization of these students both in the academic setting of the classroom and also in the social settings of the hallways and cafeteria. Research shows that identity is influenced by these larger societal structures and is relationally negotiated and renegotiated (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Norton, 1997; 2000). The ramifications of their marginalization from the communities of practice must be considered within this notion of identity. As identity development is a key component to adolescence, it is of the utmost importance to consider how different language learning program models impact that development. Specifically, we must take into consideration the experience of newcomer ELs in the DLI program presented in this study, and juxtapose it against the experience of newcomer ELs in the English-only track to explore the possibility of a transformative language learning program model.

In this chapter I presented the results of my data collection. In Chapter Five I will further discuss my major findings, their implications, and suggestions for further research.

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

This study was designed to examine the ways in which newcomer ELs characterized sense of belonging and identity. Data was collected through individual student interviews, which were transcribed and analyzed using discourse analysis. In this study, I sought to answer the question: What are the differences in how newcomer ELs in the DLI program characterize identity and sense of belonging compared to newcomer ELs in the English-only track? In this chapter, I will analyze the study, discuss major findings, and consider possible implications for DLI teachers and administrators of such programs. I will also suggest ideas for further research.

### Major Findings

Based on the findings of this study, there is a difference between the perceived status, or symbolic capital, of Spanish in the school by newcomer ELs in the DLI program compared to the perception of Spanish by newcomer ELs in the English-only track (Bourdieu, 1977). In repeated instances, newcomer ELs in the English-only program shared experiences in which they were marginalized and were denied access to participation in the school community of practice due to the fact that they were proficient in Spanish, but not in English (Lave & Wenger, 1990). In addition, newcomer ELs in the DLI program perceived that there were more Spanish speakers in the school than did newcomer ELs in the English-only track. While it is left to be determined whether or not the status of Spanish is elevated within the entire DLI community, the findings of this study support the literature regarding the design and structure of DLI as it pertains to the program model goal of equalizing the language status between English and the minority



language, which is achieved through raising the status of the minority language in the DLI classroom, making it the dominant language of instruction (Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, 2000; Freeman, Freeman & Mercuri, 2005).

Another finding of this study is that students in the DLI program expressed higher levels of classroom participation than students in the English-only track. EL newcomers in the DLI program communicated greater access to content in their Spanish-speaking classes, as well as a superior ability to express themselves, without the help of an interpreter, in an academic setting, both in whole class discussions as well as in small group work. Students in the DLI program articulated the ability to access the teacher and obtain further instruction or clarification from the teacher without needing to depend on someone to interpret or translate for them. This is particularly important since it is through these mechanisms that learning occurs. Therefore, academic success is contingent on the ability to fully participate in the learning experiences and in their classroom community.

Finally, the findings of this study revealed that newcomer ELs in the DLI program experienced greater levels of peer acceptance than newcomers in the English-only track. Conversely, students in the English-only track were treated differently, made fun of, given dirty looks, or had been the target of mistreatment more than students in the DLI program had.

These themes found within the data address the original research question of this study, what are the differences in the ways that newcomer ELs in the DLI program characterize identity and sense of belonging in comparison to newcomer ELs in the

English-only track, through Lave and Wenger's communities of practice. Communities of practice are constructed by members, both legitimate peripheral participants and full participants, who share similar understandings, knowledge and relationships, as well as routines, practices and resources. Communities of practice are ubiquitous, and oftentimes, people are peripheral or full participants in multiple communities of practice. As legitimate peripheral participants move towards full membership, their learning and thus, identity develops and evolves, and as a result, the communities of practice are transformed and renegotiated (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Similarly, marginalization from legitimate peripheral participation in communities of practice also impacts identity development.

In the case of the research site, there are multiple communities of practice described through the participants' experiences. First, there is the community of practice that is the larger school, defined by the structures of the dominant culture, a reflection of the larger society outside of the school. Secondly, there is the community of practice that is created within the DLI program, which share the structures strategically developed through a program model that promotes academic achievement, biliteracy and biculturalism. Finally, there is the community of practice that consists of the newcomer ELs, who share the experience of recent immigrants, learning English as an additional language, as well as the practices and traditions of a new culture, thereby negotiating their evolving identity, developed from within the third space they occupy.

Communities of practice within the school context can be structured around "how to do school," that is, learning the hidden curriculum, the norms, values, and beliefs

conveyed in the classroom and social environment (Giroux & Penna, 1983). Newcomers have to learn *how to learn* in their new schools. They must learn the social and cultural practices within specific school communities (i.e. community of practice). They do so as legitimate peripheral participants.

Newcomer ELs in the DLI program are participants of the community of practice formed by the students in the DLI program. Newcomers in any community of practice start as legitimate peripheral participants, learning through relationships with other members and observing to learn the practice and knowledge shared within the community. For newcomer ELs in the DLI program, their legitimate peripheral participation moves towards full participation as they learn the social and practical structures within the DLI community. This can be as simple as how to turn in homework assignments, ask questions, and participate in class discussions. How students negotiate their knowledge and participate in class are all components of the learning towards full participation.

Newcomer ELs in the DLI program have access to legitimate peripheral participation because they are able to communicate with other members in Spanish. Furthermore, they are able to move toward full participation in the community of practice through engaging in the practices of school: understanding and asking questions related to the academic content, interacting and working with peers and teachers, and performing in all capacities required of a student. Lave and Wenger describe the relationship between identity and learning as such, “We conceive of identities as long-term, living relations between persons and their place and participation in communities of practice.

Thus identity, knowing, and social membership entail one another.” This notion of identity was corroborated with the findings of the data of the newcomer ELs within the DLI program. As participants within the community of practice, whether legitimate peripheral participants or full participants, newcomer ELs view themselves as members of this community and as a result, subjects of their own reality. Their sense of self-efficacy and agency is reflected in their shared experiences as well as through their specific language use. Students expressed their agency through the use of singular and plural first-person pronouns, ‘I’ and ‘we.’

All of the classes that the students in the English-only track attend are taught primarily in English. While they do have two ESL classes, where there is a large percentage of native Spanish-speakers, the main goal remains English language proficiency. The remainder of the classes they attend each day are mainstream classes, conducted entirely in English, at times with bilingual paraprofessional support. As such, the newcomer ELs in the English-only track are participants or strive to be participants of the community of practice that makes up the greater school community. Similar to the experience of newcomer ELs in the DLI program, students in the English-only track arrive at the school as newcomers, lacking the knowledge regarding the norms, beliefs, and practices of the school. Membership in a community of practice would allow students the opportunity to move towards full participation, able to carry out all of the responsibilities and functions as a student within the school. In order to do so, students must have access to legitimate peripheral participation. However, their access to the community of practice as legitimate peripheral participants is limited by their lack of

English language proficiency and is therefore dependent upon bilingual individuals to act as a bridge to help them gain access. This dependency and lack of self-efficacy and agency is reflected in their shared experiences and is characterized through their language use of the third-person plural pronoun, 'they,' as they often describe themselves as objects of someone else's reality, rather than subjects of their own.

#### Limitations

This qualitative case study involved ten out of the twenty-five newcomer ELs at the school. Therefore, my findings are based on this small group and could vary if every student were included in the study. Furthermore, all of the students in the English-only track were in eighth grade, and all of the students in the DLI program were in sixth or seventh grade, as the DLI program was a developing program, and only at the sixth and seventh grade levels at the time of the study. The variability of the age of participants could introduce additional factors that are beyond the scope of this study, such as social and cognitive development of adolescents.

This study is also limited by the fact that I am not a native Spanish-speaker. Although fluent in Spanish, the cultural and linguistic differences between myself and the participants, could limit or alter student responses. In that same line, I have had all of the participants in class for one to two years. Although it was clearly communicated that their participation had no implications to their grade or classes, and that they should be honest, it is possible that because of the already established relationship, that students modified their responses in order to appease me as the researcher, responding in ways that they thought I would want them to respond.

### Implications

This research sought to inform program-level decisions in regard to the participation of newcomer ELs in the DLI program, as well as provide insight to other programs that face similar decisions. This study supports the inclusion of newcomer ELs in DLI programs, as their participation can lead to greater perceptions of Spanish in the school, access to diverse peer relationships, higher levels of classroom participation, and a greater sense of peer acceptance. Furthermore, the results of this study show that newcomer ELs in the DLI program expressed stronger self-efficacy and exerted their agency through their participation within the communities of practice in the DLI community.

### Further Research

This study attempted to gather information from newcomer ELs in a DLI program and newcomer ELs in an English-only track. While clear themes emerged from the data, further research that includes a greater number of newcomer ELs would be beneficial to gain an even broader understanding of the experience of newcomer ELs in the school. Furthermore, expanding the investigation to include all English learners, both participants of the DLI program and students in the English-only track, would lead to further insight about the role participation in the DLI program plays in identity construction and sense of belonging in the school setting.

### Conclusion

The motivation for this study developed from within the belief that education, specifically language education, is highly political (Norton, 2000). I believe that within

education, there exists the ability to empower or to oppress. In this way, it possesses the ability to be transformative, empowering students, leading to the creation of new power structures within society; however, education also possesses the ability to reproduce current power structures, leading to the continued oppression of certain populations (Freire, 1970). In my experience, newcomer ELs are often marginalized, or oppressed, within the school setting, struggling to access and understand academic content and reluctant to move outside their small social network, consisting of other newcomer ELs. Because of these observations, in this study I sought to explore the extent to which participation in DLI programs could be transformative for newcomer ELs.

The findings of this study suggest that DLI programs do have the potential to be transformative. Newcomer ELs in the DLI program expressed agency and self-efficacy; they were the subjects of their own reality. They were legitimate peripheral participants of the DLI community of practice. As such, they had access to other members (students and teachers), information (curriculum and content), resources, and opportunities for participation. Members of this community of practice regarded bilingualism and Spanish as having substantial symbolic power. This community belief was reflected in the way the newcomer ELs in the study expressed their positionality within the school, and thus their identity as members of that community.

While these findings alone shed light on the transformative potential of DLI programs, juxtaposing the experience of the newcomer ELs in the DLI program with that of the newcomer ELs in the English-only track, further exposes this potential. Newcomer ELs in the English-only track did not express agency or self-efficacy. They were often

the objects of someone else's narrated reality. They were placed in a position of subordination, and were denied access to legitimate peripheral participation. In essence, I would argue, that the education experienced by these students was not in any way transformative, but rather, reproductive. These students continued to exist in a position of oppression, which was largely influenced and decided by their limited English language proficiency.

Comparing the experiences of these two student groups is exceedingly important as we consider the future of language learning. The research shows that newcomer ELs in DLI programs have higher rates of academic success when compared to newcomer ELs in English-only tracks (Thomas & Collier, 1997; 2002; 2009; 2012), but this present study highlights the social and societal implications of the participation of newcomer ELs in DLI programs. The population of newcomer ELs in the United States continues to increase (NCTE 2008; National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, 2002). Knowing the transformative potential of DLI programs, we must decide, as educators, administrators, and policy makers, what type of educational experience we want to provide for our students.



APPENDIX A: LIST OF POSSIBLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH

### **Part A: Introduction**

1. How are you today?
2. How was school? How is school going?
3. What was your favorite part about school? Why?
4. What was your least favorite part about school today? Why?

### **Part B: Comparing and contrasting former schools to current school**

5. When did you move here?
6. Where did you live before?
7. Can you describe what your first day at school was like?
8. What did you think of the school? Classes? People?
9. What was exciting? Scary?
10. What made you nervous or happy?
11. Who are your friends?
12. Do you remember when you first met them?
13. How did you meet them? Will you tell me the story?
14. How is this school different from where you used to live?
15. What did you like or not like about where you used to live?
16. What was your school like?
17. How is where you live now different?
18. Do you ever wish you were in a different school? Why or why not?

### **Part C: Participation in school**

19. What do you like or not like about where you live now?
20. What do you like or not like about this school?
21. What are some things that you really like about this school?
22. What is your favorite class?
23. Why is that your favorite class?
24. What is your least favorite class?
25. Why is that your least favorite class?
26. What do you like to do at school?
27. Are you involved in any activities or sports?
28. What made you want to participate?
29. Can you tell me about \_\_\_\_ (newspaper, soccer, etc.)? What's fun about it?
30. Do you feel like you are a part of this school? Why or why not?

### **Part D: English and Spanish**

31. What is it like learning English at this school?
32. Do you mostly speak in English or Spanish with your friends?

33. Do your friends mostly speak English, Spanish, or both?
34. Do you think you would say you are proud for knowing both English and Spanish?
35. Have you ever felt treated differently for speaking Spanish?

**Part E: Dual language immersion program**

36. Why did you decide to be in the immersion program?
37. Do you like it? Why?
38. What are some benefits of learning in Spanish?
39. Compare your Spanish classes and your English classes.
40. Think about how much you raise your hand and participate in class discussions. Is it the same or different in English and Spanish classes? Why?
41. If you could give advice to someone about being in the Spanish classes or only English classes, what would you say?
42. Thinking about how you felt when you first came here to how you feel now, do you think it's the same or different? How?
43. Is there anything else you want to share?

APPENDIX B: LIST OF POSSIBLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN SPANISH

### **Parte A: La introducción**

1. ¿Cómo estás hoy?
2. ¿Cómo estuvieron las clases? ¿Cómo te van con las clases?
3. ¿Qué fue la mejor parte de la escuela hoy? ¿Por qué?
4. ¿Qué fue la peor parte de la escuela hoy? ¿Por qué?

### **Parte B: Comparar las escuelas anteriores a esta escuela**

5. ¿Cuándo te mudaste a aquí?
6. ¿Dónde vivías antes de vivir aquí?
7. ¿Puedes describir como era el primer día de escuela aquí?
8. ¿Qué opinabas de la escuela? ¿las clases? ¿la gente?
9. ¿Fue emocionante? ¿Te dio miedo?
10. ¿Qué fue lo que te hizo sentir nervioso, feliz, etc.?
11. ¿Quiénes son tus amigos o amigas?
12. ¿Te acuerdas como se conocieron?
13. ¿Cómo se conocieron? ¿Me la puedes contar?
14. ¿Cómo es diferente aquí que dónde vivías antes?
15. ¿Qué fue lo que te gustó o no te gustó dónde vivías?
16. ¿Cómo era tu escuela?
17. ¿Cómo es esta escuela diferente?
18. ¿Alguna vez has esperado que estuvieras en otra escuela u otra ciudad? ¿Por qué?

### **Parte C: La participación en la escuela**

19. ¿Qué es lo que te gusta sobre dónde vives ahora?
20. ¿Qué es lo que no te gusta sobre esta escuela?
21. ¿Cuáles son algunas cosas que realmente te gustan de esta escuela?
22. ¿Qué es tu material o clase preferida?
23. ¿Por qué es esta tu preferida?
24. ¿Cuál es la clase que no te gusta tanto?
25. ¿Por qué no te gusta?
26. ¿Qué es lo que te gusta hacer en la escuela? Puede ser afuera del día escolar.
27. ¿Participas en alguna actividad o deporte? ¿Has participado una vez?
28. ¿Qué fue lo que te hizo querer participar? ¿Qué es lo que te dio las ganas?
29. ¿Me puedes contar un poco sobre \_\_\_\_\_ (club de periódico, el fútbol, etc.)
30. ¿Te sientes como parte de la comunidad aquí en esta escuela? ¿Por qué?

### **Parte D: El inglés y el español**

31. ¿Cómo es aprender el inglés aquí?
32. Con tus amigos, ¿hablas inglés, español, los dos? ¿En cuál idioma se comunican?

33. ¿Tus amigos hablan inglés, español, o los dos?
34. ¿Tú dirías que estas orgulloso/a por saber ambos español e inglés?
35. ¿Alguna vez te has sentido que alguien te ha tratado diferente por hablar español?

**Parte E: El programa de inmersión dual**

36. ¿Por qué decidiste participar en el programa de inmersión y tener dos materias en español?
37. ¿Te gusta? ¿Por qué?
38. ¿Qué son algunos de los beneficios de continuar de aprender el español?
39. Compara tus clases en inglés en comparación de las clases en español.
40. Piensa en cuanto te levantas la mano y participas en la clase. ¿Es igual? ¿Diferente? ¿Por qué?
41. Si pudieras dar consejos a una persona sobre participar en el programa de inmersión y tener clases en español o solamente tener las clases en inglés, ¿Qué consejos les darías?
42. Pensando en cómo te sentías al llegar aquí y ahora cómo te sientes, ¿piensas que es diferente, igual, o cómo? ¿Por qué?
43. ¿Hay algo más que me quieras contar?

## APPENDIX C: TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

## Transcription Conventions

- (IA) Inaudible or non-transcribable segments of talk
- . A period indicates a full stop
- , A comma indicates “parceling of non-final talk” (Eggins & Slade, 1997, p. 2)
- ... Intervals within and between utterances; indicates hesitation
- Italics* Italicized speech indicates an utterance in English



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