

SPANISH HOME LANGUAGE USES AS FACTORS
IN BILINGUAL CHILDREN'S
LANGUAGE PREFERENCES

by

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DEDICATION

To all of those who ever wanted to make a change.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
RRISD	Round Rock Independent School District
LSAC	Longitudinal Study of Australian Children
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
HL	Heritage Language
TEA	Texas Education Agency
GIDS	Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
LOE	Languages Other Than English
SES	Socioeconomic Status
Hays CISD	Hays Consolidated Independent School District
STAAR	State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness
LPAC	Language Proficiency Assessment Committee
HMH	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
AISD	Austin Independent School District
COVID	Coronavirus Disease 2019
IRB	Institutional Review Board

I. INTRODUCTION

Like many emergent bilingual children, I experienced subtractive conditions of schooling in my own education. All I can clearly remember from my kindergarten year at Voigt Elementary in Round Rock Independent School District (RRISD) is the dark abyss behind my eyelids as I cried my 5-year-old heart out as I attempted to say the letter name and the letter sound of each letter in the English alphabet for the second time. The experience was double torture for my brain and heart. In that school year, there were no bilingual kindergarten classes at my school. I was a Spanish-speaking student placed in a monolingual English kindergarten classroom. My kindergarten English monolingual teacher patiently waited on me for a very long time to pronounce every letter name and every letter sound to each letter in the English alphabet.

Like many Spanish-speaking kindergarteners in the United States, I was forced not just to learn English but to learn new content and concepts through English. On a few occasions throughout the school year, I had to stand in front of my teacher for my letter name test and letter sound test. I was terrified most of the time during these tests and time seemed to move so slowly. As each slowly drawn-out day passed in my sunlit and colorful classroom environment, my home language was gradually hammered away into nothingness. Years later, as a kindergarten bilingual teacher, I had to administer similar letter sound tests to my bilingual students. This type of letter sound test is still common practice in bilingual kindergarten classrooms.

If numbers of speakers of minoritized languages get smaller, some human cognitive abilities and capabilities can wither away. Harrison (2007) states that:

The last speakers of probably half of the world's languages are alive today. As they grow old and die, their voices will fall silent. Their children and

grandchildren-by overwhelming majority-will either choose not to learn or will be deprived of the opportunity to learn the ancestral language. (p. 3)

Verdon et al. (2014) found that some children in Australia are simultaneous learners of their home language and English from birth while other children are not. Children who are not simultaneous learners are considered “sequential language learners” in school who may lose their home language in favor of attaining the English acquisition. Verdon and researchers studied three waves of data from a Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC), that involved 4,252 young children over the course of five years to identify patterns of language maintenance and loss among those that speak other languages other than English. The most common languages to be spoken other than English by the children were Arabic, Vietnamese, Italian, Spanish, and Greek. Verdon et al. found that different factors are related to language maintenance:

Environmental and personal factors such as parental language use, presence of grandparent in the home, type of early childhood care, first- and second-generation immigrant status, and parental perception of support from the educational environment were related to language maintenance among non-English speaking children. (p. 168)

Some speakers of minoritized languages around the world have been silenced and were told to speak, read, and write English only. Fillmore (2000) conservatively estimates that there are 3.5 million children in U.S. schools that are identified as limited in English proficiency (LEP). These students are considered to have limited English knowledge. Without linguistic help, these scholars are excluded “from effective participation on the educational program offered” by the schools they attend (Lau v. Nichols, 1974). Decades later, home language loss is still evident in U.S. schools. Fillmore (2000) affirms that “While virtually all children who attend American schools learn English, most of them are at risk of losing their primary languages as they do so”

(p. 203).

Furthermore, Lewis and Simons (2009) established that Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) includes the intergenerational transmission as an individual decision made by parents. Fishman and others have identified social spaces where languages are heard. These social spaces are called, "domains of use". Fishman and others have identified these "domains of use" that pertain to people, location, and a topic that is tied to a specific language. As a particular language is used and becomes the dominant language over time, it becomes more important than other languages to the individual.

Societal and institutional choices are crucial in influencing the parental decisions on their language usage with their children. Parents are crucial in supporting their children with language maintenance by passing on the home language on to their children. Parental attitudes and biases on language preference can affect home language loss and maintenance.

My overarching research question: How do the language beliefs of parents of emergent bilingual children shape their language usage with their children at home? is derived from this previous research because I would like to know how the language beliefs of parents of emergent bilingual children shape their language usage with their children at home. Parental language beliefs are important so that they can instill the idea of home language development and maintenance with their children.

Research shows that more languages are in danger of being lost. Grosjean (2010) described the Navajo-language revival program in Fort Defiance, Arizona and highlights the work by linguist, Michael Krauss and education specialist, Teresa McCarty. Grosjean

found that this work sheds light on the fact that America's indigenous languages are in danger. Out of the 175 indigenous languages found in the United States to this day, only 20 of those languages are being acquired by children. The Navajo-language revival program started so that children could acquire the Navajo language while making progress in English and other subjects. The children at Fort Defiance Elementary School were taught reading and writing skills in Navajo before moving on to the English. As students moved up in grade levels, English was brought in more into instruction and students took pride in being Navajo.

My first research question: How do the language beliefs of parents of emergent bilingual children shape their language usage with their children at home? is also derived from this previous research. Although students are instructed more and more in English as they move up grade levels in school, I would like to know how the language beliefs of parents of emergent bilingual children shape their language usage with their children at home so that parents can continue to help their child in promoting and maintaining Spanish in the home.

Similarly, Velásquez (2014) studied household practices and attitudes toward Spanish in a group of first-generation Mexican immigrants in Nebraska in a majority White community. Through this study, she found that when mothers chose the household activities which include talking to children or with them, praying, going to church, religious education, and reading to them, their children's Spanish was maintained. When fathers chose the household activities of talking to their children or with them, going to the park, playing with them, and reading to them, their children held on to the Spanish language. Although more than half of the mothers reported that they had no difficulties in

making their children speak Spanish at home, nine of the other mothers in this study suggest various degrees of shift to the English language in their household. Six mothers stated that their children did not know some words, and this was an obstacle to their Spanish use.

Only 2 mothers reported their children's preference for speaking English with their siblings at home. This trend was seen throughout all households visited by members and the research team in this study. One mother stated that her child refused or was unable to speak to her in Spanish. My research question regarding what effects do parents believe their home language practices and preferences will have on their children's maintenance if Spanish is derived from this study. I ask this question because it is important that parents keep Spanish activities and/or begin new Spanish activities that will allow for their children to do activities in Spanish as they continue to age and mature.

The practice of silencing children's home language in U.S. schools has pushed the Spanish home language and Hispanic heritage out of the lives of Latinx children, causing many students to lose their home language and own identity. The relationship between language and identity for my participants in my study is the realization that obtaining Spanish and English language proficiency is important so that the participants can be viewed as successful citizens in the United States by people in the U.S.

Spanish-speaking students are constantly placed under social pressures that can stop their Spanish from developing. Harrison (2007) affirms that "languages reveal the limits and possibilities of human cognition – how the mind works" (p. 18). Furthermore, Harrison (2007) claims that linguists believe that once we uncover the properties of all human languages, we have learned something about the building blocks of the very

architecture of human thought. It is important to study this topic and add to the existing research towards the goal of equipping Spanish-speaking emergent bilinguals so that they do not lose their home language.

Some schools have tried to maintain Spanish as a home language. For example, Smith (2002) in a study of a historic Tucson, Arizona bilingual school, found that after eight decades of English-only teaching, drop-out and retention rates of children from language minority families surpassed rates for their majority language peers (2000). So, La Escuela (The School) became a K-5 bilingual magnet school (p. 168). Once La Escuela reopened and became a bilingual magnet program, about six students in each classroom were fluent Spanish speakers. After 18 years of bilingual education maintenance, each classroom had an average of two fluent Spanish-speaking students.

Unfortunately, the physical separation of the barrio from interstate highway (US 10) cut the community in half and reduced the school's Spanish-speaking population. Home language loss in this case is evident. I wonder what language practices the parents of the bilingual students at La Escuela could have applied so that their children could have developed and maintained their Spanish home language. My research question on parental literacy practices is derived from this study. The topic of home language loss matters because Spanish-speaking students are affected across the U.S. and Canada. Pacini-Ketchabaw et al. (2010) claim that Latinx students are gaining attention in Canada because of frequent poor performance in school. I think educators, parents, and students must work juntos (together) to ensure that the Spanish-speaking children in school maintain and hold on to their home language throughout their lives.

Lewis and Simons (2009) found that "If children do not learn language from their

parents, there is little possibility that they in turn will be able to pass the language on to their children” (p. 5). In addition, social factors create general situations in which languages are used.

Children and their families may favor a language over another language in a certain situation. Velázquez (2014) states that “Focusing on maternal perceptions of agency is relevant because in immigrant households, parents-and in particular mothers-must negotiate transnational and local pressures either to foster bilingualism in their family or to encourage substantive assimilation to English” (p. 138). Velázquez examined the ways in which a group of first-generation Hispanic immigrants to the U.S. Midwest conceptualized their parental role in their child’s bilingual development.

The purpose of the study was to ask the respondents to identify the individuals or institutions on which their children’s language and academic development depended, household practices which were perceived as conducive to Spanish maintenance, and obstacles perceived to their child’s usage of Spanish at home, school, and the community. Traditional Latino family units were examined in this study. Single-parent households and same-sex marriages were excluded. Velázquez (2014) found that “Understanding immigrant households as sites for language development and understanding immigrant mothers as agents in their family’s well-being and possessors of funds of knowledge, has deep consequences for their children’s likelihood for educational success” (p. 150).

In this study, the household activities most perceived by mothers’ as contributing to language maintenance include talking to or with children, praying, going to church, religious education, and reading to their children. Household activities most perceived by husbands’ that contributed to language maintenance include talking to or with children,

going to the park, playing with the children, and reading to their children. From this study, I derived my interview question 15: What kinds of daily or regular activities does your family do in Spanish at home?

Hispanic mothers' play a caretaker role in children's language socialization and are typically one of the first people to hold their new-born baby in their arms and speak to their child in Spanish. Children may feel pressured by older siblings or school peers to acquire English quickly. The child grows into an educational system that consists of political and social pressures on the learner that can create conflict in fully developing and identifying with their home language, culture, and identity.

When bilingual children are given ample opportunities to advance in their own academic learning in their home language, they can excel as well or beyond their monolingual English-speaking classmates. I wonder if Spanish-speaking parents who are English language dominant relate less to their own culture and consider themselves more English monolingual than bilingual since they lost most or all their home language growing up. I think that when parents and school personnel agree on language usage, students can maintain bilingualism. I think children are agents and they have the ultimate choice whether they will hold on to their home language. What if bilingual students were to hold on to their home language throughout the elementary school years? According to research, bilingual students who demonstrate home language maintenance throughout their elementary school years perform better academically. Pimentel (2011) claims that when students participate in enrichment bilingual programs, they demonstrate school achievement on a variety of levels. Furthermore, these students can read at higher grade levels, score better on standardized tests, and remain in school longer.

Parents are instrumental in assuring if their child holds on to their home language. Pacini-Ketchabaw (2010) found that “The assimilative pressures toward abolishing Spanish as a language of the home must be taken into account. In short, the functionality and integrity of the families is threatened in a number of ways” (p. 119). In this study, Hispanics in Canada were studied so that researchers could report on the home language practices of 45 Hispanic families. The findings include parent views on Spanish maintenance to foster family unity, Latino identity, and professional advancement. Parents used several strategies with their children to maintain Spanish. In addition, parents wanted to see schools positively recognize and build upon the family’s cultural capital and home language. Pimentel (2011) described how language-minority students in enrichment bilingual programs performed better academically than students who were not in enrichment bilingual programs:

Students who participate in enrichment bilingual programs demonstrate school achievement on a variety of levels. Compared to language-minority students who either do not participate in bilingual education at all or are enrolled in remedial bilingual programs, language-minority students in enrichment bilingual programs can read at higher grade levels, score better on standardized tests, and remain in school longer. (p. 338)

Pimentel’s study took place in a Pre-K bilingual program in Central Texas. The main participant in this study was her son, Quetzin. The purpose of this study was to examine the number of language ideologies as they manifest in a case study of an emerging bilingual student who went from being labeled at-risk in a Pre-K bilingual program to gifted in a kindergarten two-way dual language program. Pimentel (2011) found that “[...], language minority students effectively learn, as the school has intended them to, that their native language is a barrier to learning and that they do lack academic proficiency” (p. 351). Educators need to ensure that students see their minority languages

as reflections of their own cultural identities.

In my study, I raised the question: What effects do parents believe their home language practices and preferences will have on their children's maintenance of Spanish? This question is important because, at home, the parents can foster activities to ensure that the home language is developed and maintained by the child.

The purpose of my empirical study is to understand the phenomenon of home language loss among emergent bilinguals in an elementary school setting and propose ideas toward a solution to home language loss among Spanish-speaking families. By collecting and analyzing qualitative data in the form of interviews with parents of emergent bilingual children, I sought to generate solutions to foster Spanish language maintenance at home so that students whose native language is Spanish can succeed while learning a second language or more languages in school. Such efforts could help children to become confident home language speakers by maintaining their home language and promoting a foundation for lifelong bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism in the home.

This investigation with parents of bilingual children builds upon previous literature and research so that new understandings of home language loss and maintenance can be found, and parental language preference and biases can be explored.

Statement of the Problem

A growing body of evidence shows the importance of home language maintenance for emergent bilingual children in the United States. Yet, home language loss is an urgent problem in the U.S. Behind the colorful facade of student work lie layers of discrimination, inequities, language ideologies, and racism. Parents are on a jagged terraneous upward battle to fight for the injustices that they and their children must face in the public school system. Bilingual families in the U.S. are constantly working against a broken system.

Research suggests that teachers, parents, and students are aware of the home language loss problem and are interested in preventing the linguistic discrimination that has historically occurred within educational institutions that have always been led by someone else's political agenda. Messages of internalized linguistic discrimination in addition to other discriminatory ideologies are at work in the school system. We need my study so that people are aware of the tremendous home language loss problem in this country that is attacking the nation's youngest learners and eroding their home language and culture. When a language is lost, people lose the passing down of values, generational old stories, and ways of being.

I was heavily torn from the many opportunities of having impactful Spanish conversations at school when I was a kindergarten student. Staring at the face of discrimination, I had to learn how to survive as an emerging bilingual student without a safe space in school to learn, develop, and cultivate my home language. Linguistic discrimination is only one means of discrimination that I had to fight against in public school in Texas. Our nation's youngest bilingual students are at "war" daily in the

American school system and they need all the resources they need to protect themselves from other impediments they and their families encounter in the public school system. Additional impediments emergent bilingual students face are racial discrimination and gun violence.

Home language loss not only negatively effects the youngest learners, but home language loss also brings disruptive effects to older learners. Some college students struggle to pass state bilingual teacher certification exams so that they can become Texas certified bilingual educators. When students need to take more Spanish college coursework and pay more teacher certification exam fees because they cannot pass those exams, they pay more money for tuition and sink into debt. Instead of adding to the national debt, college students can professionalize their Spanish instead of trying to acquire it. If there were greater awareness of the issue of Spanish language loss, then maybe more can be done politically so that language-in-education policies can change and bring improvements in the field of bilingual education and the lives of emergent bilingual children and their families.

Research Questions

In this qualitative study, I addressed the following overarching question: How do the language beliefs of parents of emergent bilingual children shape their language usage with their children at home? Specifically, this study answered the following four sub-questions: In which domains or situations do parents of emergent bilingual students decide to use their home language(s) with their children? In which domains or situations do parents of emergent bilingual students decide to use Spanish with their children? In which domains or situations do parents of emergent bilingual students decide to use English with their children? What effects do parents believe their home language practices and preferences will have on their children's maintenance of Spanish?

Literature Review

There is a current global phenomenon regarding language loss. Shen and Jiang (2021) found that “Usually, by the age of five, the younger generation of the immigrants starts to show remarkable tendency of shift from their heritage language (HL) to English. The second generation is, therefore, a “transitional generation” which holds the key to whether the HL will be maintained or lost” (p. 2). In this study in Australia, thirty 10-11-year-old children of Chinese immigrants took a Chinese proficiency test and participated in semi-structural interviews. The high-achieving participants expressed their aspirations to attain high levels of Chinese literacy and identified themselves as being half Australian, half Chinese. Participants who performed lower only expressed aspirations to learn English and identified themselves mainly as Australian. Shen and Jiang (2021) state that as children grow and become more mentally mature, they explore and develop a well-rounded identity that is complex, mutable, and is influenced by age, life experiences, family attitudes, and more.

Rapid changes in language communities across the U.S. motivate researchers to investigate the phenomenon of how people prefer English over Spanish because English is the dominant social language in the U.S. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is the actual branch of the government of Texas that is responsible for public education in Texas in the United States. TEA (2022) claims that out of the 5,371,586 students, 52.9% of the student population identify as Hispanic/Latino, and 20.6% of the student population are English Learners. This data indicates that Hispanic families are experiencing a tremendous amount of language loss, and this is an issue worth pointing out.

Even along the U.S.-Mexico border with various Spanish language resources, Spanish home language loss is prominent. For example, Villa and Rivera-Mills (2009) found that even in the U.S. Southwest, “However, even in this fertile environment for sustaining Spanish, some parents do not pass Spanish on to their children, while others do” (p. 3). Similarly, the Central Texas region where my study was conducted is in constant linguistic flux. For example, in my own teaching experience in Central Texas, I have noticed the severity of how often students enroll in school and then within a matter of months, withdraw from the school or school district. Some of my former students were newcomers from Honduras or México. As these ‘nomadic’ students travel through the public school system, they bring with them their own linguistic resources and when they leave a school, they continue their educational journey with new language learned.

Parents must also do their part so that that their children maintain the home language. Yakel and Beale-Rivaya (2017) found that “Though educators can encourage language maintenance in an academic setting, it is equally important for encouragement to come from within the home. In a Central Texas study conducted by Yakel and Beale-Rivaya (2017), participants were students in a local non-profit organization biliteracy class. Five of the students provided interviews and were all migrants from Mexico between the ages of 25 and 60. The purpose of the study was to explore the motivating factors of Hispanic immigrants that lead them to continue their basic education, especially regarding to immigrants later in life in central Texas. An important finding is that personalized learning outcomes help keep literacy programs relevant to the community.

For many emergent bilingual children, English becomes the language of socialization. Verdon et al. (2014) found that “In many cases, despite efforts from the home and/or

education environment to facilitate multilingualism, children may choose to be monolingual in the language of the dominant culture, thus losing their ability to communicate in their home language” (p. 170). Furthermore, Verdon et al. (2014) has found that children’s choices are influenced by the presence of influential communicators such as older siblings who prefer to speak the dominant social language rather than the home language. In the following sections, I briefly review literature on the following topics: challenges to home language maintenance among bilingual children in the U.S., Hispanic population expansion across the U.S. and language shifts, Spanish maintenance and loss, negative impacts of home language loss on bilingual students, and research on the advantages of bilingualism.

Challenges to home language maintenance among bilingual children in the U.S.

This review of the literature demonstrates that bilingualism has advantages for children and that home language maintenance helps emergent bilinguals to realize these advantages. At the same time, there are also challenges to home language maintenance among bilingual children in the U.S. In this section, I will briefly review literature on the challenges for home language maintenance among bilingual children in the U.S. and identify factors that pose challenges to the maintenance of home language among bilingual children and families.

Velásquez (2014) found that regarding language development, future research should include father’s perceptions of agency, single-parent households, and households that do not have parents as the head of households. There are also households that have grandparents and siblings as the head of household. In addition, it would be informative to learn about households in which the parent is not a native Spanish speaker. The

maintenance issue stems from children not learning their home language from their parents or family elders. Lewis and Simons (2009) found that Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) brings focus on the importance of intergenerational transmission in the maintenance of a particular language. If parents do not pass the home language on to their own children, there is little possibility that their children will learn it. Like I mentioned before, when language users gravitate towards a language that becomes the dominant language, that language becomes more important to the language user. When a language is no longer used, it loses its importance, and it becomes a less valuable resource. It is important that parents communicate the importance of developing and maintaining the Spanish language to their children. Researchers have described that the factors required for home language maintenance are sufficient years of quality bilingual education programming, parental decisions on home language usage, and the level of education and literacy of the parents and grandparents of bilingual students.

New laws and oppressive education approaches can also hinder the well-being of bilingual students in the U.S. Bilingual students in many communities are in a long and steep struggle to maintain their home language at home, school, and in the community. España and Herrera (2020) claim that English-only legislation which eliminates bilingual education such as Arizona Proposition 203 (2000) and Arizona HB2281 which is legislation that bans ethnic studies, were a hinderance to bilingual education. Arizona HB2281 was struck down by a federal judge in the year 2017. New legislation permits or requires ethnic studies. The English-only legislation of California Proposition 227 (1998) and Massachusetts Question 2 (2002) which also eliminated bilingual education, got

reversed by bilingual legislation, voters, and bilingual education is once again legal in those states.

Bilingual students must stand up against language ideologies. Pimentel (2011) states that linguistic conformity is a language ideology that resonates the idea that someone who speaks a non-English language is perceived as a person who threatens the unity or “social glue” that is looked upon as keeping the United States together. Raciolinguistic ideologies frame low-income students of color as linguistically deficient when compared to their white class classmates. Flores (2017) found that “These raciolinguistic ideologies were part of broader colonial efforts at the dehumanization of indigenous and African populations that could then be used to justify the violent conquest and genocide associated with European colonialism” (p. 1). Flores argues that people must dismantle structural racism to dismantle the raciolinguistic ideologies inherited in our society. Furthermore, Pimentel (2011) claims that “[...] language ideologies, operating as a larger part of the larger project of Whiteness, are often embedded in the language programs that are implemented in schools and thus shape how Latina/o students are perceived within these programs” (p. 343).

Bilingual students need bilingual programs where they have the liberty to use all their linguistic resources in the classroom. García and Kleifgen (2011) states that “by strictly separating the two languages, bilingual educators in these programs often fail to build on the students’ home language practices in bilingual communities. Furthermore, these programs do not allow for cross-linguistic comparisons and other bilingual practices that are most important in the 21st century” (p. 177). Positive change must be made so that ongoing improvements can be made in the areas of economics, education, and health

issues.

Limited years of bilingual programming is another factor that hinders language maintenance. Grosjean (2010) described early exit transitional language programs, where instruction in the students' home language serves as a bridge to "carry" them over to the second, or majority language existed in the twentieth century in the United States. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) established transitional programs. These programs are present now in countries such as England, the Netherlands, and Sweden. The program can last from 1-4 years (which depends on the country), after which instruction and the majority language takes over and takes precedence over the home language. Empirical evidence in bilingual research has found that bilingual students benefit more academically, cognitively, emotionally, and socially when they learn in their home language in school. Children can develop and maintain their home language by enrolling in a dual language or two-way bilingual program.

Parental decisions on language preference are a factor in determining whether their children maintain their home language. Yakel and Beale-Rivaya state that it is important to evaluate what is happening in the homes since this is the setting where most early language transmission takes place. Yakel and Beale-Rivaya (2017) state that "Another possible research area would be to determine if a correlation exists between the level of parent's education and the level of bilingualism of their children" (p. 264).

After reviewing this research, I explored possible answers to my own research question regarding how the language beliefs of parents of emergent bilingual children shape their language usage with their children at home. Christensen (2009) claims that language is still contested in many parts of the world. Most political, educational, and

commercial interactions occur in the language of the colonizer. Therefore, parents are often pushed to have their children speak the home language or the dominant social language of the colonizer. The colonizer's language is seen as the language of power. Yakel and Beale-Rivaya (2017) affirm that "Given the renewed motivation to help ensure the maintenance of Spanish across generations in the United States, it is imperative to evaluate what is happening in the homes where most of the language takes place" (p. 264).

The level of formal education and literacy of parents and grandparents of bilingual students has been proposed as a factor that may hinder language maintenance. Yakel and Beale-Rivaya (2017) claim that:

Challenges arise, then, when the parents of these students speak their mother tongue but are not literate and are therefore unable to provide literacy support in the native language to their children before they enter school, at which point they are exposed to formal education in English and their first language is often jeopardized. (p. 249)

Literacy support can come from parents with different literacy background. Research shows that when Spanish-speaking parents are literate in Spanish, the parents can do literacy-based activities with their children in the home before the children enter school. Their children will be more successful in school than other children who do not have similar home language experiences. Because I have reviewed this literature, I am aware of these potential challenges.

The Hispanic population expands across the U.S. and language shifts

The Hispanic population in the U.S. continues to increase. New migration is bringing new Spanish speakers into the U.S. and some Spanish speakers are losing the Spanish language. Researchers have discovered that even as the Hispanic population expands

across the U.S., language shift to English and language loss continue. Durand (2010) found that “[...], Latinos are currently the largest ethnic minority group in the United States, representing 15.1% of the total population in 2007” (p. 208). The relation between Latina mothers reported at-home practices regarding school preparation and their child’s literacy skills were examined. The study included 56 kindergarteners and their mothers and Durand found that parental involvement in children’s academic lives is beneficial in the early years. Furthermore, educators must view Hispanic parents as collaborative partners and join them in maximizing the potential of Hispanic children developing and learning in the U.S.

A decade later, the rise in the Hispanic population continues. The United States Census Bureau (2020) found that the Hispanic population was the second-largest racial or ethnic group, now comprising of 18.7% of the total population. Yakel and Beale-Rivaya (2017) observes that “Furthermore, it is projected that by 2050 the population of Hispanics in the U.S. will rise to 132.8 million, or 30% of the total populace” (p. 246).

The proximity to the Mexican border, home language transmission within multi-generational households, religious practices, Spanish language media, and popular culture in Spanish are factors that support language maintenance in these regions of the United States. Grosjean (2015) states that “Bilinguals can be globally dominant in a language but may be dominant in the other language for specific domains” (p. 574). Holly Cashman (cited in Villa and Rivera-Mills, 2009) approaches the analysis of shift and maintenance from a different perspective. She did not focus on the language patterns of bilingual speakers but rather on the linguistic and political environments they inhabit.

There are social pressures and political circumstances that draw students away from

their home language practices. As the Hispanic communities expand throughout the United States, research consistently shows us that there is a rapid and continuous loss of home language across the U.S. within Latin communities. The literature reviewed in the following section emphasizes accelerated language loss in schools and communities throughout the United States.

Spanish maintenance and loss

Spanish home language loss across the U.S. is an ongoing issue. In my study, I explored the Spanish language loss concept. Grosjean (2010) claims that the most common practice used in schools is to integrate bilingual children into the school system so that they can acquire the majority language as best they can, without paying attention to, or using, their first language.

As a former bilingual kindergarten teacher in Central Texas, I have seen my own former kindergarten bilingual students quickly learn the English language and forget their Spanish home language in school. On the contrary, some of my former bilingual students maintain their Spanish home language while acquiring English. Fillmore (2000) states that “While virtually all children who attend American schools learn English, most of them are at risk of losing their primary languages as they do so” (p. 203). Ekiaka-Oblazamengo et al. (2016) claims that:

In the United States, facing the hegemonic trend of creating a uniform culture and language as a way of maintaining social order and control, some scholars have denounced the historical issues of cultural and linguistic genocide and deculturalization that are still alive nowadays. (p. 79)

Furthermore, Ekiaka-Oblazamengo et al. (2016) found that the development of literacy in the home language is illusionary because the desired outcome is to master the “basic” language (English) due to the transitional status of bilingual programs as

conceived by U.S. policy. To overcome the challenges of children being reluctant to learn and speak Spanish, parents should maintain the daily literature practice through Spanish. In addition, parents should convince their children on the importance of learning Spanish.

Negative impacts of home language loss on bilingual students

There are negative impacts of home language loss on bilingual students in five areas in the U.S. The negative impacts affect the academic, cognitive, emotional, political, and social aspects of bilingual children.

In some academic settings, bilingual students experience the negative impact of home language loss as they face the school's idea to integrate them into the mainstream classroom so that they may acquire the majority or dominant language. Historically, this has been the case in the U.S., but this has not been the intent of additive programs such as dual language programs and two-way programs. The intention of these additive programs consists of bilingual students learning and mastering "basic" English, content knowledge, and biliteracy. Ekiaka-Oblazamengo et al. (2016) claims that the development of the home language in school is an illusion because the end goal is for the student to master the "basic" English Language due to the transitional status of bilingual programs. That result is not the same as dual language and two-way bilingual schools.

Bilingual children need to truly develop their home language in school, so they do not fall behind academically. Grosjean (2010) articulates "If children do not understand or speak the language used in the school, their learning of skills and content matter is slowed down and they fall behind" (p. 231). As a former kindergarten bilingual teacher, I have witnessed some of my former kindergarten bilingual students favoring English over Spanish in school. Some of my students have been able to learn both Spanish and English

simultaneously and excel academically while others who favor the dominant social English language fall behind academically and cognitively as they rapidly lose their Spanish. In my own practice as a former bilingual kindergarten teacher, I have noticed some bilingual students from ages 5-7 in grades kindergarten through second grade begin to dramatically shift to English.

Bilingual students face the impact of home language loss in their cognitive abilities when they do not fully develop their Spanish home language. Cummins (1984) referred CALP as cognitive/academic language proficiency and CALP includes the ability to analyze, synthesize, understand grammatical rules, sentence structures, semantics, etc. and do not differ from one language to another. Pimentel (2011) found that “Problems arise when Latino students are prohibited from fully developing their underlying proficiency in Spanish. Research has consistently shown that students need 5-7 years of schooling in their first language to develop CALP in their first language” (pp. 339-340). Furthermore, Pimentel (2011) found that Latina/o students who fully develop the foundation (CALP) in Spanish language do not have to redevelop all those language skills in English. The underlying proficiency in Spanish transfers over to English and students only need to develop the surface features of the English language.

Bilingual students can feel the negative emotional impact of home language loss. When I was a young learner, my home language development was significantly interrupted as I faced linguistic discrimination in public school. My kindergarten space was the learning site where I was destined to lose Spanish and cultural identity. I refused to lose my home language and Hispanic culture. I fought hard to learn English and Spanish.

Bilingual students experience the negative impacts of home language in political matters. Yakel and Beale-Rivaya (2017) found that languages other than English, also known as LOEs, have been looked upon as dubious and unsettling in the history of the United States. LOEs have been viewed as a problem and then as a right in the view of policymakers in present times and more so before and during the civil rights era. Ruiz's language orientations model (1984, 2010) suggests that if a language does not have any extrinsic use, then that language may have very little if any value. Some people value a language that facilitates one's access to social or material goods (social or economic capital). Languages need to function in domains so that they do not die. A home language should be seen as a resource and not as a problem to be taken away from a child.

If bilingual students encounter home language loss, they could experience negative issues in social domains. When bilingual students lose close friends of Hispanic descent in school, they lose opportunities to use Spanish with age peers. Bilingual students who choose not to use their Spanish with grandparents and other elders also lose out on opportunities to communicate, socialize, and learn from elders. In turn, having Spanish-speaking grandparents at home can benefit bilingual students. Tran (2007) states that "[...], the presence of grandparents and other older relatives at home has been hypothesized to increase the use of Spanish, as immigrant grandparents are less likely to be fluent in English" (p. 12). Grandparents are also more likely to be literate in Spanish.

Bilingual students can also feel shame and experience verbal "put downs" in certain social contexts. Smith (2002) found that a Mexican-American mother in Nogales, Arizona who was also a bilingual educator compared herself with her cousins who went to school on the other side of the border. The mother described herself as 'pocha', a term

for a person who is considered a semi-speaker of Spanish. The mother wanted her daughter to study in a dual language program the U.S. The term ‘pocha’ can have a negative impact by causing bilingual students to feel less worthy than their classmates who speak Spanish fluently.

In this study, the researcher examined interactions between Spanish speakers and a bilingual magnet school to ask how the location of a dynamic Spanish-speaking community influences Spanish learning and instruction. Smith (2002) claims that “Ethnographic and census data suggest that language shift to English has continued in El Barrio despite the creation of a bilingual school designed, in part, to prevent minority language loss” (p. 179). The studies focused on resistance towards passing on the Spanish language to their children by families. Bilinguals in the U.S. have held on to discriminatory narratives for decades. Flores (2013) claims that:

Although nation/state governmentality has perpetuated the marginalization of language-minoritized communities, these communities have constantly resisted their marginalization. Bilinguals in America have a history of resisting against discrimination, inequities in education, and racism. This resistance has taken many forms, though most fall under the large umbrella of identity politics, namely, movements that seek to empower a particular group of people who have historically been oppressed. (pp. 271-272)

Public attitudes about languages other than English have an influence on languages other than English. Seals and Peyton (2017) studied public attitudes on language proficiency in languages other than English and found that:

Public attitudes regarding use of and proficiency in languages other than English affect and inhibit use of those languages and the desire to learn them at home, in the community, and at school. [...], parents, and educators continue to have questions about the value of speaking a language other than English. (p. 88)

In this study, researchers at a rural Oregon public primary school outlined the

strengths of a program, outlined the challenges, and presented the brief history of the program from its establishment to its decline. Students were the participants. The school and school district worked to make some accommodations so that students could still learn their home language to some capacity after the program was dismantled. The program ceased because there was lack of continued support of the school and the community. Research in this area helps us understand the home language loss and language maintenance dynamics that resonate within bilingual families in Hispanic communities.

Political reform and educational reform are needed to rise above powerful monolingual ideologies so that bilinguals can live in an equitable societal framework to reach their full potential as learners. Research on language ideologies suggest that they are persistent, and that legislation and language policies do not easily change them. Rather, the reverse: changes in language ideologies shape policies.

Research on The Advantages of bilingualism

To summarize the research reviewed in this section, researchers have found that bilingualism presents several advantages for learners. These advantages include but are not limited to the areas of academic achievement, cognitive advantages, relationships, and social advantages. Smith and Murillo (2015) found that bilingual students who live in border colonias in Texas gain six forms of capital through Spanish/English biliteracy: affective, cognitive, academic, social, intercultural, and economic. Border colonias are unincorporated settlements that typically have poor services and not ethnically diverse along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Bilingualism brings academic achievement for bilinguals. Smith and Murillo (2015)

claim that “Forms of academic capital include grades, test scores, graduation rates, letters of recommendation, scholarships, degrees earned, publications, etc. with distinct implications for individuals and groups” (p. 67). Bilingualism creates cognitive advantages for bilinguals. Verdon et al. (2014) found:

[...] that the linguistic experience of bilingualism has consequences for nonverbal cognitive performance and that those consequences are to the advantages of the bilinguals. Moreover, the advantages documented for executive control across the life span seem to contribute to cognitive reserve, allowing bilinguals to better cope with Alzheimer’s disease and postpone the appearance of its devastating symptoms. (p. 233)

Bilingualism brings social advantages which helps build relationships. When bilingual students maintain their home language, they can communicate more effectively with their parents and communicate better with grandparents and other elders.

Relationships weave together strongly for generations when children can communicate with familial elders. Smith and Murillo (2015) affirm that:

Multilingual literacies convey affective capital because the foundational relationships developed in families and friendships are embodied and carried out in particular languages and language repertoires, and the use of language, in oral and written form, can signal intimacy, solidarity, and in-group status. (p. 64)

Bilingualism brings about social advantages. Bilingual students can communicate with others in dynamic ways in different social fields. Smith and Murillo (2015) found that:

[...], schools, homes, work-places, and community can be regarded as “adjacent and overlapping social fields” where key actors (learners, teachers, administrators, and parents) may hold and express shared and divergent views regarding the place of multilingual literacies and translanguaging in education. (p. 63)

By reading the literature, I found that bilingualism creates profound advantages for Spanish-speaking bilingual learners in the areas of academic achievement, cognitive

abilities, relationships, and the social arena for the benefit of bilingual students.

Similarly, Yosso (2005) found six types of capital that educational leaders may use to frame their interactions with students. These types of capital are aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational, and resistance. Yosso defines each type of capital. Aspirational capital consists of the “hopes and dreams” students have. These forms of capital empower individuals. Linguistic capital consists of the various language and communication skills students bring to the college environment. Familial capital is the social and personal human resources students have in their existing precollege environment. These resources are drawn from their extended family and community networks. Social capital is defined as students “peers and other social contacts” and emphasizes how students utilize all these contacts to gain access to college and maneuver other social institutions. Navigational capital is defined as students’ skills and abilities to maneuver “social institutions”, including educational spaces. Resistance capital holds its place in the experiences of communities of color and secures equal rights and collective freedom (pp. 1-2).

After conducting my study with parents of bilingual first graders, I gained first-hand experience on how bilingual students exercise the advantages they obtain from bilingualism in their everyday lives.

Given the strong capital found in bilingual families in the literature, I conducted parent interviews to learn about how the language beliefs of parents of emergent bilingual children shape their language usage with their children at home and draw from the results and findings and implications for the concepts of Spanish language loss and language maintenance in the field of bilingual education. Flores (2013) found that “Considerable

research data suggest that, for dominated minorities, the extent to which students' language and culture are incorporated into the school program constitutes a significant predictor of academic success" (p. 277). This study has been completed to enhance and expand on past and previous research on Spanish home language loss.

II. METHODS

Research Design

The purpose of this study was to examine how the language beliefs of parents of emergent bilingual children shape their language usage with their children at home. My qualitative study included parent interviews. A qualitative research approach is ideal for studying home language loss in Hispanic communities across the U.S. Scribbr (2019) states that qualitative research is done when a person wants to answer research questions to understand and explore an idea. According to Shen and Jiang (2021), using pre-formulated questions as open-ended questions, aims to guide participants to converse on their own experiences, stories, and perceptions in relation to Chinese language maintenance. I did two interviews each with four different families, for a total of 8 interviews. After the interviews, I interpreted the data.

Similarly, I mostly used pre-formulated open-ended questions in parent interviews (See the APPENDIX SECTION). I explored how the language beliefs of parents of emergent bilingual children shape their language usage with their children at home so that parents can continue to do activities to promote and maintain Spanish in the family. Parents and their children involved in my study have been participating in Spanish literacy activities at home such as reading books, making shopping lists, going to church, and singing Spanish songs. I learned that some of the parents do more activities in Spanish than the other parents in the study.

Context of the Research

While plagued with problems such as the misrepresentation of Hispanics, The U.S. Census (2020) found that the Texas demographics consists of the following: White

50.1%, Black or African American 12.2%, American Indian and Alaska Native 1.0%, Asian 5.4%, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander .01%, Hispanic Origin 39.3%, and Some Other Race 13.6%.

This study took place in Hays County in Central Texas. Central Texas is home to Spanish speakers from various backgrounds and dialects. Historically in Hays County, student mobility is common. When those Spanish speakers consistently migrate from any location and reside in Texas, there can be a language shift and Spanish speakers could lose their home language in the process of such migration or migrations. Students are frequently switching districts and schools. The demographics of Hays County consist of the following:

Table 1. Hays County Demographics

Race	Percent
Hispanic or Latino	40.1%
White alone	90%
Language Backgrounds	
Spanish	23%
English	74.2%
Levels of formal education	
High School or equivalent degree	23.3%
Bachelor’s degree	24.4%
Graduate or professional diploma	12.8%
Most common jobs/industries	
Employee of private company workers	67.9%
Local, State, and Federal Workers	17.2%

As we see in Table 1, the Census data is unclear, and the Census Race/Ethnicity questions are not straightforward neither are the numbers. Latinx people are pushed to be identified and counted as “White” by the Census. Latinx people are being lost in the data and their needs are not being met.

According to the data in Table 1, Hays County consists of predominately persons of the White race and English is the dominant language. The number of people who have a Bachelor’s degree outnumber the amount of people who earned a High School or equivalent degree. Most people in Hays County are employees of private company

workers. Niederwald is nestled in a rural area west of Buda and many students who live there are identified as having a low SES (Socioeconomic Status). Communities closer to Interstate Highway 35 and west of that interstate are considered to have a higher SES Status.

Hays County has boomed with new housing developments and prime apartments that are bringing in more people from surrounding cities and other states. Over the past eight years, the regional economy is expanding as new construction paves the way for more business growth and housing opportunities for families. Apartment leasing, housing, and property taxes are more affordable in Hays County than in the Greater Austin area and San Marcos communities. The Austin area communities are less affordable.

The Hays Consolidated Independent School District (Hays CISD) serves the towns Kyle, Buda, and Niederwald. Interstate Highway 35 cuts right down the center of the school district. The demographics of Hays Consolidated Independent School District consist of the following:

Table 2. Hays CISD Demographics

Race	Percent
Hispanic	65.2%
White	28.0%
Language Backgrounds	
Spanish	42.8%
English	56.3%

As we see in Table 2, the Hays Consolidated Independent School District serves

mainly students of Hispanic origin. In this Table 2, I am using the terms that Hays CISD uses. Hays CISD uses the term White which can include people of Hispanic ethnicity. Whites are the second-largest group in the district. English is the dominant language spoken within the district. The Spanish language is the second most spoken language in the district. Table 2 is different from the previous table because Hays CISD serves greater numbers of people who consider themselves Hispanic.

The county data tells us that Hays County consists of predominantly persons who consider themselves to be of White ethnicity and that English is the dominant language in the county. On the other hand, district data tells us that the Hispanic population continues to grow in Hays CISD and has passed the number of people who consider themselves as White or any other race or ethnicity while the number of Spanish speakers is almost comparable to the number of English speakers in the district.

The U.S. Census (2020) generated Niederwald demographics which include: American Indian and Alaska Native 11, Asian 4, Black or African American 17, Hispanic or Latino 378, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander 1, White alone, not Hispanic or Latino 261, Some Other Race 133, Two or More Races 167, and White 335.

For this study, I gave the focal school the pseudonym, La Escuelita Elementary. The school is in Hays CISD. TEA (2020) found that the demographics at La Escuelita consist of 0.0% African American, 94.0% Hispanic, 5.6% White, 0.1% American Indian, 0.1% Asian, 0.0% Pacific Islander, and 0.1% Two or More Races. In addition, 89.3% of students are economically disadvantaged, 15.1% of students receive special education services, and 69.3% of students are English Learners.

In comparing all the demographic data collected, there is a large percentage of White

people in Texas and in Hays County. The Hispanic population has the second largest percentage in Texas and in Hays County.

On the other hand, in the town of Niederwald, the research context is different than other areas in Texas. The Hispanic population in Niederwald is represented the most, and the White population has the second largest percentage. Blacks or African American demographic percentages are generally lower than Hispanic percentages in Texas, Hays County, and in Niederwald. Niederwald is a town fifteen miles northeast of San Marcos in eastern Hays County and was founded by German pioneers after the Civil War. The German word, “Niederwald”, is a noun which means “brushwood”, a grassy area with trees and shrubs that was periodically trimmed down to stimulate growth to the area while providing firewood and timber.

According to the Texas Education Agency, before 2020, La Escuelita Elementary earned a B Overall State Accountability Rating. This rating is based on TEA’s Domain 2: School Progress. School Progress measures how students perform on The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) test this year versus last year or how a district/campus compares to similar districts on progress standards. La Escuelita Elementary earned a distinction in Comparative Growth. This distinction is granted to schools for performance relative to the 40 schools compared to La Escuelita Elementary. La Escuelita Elementary was in the top 25% of comparison campuses. The growth measure consists of Domain 2 of the accountability system. All students in fourth grade and fifth grade must show growth from the previous year into the current year. For example, fourth graders must show growth from the third grade State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) test and fifth graders must show growth

from the fourth grade STAAR test.

La Escuelita Elementary is a PK-5 campus and has an early-exit bilingual program that ends at the end of third grade. As soon as STAAR scores are received and the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) meets to make recommendations for students, a decision for exit is made. The exiting of the bilingual program depends on the LPAC meeting results. If students meet qualifications, and the LPAC recommends that a student exits the bilingual program, students are monitored in fourth grade and fifth grade. The LPAC can recommend reentry into the bilingual program if students are not doing well in school. If a student exits in fourth grade or fifth grade, they will be monitored two years after whenever they exit the bilingual program.

In Hays CISD, bilingual programs use the HMH (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) Reading Curriculum. The Reading curriculum is taught in Spanish and moves quite fast. There is a Spanish writing component embedded in the curriculum. The writing curriculum is taught and jumps from concept to concept from one day to the next quickly. The curriculum consists of 9 modules with the 9th module being a review of previous learned material. This early-exit curriculum model will shape what first graders are doing throughout the school year in their classrooms. The goal is to transition students to an English-only curriculum. Furthermore, the reality of this early transition to English-only instruction confirms the belief that the youngest bilingual students should experience assimilation at an early age. In the English-only learning process, inequity rears its domineering face along the bright and colorful school walls to the very core of linguistic discrimination.

Participants

The focal location for this study was at La Escuelita in Niederwald, Texas. I know many of the bilingual families and students at the focal research site. As a veteran teacher, I am well known in the community. I selected four family units at the elementary school where I was currently employed to participate in my study. The participants in my study are parents of emergent bilingual children who attend La Escuelita. In my study with an interview-based design, I selected four bilingual first grade students from my former bilingual kindergarten class who completed their kindergarten school year. I interviewed most of the parents of those same students. I intentionally chose 2 households with a first grade student who speaks Spanish most of the time at school and selected 2 different households with a first grade student who speaks English most of the time at school to find out the home language practices of all the families chosen for this study. The family descriptions are stated later in this section.

After selecting the families based on the language their child spoke the most at school, I provided each selected first grade student a “Consentimiento Informado” letter at school to take home in their backpack so that they could give a letter to their respective family. The Spanish version of the letter was printed on yellow paper and the English version of the letter was printed on green paper. I chose the yellow paper for the Spanish letter because yellow was my favorite thematic color that I used to use in my kindergarten bilingual classroom. I chose green paper for the English letter because some people associate green for the word “go”. For example, when some people drive in their vehicle, they keep driving under the green lights at a light intersection. Two days later, I followed up with each family to find out if they had received the “Consentimiento

Informado” letter. Initially, one family refused to participate in my study, and another family did not respond to me. So, I had to ask two additional families to participate. Both families agreed to participate. Three of the participating parents filled out the Spanish “Consentimiento Informado” letter and one mother filled out the English “Consentimiento Informado” letter.

All the participating parents preferred to be interviewed in Spanish. Parents were asked a first set of interview questions (See Appendix A and Appendix B). One month after the first set of interviews, I conducted the second set of interviews with the same parents to follow up and ask new questions based on my preliminary analysis of the first round of interviews. The second interview questions are also included (See Appendix C and Appendix D). Parents responded in either Spanish or a mixture of Spanish, English, and Spanglish.

A month after the first set of interviews, I conducted the second set of interviews with the parents. I had to ask, David, one of the fathers, the interview 1 questions at the second interview because he was unable to attend the first interview. He wanted to participate in this study. I then scheduled all four interviews within the following week and conducted the initial parent interviews. Open ended questions were utilized in both interviews. The first interview gave me insight on the current home language practices of the families. The second interview was designed to follow up with themes or areas that need to be further explored and so that I could capture any possible changes in parents’ attitudes on home language and practices.

In the Lopez family, Blanca and David are the parents. One of their daughters was my former bilingual kindergarten student who began her kindergarten school year on Zoom

during the pandemic. Blanca quickly returned the English “Consentimiento Informado” letter. Blanca is an immigrant from Mexico. She did not attend school in Mexico, and she arrived in the United States when she was 3 years old. She is a stay-at-home mother who speaks a combination of Spanish and English. Her husband, David was born in Austin and attended schools in the Austin Independent School District (AISD). He works in construction and foundation repair. David told me that he works with American and Mexican people, so he speaks Spanish and English at work. Most of my conversations with Blanca within the last two years have been in English. All my conversations with David in the last two years have been in Spanish.

In the Sánchez family, Maribel is the single mother. Her son was my former bilingual kindergarten student who began her kindergarten school year on Zoom during the pandemic. Maribel is an immigrant from Dolores, Hidalgo, Mexico, and she arrived in the United States when she was 20 years old. Recently, she has gone through a divorce and takes care of her daughter and son at home. I remember the time that I picked up a gelatin dessert that Maribel had made for me for Easter a year ago. Her son was excited to see me arrive at their house. When I stepped up to the front door, Maribel opened the door with a big smile and told her son that his teacher had arrived to pick up the dessert. Her son jumped on the sofa and stood up as he hid behind a giant pillow smiling at me. Her son was shy as his mother prompted him to say hello to me. He muttered the words, “Hola maestro”. Maribel works as a stay-at-home mom 3 days out of the week. All my conversations with Maribel over the last two years have been in Spanish.

In the Ramírez family, Eva and Adrian are the parents. A daughter of theirs was my former bilingual kindergarten student who began her kindergarten school year on Zoom

during the pandemic. Eva is an immigrant from San Luis Potosi, Mexico and she arrived in the United States when she was 18 years old. Eva attended school in Mexico up to the fifth grade. She works in the home. Adrian is an immigrant from San Luis Potosi, Mexico and he arrived in the United States when he was barely 16 years old. Adrian attended school in Mexico until he reached middle school. He works in construction 5 days a week. Although a lot of Spanglish is spoken at work, he uses Spanish most of the time. All my conversations with Eva and Adrian within the last two years have been in Spanish.

In the Gutierrez family, Isabel is the mother. Isabel is an immigrant from San Luis Potosi, Mexico and she arrived in the United States when she was 9 years old. Isabel works from home as a babysitter and takes care of children on some days. She always uses Spanish when she works. It was difficult for her husband to be interviewed since he worked late hours throughout the week. One of their daughters was my former bilingual kindergarten student who began her kindergarten school year on Zoom during the pandemic. All my conversations with Isabel in the last two years have been in Spanish.

Data Collection

To collect authentic and personalized data from the participants, I used interviews as the primary source of data.

Interviews: All participants were interviewed at two different stages of the study. The first round of interviews was conducted to collect important data on the families' backgrounds and home language usage. The researcher asked open-ended questions to find specific information from the participants. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. Choices were made for the second round of questions based on the rich

findings of the first round of interviews. The second round of interviews were recorded and transcribed to discover more information on home language usage and parents' views on Spanish and English. During each interview, I wrote down notes that described the dialogue between the participants and the researcher.

Different notes were also written by the researcher to describe family living situations during the interview recordings. For example, when I first interviewed Blanca, I could hear her daughters playing in the background. When I interviewed Eva y Adan in their first interview, I could hear a child crying in the background and a neighbor interrupted him in the middle of the interview because he had to talk to Adan about a home maintenance job. Adan returned to the interview as soon as he could. He was very apologetic for the disruption.

Analysis

First, I collected the data from the first round of interviews by transcribing the interviews. Next, I typed the transcriptions. Then, I created a table with the questions from the first round of interviews and I included the parents' responses. A month later, I gathered data from the second round of interviews by transcribing those interviews. After that, I typed the transcriptions. Later, I created another table with the questions from the second round of interviews that included the parents' responses. After collecting data from all interviews, I created a third table with my research questions and included questions from the first round of interviews and questions from the second round of interviews with corresponding answers that would answer my research questions.

I analyzed the data collected from the first round of interviews by thinking about the transcriptions. I looked for any patterns across the first table I created. Based on the data I

collected from the first round of interviews, I wrote the new questions for the second round of interviews. The information I gained from the first round of interviews informed me about the families' home language practices, and I also learned how families use their home language at home. I learned about what parents think regarding the usage of Spanish in school. The substantial data informed me of what I needed to ask in the second round of interviews.

I then conducted the second round of interviews, transcribed them, and then I created a table for the second interviews. I also analyzed the data collection from the second round of interviews by thinking about the transcriptions. I looked for patterns across the second table I created. Finally, a third table was created.

Table 3. Section Example of Answers to the Research Questions

Research Question	Interview 1, Questions	Interview 2, Questions
How do the language beliefs of parents of emergent bilingual children shape their language usage with their children at home?	<p>19. Como padre, ¿qué opina sobre el uso del español en la escuela? (Por ejemplo, ¿qué piensa sobre la enseñanza del español y el inglés en la escuela?) Desde que su hijo comenzó a estudiar en La Escuelita, ¿ha cambiado su forma de pensar sobre el español en la educación de su hijo?</p> <p>In the Lopez family, the mother and father think that it is good that their children maintain Spanish. The mother wants her child to write and read Spanish and know how to pronounce Spanish before she is introduced to the English. The father thinks that it is more difficult for children to learn Spanish than English. To him, most children know English and they learn it quickly. His youngest daughter is very young, and she is already speaking a lot of English.</p>	<p>3. La investigación muestra que muchas familias mexicanas/hispanas en Texas quieren que sus hijas/hijos estudian únicamente en español. ¿Por qué eligió el programa de educación bilingüe para su hija/hijo? Cuando matriculó a su hija/hijo en el programa de educación bilingüe en La Escuelita, ¿Cuáles fueron sus razones más importantes?</p> <p>In the Lopez family, the father wants his daughter to learn Spanish fluently and to learn Spanish and English. He wants her to be able to read and write in both languages so she will not have difficulty in the future.</p> <p>In the Sánchez family, the mother wants her son to develop Spanish and wants him to read and write Spanish well.</p>

The third table contained the research questions and any questions and parents' responses from the first round of interviews and the second round of interviews that would answer the research questions.

I conducted interviews over Zoom because in-person interviews were not allowed due to a COVID (Coronavirus Disease 2019) restriction set forth by the IRB (Institutional Review Board). Each participating family allowed me to audio record the interviews. I took notes during the interviews. I transcribed the 4 Zoom audio recordings from the first round of interviews. I then created a table with all the Interview 1 questions and included the responses from the parents. After completing the second round of interviews, I transcribed the remaining 4 Zoom audio recordings. After transcribing those interviews, I created a table with the Interview 2 questions and added the answers. I looked across all the interview answers to locate any reoccurring words. With the completion of the interviews, I gained more insight on parents' views of language bias, language loss, and home language maintenance.

I looked across all the interview answers to find any patterns related to language maintenance and families' ideas about the importance of Spanish and English. Themes that arose during the first round of interviews were speaking Spanish with extended family, speaking English with older siblings, Spanish maintenance, and bilingual benefits for children. Themes that arose from the second interviews consist of children's Spanish usage growth, children's bilingualism, and societal bilingual communication.

Researcher Positionality

My background and identity as a former bilingual student and past position as a bilingual teacher matter for my study because I realize how important it is to be bilingual. To me, helping people who do not understand Spanish or English is essential to daily living. Furthermore, I believe that being bilingual or multilingual gives people advantages in communicating with others and opens the door to many opportunities in

the workforce. Being a bilingual teacher has given me the chance to share my background and identity as a bilingual with my students. My parents have valued the use of Spanish and English at home. My father thinks that it is good to know Spanish and English because a person can help others. My mother thinks that there are many benefits to being bilingual.

Despite my parents' bilingualism, I experienced home language loss growing up as a child in a bilingual family as I tried to fit in with English-speaking peers at school. Some Spanish-speaking peers moved to another school on the other side of the city or in another state. In my case, some factors that contributed to this type of mobility around me was caused by a change in residence or a parent's new employment. Growing up, I had a similar experience like that of Juan Guerra as noted by de Oliveira (2010). By the time my last year of high school had started, almost every single friend I made in school was Anglo. These early experiences drove my desire to work with bilingual children and led to my interest in pursuing this study. Growing up as a teenager and as an adult, I noticed that some Hispanic people speak mostly English and have either never learned Spanish or forgot a lot of Spanish. I wondered why this was the case in so many Hispanic families.

My experiences as a bilingual teacher in local schools have shaped my study because I have taken note on how some bilingual students and some parents of bilingual students prefer speaking English. When I was a bilingual kindergarten teacher, some of my students spoke mostly English at school. As much as I tried to have some of my students speak to me in Spanish, they were reluctant to speak Spanish and only wanted to speak English. Living in this reality in the classroom pulled me inward to want to investigate on the matter of why some 5-year-old and 6-year-old children prefer to speak English over

Spanish. I decided to pursue the study of Spanish language loss, specifically the role of how parents' attitudes and home language practices impact their children's use of the home language.

III. RESULTS

In this chapter, I share the findings of the study. My research questions consist of the following:

1. How do the language beliefs of parents of emergent bilingual children shape their language usage with their children at home?
2. In which domains or situations do parents of emergent bilingual students decide to use their home language(s) with their children?
3. In which domains or situations do parents of emergent bilingual students decide to use Spanish with their children?
4. In which domains or situations do parents of emergent bilingual students decide to use English with their children?
5. What effects do parents believe their home language practices and preferences will have on their children's maintenance of Spanish?

For purposes of organization, I will present the results of each research question below. To keep the authenticity of data, in this chapter, I wrote the exact Spanish words that parents said in the interviews.

The first research question is: How do the language beliefs of parents of emergent bilingual children shape their language usage with their children at home? During the first round of interviews, in the Lopez family, I found that Blanca and David both think that it is good that their children maintain Spanish. Blanca said, "Um hum, pienso que está bien. A, me gusta que mantienen su español como los que ya saben pero les introducen el inglés pero sin dejar el español porque es muy importante no dejar el español. Aprender uno nuevo pero no dejar el español." Blanca wants her daughter to be

able to read, write, and pronounce Spanish before being introduced to English. David wants his daughters to speak more Spanish at home to show respect to other family members who mostly speak Spanish. David said, “Tengo una niña chiquita. Ya ella todavía no va a la escuela y habla mucho inglés y pues me falla un poquito el español, ja, sí. Um, sí. A veces tenemos que decirle que hable español porque no más quiere andar hablando inglés y pues a veces le decimos que habla español por respeto a veces a los que están aquí en la casa que nadie sabe como mis papás o sus abuelos que no sabe inglés, pues les digo, “Habla español por respeto a los que están alrededor de ti.” The examples from this family clearly show that both parents think that it is important for their children to know and use Spanish so that their children are successful in school and can communicate with family members respectfully.

During the second round of interviews, I found more about what David and Blanca thought about learning Spanish and English. David said, “Para que aprendiera el español más fluyente. Pues, que aprendiera los dos lenguajes también. Que puede hacer las dos cosas, leer y escribir en los dos idiomas para que no se le dificulte en el futuro.” Blanca said, “Queríamos que aprendiera bien el español. A escribirlo y leerlo. Porque es muy facil hablarlo pero queríamos que aprendiera escribirlo y leerlo, también.” Blanca and David want their daughter to learn Spanish and English so that she can read and write in both languages and not have difficulty in the future.

During the first interview, in the Sánchez family, Maribel thinks that it is good for her son to learn Spanish so that she can communicate with him. She thinks that English is another language that can help her son in the future. Maribel said, “Pues, español es bueno porque nosotros podemos hablar y comunicar bien con él. Y, el inglés porque es

otro idioma que le puede ayudar en el futuro para saber los dos idiomas. Si supiera otro idioma entonces pienso yo que sería mejor porque sería más idiomas que él supiera.”

This example suggests that she views Spanish as the main language to use with her son.

Although learning other languages is beneficial, she expressed that using Spanish at home will benefit her children the most when it comes to communicating with family members, English is another language that can help her son in the future, and if he knows another language, it would be better.

During the second round of interviews, I learned that Maribel wants her son to develop Spanish and read and write Spanish. Maribel said, “Que el aprendiera el inglés. Ya lo sabía porque lo aprendio por medio del teléfono, pero lo que yo quería que el aprendiera bien a leer y escribir en, pues aquí era el español pero, pues yo creía que allá fuera en inglés.” Maribel’s comment tells us that she thought that her son attended school to learn English and she also thought that he would just learn Spanish at home. Maribel found out about the bilingual program at La Escuelita when her son took the oral language proficiency test in English and Spanish. The oral language proficiency tests must be approved by TEA and are provided for the grade level and program services design of the school. She wanted her son to learn how to read and write Spanish well.

La familia Ramírez thinks that it is good for their children to learn Spanish in school. Adrian said, “Pues, yo pienso que es algo muy muy bueno para ellos. ¿Verdad? Para nuestras hijas. Porque como todos decimos casi todos los inmigrantes dicen que una persona que habla dos idiomas vale por dos. ¿Verdad?” I found out that Eva thinks that her children can get a better job in the future and help other people if they are bilingual. Eva said, “Es algo bonito a saber dos lenguajes como mi esposo dijo. Otros idiomas

también. ¿Verdad? Pues, ellas pueden tener, verdad, un trabajo mejor, verdad y ellas ayudan, verdad, otras personas.” From these examples, I learned that both parents think that being bilingual is something good for their children that will bring their daughters better job opportunities and will enable them to help others.

After the second round of interviews, I learned that Eva thinks that it is better if her daughters learn Spanish in school. Adrian wants his daughters to learn English while they maintain their Spanish home language. Eva said, “Si van a México, pues así ya saben el español. Porque si no más quieren hablar inglés que no les gusta el español, allí es donde van a batallar.” Adrian said, “Que sí. Que aprendiera el idioma de aquí. Y que no perdiera su primer idioma y que los mantuviera los dos. Bien actualizados.” During the interview, Adrian expressed how he wants his children to use Spanish and English well. The parents’ comments tell us that if children already know Spanish, they will be prepared to travel to a country like Mexico. Furthermore, knowing Spanish and English very well will only benefit children in their future so that they are successful citizens.

Isabel states that it is good for her daughter to be bilingual so that her daughter can be bilingual and triumph in the United States. Isabel said, “Pues, yo pienso que es bueno porque es otro idioma para ella, para su futuro para que sea bilingüe y puede agarrar mucho más buenas oportunidades para crecer en todo con lo que está pasando en el mundo.” From Isabel’s words, I learned that she thinks that Spanish is another language that her daughter can learn so that her daughter can be successful in the future.

After the second round of interviews, I learned that Isabel wants her daughters to learn both languages, have better opportunities, and wants the daughters to have more family communication. Isabel said, “Que sea bilingüe. Que aprendiera el español más

para que entienda más con la familia.” Isabel’s comments convey the message that it is important for her daughter to be bilingual and shows that she would like for her daughter to communicate with the family more in Spanish. Isabel’s comments convey the message that family ties across borders are essential for families to stay together from generation to generation.

The second research question is: In which domains or situations do parents of emergent bilingual students decide to use their home language(s) with their children? The third research question is: In which domains or situations do parents of emergent bilingual children decide to use Spanish with their children? For research question 2 and research question 3, I found that after the first interview, most of the parents of the emergent bilingual students made a conscious decision to use Spanish at home. Most of the children speak Spanish with the mother, father, and grandparents.

In the Lopez family, Blanca and David told me that they travel with their children to Mexico and the children use Spanish with their parents, grandparents, grandparent’s brothers, aunts, and uncles. Blanca said, “En la escuela y con la familia. Con su papá, mi esposo, hablamos más español.” David said, “Cuando vamos a México, ja ja. En México, allá, pues sí, es puro español allá. A, cuando vamos a visitar a la suegra o cuando está con sus abuelos. Pero aquí en la casa casi habla inglés. Habla español con sus abuelos y con los hermanos de sus abuelos, tíos.” From these comments, I learned that the daughters and the mother speak to the father and extended family members mostly in Spanish. Furthermore, I also learned that their daughter speaks Spanish to family members such as her grandfather and great-grandfather in Mexico over the phone and when their daughter attends church services with her grandmother. These findings tell us that parents of

emergent bilingual children want their children to communicate with extended family across borders and form strong relationships with familia.

In speaking to these parents, I found a contradiction. Blanca told me that she thinks that English is spoken the most at home and David told me that Spanish is spoken the most in the house. This contradiction made me look at the findings for this family more closely as I tried to learn more about the children's home language use.

A daily or regular family activity done in Spanish includes having a carne asada cookout. The family also listens to Spanish music and their daughter is enrolled in a bilingual program at school. David said, "Cuando va a la iglesia con su abuela, todos hablan español y ella habla español o cuando hacemos una carne asada aquí con la familia todos hablando puro español." These findings tell us that when his daughter is with her grandmother or when she is having a social time with extended family, she uses Spanish in that intimate, family domain.

In the Sánchez family, Maribel's son speaks Spanish with his mother, his uncles, and grandmother. Maribel's son is enrolled in a bilingual program at La Escuelita. In the Fall of 2021, he took two Spanish books home from school to read. Maribel told me, "Sí, mandamos textos. Vamos a la iglesia los domingos. Él solamente mira la televisión por poco del tiempo." Maribel's comment tells us that daily or regular family activities done in Spanish include sending texts to family members and attending church services. After the second interview, Maribel told me that her son does not watch television. She went on to tell me that her son plays video games about cars and astronauts. I could sense that her son plays English video games.

In the Ramírez family, Eva and Adrian's daughter speaks more Spanish at school,

restaurants, sometimes at stores, and with the older sisters. Daily or regular family activities done in Spanish include attending church services and writing shopping lists. The daughter is enrolled in a bilingual program at school. Adrian told me, “Pero, la mayoría de actividades son todas en español.” From these results, I learned that Eva and Adrian place a high importance for Spanish as they advocate for Spanish in their household and their children do a variety of activities in Spanish that enhance the children’s Spanish literacy.

In the Gutierrez family, Isabel thinks that her daughter almost never speaks in Spanish. Her daughter uses Spanish with her dad and grandparents when she gets to visit her grandparents and when is she is playing with her father. Daily or regular family activities done in Spanish include playing the “Lotería” game and grocery shopping. The children watch Spanish cartoons, listen to Spanish music, sing Spanish songs, read Spanish books, and are in a bilingual program at school. Isabel said, “Y también, cuando vamos al mandado, compramos meriendas o comida. Ella me dice, “Necesito pan y agua y cosas así. Y, ella me dice en español.” Isabel’s comment tells us that her daughter asks for food and water at the store, she asks her in Spanish. Clearly, when her child needs her basic needs met, she speaks in Spanish.

The fourth research question is: In which domains or situations do parents of emergent bilingual children decide to use English with their children? For research question 4, after the first round of interviews, I found that most of the children speak English at home with an older sibling or older siblings.

Blanca and David’s daughter uses English at home with her sister and her mother. She also uses Spanish when she is with cousins, uncles, and aunts. Daily or regular

activities the family does in English includes texting, reading books, reading newspapers, reading magazines, reading the Bible or other religious text, surfing the internet, watching movies or television, writing shopping lists, keeping a calendar, keeping health information, and keeping up with banking/accounting. During this interview, I could sense that most of the books her children read are in English and come from school. David said, “Cuando miran la tele, ja, ja. Todo lo miran en el teléfono, en la tele, en inglés.” David’s comment tells us that his children watch entertaining media in English and these results tell us that his children seek out these types of activities in English.

Maribel’s son uses English when he arrives home from school and goes outside to play with friends. He also uses English with his uncles but visits his uncles once a year in Mexico. Maribel said, “No hacemos actividades en inglés.” Her comment tells us that her and her son do no activities in English and that she thinks that Spanish activities are the most important so that her son can continue to learn Spanish.

Eva and Adrian’s daughter uses English at restaurants and sometimes at stores and speaks English with her older sisters. Daily or regular activities that that family does in English consist of reading English books, homework, internet games, and watching television. Adrian said, “A veces ellas tienen esos juegos los niños tienen estos días en el internet. Eso es lo que ven en la televisión es en inglés por la mayoría.” The children of Eva and Adrian and daughters of Blanca and David watch entertaining shows on television. Adrian’s daughters watch entertaining internet media content in English.

Isabel’s daughter speaks English with her older sister at home. Daily or regular activities that the family does in English consist of reading English books. Isabel said, “En inglés, a, por ejemplo, cuando ella trae libros de la escuela que quiere que lo leamos

con ella. Hay veces que trae en inglés y se lo lee con ella o libros que hay aquí en la casa igual.” Isabel’s comments tell us that her daughter brings home books in English from school and has books at home that are in English so that her daughter can continue to learn and use English at home. Isabel’s daughter enjoys reading books about unicorns and the book, *Telma la Unicornio* by Aaron Blabey.

The fifth research question is: What effects do parents believe their home language practices and preferences will have on their children’s maintenance of Spanish? For research question 5, after the second round of interviews, I found that in the Lopez family, Blanca states that her daughter has a lot of Spanish books in the home and her children listen to Spanish music. Blanca’s daughter enjoys reading books about princesses and Disney princesses. Most of the books the Lopez family have are princess books and were given to them and are written in Spanish and English. If the book is in English, Blanca translates the story to Spanish. Her daughter also enjoys reading Dr. Seuss books and nighttime stories.

Both parents speak to their children in Spanish and tell them to speak more Spanish. I probed Blanca with further questioning on her daughter’s literacy home practices. She stated that her children’s books are all in Spanish, her children read and write in Spanish, and that almost everything they do at home is in Spanish. Blanca said, “Tratamos de hablar en español y decirles que hablen más en español. Sí, todos los libros que lee es en español.” Blanca’s comments tell us that she has made some changes in the way Spanish is used with her children. Her and her husband have told their daughters to speak more Spanish and only have Spanish books in their house.

In the Sánchez family, Maribel states that she only communicates to her son in

Spanish since it is easier for her son to speak to her in Spanish. Maribel said, “Con la mayoría sí le hace fácil hablar en español. Es poca la familia que le habla en inglés a él.” These findings tell us that her son uses Spanish the most at home. Maribel did not mention any Spanish reading activities that are completed by the family.

In the Ramírez family, Eva and Adrian mentioned that they watch Spanish television programs with their children. Sometimes, her daughter reads to her in Spanish. Her daughter enjoys reading books about princesses and a few books about animals. The family attends Spanish church services. The family uses Spanish when they make shopping lists, go shopping, go to the doctor’s office, and make WhatsApp phone calls. Adrian said, “Todo lo que hacemos yo pienso que sí le a beneficiado siempre porque ella este, nosotros pensamos, verdad, que se comunica bien en español y pues, sí es este, pues sí a resultado. Sí.” These findings tell us that Adrian and Eva both think that the activities that they do in Spanish with their daughter benefit her because she communicates well in Spanish. According to the parents, the various Spanish literacy practices that they engage in with their children have shown positive results in the way the children continuously use Spanish in consistent home language practices.

In the Gutierrez family, Isabel states that she speaks to her daughter in Spanish and tells her daughter to try to speak in Spanish. The family plays the Lotería game and lets the daughter read the Lotería bingo cards so that she can practice her literacy. The child also reads Spanish books. These strategies have helped her daughter to maintain Spanish in the home. Isabel said, “Umm, hablamos con ella y le decimos que nos hable, que trate de hablarnos más en español. Si hay una palabra que ella no entiende, nosotros le ayudamos a ella para que aprenda la palabra.” Isabel’s comments tell us that her and her

husband try to tell her daughter to speak more Spanish and if there is a word that her daughter does not understand, the parents will help her to learn the word. Clearly, there is Spanish support at home so that their daughter can become more bilingual. Upon the completion of the first round of interviews, I found insightful information on parental views of being or not being bilingual and their child's home language usage at home.

In the Lopez family, Blanca and David consider themselves to be bilingual. Blanca thinks that English is spoken the most often in their home and David thinks that Spanish is spoken the most in their home. Blanca and David do not necessarily agree on what language is used the most at home. When David speaks to his daughters in Spanish, they respond to him in English. The children speak mostly English at home and speak Spanish with grandmothers. In the first interview, I asked Blanca, “¿Qué idioma habla más su hijo en casa?” Blanca said, “inglés”. I then asked Blanca the next question, ¿Por qué cree que su hijo prefiera hablar ese idioma?” Blanca responded, “Se le hace más facil explicar las cosas.”

Although their daughter speaks mostly English at home, both parents want her to be able to read and write in Spanish. Blanca and David want her to be bilingual and be successful in the future.

In Sánchez family, Maribel does not consider herself to be bilingual and she states that Spanish is the language that is spoken most of the time in her home. Her son speaks mostly Spanish at home with her most of the time. When her son does arrive from school, he plays outside with neighborhood friends and uses English. Maribel lets her son speak English sometimes. When he begins to have trouble speaking English correctly, she makes sure to stop him and tells him to speak Spanish.

In the first interview, I asked Maribel the question, “¿Qué idioma habla más su hijo en casa?” Maribel said, “español”. I then asked Maribel the next question, “¿Por qué cree que su hijo prefiera hablar ese idioma?” Maribel answered, “Porque conmigo, es la manera en que yo lo entiendo.” Maribel states that her son speaks Spanish with his uncles and his grandmother although he seldom speaks English to his cousins since he visits them in Mexico only once a year.

Maribel ensures that her son use Spanish at home as much as possible so that he can communicate effectively with her. She is certain that her son will be successful if her son learns the Spanish language and the English language.

In the Ramírez family, Eva and Adrian do not consider themselves as bilingual persons since both speak a little bit of English. In both of my interviews with Eva and Adrian, I found that they do several activities so that they can use Spanish with their children such as going to restaurants, making shopping lists, shopping at stores, talking to her at dinner time, and attending church. Eva and Adrian use Spanish mostly in their household because that is the language they normally utilize.

In the first interview, Eva expressed concern for her oldest child because her oldest daughter is being taught only in English at the high school level. She wants all her children to be bilingual and thinks that if her children can learn even more languages, that would be better. She states that if her children know Spanish and English and more languages, they can help other people and get better jobs in the future. Adrian thinks that being bilingual is good for his children and thinks that being bilingual gives his children the opportunity to help others in need. To him, being bilingual is a gift.

In the Gutierrez family, Isabel considers herself to be bilingual. She speaks Spanish to

her children. She states that the daughter who used to be in my class speaks mostly English at home because she either does not like Spanish or does not speak Spanish, but her daughter does understand Spanish. Furthermore, the mother states that she is not sure why her daughter speaks English most of the time. On many occasions, her daughter refuses to speak Spanish and has preferred to read English books. Isabel thinks that her daughter is more comfortable speaking English since her daughter speaks English with her older sister.

Isabel thinks that Spanish is a good language for her children to learn because Spanish is another language that her daughter can know so that she can have more opportunities in her future. Isabel placed her daughter in a bilingual program at school so that she could speak Spanish. In the second interview, Isabel did say, “So, es importante que hable más el inglés y pues los dos idiomas, pero más más yo me ‘magino que el inglés porque usamos aquí en los Estados Unidos y estamos donde toda la genta se comunica en ese lenguaje.” Isabel thinks that it is more important for her daughter to speak English because her daughter lives in the United States. Isabel wants her daughter to be bilingual, have better opportunities, and wants her daughter to understand her Spanish speaking family members more.

After the first round of interviews, I learned that the mothers are from Mexico, most of them work from home, and speak mostly Spanish. Some of the parents are from San Luis, Potosi, Mexico, and most of the parents arrived in the United States when they were a child. In Mexico, Spanish was the language that teachers used the most in school. Most of the parents in this study do not consider themselves to be bilingual because they do not feel fluent in English. According to most of the parents, Spanish is spoken the most in the

home and most parents speak to their children in Spanish. One mother speaks to her child in English the most.

Two of the children speak in Spanish the most and the two other children speak mostly English at home because they either feel more comfortable using English or perhaps dislike using Spanish. Furthermore, most of the children speak Spanish at home with their mother, father, and grandparents. Most of the children speak English with their older sibling or siblings.

I found that children interacted the following activities in Spanish: going to church, making a shopping list, and going for groceries. Listening to Spanish music and children's attendance in bilingual classes was most common thing that parents' do to keep Spanish as a family language and all the parents think it is important that their child be bilingual.

I also found that the children did the following activities in English: play with neighborhood friends, play, watching television, and singing. Most families provide books, read, or welcome books in English for their children. I also learned that some of the families use Facebook in Spanish and use Gmail in English. Technology was used mostly in English.

After my data collection from the second round of interviews, I learned that my study impacted the families in a positive way. According to the parents, they claimed that their children really were using more Spanish. I also noticed the children using more Spanish with me at school. Some of the parents want the bilingual program at La Escuelita to extend further than the third grade. After the second interview, when la familia Ramírez asked me for a list of Spanish literacy activities, they surprised me and made me think

more about my impact on the families. After my conversation with them, I emailed all the families the list of Spanish literacy activities so that the parents can further promote Spanish at home.

All the parents in this study think that their child is learning well in school and that it is good that Spanish is taught in schools. I also learned that some of the parents do not want their children to struggle when they get older, therefore they want them to learn the English language. In addition, all the parents think it is important to be bilingual. Some of the parents think that by being bilingual, their children can help other people and brings more opportunities their children in the future in the United States. Some mothers think that it is important that their children know Spanish so that they can help other people. Some fathers think that it is important that their children know Spanish so that their children can communicate with extended family in Mexico.

Some families speak Spanish at home to promote Spanish in the home. Two female students read Spanish books at home. To conclude, all the parents would like to have been enrolled in a bilingual program when they were a child so they could have learned Spanish and English.

After getting the research questions answered, I learned that all families in this study want their children to be bilingual and do certain activities that help promote and maintain Spanish. After the second round of interviews, I found that the parents did effective home language practices so that their children can continue to develop and learn Spanish in the home and with the family outside of the home. I also found evidence that showed that some of the parents were aware that their children were using Spanish more at home. For example, Blanca and Isabel noticed a change in the way their children use

Spanish more at home. Blanca said, “A pues, sí tratado de hablar, usar más el español. Como dijimos cambiar los idiomas español y así y sí funcionado poquito.” To add, Isabel said, “A pues, sí, un poquito ella como se está soltando un poquito más para hablar el español”. As a result, according to the parents, some of the children were speaking more Spanish after the parents talked to me about their family’s language usage after the first round of interviews.

All the parents want their children to maintain the Spanish language while being bilingual. Most of the parents stated that their children communicate with them and with extended family members in Spanish. For example, Blanca said, “Con su papá, mi esposo, nosotros hablamos más español”. David said, “Cuando vamos a México, ja ja. En México allá pues, sí, es puro español allá. A, cuando visitamos a la suegra o cuando está con sus abuelos. Pero aquí en la casa casi habla inglés. Habla español con sus abuelos y con los hermanos de sus abuelos, tíos.” Maribel said, “Él habla más español con sus tíos y con su abuela”. Isabel said, “No, con sus abuelos. Con sus abuelos. Yo la llevo a ellos”. This evidence shows that the children speak to older extended family members in Spanish so that there is ongoing Spanish communication.

In this interview study, I learned that most of the families speak Spanish to their children at home and I found out an activity pattern among most of the families. Three of the families attend church services in Spanish. Blanca said, “At church they take them out to a little classroom and read them a little story from the Bible, draw, and build stuff. She sings.” Maribel said, “En la misa a las doce escuchamos la misa, cantamos, y sí, va ir a clases de misa.” Eva said, “En la misa, leemos la lectura y lo que dice el padre. Pues, el evangelio. Cantamos cantos. Los salmos, son salmos. Enseñanzas de la Biblia para los

niños.” Daily or regular activities that families did in Spanish at home were cook carne asada, sending texts, watching television, reading books, writing shopping lists, playing the Lotería game, and grocery shopping.

All the parents in this study plan to continue home language practices to help their children maintain Spanish in and out of the home. Maribel communicates with her son in Spanish only since it is easier for him to speak to her in Spanish. She plans to continue this practice since she claims that this is effective for him as he learns Spanish and English.

In the final chapter, I will discuss the findings and connect them to my theoretical framework of the study. My theories are grounded in the idea that parents of emergent bilingual children need awareness on the importance of Spanish home language practices and the maintenance and promotion of Spanish at home with their children so that their children will be bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural.

I think that what I have observed as a classroom bilingual teacher at La Escuelita in Central Texas fits with my findings. When bilingual students go to the school library, they are encouraged to check out any book they want, and often, these students check out English books which typically have the most colorful and vibrant book covers. Many parents who have children who attend La Escuelita do not visit public libraries.

Emergent bilingual children need opportunities or spaces where they can have meaningful conversations and literacy experiences that develop their home language for future success. Ortiz et al. (2014) found that when emergent bilingual children participate in facilitated discussions with linguistic flexibility, they can utilize those discussions with a Spanish text with high cultural relevance. As a result, these children can participate in

meaningful literature discussions and continue to learn their home language. In completing my study, I can only hope that parents gained more awareness on the importance of using more activities in Spanish at home to further advance their child's bilingual education. Velásquez (2014) found that when there is understanding of an immigrant household as a site for language development and understanding that mothers are agents for their family's well-being and their need to possess funds of knowledge, there are rich consequences of children's likelihood for educational success.

As we know from my study, when emergent bilingual children have Spanish conversations with their parents, used their linguistic resources, and used Spanish texts at home and at church, their parents felt that these children further developed and maintained their home language.

In the final chapter, I will discuss limitations of the study, implications for further research, implications for practice in schools and classrooms, and implications for families.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I will discuss the meaning of the findings from my study and connect them to my theoretical framework. I will include limitations, implications, implications for practice, implications for families, and a conclusion.

In my literature review, there are three big ideas. The first big idea is the belief that parental attitudes and decisions on language preferences influence and determine the language preference of their children. Yakel and Beale-Rivaya (2017) told us that even though educators can and do encourage language maintenance in academic settings, parents must also do their part to encourage their children to maintain their home language at home. In a household, parents can be the language models that direct and guide their children to participate in meaningful Spanish activities that promote literacy.

The second big idea is the concept that, despite the efforts made by parents and the educational environment, children often lean toward becoming monolingual in the dominant social language. Shen and Jiang (2021) found that usually, by the age of five which is the typical age of kindergarteners, children begin to show a major shift from their home language to English which is the dominant language in the United States. I have seen some of my former bilingual students make an incredible shift to English in the public education school system. Fillmore (2000) found that English quickly displaces and replaces the primary language in young first generation immigrants. A continuous loss of language hinders speakers of languages other than English. Ekiaka-Oblazamengo et al. (2016) claims that “There is a need of explaining how linguistic genocide happens (even at school), which may draw the students’ improvement back or stagnant – and purpose ways of overcoming linguistic and cultural genocide to Hispanic parents” (p. 80). Parents

can be the prime advocates for their child's home language learning.

The third big idea is the notion that limited years of bilingual programming for children hinder the full potential of children's bilingual educational trajectory. Grosjean (2010) told us that early exit transitional language programs exist so that students are taught in their home language to "carry" them over to the second, or dominant language, which is English. Early exit bilingual programming shows the fact that some bilingual students are not getting the adequate 5-7 years of schooling that these students need in their first language to develop CALP in their first language, according to Pimentel (2011). Therefore, emergent bilingual children need 5-7 years of schooling in their first language to maximize their bilingual education experiences.

My findings on how parental attitudes and decisions on language preferences influence and determine the language preference of their children support the findings that I learned from Yakel and Beale-Rivaya (2017). Yakel and Beale-Rivaya (2017) claim that academic encouragement of language maintenance must be present within a household. In addition, my study also supports the finding from Lewis and Simons (2009). Lewis and Simons (2009) found that there is little possibility that children will learn their home language if their parents do not pass on the language to them. In my study, I learned that the parents of the children want their children to be bilingual and by the end of my study, most of the parents encouraged and completed tasks at home to maintain Spanish. In my study, the parents' beliefs about the importance of Spanish match up with the previous studies by Yosso (2005) and Smith and Murillo (2015). The notion of Yosso's "aspirational capital" which is the "hopes and dreams" students have, is well evident and supported by the interview examples I received by the parents. Smith

and Murillo (2015) found that in their study, bilingualism (particularly Spanish/English), is appreciated and the desire for schools to promote biliteracy are widespread in Mexico. The parents in my study have a high regard for bilingualism for their children.

Despite the efforts made by parents and the educational environment, children may lean toward being monolingual in the dominant social language are supported by the research I learned. Shen and Jiang (2021) did find that usually, by the age of five, the children of immigrants begin to show a remarkable tendency to shift to English. Verdon et al. (2014) found that despite the efforts from the home and/or educational environment to facilitate multilingualism, children may still choose to be monolingual because of social practice. My findings were similar, because during a nine month period, two of the daughters did show a remarkable shift from the home language to English no matter their educational experience or home environment when they were in kindergarten. My finding is also different because there is a contradiction on home language usage in one family. Blanca said that English is spoken the most and David stated that Spanish is used mostly at home. A contradiction like this could be looked upon for further research regarding language shift to English.

My findings on the notion that limited years of bilingual programming for children hinder the full potential of children's bilingual educational trajectory is consistent with the literature I learned. Ekiaka-Oblazamengo et al. (2016) states that in the United States, there is a hegemonic trend of creating a uniform culture and language to maintain social order and control and the development of the home language is simply "illusionary" because emergent bilingual children are trying to master the "basic" English language due to the transitional status of bilingual programs. Broader school ideologies also hinder

home language development and its use in some schools. Grosjean (2010) states that if children fall behind in school when they do not understand or speak the language used in an educational setting. My findings tell us that all the children in the families are enrolled in an early-exit bilingual education program. At La Escuelita, bilingual children are expected to assimilate into the dominant culture and learn the dominant language which is English by the end of third grade. In my study, David, a father, did mention how his youngest daughter is already behind on using the Spanish language. Blanca is using more Spanish at home and is noticing her daughter speak more Spanish. Isabel is noticing a similar change in her daughter since her daughter is also speaking more Spanish.

Based on my findings, I propose creative and innovative ways that parents can work towards keeping and maintaining the Spanish language in their household so that students can obtain and sustain academic success throughout their schooling years and beyond. Parents of emergent bilingual children can utilize Spanish applications for children such as YouTube and educational applications. During the interviews, parents informed me that their children took part in the effective home practices of texting to extended family members and video calls to family members to develop and maintain their home language.

Research shows that Hispanic communities in the U.S. and Texas are shifting towards the English language with a loss in Spanish language. Our society and schools place a large emphasis on the English language that leaves bilingual students far behind from their monolingual counterparts. This study can provide more insightful information on the phenomenon of Spanish language loss and maintenance in Hispanic communities to better equip Latin families to aid their children to become high-achieving students in the

American school system. Furthermore, this study can give educators insight on new ideas and teaching methods for teaching bilingual students, so those students do not lose their Hispanic home language and cultural identity. Academic success can become a reality for bilingual students.

My experiences as a bilingual classroom teacher made me anticipate challenges in this study. The first challenge I thought I could encounter was the identification of a cooperating teacher who was not willing to participate in a study of a topic that some find controversial. Fortunately, all the teachers I spoke to regarding the study agreed to have their students' families participate in the study. The teachers were helpful and supportive of the purpose of this study. A second challenge I encountered was speaking to parents who were not willing to participate in the study. I found this challenge twice at the beginning of my study. Therefore, I had to quickly invite two other families to participate to have a total of 4 families participate in the study. A third challenge I encountered is that not being a bilingual classroom teacher currently had limited restraint on the number of conversations I had with bilingual students and families.

Educators have the power to transform the lives of the children they teach daily. As the primary adult in the classroom, the teacher's thoughts as well as home language usage, and views on home language are important factors in their students' home language use, home language development, and home language maintenance.

Limitations

The first limitation I encountered in this study was having a small number of participants and this limited my ability to learn from as many participants as possible. Future research could feature more participants for similar studies so that they can collect

more data. A greater number of participants matters so that non-traditional households are also studied and impacted by similar research.

The second limitation I had in my study was having only one data type (interviews) and this limited my ability to gain valuable data to add to my study. Because of COVID regulations, in-person interviews were not permitted. The interviews took place on Zoom, and they were audio recorded so that I could transcribe the interviews. Conducting interviews on Zoom limited my ability to observe first hand about how families communicate in their home and minimized my ability to learn what families do in their home to promote Spanish. If I were to conduct a similar study in the future, I would change the location of the interviews. Instead of having interviews on Zoom, interviews would be held at the parents' home. I would like to interview other relatives, children, teachers, and administrators to learn more about their views on home language. Having various data types like school observations, participant home observations, and participant artifacts can bring more evidence in to a study so that researchers can draw more on data collected.

The third limitation I had was having a small amount of time to complete my research. In my study, data were gathered within a single month. Having a small amount of time limited my ability to collect more data and shortened the thought processing time of the participants. Additional complementary data would have helped, for example, learning about contradicting parental views on home language use. I tried to share my preliminary findings to my participants to see if they agree or disagree with my analysis in this research study, but I did not get to since I ran out of time because the school year ended.

The fourth limitation I encountered was the long working hours that one father had which did not give me the chance of interviewing him. When parents do not have long working hours, they are more readily available to participate in similar studies.

Implications for Further Research

Despite these limitations, the findings of this study have potential use for educators, school personnel, and families to better the field of bilingual education. Parents attitudes toward Spanish, single-parent households, and same-sex marriages can be considered for further research. Additionally, interracial marriages, age-discrepant marriages, and marriages with earning gaps can be explored. I think specific practices such as activities involving technology and literacy can be regarded in future research. If I were to undertake this study again, I would follow-up with the same families and include in-person interviews, home observations, and collect artifacts.

Yakel and Beale-Rivaya (2017) raised the possible research area of determining if there is a connection between the level of a parent's education and the level of bilingualism of their children. A parent's level of education may or may not necessarily determine what parents do at home to maintain the home language nor may it determine how much time is used to maintain the home language with their children at home. Further research can be done to explore those areas of interest. In my study, parents who had more years of formal education, had children who shifted more to English.

In completing this study, I formed three new questions for future research. The first new question is: Did at-home learning during the pandemic significantly affect the language preference of children? Since some of the youngest children in my study were at home with older siblings during the pandemic, I wonder if at-home learning caused an

effect on the language usage of younger siblings in a remarkable way. This question is important because two groups of parents have seen their daughters make a big shift to English since their children began online learning from home during the pandemic. The COVID pandemic, disrupted the world and stormed through my classroom. During and after some of my online instructional times, I took mental and anecdotal notes on students' Spanish and English language usage. I began to wonder why some of my students at the time would use an extensive amount of English on Zoom. I realized that some of my students at that time were learning at home with older siblings who would use English with them most of the time.

The second new question I formed is: Does a bilingual teacher's Spanish language usage with another bilingual teacher effect the language preference of emergent bilingual children? I ask this question because as a former bilingual kindergarten teacher, I have noticed some bilingual teachers make a big shift to English when they have had professional or social conversations in front of students in public school, and I have not seen any researchers ask this question. My study data is gathered from families and not teachers. So, collecting data from teachers would be insightful to find out if teacher to teacher Spanish language usage in an academic setting has any effect on children's home language usage since no bilingual teachers were actual participants in my study.

The third new question is: Does a bilingual administrator's Spanish language usage with bilingual teachers effect the language preference of emergent bilingual children? As a researcher, I ask this question because in some schools, I have heard bilingual administrators speak mostly English to bilingual teachers in front of students and I wonder if this reality causes an effect on children's language preferences. Similarly, to

the second question, finding out if Spanish language usage within administrator and teacher conversations effect children's language preferences would be a discerning study since no administrators or teachers were participants in my study.

Implications for Practice

Practice refers to what teachers and schools should do so that students can hold on to their home language. Teachers can be language models and guides for their bilingual students so that these students are supported and enabled to utilize all their linguistic resources in and out of the classroom and at home as they learn Spanish and English. At the beginning of a school year, teachers could simply converse with parents and take anecdotal notes about the activities parents do in Spanish with their children to learn more about the families and their home language activities. Teachers can let students do similar activities and/or daily and regular in class activities such as play cooking, reading books, writing shopping lists, playing the Loteria game, and play grocery shopping at school. These types of classroom activities contribute to children's knowledge of Spanish by reinforcing Spanish vocabulary, grammar, sentence structures, literacy, and writing in an academic setting.

Teacher awareness and knowledge of additional home language activities can be shared with parents of emergent bilingual children so they too can do these activities to promote and maintain Spanish at home. The earlier parents begin effective home language activities with their children, the sooner their children can expand on their home language usage and be more prepared and successful in school.

Implications for Families

Parents of emergent bilingual children are the voices for their children when their children do not know what to say in Spanish or English. It is evident that the parents in this study want their children to be bilingual and want them to have better opportunities in the United States.

In my study, parents reported the fact that at La Escuelita, there is limited bilingual programming for their children, and they would like to see more years of bilingual programming for their children. In the second interview with Blanca and David, Blanca told me a new thing she learned about the bilingual programming at La Escuelita. Blanca said, “Lo único que no nos gusta es que antes hasta quinto grado iba estar en bilingüe y ahora solamente hasta segundo grado o tercer grado. Ya es solamente inglés y cada año cambia.” Blanca does not like that the bilingual program ends at the end of third grade. Adrian also learned more about the bilingual programming at La Escuelita. Adrian said, “Todavía, en el tercero pero no mucho pero ya del cuarto pa’ adelante se ve más diferencia.” Adrian noticed that bilingual children make a significant shift from the home language to English when they are in the fourth grade. These findings tell us that parents are noticing the reality of limited bilingual programming at La Escuelita. Grosjean (2010) suggests that in schools, there needs to be more focus on home language and the use of the first language. Improvements on school funding, bilingual program selection, in-school home language representation, and parental involvement can be made so that bilingual programming is not cut short for emergent bilingual children and their families.

Parents can begin to do daily and regular activities to promote Spanish with their children before their children are admitted into school. Before children are born, parents

can already begin and/or continue to foster positive familial relationships so that once children are born, close and extended family communications in Spanish can be birthed. Although, parents in the study did not mention this idea, it is important to point out this concept. I think building strong familial relationships before children come into a family household will better prepare children to become bilingual and successful in a challenging world.

Conclusion

This was a study of four families with emergent bilingual children and was about finding how the language beliefs of parents of emergent bilingual children shape their language usage with their children at home. I hope that in completing this study, I can inspire parents of emergent bilingual children to further embrace and cultivate their native Spanish language with their children.

I almost lost my home language and now hold it very dear to me. Home language maintenance is very important to children so that they remember who they are, where they come from, and so that they can connect with their family for a lifetime. The evidence from this study provided me with the knowledge that emergent bilinguals need daily or regular domains and situations where they can use Spanish to develop and maintain their home language with their parents from an early age before they ever attend school.

Parents, like their children, have language preferences in different domains and situations. It is my hope that parents of emergent bilingual children truly exercise their given rights to establish and utilize a rich Spanish language environment in their homes to fully cultivate the home language for their children. Fortunately, there are many

resources that parents can use to help promote and maintain Spanish in the home. Educators may use the same resources or similar resources that spark an interest with their students in the classroom to further expand the use of Spanish in and out of the classroom. Emergent bilingual children and their parents can also access those resources to use in and out of the home to promote Spanish with their children. Juntos (Together), students, parents, and teachers can work together to share an array of activities that emergent bilingual children can do at school like at home to promote and maintain Spanish for familial generations to be proud of and use for a lifetime.

APPENDIX SECTION

Appendix A

(Parent Interview 1, Spanish)

1. ¿Puede decirme a qué se dedica? (Por ejemplo, ¿trabaja en el hogar o fuera del hogar?). Cuando está trabajando, ¿utiliza principalmente español, inglés, spanglish o una combinación de estos idiomas?
2. ¿Te consideras un inmigrante? Si es así, ¿de qué país o de qué lugar?
3. Si se considera inmigrante, ¿cuántos años tenía cuando llegó a los Estados Unidos?
4. ¿Dónde asistió a la escuela? Si fuiste a la escuela en dos países (por ejemplo, México y los EE. UU.), ¿qué recuerdas acerca de las diferencias entre la escuela en tu país de origen y la escuela en los EE. UU.?
5. ¿En qué idioma(s) enseñaban los maestros cuando era estudiante?
6. ¿Te consideras bilingüe o multilingüe?
7. ¿Qué idiomas se hablan con mayor frecuencia en su hogar?
8. Cuando habla con su hijo(s), ¿qué idioma(s) usa con más frecuencia?
9. ¿Qué idioma habla más su hijo en casa?
10. ¿Por qué cree que su hijo prefiere hablar ese idioma?
11. ¿Dónde habla más español su hijo? (Por ejemplo, en la escuela, la tienda, los deportes, la iglesia, y otros lugares) ¿Con quién habla más español su hijo? (Por ejemplo, con padres/familias, abuelos, tías y tíos, etc.)
12. ¿Dónde habla más inglés su hijo? (Por ejemplo, en la escuela, la tienda, los deportes, la iglesia, y otros lugares) ¿Con quién habla más inglés su hijo? (Por ejemplo, con padres/familias, abuelos, tías y tíos, etc.)

13. ¿Puede contarme sobre momentos en que su hijo habla más español?
14. ¿Qué pasa con los momentos en que su hijo habla más inglés?
15. ¿Qué tipo de actividades diarias o regulares realiza su familia en español en casa?
(Por ejemplo, enviar mensajes de texto, leer libros, periódicos, revistas, ir a la iglesia, navegar por Internet, ver películas o televisión, escribir listas de compras, llevar un calendario, información de salud, banca/contabilidad, etc.)
16. ¿Qué tipo de actividades diarias o regulares realiza su familia en inglés en casa? (Por ejemplo, enviar mensajes de texto, leer libros, periódicos, revistas; asistir a la iglesia y leer la Biblia o otro texto religioso, navegar por Internet, ver películas o televisión, escribir listas de compras, llevar un calendario, información de salud, banca/contabilidad, etc.)
17. Ahora, me gustaría preguntarle un poco sobre cómo usa su teléfono inteligente. ¿Qué aplicaciones usas en español? ¿Qué aplicaciones usas en inglés? ¿Cuál es la configuración de idioma en su teléfono inteligente? (Por ejemplo, cuando mira su pantalla, ¿está en inglés o en español?) ¿Sus hijos usan teléfono celular? Si es así, ¿para qué lo usa? ¿Qué aplicaciones usa su hijo?
18. ¿Hay algo que su familia hace específicamente para mantener el español como lengua familiar? (Por ejemplo, tomar clases de español, inscribir a los niños en educación bilingüe, escuchar música, sacar libros de la biblioteca en español, etc.)
19. Como padre, ¿qué opina sobre el uso del español en la escuela? (Por ejemplo, ¿qué piensa sobre la enseñanza del español y el inglés en la escuela?) Desde que su hijo comenzó a estudiar en La Escuelita, ¿ha cambiado su forma de pensar sobre el español en la educación de su hijo?

20. En este estudio, no estoy usando los nombres reales de las personas ni el nombre real de la escuela. Usaré un nombre inventado (un seudónimo) para usted y su familia. ¿Qué nombre quieres que use?

Appendix B

(Parent Interview 1, English)

1. Can you please tell me what you do for a living? (For example, do you work in the home or outside the home?). When you are working, do you mostly use Spanish, English, Spanglish, or a combination of these languages?
2. Do you consider yourself an immigrant? If so, from what country or what place?
3. If you consider yourself an immigrant, how old were you when you arrived in the United States?
4. Where did you attend school? If you went to school in two countries (for example, Mexico and the U.S.), what do you remember about the differences between school in your home country and school in the U.S.?
5. What language(s) did the teachers teach in when you were a student?
6. Do you consider yourself bilingual or multilingual?
7. What languages are spoken most often at your home?
8. When you speak with your child/children, what language(s) do you use most often?
9. Which language does your child speak most at home?
10. Why do you think your child prefers to speak that language?
11. Where does your child speak more Spanish? (For example, at school, the store, sports, the church, and other places) With whom does your child speak more Spanish? (For example, with parents/families, grandparents, aunts, and uncles, etc.)
12. Where does your child speak more English? (For example, at school, the store, sports, the church, and other places) With whom does your child speak more English? (For example, with parents/families, grandparents, aunts, and uncles, etc.)

13. Can you tell me about times when your child speaks more Spanish?
14. What about times when your child speaks more English?
15. What kinds of daily or regular activities does your family do in Spanish at home?
(For example, texting, reading books, newspapers, magazines; going to church, surfing the internet, watching movies or television, writing shopping lists, keeping a calendar, health information, banking/accounting, etc.)
16. What kinds of daily or regular activities does your family do in English at home? (For example, texting, reading books, newspapers, magazines; attending church and reading the Bible or other religious text, surfing the internet, watching movies or television, writing shopping lists, keeping a calendar, health information, banking/accounting, etc.)
17. Now, I'd like to ask a little about how you use your smart phone. What applications do you use in Spanish? What applications do you use in English? What is the language setting on your smart phone? (For example, when you look at your screen is it in English or Spanish?) Do your children use a cell phone? If so, what does he or she use it for? Which applications does your child use?
18. Is there anything your family does specifically to keep Spanish as a family language? (For example, taking Spanish classes, enrolling children in bilingual education, listening to music, getting books from the library in Spanish, etc.)
19. As a parent, what do you think about the use of Spanish in school? (For example, what do you think about the teaching of Spanish and English at school?) Since your child began studying at La Escuelita, have you changed your thoughts about Spanish in your child's education?
20. In this study, I am not using people's real names or the real name of the school. I will

use a made-up name (a pseudonym) for you and your family. What name do you want me use?

Appendix C

(Parent Interview 2, Spanish)

Las preguntas para la segunda entrevista se finalizaron después del análisis de los resultados de la primera entrevista. Las preguntas incluyen:

1. ¿Has visto algún cambio en cómo su hija/hijo o la familia usa español desde nuestra primera entrevista?
2. ¿Qué sabía sobre el programa bilingüe antes de que su hija/hijo comenzara a asistir a La Escuelita?
3. La investigación muestra que muchas familias mexicanas/hispanas en Texas quieren que sus hijas/hijos estudian únicamente en español. ¿Por qué eligió el programa de educación bilingüe para su hija/hijo? Cuando matriculó a su hija/hijo en el programa de educación bilingüe en La Escuelita, ¿Cuáles fueron sus razones más importantes?
4. Desde que su hija/hijo comenzó a asistir al programa bilingüe en La Escuelita, ¿qué cosas nuevas ha aprendido sobre el programa? (por ejemplo, te enteraste que el programa bilingüe termina en tercer grado, los niños aprenden más inglés en tercer grado, etc.)
5. ¿Cómo le está yendo a su hija/hijo en el programa bilingüe este año?
6. ¿Qué opinas sobre las escuelas que enseñan a los niños en español? ¿Tiene un familiar o pariente que piensa diferente sobre el uso del español en la escuela? ¿Qué dicen ellos?
7. ¿Qué piensas acerca de las escuelas que enseñan a los niños en inglés? ¿Tiene un familiar o pariente que piensa diferente sobre el uso del español en la escuela? ¿Qué dicen ellos?
8. ¿Qué tan importante es que su hija/hijo se vuelva bilingüe y bilingüe en español e inglés? (Por ejemplo, muy importante, importante, no tan importante)

9. ¿Por qué crees que es importante que los niños sepan inglés?
10. ¿Por qué es importante que los niños sepan español?
11. ¿Qué idioma habla más su hija/hijo con su familia extendida?
12. ¿Qué tipo de cosas hace su familia para promover el español en el hogar? ¿Cuál es la efectividad de estas estrategias familiares para mantener o promover el español? ¿Estas estrategias parecen funcionar según ustedes como padres? Sondeé a los padres en la familia 1 con las siguientes preguntas: ¿Le leen en español? ¿Escriben en español? ¿Hacen otras cosas en español?
13. ¿Hay algo que le gustaría agregar sobre la forma en que su hija/hijo o su familia usan el español?
14. ¿Si pudieras regresar a la escuela como un estudiante, le gustaría entrar en un programa bilingüe? ¿Por qué?
15. ¿Si pudieras cambiar cualquier cosa del programa bilingüe de su hija/hijo, que cambiaría y por qué?

Appendix D

(Parent Interview 2, English)

The questions for the second interview were finalized after the analysis of results from the first interview. The questions include:

1. Have you seen any change in how your daughter/son or the family uses Spanish since our first interview?
2. What did you know about the bilingual program before your child began attending La Escuelita?
3. Research shows that many Mexican/Hispanic families in Texas want their sons/daughters to study only in Spanish. Why did you choose the bilingual education program for your daughter/son? When you enrolled your daughter/son in the bilingual education program at La Escuelita, what were your most important reasons?
4. Since your daughter/son began attending the bilingual program at La Escuelita, what new things have you learned about the program? (For example, did you find out that the bilingual program ends in third grade, children learn more English in third grade, etc.)
5. How is your daughter/son doing in the bilingual program this year?
6. What do you think about schools that teach children in Spanish? Do you have a family member or relative who thinks differently about the use of Spanish at school? What do they say?
7. What do you think about schools that teach children in English? Do you have a family member or relative who thinks differently about the use of Spanish at school? What do they say?
8. How important is it for your daughter/son to become bilingual and bilingual in Spanish

and English? (For example, very important, important, not so important)

9. Why do you think it is important for children to know English?

10. Why is it important for children to know Spanish?

11. What language does your daughter/son speak the most with your extended family?

12. What kinds of things does your family do to promote Spanish at home? What is the effectiveness of these family strategies to maintain or promote Spanish? Do these strategies seem to work for you as parents? I surveyed the parents in Family 1 with the following questions: Do they read to you in Spanish? Do they write in Spanish? Do you do other things in Spanish?

13. Is there anything you would like to add about the way your daughter/son or your family use Spanish?

14. If you could go back to school as a student, would you like to enter a bilingual program? Why?

15. If you could change anything about your child's bilingual program, what would you change and why?

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