Exploring the Intersections of Local Language Policies and Emergent Bilingual Learner Identities: A Comparative Classroom Study at an Urban Arizona School

by

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ABSTRACT

This multilevel, institutional case study used ethnographic methods to explore the intersections of local language policies and emergent bilingual students' identities in dual language and structured English immersion (SEI) classrooms at one urban elementary school. Using a sociocultural policy approach as means to explore the ways that educational language policies are appropriated and practiced in schools and classrooms and an intersectional literacy identity framework, I engaged in a multilevel qualitative analysis of one school, two fifth-grade classrooms, and four focal emergent bilingual students. At the school and classroom levels, I sought to understand the ways educators practiced and enacted language policies as well as how they conceptualized (bi)literacy for emergent bilingual students. At the student level, I engaged in *identity-text* writing sessions designed around student interests yet aligned with the opinion/argumentation writing style the students were working on in class at the time of data collection. Additionally, I conducted one-on-one interviews with the participants at each level of analysis (i.e. school-level, classroom-level, and student-level). The primary data analysis sources included participant interviews, classroom observations, and student identity-text artifacts.

Findings highlight the dynamic in-school and classroom-level realities of emergent bilingual students in an Arizona educational-language policy context. Specifically, at the school level, there was an ongoing tension between compliance and resistance to state-mandated policies for emergent bilingual students. At the school and classroom levels, there were distinct differences in the ways students across the two classrooms were positioned within the larger school environment as well as variation surrounding how language and culture were positioned as a resource in each classroom context. The role of teachers as language policymakers is also explored through the findings. Analysis of student texts revealed the centrality of intersectional student identities throughout the writing processes. The discussion and conclusions more broadly address implications for educational practice, policy, and future research directions.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my grandmother who raised me to be who I am and who encouraged me throughout my graduate studies. *Estarás en mi corazón para siempre abuelita.*

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Through this chapter, I will provide an overview of the historical background, policy history, and significance of this dissertation study. Prior to doing so, it is important I make some key terminology distinctions. First, students who speak a language other than English at home are often referred to as *language minority* students. Some language minority students enter school with grade level proficiency in both their first language(s) and English, and therefore do not receive additional educational supports for learning English. Language minority students identified as still in the process of learning English are referred to by diverse terms depending on the region or state. Some of the more commonly used terms include English Language Learners (ELLs), English learners, limited English proficient, English as a new/additional/second language students (ENL/EAL/ESL), dual language learners, and emergent bilinguals. Throughout this dissertation, I will use the term *emergent bilinguals* to refer to students who are in the process of learning English *and* their home language. Although emergent bilinguals do not always receive institutionalized opportunities to learn their home languages in school settings, this term better captures the additive bilingual strengths that students who speak multiple languages embody (García & Kleifgen, 2010). However, when discussing educational history and policies, I will at times broadly refer to language minority students or ELLs in accordance with the historical or institutional context.

A Brief History of Bilingual Education

The role of language in education, and in American society at large, has been a perennial and evolving issue that has stirred debates, questions, and policies for centuries now. To start at the "beginning" would mean to take into consideration the period of colonization that was not only characterized by clashes between colonizers and the indigenous peoples of the Americas, but also the contentious conflicts between the diverse imperial powers that brought Spanish, English, French, and Portuguese to the Americas in the first place (Wiley, 2014, Macías, 2014). However, the colonial history and racialized politics that fueled imperialistic wars and policies that displaced millions of American Indians and subsequently endangered many of their languages through

systematic efforts to eradicate their culture is outside the scope of this project (see Wiley 2014). Instead, as a means to frame this dissertation, I will focus on the complicated place of bilingual education in U.S. society from the mid nineteenth century until today. Specifically, I will provide an overview of the practices, policies, and ideologies that have shaped and shifted the nature of bilingualism and bilingual education in American schools for language minority students.

Bilingual education in the U.S. has a long and complicated history. Numerous scholars have reported a historical fluctuation between tolerance and intolerance to bilingualism and bilingual education over the course of U.S. history (Collier & Thomas, 2012; Crawford, 2004; Kloss, 1977/1998). The period of European influx in the latter half of the nineteenth century is often referred to as a period of tolerance towards bilingualism and bilingual education programs. During this time period, languages such as German, Danish, Dutch, Polish, Italian, French, and Spanish were used as languages of instruction in areas of the country with large concentrations of individuals who spoke these languages (Gándara, Losen, August, Uriarte, Gómez, & Hopkins, 2010; Kloss, 1977/1988). However, Wiley's (2014) historical analysis argues that assimilation to English was historically the expectation with brief moments in which bilingualism and biculturalism were "conditionally tolerated but never endorsed, and at times… severely attacked" (p. 27). Historians have also called attention to the historic privileging of bilingualism for white European dissent individuals, and the subsequent attempts at the erasure of languages used by racialized groups (e.g., African slaves, indigenous groups, and Latinx populations) (Wiley, 2014). In fact, it was through systematic educational policy efforts which sought to "civilize" and "Americanize" Native Americans, that many indigenous languages were marginalized or eradicated (Wallace, 1995). This occurred most notably through the establishment of federally funded American Indian boarding schools, in which indigenous students were separated from their families and tribes and punished for engaging in their cultural traditions and speaking in their native languages (Wallace, 1995).

Mexican-Americans in the Southwest also faced systematic discrimination in the years following the Mexican-American War (Sheridan, 2012). Even with the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo guaranteeing Mexicans in the newly American Southwest both property and civil rights

(which language falls into), there is historical evidence that the rights guaranteed to them as a part of this treaty were often violated and dismissed (Griswold del Castillo, 1990). As a result, it should not come as a surprise that as schooling began to take on a more prominent societal role in the Southwest (and across the U.S.), so too did the systemic discrimination, exclusion, and segregation of Mexican-American children in educational contexts. Historical accounts from the late nineteenth to mid twentieth centuries evidence segregated "Mexican" classrooms and schools where the quality of instruction, facilities, and opportunities to learn were qualitatively inferior to schools for Anglo children (San Miguel & Valencia, 1998). Furthermore, many of the individual accounts of students during this time period indicate that the "Mexican" schools and classrooms were places where the use of English was rigidly enforced, and where students were punished for speaking in Spanish (Aparicio, 2000). Many school administrators and policy makers claimed that separate schools were necessary due to language differences; however, most historical accounts demonstrate that children were segregated based on their Mexican heritage, regardless of their English proficiency levels (Crawford, 2004; Powers, 2008). Therefore, during the first half of the twentieth century numerous legal cases were successfully brought against school districts in Arizona, California, and Texas in an effort to address the racialization, discrimination, and segregation of Mexican-American children in educational contexts (Powers, 2016). In Arizona, *Gonzales v. Sheely* (1951) ruled that the segregation of Mexican-American students was unconstitutional three years before *Brown v. Board of Education (1954)*.

At the national level, the turn of the twentieth century also marked a turning point in the intensification of anti-bilingual and anti-immigrant sentiment across the U.S. with the amendment of the Naturalization Act of 1906. This Act already restricted individuals not of European descent from legally immigrating, and the new revisions further required English proficiency for naturalization. During the World War I period, nativist anti-bilingual attacks continued, as was evidenced by the 34 states who passed English-only laws by 1922 (Kloss, 1977/1998). Many of the laws passed were linked to wartime fears of Germans, and the restrictions not only limited the ways that non-English languages could be used in schools, but also restricted bilingual practices

in other shared spaces such as churches and news media (Kloss, 1977/1998; Wiley, 2014). Even with the court's 1923 ruling in *Meyer v. Nebraska* protecting the rights of schools to teach their pupils in languages other than English, many bilingual schools had already experienced the devastating effects of anti-bilingual laws. As an example, the number of students receiving a bilingual German-English education fell by 95% in just seven years from 1915-1922 (Kloss 1978). The first half of the twentieth century was therefore marked by intense restrictions on bilingual education and repression of the cultures and languages of language minority groups across the nation.

The Civil Rights Movement ushered in a new era for language minority students. Across the U.S., parents continued to challenge the legality and constitutionality of segregation in courts. A decade after *Brown*, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 made it against the law to deny benefits or discriminate against any individual "on the ground of race, color, or national origin" (Civil Rights Act, sec. 601, 1964). Around this same time a number of bilingual schools serving predominately language minority students began to emerge around the country. Coral Way, which continues to be the oldest continually running public bilingual school in the nation, was opened to serve Cuban refugees in Miami in 1963.

It was not until 1968, when the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was reauthorized by Congress, that the educational needs of language minority students were explicitly addressed as a part of Title VII of ESEA, also known as the Bilingual Education Act (BEA). However, the BEA was not focused on developing bilingualism specifically (Garcia, 2010), but rather on ensuring that "limited English-speaking ability" children had access to programs that would aid them in the acquisition of English through the implementation of "imaginative elementary and secondary school programs designed to meet these special educational needs" (BEA, sec. 702, 1968). Due to that fact that there was no funding attached to it, initially Title VII was viewed as a purely symbolic gesture by the federal government. However, a year later in 1969 a modest, but insufficient amount of funding was attached for schools that sought to develop instructional materials for language minorities or implement bilingual education programs (García, 2010). The 7.5 million dollars initially allocated for these purposes was said to be enough

to fund only about 27,000 language minority students (Castellanos, 1983). At this time, the federal government provided funding to 76 bilingual schools in 70 cities across the nation for the first time (Thomas & Collier, 2012). These schools were predominately Spanish-English bilingual schools, nevertheless some of the funding also went to schools in which teachers taught English in addition to Navajo, Chinese, Cantonese, Pomo, Keresan, Cherokee, Japanese, Portuguese, and French (Anderson & Boyer, 1978). Additionally, by 1971 approximately 30 states across the nation passed legislation that sought to permit or require bilingual schooling of some form for language minority students of "limited English proficiency" (Ovando, Combs, & Collier, 2006). However, it is important to point out that while the type of bilingual schooling provided varied from school to school, most schools at this time segregated linguistic minorities who were still learning English into bilingual classrooms, with the goal of quickly transitioning them to English mainstream classrooms (Thomas & Collier, 2012).

Largely due to the short reach of these efforts, three key events continued to push for the rights of all language minority students in 1974. First, a group of Chinese families in San Francisco sought legal remedy for the inequitable schooling conditions of their children in the historic *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) case. This ruling established the right of language minority students to have comprehensible (i.e. primary language) access to the curriculum of their English-speaking counterparts. *Lau* further required that local education agencies (LEAs) facilitate this access. Following the *Lau* ruling that year, Congress passed the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA, 1974), which further promulgated the requirement that all LEAs must take appropriate actions to prohibit discrimination, segregation, and to take measureable actions to help students overcome barriers to receiving equitable educational opportunities. For language minority students this meant that all LEAs, not just those receiving federal funding, were required to provide specialized instructional programs to students with a primary home language other than English (Stftner-Manzanares, 1988). That same year, the renewal of ESEA's Bilingual Education Act (1974) used both the *Lau* decision and EEOA to strongly support bilingual instructional programs focused on English acquisition and students' home languages (and culture) simultaneously (Gándara, Losen, August, Uriarte, Gomez, & Hopkins, M. 2010). While this

mandate did not prescribe pedagogy, it did provide an opportunity for the establishment and expansion of bilingual education programs.

In an effort to assist LEAs with this process, the Office of Civil Rights developed the Lau Remedies (1975), which outlined the regulatory framework for the enforcement of the *Lau* decision at the school and district level. These guidelines sought to aid LEAs in the identification of language minority students, in addition to providing information on appropriate educational programing for K12 language minority students. This included a requirement for bilingual education as an option at the elementary level. However, the “guidelines” were short lived due to a number of conflicting political interests largely connected to substantial educational budget cuts and growing resistance to native language bilingual programs. Therefore, the *Lau* guidelines were not pushed as “official,” and six short years later (1981) Reagan’s incoming Secretary of Education, Terrell Bell, withdrew them from the U.S. Department of Education’s agenda (García, 2010). That same year another influential federal judicial case emerged which sought to address the equitable educational opportunities of language minority students, *Castañeda v. Pickard* (1981).

The *Castañeda* ruling further established that LEAs were required to take “appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs” (Section 1703(f)). The courts then laid out a three-part system for establishing if “appropriate action to overcome language barriers” was taken by LEAs. This stipulated that the LEAs must provide language minority students with an education that (1) relies on expert approved educational theory (2) demonstrates that the adopted educational theory is being implemented through programs and practices in the LEA’s schools, and (3) is producing measurable positive results in helping language minority students overcome language barriers (Mahoney, MacSwan, Haladyna, & Garcia, 2010). It is important to point out that the courts did not specifically endorse any one type of program as a part of this ruling (i.e., bilingual education, ESL, structured immersion).

Not without pushback and a few small wins, each reauthorization of ESEA that followed progressively reduced the percentage of funding and policy language supporting bilingual

education for language minority students. Specifically, as soon as the 1978 reauthorization, 25% of the bilingual education budget was cut. And at the same time, language on students' home languages and cultural development was eliminated from Title VII and replaced with an emphasis on bilingual programs that transitioned students to English as rapidly as possible (Gándara et. al, 2010). This meant that in order to receive federal dollars, bilingual programs were required to demonstrate that they were progressively eliminating the native language from the classroom and preparing students for mainstream English-only education. To do this, many of these programs segregated language minority students during the two to three-year period in which they were to be "transitioning" to English-only (Thomas & Collier, 2012). However, in both the 1978 and 1984 renewals, there was some brief lip service paid to the idea of developmental bilingualism, which aimed to bring English monolinguals together with language minority students in an effort to provide second language "enrichment" for English monolingual students and developmental bilingualism for language minority students. Nevertheless, funding was not attached to this idea, and little emphasis was placed on promoting this type of schooling at the federal level (Thomas & Collier, 2012).

In the 1980's and 1990's, resistance to bilingual education for language minority students continued to intensify due in large part to powerful political groups who saw bilingual education as a threat to "American" cultural assimilation (Gándara et al., 2010). This coincided with a new wave of immigration (including the legalization of long-term racialized immigrant groups) from Latin American, Asia, and other non-Western nations in the years following the lifting of national-origin quotas as a part of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1968 (García, 2014). Therefore, multiple scholars (Leibowitz, 1974; Wiley, 2000; Powers, 2014) have pointed to the importance of considering the historical ways in which:

> policies focused on language restriction have often been aligned with economic and political agendas to discriminate against racial and national-origin ethnic groups. Thus, similarities among linguicism, racism, and other inhumanities need to consider the relationships among them (Wiley, 2014, p. 19).

In fact, numerous scholars have linked the anti-bilingual education English-only movement in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries to conservative, nativist and anti-immigrant groups attempts to push for English as the language that unites Americans, a political positioning of immigrants as refusing to learn English, and the erroneous tying of linguistic diversity to ethnic and political conflict (with Quebec used as a prominent example in the 90s) (Crawford, 2004; Gándara et al., 2010; Wiley & Wright, 2004). The work of Wiley and Wright (2004) demonstrated the ways that the most recent English-only movement is similar to what was taking place on American soil during the early twentieth century. In line with is parallel, by the late 1990s English-only laws had again passed in 23 states (Wiley & Wright, 2004).

In federal education policy, the English-only shift continued as well. Although in 1988 there was a push to remove the cap on the number of English-only programs permitted under ESEA, it was not until the 1994 renewal of ESEA as the Improving America's Schools Act that the cap on English-only programs for language minority students was eliminated. This paved the way for the complete removal of any references to bilingual education in the 2002 renewal of ESEA as the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB), which included the renaming of the former Office of Bilingual Education as the Office of English Language Acquisition (Gándara et al., 2010).

English-Only and Bilingual Education in the 21st Century

The turn of the twenty-first century, saw an increase in the number of restrictive language policies at both the state and federal level. As the previous section indicated, in 2001 NCLB was passed as the reauthorization of ESEA. At this time, Title VII (BEA) was renamed Title III (regarding English learners) and the federal government removed all references to bilingual education, which many scholars considered a shift to de facto English-only policy (Menken, 2008; Wright, 2005). In addition to the policy language shift, researchers highlighted the ways that high-stakes testing requirements (as outlined in Title I) reduced the possibilities for bilingual education, particularly in low-income LEAs serving high percentages of language minority students (Menken, 2008; Wright, 2005). Essentially, by overwhelmingly focusing practitioners on narrow testing measures of competency in English and mathematics, the likelihood of bilingual education opportunities growing and flourishing were arguably reduced (Menken, 2008; Palmer & Lynch

2008; Wright 2005). At the same time, there is a small, but growing body of ethnographic research that has begun to document the ways that local policy interpretations and appropriation practices, as well as resistance to the English-only movement, can agentively influence the possibilities for bilingual education (Cassels Johnson, 2010; Newcomer & Puzio, 2014).

At the state level, the turn of the twenty-first century was also unquestionably marked by increased restrictions on bilingual education (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010). This movement was led by California millionaire, Ron Unz, who specifically identified those states with ballot initiative policies that gave unique power to the popular vote on ballot propositions. In three of the four states where Unz financed the initiatives, they passed (California, Arizona, and Massachusetts).

With the largest percentages of emergent bilinguals (EBs) in the nation, California lead the way in 1998 with the passage of Proposition 227. Titled "English for the Children," Proposition 227 made it law for California public schools to be conducted "overwhelmingly" in English. Arizona followed suit in 2000 with Proposition 203, and Massachusetts did the same in 2002 with the passage of Question 2. However, Massachusetts' Question 2 made an exception for previously established dual language schools, whereas Arizona used the law to exclusively mandate a state wide English language instructional strategy for EBs known as the Structured English Immersion (SEI) four-hour block (further discussion provided below). In all three states, the law successfully dismantled a number of bilingual programs and reduced the amount of primary language instruction EBs were receiving. In fact, after the passage of Proposition 227, the California State Department of Education reported that by the 2006-2007 school year only about 5.6% of EB students were getting primary language instruction of any form, down from 29% nine years earlier before the passage of Proposition 227 (Wentworth et al., 2010). Similar trends were found in Arizona. At the time, multiple scholars pointed out that bilingual education programs were being attacked based on non-disaggregated statewide statistics in states where the vast majority of their EB students *were not* enrolled in bilingual education programs in the first place (Crawford, 2003; Gándara & Orfield, 2010; García, 2010). In California where more bilingual programs existed than in Arizona or Massachusetts, over 70% of the EBs were enrolled in English-only ESL programs prior to the passage Proposition 227 (Gándara & Orfield, 2010).

Additionally, Cummins (2003) found that of the 29% of EBs who were enrolled in some form of bilingual education in the state of California, only a little more than half were being taught by a credentialed bilingual teacher. This suggests two things, first, that the attacks on bilingual education were misguided and provided more of a statement about the quality of the English-only system for EBs at the time the initiatives passed. Second, that the quality of the bilingual programs that did exist was likely highly variable given both the history of transitionally focused programs and the statistics on credentialed bilingual instructors.

In California and Massachusetts, the California Multilingual Education Act (2016) and the Language Opportunities for Our Kids (LOOK) bill (2017) recently overturned Proposition 227 (CA) and Question 2 (MA) in large part due to grassroots efforts to establish a new era that places greater educational value on the multilingual and multicultural strengths of local communities. Unfortunately, in Arizona the “English-only” state statute (HB2064) persists and EBs continue to be excluded from valuable content area instruction and biliteracy development opportunities. Below, I outline Arizona’s unique sociocultural-historical context.

The Arizona Legal, Political, and Educational Context

Arizona has been described as a microcosm of the demographic and economic shifts that can be anticipated in states across the U.S. in the next ten to fifteen years (Glass, 2008). This is because Arizona has increasingly become an urban dwelling, aging, and minority-majority state (Glass, 2008). At the same time, Arizona has both historically and more recently made national headlines for enacting policies hostile to individuals and children from Hispanic and immigrant backgrounds (Gandara & Orfield, 2012). As a result, Arizona has also been at the forefront of national educational policy debates on EB students (Arias & Faltis, 2012). With all eyes on Arizona, some have argued the legal and policy decisions being debated and made about the education of EBs in Arizona have the potential to influence the educational opportunities of the growing language minority student population across the nation (Gándara & Orfield, 2012). Therefore, it is important to understand how language policies and legal rulings that affect the education of EBs continue to play out in this state.

As briefly discussed above, Arizona passed Proposition 203, known as “English for the Children” in 2000 with 63% of voters in favor of the initiative. This ballot initiative mandated the use of SEI and sought to limit the use of bilingual instruction as an option for educating emergent bilingual students (Lillie & Moore, 2014). Moreover, the proposition stipulated a one academic year time frame for the acquisition of English as a second language (in conflict with the 5-8 years typically referenced in second language acquisition research) and allowed parents to sue teachers who were believed to be out of compliance with the new state statute, which required all materials and instruction be conducted “overwhelmingly” in English.

At the same time, the law allowed parents to obtain waivers to have their children participate in bilingual educational programs. However, the legal procedure for parents to be granted a waiver was, and continues to be, laborious. The multi-level approval process makes it particularly difficult for parents from low-SES or immigrant backgrounds to navigate all the strict stipulations. The law requires parents/guardians to apply in person annually to prove that their child qualifies for in one of three ways: (1) by having a child classified as an EB over age 10, (2) by providing evidence that their child has special needs that cannot be met by the SEI block after spending a required 30-days in the classroom, or (3) by demonstrating that their child already knows English through scores obtained on the state sanctioned English proficiency exams. These codified procedures, which require the approval of numerous school and district officials, decrease the likelihood of obtaining a parent waiver. Moreover, the Arizona law sought to close some of the unforeseen waiver loopholes that were being utilized in California (under Proposition 227) by giving teachers and administrators the right to legally deny parental waiver requests for any reason without explanation or consequence.

In the years immediately following the passage of Proposition 203, the implementation was slow and inconsistent across districts, schools, and classrooms (Lillie & Moore, 2014). This was in part due to confusion about the meaning of the new law, particularly for established bilingual and ESL educators, but also because the passage of Proposition 203 coincided with a number of other key educational policy shifts. This included the passage of NCLB in 2001 and judge Marquez’s ruling in the *Flores v. Arizona* (1992) case in 2000, which established that the

State of Arizona was out of compliance with EEOA (1974) by not providing equal educational opportunities to EB students. The Marquez ruling further established that funding structures for programs that appropriately addressed English Language Development (ELD) were inadequate. This led to the issuing of the Flores Consent Order (2000) which prescribed a series of requirements for both ELD and content/subject area instruction that would ensure that EB students were receiving an education “comparable in amount, scope, and quality to that provided to English proficient students” (Consent Order, 2000: 4–5).

Both in response to the Flores Consent Order and the confusion surrounding the implementation of Proposition 203, the state legislature passed House Bill (HB) 2064. HB 2064 established the English Language Learner Task Force charged with establishing a cost-efficient, “research based” curriculum for EB students. Part of this task involved ensuring that the state was in compliance with both the Consent Order requirements and Proposition 203. However, the legislature appointed Task Force included few EB curriculum or second language acquisition experts and was required to establish a uniform curricular policy for all Arizona schools that included a minimum of four hours a day of ELD coursework per day (Gándara & Orfield, 2012).

The Arizona SEI four-hour block.

The English Language Learner Task Force, which was appointed as a part of HB2064, was the driving force behind the establishment of the contentious SEI four-hour block. The Task Force created a statewide curriculum for EBs, which required four hours per day of discrete grammar and language skills intended to facilitate the acquisition of English as rapidly as possible (i.e. in one academic year). The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) first implemented the SEI model as a statewide curriculum for EBs during the 2008-09 academic year. This statewide mandate disproportionally affected low socioeconomic status (SES) Latinx EB students who attended schools with high percentages of students classified as ELLs, and as briefly mentioned above, this model was vigorously opposed by second language acquisition and education researchers for evidence-based reasons (Krashen et al., 2007; Lillie et al., 2012; Rios-Aguilar et al., 2012).

First and foremost, was the concern that the SEI model adopted by the Task Force unnecessarily restricted EB student access to the core curriculum for the majority of the school day (four hours). This was because the Arizona SEI model, which significantly departed from earlier SEI models, segregated EB students from their English proficient peers and mandated a curricular focus on rudimentary English language and grammar skills until students were reclassified to fluent English proficient. Research and practitioner communities contested that these ELD skills should instead be taught via the mainstream curricular content classes (Gándara & Orfield, 2012; Lillie & Moore, 2014). For this reason, opponents predicted that the SEI four-hour block curriculum would hurt EB students by limiting access to challenging coursework in subjects important to their long-term academic development (particularly STEM subjects), and hence disadvantage EBs as they proceeded through their K12 and post-secondary trajectories. A prediction that has proven true in a number of ways but is most notably evident in the ranking of Arizona as the state with lowest high school graduation rate (18% in four years) for EBs in the nation (Mitchell, 2016).

At the same time, academic experts called attention to the problematic nature of linguistically isolating EB students from English proficient students who would otherwise serve as native language role models for students still in the process of learning English (Krashen, Rolstad, and MacSwan, 2007; Gándara & Orfield, 2010). Other concerns expressed by scholars who have conducted extensive research on language acquisition and EBs, included an over emphasis on error correction and discrete language skills, and the unrealistic one-year time frame prescribed as a part of the model (Lillie & Moore, 2014; Jimenez-Silva, Gomez, & Cisneros, 2014). Although, the one-year time frame has largely been unenforceable due to the fact that EB students on average took more than one academic year to pass the Arizona English Language Learner Assessment (AZELLA) once classified as ELLs.

Given much of the criticism and the evidence compiling against the SEI four-hour block model, ADE recently (in 2015) opted to provide districts with the option to apply for approval to modify the SEI four-hour block to a two-hour block. Many high-school districts have sought this approval given the graduation issues they have faced as a result of the tension between

complying with the requirements of the SEI program and granting students access to the necessary coursework to graduate on time. However, other issues related to both the initial identification of EBs and the reclassification procedures in place have emerged as well. Below, I provide brief overview of the present system, and recent modifications made at the state level.

Arizona emergent bilingual classification practices.

At the national level, there is growing evidence to suggest that EB students are being misclassified for a number of reasons related to test validity, parental withholding of home language information, and administrative oversight (Cook & Linquanti, 2015; García Bedolla & Rodríguez, 2011; Okhremtchouk, 2014; Solórzano, 2008; Uriarte, Tung, Lavan, & Diez, 2010). Below I will provide a brief overview of the classification system, and recent modifications to the process, specific to Arizona.

In order for a student to be classified as an ELL and eligible for placement in an SEI classroom in Arizona, parents are given a home language survey (HLS). The HLS asks three questions about students' primary language in the home, the language most often spoken by the student, and the language first acquired by the student. If the parent answers with any language other than English, the student is assessed to determine if they are to be placed in an SEI classroom (or given an Individual Language Learner Plan (ILLP) when a critical number of EBs are not present in a school). If when assessed, a student does not score as proficient or above on AZELLA, the student is then classified as an ELL and placed in an SEI program. Students classified as ELLs are re-assessed annually for proficiency on AZELLA and ELA state standards. Once a student is deemed proficient on AZELLA, the student is reclassified as fluent English proficient and monitored for at least two years.

Recent policy shifts and local controversies.

The system described above was modified at various points in recent years because Arizona was the subject of a number of investigations seeking to determine if the State's ELL classification practices were in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. These investigations were initiated in 2009 with regard to the use of the HLS for the initial identification

of students with a primary home language other than English (PHLOTEs) and the validity of AZELLA in measuring English proficiency.

More specifically, The HLS became an issue in 2009 when ADE decided to change the statewide HLS from three questions to just one question: what is the primary language spoken by the student? Given the number of contextual and familial factors that contribute to the way a parent might answer this question, the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Education sought to determine whether the reported reduction in the number of EBs across the state (estimated at 40%) was in fact due to the change in the number/types of questions on the HLS. This would mean that a large percentage of students entitled to supplementary language support services (and associated school funds), were being denied federal benefits, and therefore discriminated against based on their ethnicity and/or language minority status. The OCR and DOJ determined that Arizona was in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 due to the extensive under identification of EBs which resulted from the HLS change (Goldenberg & Rutherford-Quach, 2012; Ríos-Aguilar & Gándara, 2012). As a result, the State of Arizona was required to reinstate its three-question format in 2011.

The OCR and DOJ investigation into the validity of AZELLA also found that the assessment did not comply with Title VI because it failed to ensure that students were proficient in each English language domain prior to exiting students from EB services, resulting in the erroneous reclassification of thousands of EBs across Arizona. This meant that ADE was failing to ensure that EBs would be able to meaningfully participate in educational coursework and programing. As a result of this ruling, ADE entered into a voluntary resolution with the OCR and DOJ, in which ADE agreed to modify its reclassification procedures. Specifically, ADE agreed to ensure that students were proficient on AZELLA as well as “meeting” or “exceeding” the state standards on the ELA portion of the then Arizona Instrument for Measuring Standards (AIMs) (now AzMERIT exam) prior to exiting students from supplementary English language support services (i.e. SEI instruction). To do this, ADE claims to have aligned AZELLA with the current ELA portion of the AzMERIT exam by making cut scores for passing AZELLA more difficult.

Finally, each of these investigations was carried out during the ongoing saga of the *Flores v. Arizona* (1992) case. Although, the Flores Consent Order was issued in 2000, the case continued to play out in federal, 9th Circuit, and district courts for more than a decade after the Consent Order was issued. In 2007-08, initially both the District Court and the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the plaintiff and found that Arizona was not in compliance with EEOA and was therefore violating an order to adhere to its legal obligations to EB student populations and programs. However, in 2009, the defendants took the case before the U.S. Supreme Court at which time the Supreme Court essentially reversed the lower-court rulings on the grounds that the District Court and the Court of Appeals improperly evaluated the case by focusing solely on the enforcement of the previous order for state compliance with federal law. Therefore, the U.S. Supreme Court ordered that the District Courts reexamine the case with regard to the adequacy of SEI, funding structures, and other circumstantial changes surrounding federal NCLB policy and state educational policy on SEI class size. In a series of rulings between 2013 and 2015, the District Court proceeded to dismiss the plaintiff's statewide EEOA claims based on the assertion that the factual basis of the case had changed, the state had made "improvements" to EB education, and finally the District Court ruled that the plaintiffs did not provide sufficient evidence to prove that segregation and access to academic content was being withheld from EBs systematically across the state; therefore, the District Court vacated the injunction against the state of Arizona and dismissed the case indefinitely.

All of these investigations, legal decisions, and changes to state laws that have played out in Arizona over the last 25 years provide the historical and political backdrop which frame this dissertation study. The most recent mandates regarding the administration of the HLS, statewide reclassification practices, and the conclusion of the *Flores* case will have implications for Arizona students and EB students across the U.S. for years to come (Rios-Aguilar & Gándara, 2012; Hogan, 2014). For this reason, Arizona has been called "ground zero" for the ongoing debates surrounding the educational opportunities and policies affecting EB students (Arias & Faltis, 2012). It the midst of these ongoing shifts and challenges, it is important that research on the implications of policies and practices affecting EB students in local, situated contexts take on

even greater importance. However, nearly 18 years after the passage of Proposition 203, relatively little research has been conducted on language policies at the classroom level where teacher agency and ideologies play out in the everyday.

Prior to presenting the background literature on bilingual and English-only education, as well as student (bi)literate identities, I provide a brief overview of the diverse types of bilingual and English as a second language (ESL) education models that have been used to educate language minority students over the last 50-60 years. I conclude by providing an overview of the study and a statement on the significance of the project.

Instructional Models for Emergent Bilinguals

Most bilingual education scholars categorize the various English-only and bilingual education models along a subtractive to additive continuum. In the context of linguistic and cultural minority students, subtractive schooling refers to those educational programs and practices that fail to attend to the linguistic, cultural, and historic knowledge and backgrounds of the students they serve (Valenzuela, 1999). Subtractive schooling practices, therefore, often fall short in fostering positive social and academic environments, and frequently perpetuate inequitable opportunities and outcomes for students, particularly those from low SES and historically underrepresented backgrounds. In bilingual education specifically, subtractive bilingualism refers to the development of the dominant societal language at the cost of the primary or home language (Ruiz, 1984; Thomas & Collier, 2010). Below, I briefly describe the current spectrum of possibilities for EB students in U.S. Public schools along an additive to subtractive framework (see Table 1 for an overview).

Arizona SEI 4-hour Block.

The SEI four-hour block is Arizona's English language development (ELD) model which severely restricted bilingual education, native language ELD supports, and all other non-SEI models for EBs via Proposition 203 in 2000. The state statue explicitly states that in SEI classrooms "no subject matter shall be taught in any language other than English, and children in this program learn to read and write solely in English" (AZ Revised Statute, 2000). In its original

design, the Arizona SEI 4-hour block was distinct from the other Sheltered Immersion/ESL content protocols because of its focus on "the English language itself" with little emphasis on

Table 1.1.
Instructional Models for Emergent Bilinguals along a subtractive to additive continuum

AZ SEI 4-hour Block	ESL Pullout	ESL Content – Sheltered Instruction	Transitional Bilingual	One-way Dual Language	Two-Way Dual Language
Develops L2 No L1 Support Non-Academic English Segregated 1 year	Develops L2 No L1 Support Non-Academic English Segregated Until EBs pass tests	Develops L2 Some L1 Support Academic English (L2) Often segregated, but not always Until EBs pass tests	Develops L2 and L1 L1 Support until transitioned Academic Proficiency Segregated 2-3 Years typically	Develops L2 and L1 Strong L1 Support Academic Proficiency & Biliteracy Development Segregated Typically until 5-8th grade	Develops L2 and L1 Strong L1 Support Academic Proficiency & Biliteracy Development Integrated Typically until 5-8th grade

academic subject-area content. Specifically, the Arizona four-hour SEI block dictates that 1) all EBs be grouped together in segregated classrooms based on their English proficiency levels,

2) EBs are expected to acquire English and exit the SEI classroom within a one-year timeframe, and, 3) learning is centered on the English language itself for four hours a day. Specifically, the state mandates that students receive 60 minutes of English grammar, vocabulary and oral conversation, reading, and writing per day. While waivers for alternative models are permitted under certain circumstances, over the last 18 years the State of Arizona interpreted and implemented the law in such a way that it nearly eliminated all alternative ELD models including many of the state's historic bilingual programs. This model is not research based and is controversial due to a lack of emphasis placed on the meaningful integration of academic subject-area content and culturally sustaining pedagogy. As a program that focuses solely on English language development in predominately segregated contexts, the Arizona SEI 4-hour block is a subtractive ELD model.

ESL pullout programs.

In ESL pullout programs, students are pulled out of mainstream coursework for a part of the school day (usually for the equivalent of a class period of 35-45 minutes) to learn basic literacy skills typically focused on English for social integration purposes (i.e., English that is not taught through academic content). Students are often pulled out in small groups, but as students get into the older grades it may be a designated class period of their day (Rennie, 1993). The remainder of the day the students participate in the mainstream curriculum. These programs generally do not provide any targeted primary language support; however, some schools may provide bilingual paraprofessionals as teacher aids in the classrooms. Depending on the state or district, students may receive ESL pull out services until they meet the academic requirements necessary to no longer be eligible for ESL services. Given this program's exclusive focus on English acquisition, lack of native language support, and the segregation of students during the ESL pullout time, it is generally considered a subtractive ELD model.

ESL content/sheltered instruction.

In schools that use sheltered instruction, language minority students are grouped or clustered together in classes (sometimes based on their ability level) with teachers who use primarily English to teach students across the content areas, although students' primary languages may be used briefly to clarify instructions when needed. Teachers are frequently required to be certified in ESL, bilingual, or sheltered instruction and are expected to use strategies to adjust their English input to the proficiency level of students (Rennie, 1993). Students are usually either fully or partially (i.e. clustered) segregated from their English dominant peers and usually spend an average of 2-3 years in these classroom settings, or until they meet the district or state proficiency standards that would allow them to be moved to a mainstream classroom. As an ELD program focused solely on English language acquisition in predominately segregated contexts, ESL content/sheltered instruction is considered subtractive in nature.

Transitional bilingual education.

There are two types of transitional bilingual education (TBE) programs, early exit and late exit. Transitional bilingual programs may start students out in a 50:50 program where they receive

half of their content classes in their native language and half in English immediately. However, it is also common that transitional bilingual programs start students out in 90:10 programs where more of the native language is initially used and then progressively more English is incorporated into student coursework over time. Below the two types of transitional bilingual programs are described in greater detail.

Early-exit.

In early exit TBE programs, after 2-3 years the native language is phased out completely and students proceed with monolingual coursework in English after exiting their "transitional" period. These types of TBE programs are typically implemented during the first 2-3 years of schooling (K-2) and seek to provide students from non-English speaking backgrounds with a means to comprehend the curriculum while they learn English at the same time. Early exit TBE programs were the most commonly implemented and legislated type of bilingual program in the years following the Bilingual Education Act of 1968. Therefore, they were the primary subject of assaults on bilingual education in the late twentieth century. Scholars have commended these programs for allowing students to keep up with grade-level coursework and helping linguistically diverse students develop some basic literacy skills in their native languages. At the same time, criticisms of early exit TBE programs revolve around questions about in-school segregation patterns similar to sheltered English-only programs. Furthermore, second language acquisition scholars contend that eliminating all native language instruction after only a few years is premature and negatively impacts the academic language development of language minority students, which is based on research that shows that students take an average of six years to acquire the academic literacy skills they need to thrive at grade level in English (Collier & Thomas, 2009).

Late-Exit.

Late exit TBE programs are often called developmental bilingual programs because they focus on providing developmental bilingualism and biliteracy through the elementary years (6-7 years), but like early exit programs they often have the goal of transitioning students to English monolingual schools after the elementary years. Transition to monolingual English schooling may

be an explicit goal of late exit programs or it may be linked to the reality that many school districts do not have the capacity to offer bilingual programs as an option in the middle school years or beyond. Schools often have difficulty staffing bilingual middle schools due to a lack of certified bilingual teachers who are able to teach increasingly specialized subjects in two languages (García, 2009). Developmental bilingual programs, especially when rooted in bilingual ideologies promote both bilingualism and biliteracy in addition to developing learners who consistently achieve higher on standardized measures of reading and mathematics than those who participated in early exit or English-only programs (Collier & Thomas, 2009; Ramírez, 1992; Thomas & Collier, 1997, 2002). At the same time, there is evidence that students in late-exit TBE programs become aware of the dominant English ideologies and expectations that they will need to transition to English monolingual schooling. As a result, students begin to transition in practice much earlier on their own (Morales & Aldana, 2010). Depending on the demographics and language policies of the school, developmental late-exit TBE programs may also be segregated. As briefly mentioned, TBE programs were frequently subjected to political attacks at the state level and decreased funding at the federal level. Especially in Arizona, there has been a notable decline in enrollment in TBE programs.

Dual language education.

In many ways, dual language education (DLE) programs have emerged as a political and semantic response to the negative framing and politically charged attacks on bilingual education programs for language minority students in the years following the Bilingual Education Act. Therefore, DLE presents a recycled and renewed definition of developmental, late-exit, and enrichment forms of bilingual education. This is evidenced by the momentum DLE was able to gain in the midst of the English-only movement that characterized the 1990's and the first decades of the twenty-first century. Scholars attribute this to a number of factors. First, many of the newer DLE programs have emphasized learning in a second language as a form of educational "enrichment" or "prestige" program designed for predominately English dominant students (Linton & Franklin, 2010; Valdez, Delavan, & Freire, 2014). For this reason, scholars and practitioners have begun to raise educational equity questions related to why certain student

groups, namely EBs, are being routinely excluded from the academic and cognitive benefits associated with dual language programs (Strauss, 2014; Valdez, 2014). This is especially troubling because research on the topic has shown that students identified as EBs benefit more than any other group from quality DLE programs (Cummins, 1996; Freeman, 1996; Rolstad, Mahoney, & Glass, 2005). In addition, there has been a declining emphasis placed on the important role of bilingual education in preserving the home and heritage languages of language minority students (Valdez, 2014). At the same time, some have argued that the intolerance of the English-only movement combined with shifting ideological values and demographics, have in many ways served as a catalyst for the DLE movement (Linton & Franklin, 2010; Thomas & Collier, 2012).

In general, DLE in the U.S. can be defined as an educational program designed to foster academic development across the curriculum in English and another language (Morales & Aldana, 2010). The Goal of DLE is to cultivate bilingualism, biliteracy, and positive multi-cultural awareness in students over the long term. DLE programs usually start in kindergarten (or in some cases pre-school) and are usually characterized by a 50:50 separation of languages from the start. However, in some cases a 90:10 split is used. In the 90:10 case, the language minority language is used 90% of the time at the start of the program and then progressively more and more English is added to the curriculum until there is a 50:50 distribution of languages (which usually occurs sometime between 3rd and 4th grade). As the choice of language distribution shows, there are diverse ways that DLE programs are being implemented. Below I provide a brief overview of what scholars and practitioners are referring to as one-way and two-way DLE programs. Both models are, by and large, viewed as additive developmental bilingual programs. However, it is important to note that the demographics of the school district and the existence of open-enrollment options frequently determine the type of program that schools and districts ultimately decide to implement.

One-way dual language education programs.

There are two primary types of one-way DLE programs: those that predominantly serve language minority students and those that serve English majority populations. Generally

speaking, “one-way refers to one language group receiving their schooling through their heritage language and another language” (Thomas & Collier, 2010, p. 25). This could be implemented similarly to the developmental late-exit bilingual programs described above wherein language minority students receive instruction in both their home language and the dominant language (e.g., English) for at least the first six years of schooling (or more). When the majority of the students are orally proficient in the minority language (e.g., Spanish, Chinese, Navajo) at the time they enter school, the program is considered one-way. Also encompassed within one-way DLE, are programs designed for English dominant students in schools with few language minority students. These types of programs are becoming more and more common; however, given that language-minority students are the focus of this study, one-way programs for English dominant students will not be discussed at-length.

Two-way dual language education programs.

Two-way DLE (DLE) programs bring together language minority students and students who are native-speakers of the dominant language (e.g. English). Under ideal circumstances, half of the students would be English native speakers and the other half would be native speakers of the minority language; however, the exact breakdown often depends on the demographics of the school the DLE program serves. In a well implemented program, the students serve as language models for one another in their native language. Through the equalizing of existing power structures between languages and through curricular and pedagogical structures DLE programs seek to foster multicultural understanding as well (Cohen & Lotan, 1995). Bilingual educators and scholars generally concur that DLE (both one- and two-way) is an ideal context for the development of bilingualism and biliteracy in a school setting.

Study Overview and Research Questions

Through this study, I investigated the intersections of local language policies and the (bi)literate identities of EB students across two classrooms at one urban Arizona elementary school. More specifically, I aimed to understand how both explicit and implicit language policies are enacted *in practice* in both the school and classroom environments. In recent years, there has been a growing body of research on the ways that language policies are implemented and

appropriated agentively as a part of a dynamic process across diverse educational and social spaces (Casells Johnson & Freeman, 2010; English & Varghese, 2010; Nicholas, 2011; Canagajah, 2011). This study aims to add to this growing body of research in an educational context in which the development of biliteracy was and continues to be restricted (Combs, Gonzalez, & Moll, 2011). At the same time, I explored the experiences of focal EB students in two classrooms by utilizing Wenger's (1998) theory of communities of practice and Cummins' (2016) identity investment construct as useful heuristics for making sense of the multifaceted identity work transpiring in the classrooms.

To do this, I used an institutional, ethnographic case-study approach guided by the following research questions:

1) At the school-level, how do administrators conceptualize (bi)literacy development and enact language policies impacting emergent bilinguals?
2) At the classroom-level, how do teachers conceptualize (bi)literacy development and enact language policies impacting emergent bilinguals?
3) At the student-level, in what ways do *identity texts* create spaces for identity negotiation for the focal students?

Significance of the Study

The findings produced as a part of this study will have important implications for understanding the ways educators impact educational spaces as local, ground level policy makers and implementers. By taking an ethnographic approach, my research seeks to add a nuanced perspective to the predominately top-down and text focused policy analysis approaches, which have been criticized for being disconnected from implementation and practice spaces. Likewise, by focusing directly on the experiences of EBs themselves, this study aims to provide child-centric insight into the dynamic interplay between language policies as practiced at the school and classroom levels and the negotiation of student identities in academic spaces.

At the same time, it is important to emphasize the importance of the cross-classroom analysis in the larger Arizona policy context. At the state level Arizona continues to mandate the use of the "English-only" SEI 4-hour block for EBs in segregated classrooms until students pass

the AZELLA exam. I focused on two fifth classrooms, one SEI and one DLE because EB students can (and do) obtain waivers to enroll in the dual language classroom at the selected school site in the 5th grade (due to the provision in the law allowing 10 years old to apply for SEI waivers). The presence of a DLE and an SEI classroom at the same school is rare in Arizona which made the contrast a key area of investigation for understanding language policy implementation and student experiences across classrooms. With Arizona labeled as the worst state in the nation for educating students who are still in the process of learning English (García, 2016), the importance of gaining a deeper understanding of student and educator practices in these environments could not be underestimated. Finally, given the limited number of classroom studies on K6 EB identity negotiation and language policy as practiced, this study makes an empirical contribution to the language policy and planning literature as well as the EB education literature. It is my hope that the findings produced will ultimately help inform the work of educators who work to improve the educational opportunities of EB students on a daily basis.

The following chapters provide an overview of the prior literature (Chapter 2), describe the conceptual framework that guided the study (Chapter 3), and introduce the methodological choices that informed data collection (Chapter 4). In the final portion of this document (Chapters 5, 6, and 7) I present the findings at the school, classroom, and focal student level. Finally, I provide a synthesis and analysis of the findings (Chapter 8) as well as a discussion on the implications, limitations, and conclusions (Chapter 9).

CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review that follows synthesizes the key literature relevant to the sociocultural-historical context of the study. Through this synthesis, I provide an overview of current and seminal research on SEI, DLE, and bilingual/bilcultural identity in schools.

Structured English Immersion as Restrictive Language Policy

The body of research conducted to-date on the practices, impact, and outcomes of SEI policies continues to grow. Below I discuss the findings as they relate to students' educational outcomes and educators as language policy implementers.

Educational Outcomes.

Over the last 20 years, research on SEI contexts in "English-only" states found a persistent or widening gap in achievement and educational opportunities afforded to EB students when systematically compared to their English dominant peers (Wentworth, Pellegrin, Thompson, & Hakuta, 2010; Uriarte, Tung, Lavan, & Diez, 2010; Rumberger & Tran; 2010).

The earliest studies conducted in California found no significant changes in the achievement gap or speed of EB reclassification to fluent English proficient after the implementation of the SEI there (Butler, Orr, Gutierrez, & Hakuta, 2000; Gándara, 2000; Grissom, 2004, Parrish, Pérez, Merickel, & Linquanti, 2006). Wentworth et al. (2010) conducted a longitudinal analysis of student data in California from 1997 to 2007 focused on districts with higher versus lower achieving EBs, and they found no variables that distinguished the differential performance between the districts with higher versus lower achieving EBs in 6th and 8th grade. In line with prior research on the topic (Gold, 2006; Parrish et al, 2006; Williams et al., 2007), researchers in this study concluded that there were likely a number of implementation and program quality factors at the micro level that impact student outcomes in need of further research.

In Arizona, Mahoney et al. (2010) found no difference in disaggregated achievement gains for EBs pre vs. post Proposition 203; however, in their disaggregated data they found that despite a slight improvement in the 3rd grade achievement gap, these gains not only dissipated

but also declined significantly in the 5th and 8th grades, indicating that in Arizona the achievement gap widened for EB students in the years following the implementation of the SEI mandate. In another study, Artiles, Klinner, Sullivan, & Fierros (2010) examined large-scale trends in special education identification and found that both Arizona and California exhibited a pattern of increased overrepresentation of EBs in special education, particularly in the learning-disabled category in the years following the implementation of anti-bilingual education policies. More specifically, Artiles et al. (2010) found that in Arizona over 50% of districts in the state had EBs overrepresented in the learning-disabled category, a number that doubled from 1999 (the year prior to the passage of Proposition 203) to 2006.

In Massachusetts, researchers focused on Boston Public Schools (BPS) found an even more pronounced widening of the achievement gap coupled with a narrowing of available services, an overall decline in EB enrollment in support services, and an increased dropout rate for high school EB students (Uriarte et al., 2010). Specifically, Uriarte et. al. (2010) found that after the passage of Question 2, BPS' grade level retention rates increased only for EBs. Likewise, they found that high school dropout rates for EBs went from being lower than those in comparison groups to becoming the subpopulation of students with the highest annual dropout rates (especially in the late high school years) in Massachusetts. These trends align with previous research in which Roderick (1994) linked grade level retention to a higher likelihood of eventually dropping out of school. While no researchers have looked at these specific trends in Arizona, descriptive statistics have put Arizona at the bottom of national rankings when it comes to graduating EB students (Scott, 2012). Likewise, in California, dropout rates for EB students, particularly those classified over the long-term, continue to persist (Callahan, 2013).

Educational Inputs.

While studies on the achievement gap help researchers, practitioners, and policy makers understand some of the macro level trends in their states, there are numerous limitations to the conclusions that can be drawn from these studies, including a narrow focus on high stakes test scores, difficultly in isolating the effects of specific policies, and the increasing criticism that a focus on the "achievement gap" alone emphasizes student deficiencies rather than the unequal

opportunities and resource allocations that are more often at the root of differences in educational attainment, and other life outcomes (Carter & Welner, 2013). As a result, a number of studies have sought to understand the ways that the systematic differences in access to high quality curricular opportunities (i.e. inputs) for EBs have an influence on outcomes.

Research that prioritizes student experiences in schools and classrooms through largely qualitative means has been the primary avenue for exploring the complex ways that school curriculum, such as SEI or other isolating ESL programs, impact long-term educational opportunities for EB students. These predominantly secondary level studies, found that students enrolled in ESL coursework in high school frequently miss out on valuable college preparatory courses in addition to frequently being subjected to negative school climate factors such as academic isolation from the larger student body, ESL coursework that focuses on rote linguistic skills, lowered academic expectations, and at times negative interactions with teachers (Callahan, Wilkinson, & Muller, 2010; Ek, 2009; Lew, 2004, Olsen, 2010; Valenzuela, 1999). As a result, many of these same scholars have argued for the opportunity for EB students to be placed in content area, college preparatory coursework with appropriate supports in place to address their linguistic development needs. The premise being that in such settings their academic abilities are less likely to be erroneously conflated with their proficiency level in English.

At the elementary level, fewer studies have been conducted that look at the classroom level impacts of SEI or ESL placement. However, Wright and Sung (2012) sought to capture the classroom practices and experiences of EB students in SEI classrooms in a cross-case analysis of two third grade SEI classrooms at different schools in the Phoenix metropolitan area. They found that the quality of materials and instruction at each school varied greatly. More research at the classroom level, particularly in districts with SEI policies or other highly isolating ESL programs, is therefore needed. Some researchers looked at the role of teachers and administrators in these contexts. Below I synthesize the key findings from studies focused on teachers and administrators who work with EBs.

Educators as Language Policy Implementers

Researchers who studied the policy implementation processes following the passage of Proposition 227, Proposition 203, and Question Two found that these policies were frequently associated with confusion that led to established educators feeling as if their expertise and autonomy (as well as the identities of their students) had been undermined (de Jong, Arias, and Sánchez, 2010; Lillie, Markos, Arias, & Wiley 2012; Newcomer, 2015; Ríos Aguilar, Gonzalez Canche, and Moll, 2012; Wright and Sung, 2012). In Arizona specifically, researchers conducting interview and survey research studies have found that the many educators on the ground working with EBs believe that the Arizona four-hour block is too restrictive and not helping to accelerate their students' English proficiency (Grijalva & Jimenez-Silva, 2014; Newcomer & Collier, 2015; Ríos Aguilar et al., 2012; Wright and Sung, 2012). In fact, Ríos Aguilar et al. (2012) surveyed over 850 teachers who work with EBs across Arizona, and they found the majority felt that the current model was not adequately preparing EBs to meet the academic standards required of them by the mainstream curriculum. As a result, there were serious concerns about EBs falling behind their peers academically (Ríos Aguilar et al., 2012).

Concerns were also expressed with regard to inequitable pedagogical practices associated with in-school segregation, access to curriculum, funding, and delayed high school graduation (Gándara & Orfield, 2012; Grijalva & Jimenez-Silva, 2014; Newcomer, 2015; Ríos Aguilar et al., 2012). At the same time, there is growing evidence that EB educators across Arizona, despite by and large lacking proficiency in an additional language themselves, feel that developing biliteracy is important to the success of their students (Ríos Aguilar et al., 2012; Wright and Sung, 2012).

A few researchers have also begun to address educator agency as language policy implementers. This growing body of research has found evidence of both tolerance and resistance to mandated policies (Grijalva & Jimenez-Silva, 2014; Newcomer, 2015). In the Grijalva & Jimenez-Silva (2014) study administrators discussed fears associated with noncompliance; therefore, many principals indicated they conditionally tolerated the Arizona SEI model. Newcomer & Collier (2015), on the other hand, found that the practices of teachers on the

ground at times embodied resistance to SEI policy. Specifically, they found evidence of teacher agency in determining the extent to which alternative instructional models and culturally sustaining pedagogy as an instructional tool were utilized with their EB students.

In Arizona, there have been concerning trends among teachers as well. Specifically, Wright and Sung (2012) found evidence teachers believed that primary language support of any kind was not allowed in the classroom, and that SEI classrooms in some cases were being treated like mainstream 'submersion' classrooms where little, if any, ESL/ELD supports were in place to meet the needs of EBs. Moreover, de Jong & Arias' (2010) study reported a disconcerting downward trend in the number of bilingual educators after the passage of Proposition 203, in addition to a notable reduction in the amount of pre-service training and professional development required of teachers preparing to work with EBs in Arizona (as measured by college and professional development credits).

A small group of researchers have also begun to look at the experiences and values of pre-service teachers preparing to work with EBs in classrooms across Arizona. Researchers of these studies, which are based on the largest undergraduate teacher preparation program in Arizona, found that there was often a lack of awareness of many of the critical challenges faced by EB students (Murri, Markos, Estrella Silva, 2012; Olsen, 2012). Specifically, Olsen (2012) found that the majority of her participants, who were predominantly white, female pre-service teachers, mirrored the English-only ideological values espoused in the SEI model and state mandated teacher preparation coursework. Moreover, the majority of the pre-service teachers did not have a desire to work with EB students in the future, which some indicated was because they did not have a similar background or did not feel fully capable of providing the support they believed would be necessary to teach this type of student population. Moore (2012) also found that many (although not all) of those training pre- and in-service teachers reflected majoritarian English-only ideologies in their work. This research suggests that English only ideologies have influenced teacher training models, and teachers across Arizona.

From Bilingual to Dual Language Education

As described above the goal of two-way DLE programs is to develop fully bilingual and biliterate learners in English and a minority language such as Spanish or Chinese. Across the nation, there has been a steady increase in DLE programs over the last 30 years. Even in California after Proposition 227 there was a sharp increase in the number of DLE programs across the state (Linton & Franklin, 2010; Thomas & Collier, 2012). Part of this was because the California policy context made it possible for new and existing DLE programs to (re)open as charter schools in order to permit EB student enrollment without going through the waiver process required under Proposition 227 (Linton & Franklin, 2010). However, opening as a public charter was a long, complex process, therefore growth in DLE charter school programs was most often linked to educator and parent-driven advocacy efforts (Linton & Franklin, 2010).

At the same time, numerous scholars have begun to ask if the growth in DLE programs is adequately addressing the needs of EBs (Strauss, 2014; Valdez, Delavan, & Freire, 2014). These concerns are largely rooted in the disproportionate rise in the number of one-way DLE programs designed to serve predominately affluent English dominant students as a form of “enrichment” or “prestige” program. While the rise in the number of DLE programs is ultimately to the benefit of all students involved, there are serious questions surrounding the sociopolitical rationales behind promoting biliteracy for certain groups of students, while restricting (and deprioritizing) it for others (i.e. EBs) (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010; Sheet, 2014; Valdez et al., 2014)

In fact, in most of the large scale quantitative studies conducted to date on the effects of bilingual education, researchers found statistically significant positive effects for bilingual education (Greene, 1997; Francis, Lesaux, & August, 2006; Rolstad, Mahoney, & Glass, 2005; Slavin & Cheung, 2005; Thomas & Collier, 2002; Willig, 1985). Many of these studies have used best-evidence syntheses and meta-analytic techniques to compare the effects of various types of bilingual education to English-only programs *for EBs* and have been unanimous in their findings that EBs who receive bilingual instruction by and large outperform their peers in English only-programs (Greene, 1997; Rolstad, Mahoney, & Glass, 2005; Slavin & Cheung, 2005; Thomas & Collier, 2002; Willig, 1985). August, Goldenberg, and Rueda (2010) also point out how rare it is

that five large scale, peer-reviewed quantitative syntheses conducted by independent researchers came to such similar conclusions.

At the same time, there were a few smaller studies and research syntheses that found no differences between bilingual education and English only instructional methods, yet also no discernable negative outcome associated with bilingual education (Rossell & Baker, 1996; Baker & Kanter, 1981). However, it is important to point out that the historical research syntheses cited here were part of an intense political debate surrounding the federal government's role in supporting bilingual educational models. The Baker and Kanter (1981) study was highly criticized by researchers for its lack of rigor, peer review, and its underlying political purpose as a report seeking to determine whether transitional bilingual education programs should be mandated by law. The authors concluded that they should not be mandated. Several large scale, scholarly reviewed studies (Willig, 1985; Green, 1997) as well as another large scale federal evaluation (Ramirez, 1992) followed the Kanter and Baker reports (1981/1996). The scholarly research syntheses reanalyzed the studies initially reviewed by Baker & Kanter (1981) and both reached different conclusions favoring bilingual education (Willig, 1985; Green, 1997). The differences in effect sizes, statistical significance, and overall conclusions of the studies can be attributed to various factors such as the inclusion/exclusion criteria, improved statistical controls, and the diverse research questions being pursued by the researchers (August et al., 2010). Kanter's (1981) original report was, therefore, considered by most to lack academic rigor, proper controls, and systematic organization especially considering the large-scale conclusions it drew at the national level. The large-scale Ramirez report (1992), which was part of an eight-year study commissioned by the federal government, also reached the conclusion that EB students, particularly Latinx students, performed better when exposed to their L1 for prolonged periods in school.

Research since has also found that students in developmental bilingual programs who sought to develop biliteracy throughout elementary school (at minimum) did better than those in transitional bilingual programs where the goal was transitioning students to coursework in mainstream English as soon as possible (Rolstad et al, 2005; Thomas & Collier, 2002). The

Thomas and Collier (2002) study took a multiple site case-study approach in their longitudinal research (1996-2001) on language minority students across the U.S. The study documented the ways that EB students in one-way and two-way dual language programs not only reached higher levels of academic achievement across the curriculum when compared to EB peers in mainstream and traditional ESL coursework, but also found that the longer a student spent in a DLE program, the better their long term academic success. They emphasize that it takes DLE students on average of 4-7 years to outperform their peers, highlighting the importance of focusing on learning outcomes over the long term. Interestingly, the Thomas and Collier (2002) study was one of the only studies to look at Spanish achievement, and they found that EBs outperformed their English dominant peers on standardized achievement examinations administered in Spanish, implicating the role that DLE can play in equalizing language power relations.

The role of language transfer as a possible explanation for the improved outcomes of EB students in DLE programs is one theory. This body of literature has looked at the ways that literacy in one language predicts literacy in a second language in areas such as reading comprehension, spelling, and vocabulary development (Abu-Rabia, 1997; Cummins, 1979; Fashola, Drum, Mayer, & Kang; 1996; García, 1998; Reese, Garnier, Gallimore, & Goldenberg, 2000); Furthermore, research on the "non academic" benefits of developmental bilingual education has demonstrated numerous advantages for EBs such as increased cognitive flexibility, greater family cohesion, and improved self-concept and identity associations (Bialystock, 2001; Lee, 2008; Portes & Hao, 2002; Portes & Zady, 2002; Vom Dorp, 2000). Below I provide a brief overview of studies where researchers look at language use and identity as they relate to EB and immigrant students.

Learner Identity and Emergent Bilinguals

Language and identity are inextricably linked, and undoubtedly influenced by the multiple social and institutional contexts in which individuals are situated over the course of their lifespans (Locke Davidson, 1996; Hall, 2012). It is in these contexts linguistic interaction mediates the diverse social and institutional settings wherein identities are developed, negotiated, contested,

and re-constructed in relationship with others (Hall, 2012; Norton, 2007). Given the immense amount of time that children and adolescents spend in K12 educational settings, schools have been and to continue to be key to understanding the ways that learners develop and negotiate their identities. This is in part because "in classrooms, curriculum and pedagogy are the mirrors in which children see themselves reflected and through which they construct images of themselves as thinkers, learners, and users of language" (McCarty, 1993, p. 191).

The interactional environments in which students forge relationships with educators, their peers, and the structures of schooling are therefore central to understanding the micro-level interactions and interpersonal spaces in which students negotiate their identities and acquire new forms of disciplinary knowledge (Cummins, 1996). Of particular relevance to this study are the prior studies which have sought to identify the factors that influence the negotiation of identities in school contexts among culturally and linguistically diverse students. Below I summarize the key findings.

The seminal work of Ogbu (1978) highlighted the ways that macro-ideologies and the historical exploitation experienced by students from certain ethnic and linguistic backgrounds played out in schools. Specifically, Ogbu (1987) contended that the historical forms of cultural subordination and stigmatization experienced by racialized students led to their skepticism of education as a "great equalizer." Particularly, racialized groups that had been historically colonized, enslaved, or treated as "caste-type" minorities (i.e. African Americans, Native Americans, and some Mexican Americans), were astutely aware of the ways that their upward mobility was limited, and therefore naturally less motivated and engaged in academic contexts. As a result of this dynamic, researchers at the time argued that cultural forms of oppositional identity became key markers of resistance to dominant culture in response to the ongoing social, political, and economic oppression experienced by these students (Ogbu, 1987; Willis, 1977). Some studies went on to describe certain behaviors and ideologies as manifestations of oppositional resistance to academic engagement, such as "acting White" as a form of disloyalty to one's community (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Matute-Bianchi, 1986).

At the same time, other researchers began to document distinct differences in the academic engagement patterns and youth ideological stances among recent immigrant groups (particularly when compared to the historically present minority groups described above). Specifically, these studies documented that despite often similar socioeconomic realities, students from families of recent immigrants were more likely to perceive school as key to honoring their families sacrifices and pursuing upward mobility opportunities (Gibson, 1987; Suarez Orozco, 1989; Suarez-Orozco, 1993). Later studies, have consistently found that first generation immigrant groups frequently academically outperform historically present minoritized student groups (Bailey & Weininger, 2004; Bailey and Vernez & Abrahamse, 2003). While the focus on generational analyses was both insightful and theoretically useful in some ways, this dichotomy was soon criticized as overly simplistic and failing to account for the diverse lived realties of culturally and linguistically diverse students both in and out of school. As a result, new theoretical, pedagogical, and empirical perspectives began to arise in order to account for the ways that the multiple identities and lived experiences frequently interacted and influenced the educational opportunities and outcomes of students in ways that previously had not been explored.

Specifically, studies that sought to understand and document classroom environments, teacher pedagogy, and the home environments of students grew in number. These studies found that classroom pedagogy often failed to engage culturally and linguistically diverse youth for a number of reasons related to low expectations, deficit perspectives, and lack of educator awareness of the extensive cultural and linguistic knowledge that students brought to school each day (Begay, Dick, Estell, Estell, MCarty, & Sells, 1995; McCarty, 1989; Moll, 1992; Heath, 1983; Phillips, 1983; Villegas, 1991). Several of these studies found that the interactional patterns in schools tended to reflect the linguistic and cultural norms of the mainstream, predominately white cultural groups (Heath, 1983; Phillips, 1983). This meant that students of color frequently had different understandings of interactional behaviors related to storytelling, turn taking, gender role expectations, and self-directed or cooperative learning (Heath, 1983; Begay et al., 1995; Villegas, 1991). Moll (1992) focused on *funds of knowledge*, which he defined as “the essential cultural

practices and bodies of knowledge and information that households use to survive, to get ahead, or to thrive" (p. 21). Moll's extensive research on the home lives of bilingual Latinx students in Arizona focused largely on labor markets and social networks, but likewise found that school structures often failed to acknowledge the unique experiences that were a part of students' home lives, including but not limited to ranching, mechanics, carpentry, cultivating and harvesting plants, home and herbal remedies, and many other forms of cultural practices.

Studies like these lead to the development of pedagogical innovations that sought to merge curricula with the lived sociocultural realities of students. Frequently referred to as culturally relevant pedagogies, the diverse curricula that fall under this umbrella term seek to improve student engagement, opportunities to learn, and academic outcomes by incorporating the languages and cultures of students into the classroom in meaningful ways, thus positioning their identities as strengths (López, 2016). Diverse manifestations of culturally relevant pedagogies include equity pedagogy (Banks, 1993), language awareness curriculum (Svalber, 2009); critical bicultural pedagogy (Darder, 2012); and culturally relevant, responsive, or sustaining pedagogies (Ladson-Billings, 1995a; 1995b; Gay, 2010; Paris, 2012). Developmental dual language education (DLE) as previously described theoretically also falls into this realm due to the unique ways it seeks to preserve and develop students' home or heritage languages as a part of a bicultural curriculum; however, the pedagogy and curriculum used in DLE programs varies widely from program to program. By incorporating student identity into the curriculum in ways that affirm and incorporate students' home languages and cultures, culturally relevant educators seek to transform students' relationships with schooling and empower them as learners (Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Santamaria, 2009).

A number of studies have set out to understand the links between pedagogy, language, culture, and identity across psychology, linguistics, and education. These studies, while diverse in their goals, have sought to explain the connections between student identities, instructional practices, and the academic outcomes. In the remainder of this section I summarize the key findings from these studies.

Educational programing that develops a critical awareness of discrimination, prejudice, and social justice issues while at the same time affirming student cultural identities and academic achievement have been linked to positive student outcomes such as improved standardized test scores, high school graduation rates, and college attendance rates (Cabrera, Milem, Jaquette, & Marx, 2014; Hehan, Hubbard, & Villanueva, 1994; López, 2016). López's (2016) study used hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) to understand the ways that teachers' beliefs and behaviors associated with culturally relevant teaching (CRT) and student identities impacted academic outcomes. She found that teacher beliefs about incorporating Spanish into instruction, funds of knowledge, and critical awareness were associated with higher reading achievement scores in a sample of Latinx elementary aged students (3rd-5th grade). Likewise, Cabrera (2014) investigated the academic achievement of students enrolled in Tucson's Mexican American Studies (MAS) program which was, prior to being outlawed, a national exemplar of a successful critical and bicultural pedagogy program. Using regression analyses, he found that students enrolled in the Mexican American Studies program outperformed their peers on standardized achievement measures and in graduating from high school.

In education psychology, research has also established links between student identity and minority status, segregation, educational curricula, in-school labeling, and classroom grouping practices (Brown & Bigler, 2002; Bigler & Liben, 2006; Nesdale & Flesser, 2001). Specifically, educational contexts, practices, and materials that produce "stereotype threat" (i.e. negative academic stereotypes about certain racial-ethnic groups) have negative consequences on the academic engagement of Latinx and African American students (Gonzales, Blanton, & Williams, 2002; McKown & Weinstein, 2003; Steel, 1997). In line with the work of López (2016) and Cabrera (2014) outlined above, Oyserman, Grant, & Ager (1995) proposed a racial-ethnic identity model in which awareness of racism, connectedness with one's cultural-ethnic group, and embedded achievement (which posits that achievement is valued by the racial-ethnic community), produced positive academic and social outcomes in school for youth from racial-ethnic minority groups. In testing this model, scholars did indeed find that connectedness, awareness of racism, and embedded achievement interacted in unique ways to predict higher

grades, academic achievement, and the overall well-being among Latinx, American Indian, and African American youth (Altschul, Oyserman, & Bybee, 2006; Oyserman et al., 1995; Oyserman, Harrison, & Bybee, 2001; Oyserman, Bybee, & Terry, 2003).

In looking specifically at language minority students, the link between bilingualism and identity has been established (Portes & Zady, 2002; Lee, 2008; Suarez Orozco & Suarez Orozco, 2000; Vom Dorp, 2000). Specifically, dual language environments that value multiculturalism and multilingualism have been linked to improved self-concept and academic confidence in EBs (Lee, 2008; Portes & Zady, 2002). Using ethnographic methods, Morales (2010) and Newcomer and Puizo (2014) specifically looked at the experiences of EBs in Spanish-English dual language schools that operate in states with restrictive language policies. Their findings point to the importance of building bilingual communities of practice that not only develop students with advanced levels of bilingualism and biliteracy, but also create environments that value family, culture, and multilingualism as integrally connected to student identities in the past, present, and future (Morales, 2010; Newcomer & Puizo, 2014).

Summary

Through this review of literature, I sought to bring together the prior research on the educational outcomes, opportunities, and experiences of EB students in diverse curricular program models. At the same time, I linked this literature to the extant research on student identities and culturally relevant pedagogies in K12 settings. The policy research conducted on SEI has predominately focused on student testing outcomes and the influence of these policies on educators. While the student identity research has largely explored the experiences of adolescent age youth. In this study, I seek to add to the literature by conducting an institutional, ethnographic case study at an elementary school on the policies, practices, and educational opportunities that influence EBs in both SEI and DLE classrooms. My exploration of the prior literature led me to a number of theoretical frameworks and constructs that would best capture this study's research questions. Below, prior to presenting the methodology (Chapter 4), I outline the multifaceted conceptual framework, which guided this dissertation.

CHAPTER 3
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

I theoretically position this work within a sociocultural-historical perspective which assumes that the underlying nature of knowledge “must be understood in, and cannot be separated from, its social and cultural historical context” (Rogoff, 2003, p. 50; Vygotsky, 1978). Scholars who conceptualize their work through this lens have sought to understand diverse phenomena associated with human development across disciplines such as psychology, sociology, education, linguistics, and other social science disciplines. To explore knowledge from a sociocultural perspective, it is necessary to situate oneself within a specific context. In this case the context will be two fifth grade classrooms within the same school. At the same time, given the policy context described in the introduction and the nature of language learning as central to this study, I will draw on three theoretical perspectives from within sociocultural policy, language policy and planning, and student identity theories. I argue that the central tenants of these theories will allow me to make sense of the dynamic classroom and in-school realities of EB students, and their communities of support in an Arizona educational policy context.

A Sociocultural Understanding of Policy and Practice in Education

Sociocultural policy studies in education have largely emerged from research through which researchers look at policy implementation studies across diverse disciplinary contexts in the social sciences. These scholars have sought to critically reconceptualize the relationship between government, society, and individuals as dynamic and nonlinear in nature (Ball, 1990; Shore & Wright, 1997). Specifically, from an anthropological perspective, Shore and Wright (1997) asked questions related to policy in action, policy failure, policy discourse, and the power dynamics at play when policies construct subjective realties that influence possibilities, practices, and often identities as well.

In expanding this framework, Sutton and Levinson (2001) explain that a sociocultural approach views educational policy as “a complex social practice, [and] an ongoing process of normative cultural production constituted by diverse actors across diverse social and institutional contexts” (p.1). Within this framework policy *is* practice, therefore human activity within a given context can by analyzed through policy *moments* and policy *appropriation* as a means to highlight

the agency, identities, values, beliefs, or the lived experiences of individuals and groups across time (Sutton & Levinson, 2001). More specifically, *appropriation* unites policy formation and implementation under one umbrella that conceptualizes the multifaceted, and ongoing nature of policy processes. *Moments* represent instances in which it is possible to "account for the negotiation of policy in everyday life." (Sutton & Levinson, 2001, p. 2). In this model, individuals act as creative agents in the uptake of policies (i.e. appropriation) by illuminating the ways that actors, despite the presence of structural and procedural constraints, may incorporate policies and new information according to their own unique interests, motivations, resources, and backgrounds (Sutton & Levinson, 2001). Through this framework, it becomes possible to explore the ways that groups and individuals come to understand, engage, reflect upon, and at times resist policies and the normative discourses associated with them at the local level.

The ethnography of language-education policy

In light of the sociocultural approach to policy outlined above that integrates the notion of policy as appropriated through moments at the local level, I sought to explore classroom practices as embodying the agency of educators and students in everyday interactions. To do this I looked to a combination of the ethnography of language policy (Hornberger, 1988; Hornberger & Johnson, 2007; 2011; McCarty, 2011; Ricento & Hornberger, 1996) and educational language policy (Menken & García, 2010) as a way to conceptually frame the ways the ubiquitous nature of language in everyday interaction places the power to negotiate the meaning of language policies in the hands of educators, particularly classroom teachers (Menken & García, 2010). Given the context and goals of this study, I combine the two perspectives as an ethnography of language-education policy approach in order to make sense of the idea that both formal and informal language policies are practiced in the classroom contexts in which students and teachers are situated daily.

The ethnography of language policy was first theoretically posited by Ricento and Hornberger (1996) in their seminal work which discussed language policy and planning (LPP) processes as a metaphorical onion. They use this metaphor to describe the unique ways that social contexts interact with agents to inform the ways that language policy processes manifest

distinctly across spaces in which language policy making, implementing, and appropriating occur (Hornberger & Johnson, 2011). Johnson and Hornberger's (2011) further elaborated this as an approach which allows researchers to interrogate the connections between the macro and micro layers by illuminating connections between policy and practice which they linked to "a critical approach with a focus on agency, [and] recognizing the power of both *societal* and *local* policy texts, discourses, and discoursers..." (Johnson, 2013, p. 44). In extending this perspective, McCarty (2011) emphasized that language policy, planning, and practice are conceptualized in her work on the ethnography of language policy "not as separable acts but as mutual constitutive, interdependent, and co-occurring sociocultural processes" (p. 7).

Around this same time, Menken and García (2010) began theorizing about the unique role of districts, schools, and classrooms in LPP as educational language policy. Their work emphasizes the place of both official and unofficial language education policies as "interpreted, negotiated, and ultimately (re)constructed in the process of implementation" (Menken & Garcia, 2010, p. 1). In this way, they position implementation as central to policymaking and thus position educators as occupying powerful roles as language policymakers. In a U.S. context, they highlight the power of the practices of educators in everyday contexts to resist English-only ideologies that position bi/multilingualism as a problem in schools and instead position bi/multilingualism as a resource and right of language minority students (Ruiz, 1984).

This is in line with Ricento's (2000) historical analysis of the evolution of research within LPP as in-process, but predominately concerned with exploring the tensions between linguistic human rights and hegemonic language ideologies. LLP scholars have therefore called for expanding research which seeks to answer questions related to language beliefs, local practice, agency, identity, and social justice (McCarty, 2011; Ricento, 2000). In heeding this call through this study, it was my intention to privilege lived experiences in order to give voice to the participants' perspectives at the micro and meso levels of analysis, while never failing to acknowledge the macro level sociocultural, historical, and political influences at play (Sumida-Huaman, 2016). However, prior to exploring how I will pursue this end methodologically, below I discuss current theories related to language minority student identities.

The Intersections of Identity

Identity as a construct of interest has been explored theoretically across disciplines in the social sciences for many years. For this reason, scholars have defined it in distinct ways depending on their theoretical orientations and historical place in time. The distinction often drawn between psychological and sociological identity theories often lies at the level of context emphasized in identity processes (Deaux & Martin, 2003). Specifically, scholars from sociological conceptualizations tend to analyze individuals' relational ties to established social structures and societal roles (Stryker, 1980), whereas psychological conceptualizations typically examine individual characteristics linked to categorical memberships and cognitive constructs such as motivation, sense of belonging, and self-concept, among others (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In attempting to link the two frameworks in a novel way, Deaux and Martin (2003) expand on Streyker, Serpe, and Hunt's (2000) levels of context by broadly identifying three levels of context in identity development: large-scale socio-demographic contexts, intermediate institutional contexts, and proximate or interpersonal-relational contexts. By incorporating cognitive self-categorization factors, Deaux and Martin's (2003) integrative model seeks to highlight the ways identity negotiation is both an agentive process and the result of structural opportunities and constraints associated with particular social contexts (Deaux & Martin, 2003). In this way, "identities are both claimed subjectively and ascribed collectively" (Deaux & Martin, 2003, p. 107)

Likewise, scholars from across the social sciences and legal studies have interrogated the idea of multiple identities which exist both from moment to moment, and over time. The focus has often centered on the importance of cultural communities in the development of the self (Erikson, 1994; Rogoff, 2003). These communities may include familial, racial, national, socioeconomic, gendered, religious, or other sociocultural associations that share common characteristics. At the same time, communities can include affinity groups (Gee, 2001) or communities of practice (Wenger, 1998), which convene around common goals, practices, and interests.

Scholars have expanded on the idea of a multiplicity of identities in individual and group experiences not only by highlighting the unique ways that identities converge, diverge, and evolve

as a part of an interconnected network, but also by emphasizing the ways that historically marginalized groups are at times pushed further into the margins by the tendency to oversimplify and essentialize identity categories (Crenshaw, 1991; McCall, 2005; Meseus & Griffin, 2011; Shields, 2008). This perspective emerged from legal studies, where Crenshaw (1991) first looked at the ways that African American women's opportunities were uniquely constrained by both their race and gender simultaneously in court cases. Diverse scholars have since elaborated on the role of intersectionality in understanding lived experiences. From within an intersectional framework, scholars explore lived experiences through distinct, yet overlapping identity associations in order to understand the ways that social, institutional, and political structures impact patterns of inequality and opportunity across social contexts and categories. By focusing on instances of marginalization while at the same time taking into consideration the role of ideologies, power, and privilege, intersectionality seeks to challenge injustices and reduce the likelihood of marginalization, particularly among the most vulnerable (Núñez, 2014).

In this study, understanding the interplay between these diverse levels of context is central to understanding the macro-level ideologies that influence the institutional and micro-level interpersonal settings in which EBs are embedded in their day-to-day classroom lives. Likewise, an intersectional perspective allows for the exploration of the diverse backgrounds that EBs embody. Thus, it resists the tendency to oversimplify EBs from Latinx backgrounds as a monolithic group while at the same time allowing for deeper understandings of the ways in which educational and curricular contexts may stigmatize, (dis)empower, and produce (in)equitable outcomes for EB students. At the same time, considering linguistic and (bi)literate academic identities is of central importance to the study of student identities in schools. Below, I explore relevant theorizations prior to presenting the methodological framework that will be used to measure the key constructs of interest.

Identity in Learning, Literacy, and Language

Vygotsky (1978) is largely credited for theorizing the role of social interaction in human development. In his work, the activities in which individuals engage are tied to both the institutional and socio-historical contexts in an interdependent interplay. The work of Vygotsky

(1978) further contends that literacy, mathematics, and other situated academic skills are culturally specific developments, rather than linked to broader conceptions of advanced cognitive development. In this view, symbolic and cultural tools specific to school related activities mediate learning within the *zone of proximal development* (ZPD). ZPD is a space in which children or otherwise novice learners are exposed to more experienced individuals within their culture, who seek to facilitate learning through participation in cultural activities that novice learners could not otherwise do on their own (Vygotsky, 1978).

In education, this has been applied to the development of literacy skills in children. Wherein schools and classrooms create spaces in which children are socialized into certain ways of being and knowing, that in turn position students in ways that have profound implications for their identity development (e.g. high or low achievers, or other labels) (Caraballo, 2016). Within educational institutions, both the curriculum and pedagogies used within the ZPD are mediated by individual natures, discourse, and affinities (Gee, 2000) that shape how students come to interact with and view themselves through their literacy practices (Caraballo, 2016; McCarty,1993). Moje and Luke (2009) identified five common metaphors used in studying identity in literacy research, which included identity as difference, identity as self/subjectivities, identity as mind or consciousness, identity as narrative, and identity as positioning. They indicated that these conceptualizations are not mutually exclusive, but instead frequently overlap (Moje & Luke, 2009). At the same time, their synthesis found that although scholars conceptualized identity in diverse ways, identity was generally defined as socially constructed (Erikson, 1994; Sarup, 1996), fluid (Anzaldúa, 1999; Gee, 2001; Misher, 2004; Moje, 2004a), and recognized by others (Gee, 2001) across studies. In this study, I used this as my working definition of identity as I engaged in data collection.

At the same time, given the focus on EBs and classroom practices, both language and classroom discourse are central to the framing of this study. From this perspective, language as a cultural sense-making tool is key to understanding the development and evolution of the social, fluid, and recognized nature of identity, particularly in academic settings where students are actively engaged in learning and literacy development. The process of language learning is

particularly sensitive to issues of identity because "…it is also a complex social practice in which the value and meaning ascribed to an utterance are determined in part by the value and meaning ascribed to the person who speaks" (Norton & Toohey, 2002). For students from historically marginalized linguistic and cultural minority groups, there is evidence of the connections between the value placed on their linguistic ways and language use and their identity development (Olsen, 2000; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2000). In fact, García (2014) argues that "teaching U.S. Latinos today without including their Spanish language practices restricts their voices, knowledge, opportunities, and imagination" (p. 60). Therefore, it is of paramount importance that researchers continue to seek pathways for illuminating the ways that language, learning, and literacy development are experienced as a part of the larger identity narratives of EB students.

To explore the complexity of both the intersectional and (bi)literate identities of EB students, I will use *communities of practice* (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) and *identity investment* (Cummins, 2016) as useful heuristics for making-sense of the multifaceted identity work transpiring in two urban fifth grade classrooms. Wenger (1998) outlined a social theory of *learning as participation* in diverse communities of practice in which the meanings, practices, and identities developed in these communities mediated learning as doing, experiencing, belonging, and becoming. The classrooms in the present study are, therefore, only one part of the "nexus of multimembership" in which students and teachers actively engage (Wenger, 1998, p.158). Wenger (1998) emphasized that within these diverse communities of practice, "participation here refers not just to local events of engagement in certain activities with certain people, but to a more encompassing process of being active participants in the practices of social communities and constructing identities in relation to these communities" (p. 3). It is in and through participation in these communities of practice, that individuals "develop, negotiate, and share" in the construction of theories, assumptions, and worldviews that guide their lives in ways that are both personal and social (Wenger, 1998 p. 48). Identity negotiation is, therefore, central to communities of practice, because these spaces shape students' interpretations of their past and present, as well as their possible future selves. This framework provides a lens through which to make sense of the social, multiple, and recognized identities of EB students from diverse linguistic, racial, familial, and SES

backgrounds in a shared classroom community.

As a part of what Wenger (1998) calls the process of identity formation and learning, three modes of belonging are outlined: *engagement, imagination, and alignment*. In the context of this study, engagement refers to the practices, interactions, learning histories, and relationships in which students participate in a classroom context. Imagination, on the other hand, relates to students' emerging worldviews and the ways in which they see themselves connected to broader communities and narratives. Alignment is also broader than engagement because it involves connections, coordination, and at times compliance questions that connect the microlevel classroom practices with broader discourses and structures that influence the community of practice. I will utilize these three constructs as a means to make sense of student engagement patterns, identity negotiation processes, and instructional-curricular decisions in the classrooms participating in this study.

Similarly, I will use Cummins' (2006) *identity investment* as a construct that will allow me to better explore the links between student participants' (bi)literate identities and the academic environments in which they are embedded. As one piece of a larger academic expertise framework, identity investment expands upon established learning theories such as building on students' prior knowledge, and crafting learning communities that engage students in active, critical literacy by positing that the degree to which learning communities invest in student identities will determine the extent to which students engage with the curriculum and instruction in classrooms. More specifically, it "proposes that optimal academic development within the interpersonal space of the learning community occurs only when there is both maximum cognitive engagement and maximum identity investment on the part of students" (Cummins, 2006, p. 60).

This framework is also unique because of its focus on developing both multiliteracies and multilingualism in students from language minority backgrounds. Like other similar frameworks (i.e. funds of knowledge and culturally relevant teaching), it seeks to challenge the overemphasis on the dominant language (and culture) by acknowledging the importance of students' linguistic and cultural capital as an explicit part of the curriculum. It also pushes for the incorporation of multiliteracies that move beyond traditional text-based literacy to also incorporate many of the

technologically-mediated literacies that are a part of the lived realities of twenty-first century students (Cummins, 2006). Likewise, this framework is particularly useful because of its explicit

Figure 3.1. Conceptual Model Visualization

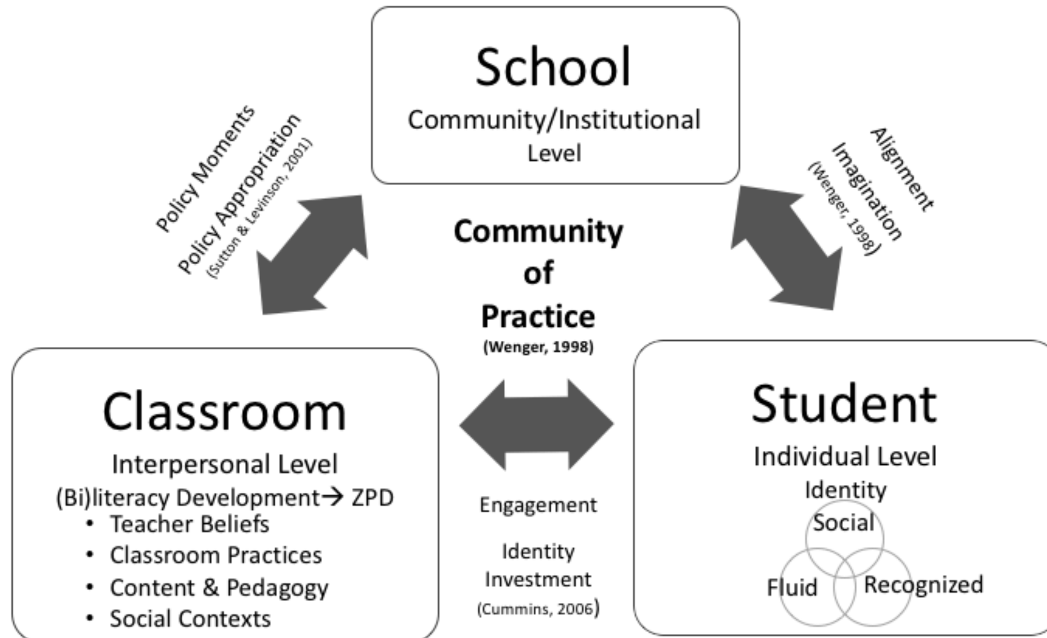


Figure 3.1. Theoretical model linking sociocultural policy (Sutton & Levinson, 2001), LPP (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996; Menken & García, 2010) and identity perspectives (Cummins, 2006; Wenger, 1998; Vygotsky, 1978).

focus on using identity texts to mediate the identity negotiation processes of EB students in classrooms (or other educational) contexts. As a part of the data collection procedures in the following chapter, I further explicate the construct of identity investment through the production of identity texts as a useful tool for empirically engaging in the exploration of the identity work that takes place in classroom settings.

Summary

This theoretical framework seeks to unite the ways that policy as practiced in classrooms has implications for the ways that EB students negotiate their identities as they develop (bi)literacy. Figure 3.1 provides a conceptual model of the connections between the diverse perspectives from sociocultural policy, LPP, and student identities that inform this study. In the chapter that follows, I describe the methodological approach and procedures I used to collect the data.

CHAPTER 4
METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, I outline the methodology and data collection procedures that I used as part of this institutional, ethnographic case study. I first provide an overview of the empirical approach, research questions, and the context of the study. Then, I proceed to justify the participant selection methods, data collection procedures, and data analysis strategies. Finally, I end with a statement on ethical considerations and my researcher positionality.

Ethnographic Approach

Epistemologically, I aligned this work with the view that knowledge is situated in specific social contexts, thus “in every act… individual and society are intertwined” (Streek, Goodwin, LeBaron, 2011, p. 5). This perspective views the self as mediated by social interactions that are embedded in communities of practice, and invariably utilize historically specific cultural tools to make sense of lived realities (Blumer,1969; Mead, 1934; Streek et al., 2011; Wenger, 1998). From within in this perspective, I viewed ethnography as appropriate for this particular study given its focus on describing, analyzing, and interpreting classrooms as communities of practice with shared cultures.

Culture is often defined broadly as linked to the nuances of human behaviors, beliefs, languages, rituals, and other patterns or tools of engagement (Creswell, 2015). For the purposes of this study, I employed a sociocultural perspective, which asserts that:

> culture is not an entity that *influences* individuals. Instead, people contribute to the creation of cultural processes and cultural processes contribute to the creation of people. Thus individual and cultural process are *mutually constituting* rather than defined separately from each other (Rogoff, 2003 p.51)

In classrooms, the dynamic interplay of educational policies, institutional discourses, pedagogical practices, and individual identities come together in complex, fluid, and at times unpredictable ways. Thus, “the ethnographer's challenge is to weave the immediacy and rawness of educational experiences into a context from which analytical patterns and insights can be discerned” (Mills & Morton, 2013, p.1). Equally important is acknowledging the historical crisis of representation (Clifford & Marcus, 1996) that makes ethnography messy and undoubtedly

intertwined with researcher subjectivities (Denzin, 1997). With this in mind, I used ethnography as lens for being, seeing, thinking, and writing (Mills & Morton, 2013) as I sought to explore the connections between larger institutional level discourses, language policies as practiced at the classroom level, and identity negotiation processes of EB students enrolled in an urban Arizona elementary school.

Ethnography is an unquestionably wide lens from which many diverse perspectives and approaches to research have emerged. Therefore, from within ethnography, this study aligns well with institutional ethnography (Smith, 1986). Gobo (2008) defines this form of ethnography as an approach that enables the exploration of:

> …the micro-macro connections amongst local settings of everyday life, organizations, and translocal processes of administration. It examines how social systems and institutional relations shape individual experience; how macro-level political discourse and organizational knowledge translate into micro practices that impede educational access, govern employment opportunities and shape quality of life. (p. 66)

Institutional ethnography also can be conceptualized as a form of ethnographic case study (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999; Creswell, 2015). I consider this study an institutionally based, ethnographic case study, where the case is multilevel, but bounded at the school level. The analysis included the school, classroom, and individual student levels. These multiple levels were necessary for exploring the macro-micro connections from within the school-specific educational context.

Methodologically, ethnographies utilize diverse forms of data collection procedures that lend themselves to in-depth analyses aligned with the research questions. As such, I used qualitative methods including interviews, observations, institutional documents, and student “identity text sessions.” However, I also administered a small student questionnaire in order to gather some basic descriptive information on the two participating classrooms. In what follows I describe the research site and participants, followed by a defense of my methodological choices.

Research Site and Participants

I purposively selected Alma Elementary (pseudonym) as the school site for this study (Daniel, 2012). It is a case of interest because it is one of only a handful of schools in the area with a two-way dual language education program in a predominately Latinx community neighborhood. Moreover, the unique presence of diverse curricular programs for EBs within the same school (i.e. dual language and SEI education) is rare, and therefore makes Alma Elementary a case of intrinsic interest (Stake, 2000). At the same time, the multiple classrooms selected for analysis are central to understanding the issue of *who* has access to bilingual education. Specifically, the analysis focused on two fifth grade classrooms: one SEI classroom and one DLE classroom. I selected the fifth grade because it is the first year that it becomes more feasible for an EB student to obtain a waiver under the Arizona SEI system without having passed AZELLA (as it is the year students typically enter school at age 10). This unique combination of characteristics makes Alma Elementary an undoubtedly instrumental case for understanding language policy as practiced at the school and classroom level, and, as experienced at the student level.

From within Alma Elementary, I purposively selected individual participants at the school, classroom, and student levels of analysis. At the school level, the principal, current and former language acquisition coordinators, and the 5th grade master teacher were selected due to their extensive knowledge of the programs, policies, and practices impacting EB students and their instructors. At the classroom level, teachers (*n*=3) were central to understanding language policy as practiced in the classrooms in addition to serving as key informants on the focal students. Finally, from within each classroom I selected two focal students (*n*=4). In the remainder of this chapter I describe the demographic characteristics of the school, classrooms, and participant groups who participated in this study.

School site.

Demographically, Alma Elementary is part of a small K8 elementary school district that serves approximately 3,000 students in an urban Arizona setting. The students in the district come from diverse backgrounds, with 46 countries and 38 languages represented in their student

population. In line with the historical demographics of the Southwest, the district is majority Latinx (67%), with the remaining student population identifying as Black (11%), White (10%), Native American (8%), and Asian (2%). Furthermore, approximately 88% of students in the district are on free and reduced lunch (FRL), 11% are classified as EBs, and 18% are eligible for special education services.

Alma Elementary is one of five schools in the district. It serves as an upper elementary campus focused on the education of approximately 440 students in the 4th through 6th grade. In the fifth grade, there were two dual language classrooms, one SEI classroom, and three mainstream classrooms (one with a gifted student cluster). All EB students are enrolled in the SEI classroom, with the exception of those permitted into the DLE classrooms with an appropriate waiver on file. Demographically, the students at Alma Elementary were majority Latinx (65%), White (12%), Native American (9%), Black (9%), Asian (2%), and mixed race (3%). Furthermore, approximately 79% of students in at the school were on free or reduced lunch, 15% were classified as EBs, and 22% were eligible for special education services.

Administrators.

The principal, the current and former language acquisition coordinators, and the fifth grade master teacher were the key participants at the school level due to their knowledge of the programs, policies, and practices that impact the focal classrooms and students. The principal is a white, English monolingual female who has been the principal at Alma Elementary for the past 5 years. Prior to being hired as the principal at Alma, she was a master teacher and behavior interventionist at Alma for 2 years and a K5 classroom and mentor teacher at an urban elementary school in a large city in the Southeast U.S. for 10 years. The 5th grade master teacher, whose role was that of an instructional coach to all fifth-grade teachers at Alma, is a white, English monolingual female who has been a master teacher at Alma for the last four years. Prior to coming to Alma, she was an instructional coach in another district for seven years and a second/third grade teacher for an additional 5 years in another nearby Title I school district. I interviewed both the current and former language acquisition specialists (LAS) as well. I chose to interview both because the former LAS had been in the school district for over 15 years and in the

Arizona area for over 25 years, but left Alma the year I collected data to take a similar position in a larger nearby district. The former LAS is a Latino, Spanish-English bilingual male who started at Alma immediately after completing his bilingual/ESL teacher certification program. He was a 5th and 6th Grade Spanish Dual Language Teacher for ten years at which point he was asked to take on a Mentor Teacher role and was then promoted to a master teacher position at Alma. A few years later, he was promoted to the LAS position and was in that position for five years before taking a similar position in a large nearby school district two years ago. The current LAS is a bilingual English-Spanish, White female who relocated to Arizona from a large Midwestern city to take on the LAS role the summer prior to this study. Prior to the LAS position, she received her master's in second languages and cultures with an emphasis on DLE programs and she was a dual language immersion K5 teacher for 5 years.

The DLE classroom.

There are two fifth-grade dual language classrooms at Alma where the students receive 50% of their coursework in English and 50% in Spanish throughout the day. To do this, there is one teacher who teaches in English and one who teaches in Spanish. In line with the 50:50 model, the students rotate classrooms halfway through each day. Content wise, Alma's dual language program is unique in that the dual language teachers switch content areas (i.e., math and ELA/SLA) every two weeks to ensure students receive instruction in both languages in each core subject area. At the time of this study, the only subject areas that were not a part of the dual language curriculum officially at Alma were science and all specials (i.e. health, art, P.E., library, etc.). The Spanish dual language teacher, Luz (pseudonym), is a Mexican-American Spanish-English bilingual from the Southwest who has been a 5th grade Spanish dual language instructor at Alma for 10 years. She started at Alma immediately after graduating with her degree in multilingual/multicultural education from a nearby public university. The English dual language teacher, Esther (pseudonym), is a Mexican-American English-Spanish bilingual from the Southwest. She graduated with a degree in Liberal Studies and then obtained her Master of Elementary Education from a large public university in Arizona. In addition to being certified in Elementary Education she received the required (at the time) Arizona SEI endorsement. Esther

started her teaching career at Alma upon finishing her master's program and at the time of data collection was in her third year as the 5th grade English dual language instructor.

In the focal dual language classroom, there were 28 students of whom 90% were Latinx, 6.5% were mixed race, and 3.5% were White. The gender breakdown was 54% female to 46% male, 18% of the students were classified as EBs, and I no students were receiving special education services. The students in the focal DLE class have varying degrees of Spanish proficiency with approximately 62% of the students reporting that Spanish was their first language, 28% reporting that English was their first language, and 10% reporting that English and Spanish were both their first languages.

The SEI classroom.

In SEI classroom the students receive all content area curriculum in English and the students are in a self-contained classroom with the same teacher throughout the day, with the exception of when they go to specials. The teacher, Emily (pseudonym), identifies as a white Jewish-American female with advanced proficiency in Spanish from the Southwest. She completed a degree in International Studies from a large public university in the Pacific Northwest and shortly thereafter enrolled in a Master of Elementary Education program at large public university in the Southwest. In addition to being certified in Elementary Education, she holds the required (at the time) Arizona SEI endorsement. At the time of data collection, Esther was in her first-year as a self-contained classroom teacher, however, she worked for a part of the previous year in the same district as an academic interventionist. Her classroom was considered the SEI classroom because it was where all fifth-grade EB students were placed with the exception of those with waivers in the dual language program.

In the SEI classroom there were 21 students. Demographically 57% were Latinx, 19% were Asian, 10% were Middle Eastern, 10% were White, and 5% were Black/African-American. The gender breakdown was 76% male, 14% female. EBs made up 72% of the class and an additional 10% were reclassified as fluent English proficient (R-FEP) students. Additionally, approximately 40% of the students received special education services. The students in Emily's classroom came from diverse language backgrounds, with 52% reporting Spanish as their home

language, 19% reporting English, 14% reporting an Asian language (i.e., Chinese, Bangla, Burmese), 10% reporting Dari (also known as Afghan Persian), and 5% reporting Arabic.

The Focal Students.

From each classroom, I selected two focal students in close consultation with the teachers. The four students included in this portion of the study were purposively selected to ensure that they were EBs who met the following criteria: (1) they spoke Spanish as their first language and (2) they were officially classified as an ELL by the state. The focal students in the SEI classroom were two male students, to be referred to throughout the remainder of this document as Jeff and Jorge (pseudonyms). The focal students in the focal dual language classroom included one male student, Danny (pseudonym), and one female student Elena (pseudonym). I provide a more detailed overview of each student in the findings section to follow.

Data Collection Methods

All data for this study were collected from February 1, 2017- May 31, 2017. In the section that follows, I outline the rationale for each of the data collection procedures. The data sources included administrator interviews, teacher interviews, a student questionnaire, classroom observations, student interviews, and identity-text sessions with focal students. Following the descriptions of each data collection procedure, Table 4.1 outlines the way each data collection method mapped onto to the conceptual framework. As a reminder, the research questions that guided this study were:

1) At the school-level, how do administrators conceptualize (bi)literacy development and enact language policies impacting emergent bilinguals?
2) At the classroom-level, how do teachers conceptualize (bi)literacy development and enact language policies impacting emergent bilinguals?
3) At the student-level, in what ways do *identity texts* create spaces for identity negotiation for the focal students?

Administrator interviews.

I conducted open-ended, semi-structured interviews with the principal, the current and former LAS, and the fifth-grade master teacher. I used a thirteen-question interview protocol (See

Appendix A) as a guide, which allowed for contextual flexibility in question order and follow up based on the participants responses. The interviews lasted approximately 1 – 1.5 hours each. All participating administrators provided informed consent prior to the interview (See IRB Consent Letters in Appendix A).

In line with the ethnographic nature of this study, the goal of these interviews broadly speaking was to gather administrators' "descriptions of key aspects related to the cultural world of which he or she is a part – that is space, time, events, people, activities, and objects" (Roulston, 2010, p. 19). In order to provide structure, I aligned my questions with Spradley's (1979) ethnographic interview techniques, which divides interview questions into three types of questions: descriptive, structural, and contrast. With the theoretical framework in mind, the descriptive questions focused on the policies and practices that informed and guided the curriculum and educational objectives associated with the fifth grade SEI and dual language students. In an effort to tap into to the ideological assumptions that guide the administrators' practices, I asked descriptive questions about their pedagogical philosophies, school curriculum, beliefs about biliteracy and EBs, and their general academic visions for the school. In moving on towards structural questions, I asked details about the ways in which students were enrolled in the DLE and SEI classrooms. Likewise, I asked the administrators about the ways state policies influence the work they do with EB students. Finally, I asked contrast questions about the ways students, teachers, curriculum, pedagogy, and academic outcomes differ between the SEI and DLE classrooms. I also asked for some basic demographic and background information from each participant.

Teacher interviews.

Similar to the administrator interviews, I also conducted open-ended, semi-structured interviews with the three focal teachers (See Appendix C). Again, the semi-structured nature of the interviews was intended to guide the participants, but still allow those being interviewed to openly voice their experiences and knowledge with the interviewer (Creswell, 2015). With each teacher, I engaged in two in-depth interviews. One at the beginning of data collection and one at the end. The intention behind conducting interviews with the focal teachers at two separate

occasions was to allow me to incorporate questions that emerged over the course of my classroom observations in the final interview session.

I again used Spradley's (1979) ethnographic interview techniques to guide the development of the teacher interview protocols using a combination of descriptive, structural, and contrast questions. Specifically, over the course of these two interviews, I asked the teachers questions about their backgrounds, their instructional philosophies, and the practices that guide their curriculum, pedagogical processes, and educational objectives. I also engaged the teachers in questions directly about their beliefs about biliteracy, their views on the impact of state and federal policies on their classrooms, and their perspectives on the focal students in their classrooms. Each interview lasted 1-1.5 hours. The first interview included a series of 12 guiding questions, the second interview centered around the focal students and included 9 guiding questions. All teachers were provided with consent letters informing them of their rights as research participants.

Descriptive questionnaire.

At the classroom level, I administered a basic student questionnaire to all students in the two focal classrooms (*n*=60) with a parental consent form on file (See Appendix C). This student questionnaire was adapted from the survey developed by Morales (2010) in a case study on a dual language school in California. There were two versions of the questionnaire, one for the students in the DLE classroom and one for the students in the SEI classroom. The purpose of this questionnaire was to gather descriptive information on student backgrounds, home language practices, and beliefs about language(s). The descriptive nature of the questionnaire allowed me to better understand the larger peer-level sociocultural contexts of the classrooms. This was the only mixed methods data collection tool I employed, however it served the distinct purpose of providing a more complete understanding of the research context. Additionally, it aided in identifying those students who could serve as potential focal students in addition to providing me details about the students' language use at home which was not available through the school.

Classroom Observations.

Compiling a written record of the observations and researcher experiences at the school

or field site is important to any ethnographic endeavor (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011). However, due to the baggage that has accompanied the ethnographer's gaze historically, it is essential that I briefly articulate my position as a *participant observer* in the focal classrooms (Spradley, 1980). As a participant observer, I was a part of the social and academic life of the classroom. This meant that I shared in both the organized activities and spontaneous interactions that made up the day-to-day routines of the classrooms when I was present. This was rooted in the underlying assumption that "reality" is best explored as something that is "created and sustained in and through interaction with others" in unique social contexts (Emerson et al., 2011). Through this experience I sought to understand the focal classrooms and students, with the hope that naturalistic generalizations would be possible as findings emerged (Stake & Trumball, 1982). From a theoretical perspective, the observations served to inform both the language policy as practice research questions (Sutton & Levinson, 2001; McCarty, 2011), as well as the provide insight into the ways that the focal students engage in their communities of practice (Wenger, 1998).

The observational protocols I used were open-ended in order to allow for the organic emergence of themes (See Appendix E for an example). However, in order to provide some structure to the process I again applied some of Spradley's (1980) work on ethnographic observational categories to the protocols. More specifically, I followed a sequential observational pattern on the days I observe in each classroom. I began with descriptive observations of the physical setting, the daily routines, and typical daily activities. Next, I moved into conducting more focused observations or what Spradley (1980) refers to as the taxonomic analysis phase during which I described one domain from within the larger cultural scene of the classroom. This included my observations of de facto and de jure language policies, classroom content and teacher pedagogy, and the classroom engagement patterns of focal student participants with the teachers and their peers.

At the same time, it is important to note that as a participant observer, I did not engage in extensive note taking during the course of my observations. Instead, I relied on "jottings" while I was in the classroom, then immediately following the observational visit I wrote extensive

fieldnotes on the 2-3 hour period I was present in each classroom each week (Emerson et al., 2011). Jottings are defined by Emerson et al. (2011) as "a brief written record of events and impressions captured in key words or phrases" that are meant as a point of reference when the researcher goes to write up more extensive fieldnotes at a later point in time (p. 29). I extended this definition of "jottings" to include creative modes such as visual snapshots (i.e. photos) of the classrooms (Pink, 2007).

In order to pursue this in-depth observational experience, I observed each classroom once per week over a four-month period for a minimum of two to three hours at a time. My observational protocols were not explicitly piloted. Instead, they were part of the trial and error process associated with conducting ethnography in everyday contexts (Mills & Morton, 2013). However, it important to point out that I was a volunteer on the Alma Elementary campus for four months prior to data collection and so I was familiar with the setting and participants when I began formal data collection. Additionally, I kept a "jottings" journal, as described above, in addition to writing detailed fieldnotes after each observation. These detailed fieldnotes were written up within 24 hours of the observation, and as frequently as possible immediately following each observation. Given the time frame of the study, I have fieldnotes documenting approximately 75-80 hours of classroom time (35-40 in each classroom) over the course of the semester.

Identity text sessions.

Cummins (2006) defines identity texts as "the products of students' creative work or performances… (written, spoken, visual, musical, dramatic, or combinations in multimodal form) that then hold a mirror up to students in which their identities are reflected back in a positive light" (p.60). In the examples used in Cummins (2006) chapter on identity texts, students who attend both English-medium schools and multilingual schools were encouraged to engage in the curriculum through the construction of identity texts in their first/home languages and English simultaneously. Identity investment and developmental biliteracy are therefore both explicit goals of this approach.

In order to engage in the production of identity texts with the focal students (*n*=2 from each class), I engaged in 4-5 "identity text sessions" with each focal student. Each session lasted anywhere from 20 to 40 minutes and took place during the students English Language Arts (ELA) or Spanish Language Arts (SLA) writing time. Depending on the day, the sessions were either 1:1 or they included two students at a time. The teachers selected the students who were both EBs and in need of additional writing support to participate in the study. I selected this method of data collection after consulting the teachers about the ways my research could best serve their and their students' needs. The teachers decided that it would be best for me to conduct writing sessions with students in addition to their normal classroom writing requirements as a form of supplemental support. Given that the writing standard that the students were working on at the start of the Spring 2017 semester was opinion and argumentation, the teachers and I discussed multiple options, but ultimately decided on having the students write letters to the President (or another individual of their choosing) about issues that were important to them. Below, I describe student identity text sessions in greater detail.

After requesting consent from each student (after parental consent had already been obtained), I conducted a one-on-one session with each student at the start of data collection. In session one I audio recorded an interview with each focal student, discussing their backgrounds, interests, and the memoir pieces they wrote in the fall. I then informed them of the writing project, and I asked the students what they might like to write about in a letter to the President. At this point, I provided the students with a list of ideas they could pick from (see Appendix F) in conjunction with the teachers and let them know that once they decided on a theme I would bring some articles and sources to aid them in writing their letter during the following sessions. More specifically, the prompts developed gave the students freedom to write about subjects surrounding health, education, environmental, social, or political issues. If the students were not interested in the topics provided, they were given the choice to choose another issue that was important to them.

During session two, we spent time reading through the articles on the issues the students selected. The remaining sessions (2-3), varied with each student. Some students needed more

time to read and process through what they wanted to say. We then spent the remaining sessions working on developing their one-page opinion letter. The final opinion text served as the main cultural-identity artifact source for analysis in the findings. All students who participated in this portion of the study had consent forms on file.

Level of Analysis	**Method & Participants**	**Construct(s)**	**Data**
School Institutional Level	• Admin Interviews	• Policy as Practice: Perspectives on language policy appropriation, school level policies and practices • Administrator backgrounds and beliefs about (bi)literacy, curricular models, pedagogy, and emergent bilinguals	• Interview Transcripts & Audio
Classroom Interpersonal Level	• Teacher Interviews • Classroom Observations • Student Questionnaire	• Identity Investment → Teacher backgrounds, beliefs about (bi)literacy, curriculum, pedagogy, and perspectives on focal students • Policy as Practice → Lessons, pedagogical practices and patterns, student engagement patterns • Ethnography of Language Policy & Communities of Practice	• Interview Transcripts & Audio • Jottings & Fieldnotes • Video of selected classroom sessions
Student Individual Level	• Student Interviews • Identity Text Sessions • Observations	• Identity Investment & Intersectionality → (Bi)literate practices of focal students, identity associations, opinions on issue. • Language Policy as Practice	• Identity Texts/ Student Writing Artifacts • Student Interviews • Fieldnotes & Jottings

Table 4.1. Method, Construct, and Participant Alignment

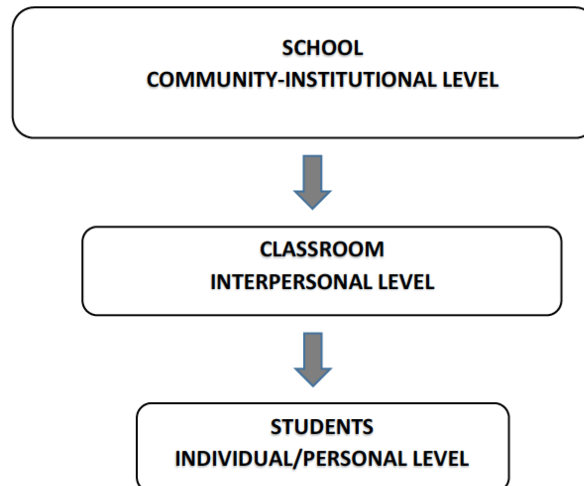
Data Analysis

In order to do this, I utilized Rogoff's (1995) three planes of analysis, which included the community/institutional plane, the interpersonal plane, and the personal/individual plane. In this system, the community/institutional level seeks to link broader institutional structures (e.g. the school, district, or other macro level institutions) to the activities in which individuals engage as participants. The interpersonal level focuses on the interactions and activities that foster connections, coordination, and communication between people in everyday life. The individual level is defined as a "process of becoming" (Rogoff, 1995, p.3). At this level, individuals evolve

as they appropriate new ways of being through participation in diverse sociocultural activities. Figure 4.1 provides a visual of the three planes.

From within in this framework, I analyzed data at the school, classroom, and individual student levels of analysis in order to better understand the ways that policy is both mediated by the community-institutional level and practiced in classrooms. Furthermore, at the individual level I explored the ways that individual students negotiate their identities within classroom spaces. These three planes of analysis provide a useful tool from which to organize the data by context level (i.e. school, classroom, and student). With this multi-level data analysis framework in mind, I analyzed each data source distinctly.

Figure 4.1. Rogoff's (1995) Three Planes of Analysis



For all data, I engaged in the following analytic practices. First, I produced triangulated data, or what many qualitative researchers are now referring to as crystallization (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Crystallization is a way of providing multiple perspectives on the same central phenomenon of interest by including multiple data sources in the analysis of findings. The data produced as a part of this study, as outlined in the prior section, fulfilled this end. Additionally, given the ethnographic, case study nature of the data, I utilized member checking as a means to increase the credibility of my interpretations and assertions. Member checking is a procedure in which researchers request that participants ensure transcripts, quotations, and other interpretations in the findings are deemed accurate by those whom they represent (Marshall &

Rossman, 2011). In the subsections that follow, I describe the techniques I utilized when individually analyzing the interview, observational, questionnaire, and identity-text session data.

Interviews.

All interview sessions (averaging 1-1.5 hours each) were recorded and transcribed verbatim (yielding transcripts totaling 73 pages and 31,827 words). Following transcription, I engaged in first cycle coding, in which I used a combination of In Vivo and Values Coding for the administrator and teacher interview data (Saldaña, 2016). In Vivo coding is what Saldaña (2016) refers to as "literal" or "inductive coding" in which participants' own words are used to code the data as a means to "prioritize and honor the participants voice" (p. 106). Whereas, Values Coding seeks to accurately portray participants' worldviews, attitudes, beliefs, values, or ideologies (Saldaña, 2016). This combination of coding strategies fit the nature of the ethnographic approach, and the research questions surrounding policies, practices, biliteracy, and identity issues in EB education. Next, I engaged in second cycle coding (Saldaña, 2016). As a part of this process, I coded the data inductively moving from specific codes to more general categorizations until I reached a point of saturation in which larger themes, interpretations, and analyses emerged (Roulston, 2010; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Wolcott, 1994). The organic nature of the data, prior literature and conceptual framing, and my researcher positionality all influenced this ongoing data reduction process.

Observational data.

I collected observational data primarily via jottings and fieldnotes. Over the course of the semester, this resulted in approximately 45 fieldnotes entries, documenting 75-80 hours of classroom activity. I recorded fieldnotes in Evernote and jottings in a small paper notebook. Analysis of fieldnotes was ongoing, meaning general descriptive codes or tags were routinely added to fieldnotes throughout the data collection process. At the conclusion of the data collection phase, fieldnotes deemed relevant to the research questions were selected for further analysis and coded both thematically and via process coding (Saldaña, 2016; Charmaz, 2008). Process coding emphasized the actions observed in the classroom often using gerunds (-ing words) to code the observed happenings of the classrooms.

At the same time, given the fact that the nature and reach of fieldnotes is limited, I also recorded approximately 16 hours of audiovisual observational data, or approximately one observational session per week (rotating between the SEI and DLE classrooms). Given the extensive nature of the audiovisual data and the time constraints of this study, the audiovisual was ultimately only used as a supplemental source of findings to support the analyses based on the fieldnotes.

Questionnaire.

I analyzed items on the questionnaire descriptively as means to summarize the home and social language patterns of *all* students in the classroom. Findings were reported in percentages in order to provide an initial overview of the student language backgrounds and usage patterns in the two classrooms. The few open-ended items were designed to get at student attitudes and values. Therefore, I used a similar combination of In Vivo and Values Coding to code the open-ended survey responses (Saldaña, 2016). Ultimately, I used the findings from these questionnaires to inform my descriptions of the focal classrooms and students.

Identity text sessions.

The identity text sessions produced three types of data: student identity-text artifacts, researcher-student interactional/interview data, and fieldnotes. For the first identity text session data, I transcribed each student session verbatim (yielding transcripts totaling 18 pages and 7,587 words). Then following transcription, I engaged in a coding process similar to that of the teacher and administrator interview data above. Specifically, I used both In Vivo and Values Coding to reflect student voice in these sessions and portray participants' perspectives (Saldaña, 2016). The identity text artifacts were the central piece of the student level data. In the findings and discussion, I provided the details from the students work and analyzed the student writing, I used both In Vivo and Values Coding to reflect student voice in these sessions and portray participants opinions, arguments, and values as reflected in their writing (Saldaña, 2016).

Data analysis overview.

In summary, I utilized distinct forms of thematic coding for transcripts, observational data, and the academic texts as described above. Across all data, I engaged in analytic memo writing

(Charmaz, 2014; Saldaña, 2016) in order to better document the development of my ideas and interpretations throughout the ethnographic data collection process.

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

It was not only important to build a cogent argument from within the field, but also essential to ensure that I reflected on and engaged in both ethical and trustworthy practices with the participants who volunteered to be a part of my project. Trustworthiness refers to the credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of my research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In order to ensure trustworthiness in conducting ethnographic case study-type research, qualitative scholars recommend that researchers engage in holistic and prolonged engagement at the research site (Cho & Trent, 2006; Donmoyer, 2001; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). In looking specifically at building the trustworthiness and validity of the research design, I not only engaged in prolonged engagement at the research site, but I also incorporated data triangulation and member checking practices to assist in ensuring accurate representations of everyday life at the school site (Cho & Trent, 2006; Donmoyer, 2001; Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Ethical considerations are also of utmost importance in the design and implementation of research. Marshall and Rossman (2011) outline respect for persons, beneficence, and justice as the three primary ethical considerations that researchers should address in their work. Respect for persons involves both ensuring that participants are not being used solely for our own research purposes (but that the research also benefits the participants) and showing the utmost respect for the right of participants to choose to participate or not, in addition to guaranteeing privacy and anonymity if they do consent. One of the official means for ensuring this level of respect is obtaining approval from the university's institutional review board (IRB). Therefore, in going through the IRB process, I ensured that all potential participants were aware that their participation was voluntary, their identities were protected, and that there were minimal to no risks associated with participation. All participants were provided with information that allowed them to fully understand what they were expected to do and commit to as a part of the research process. Likewise, I ensured that my consent forms are written in friendly and accessible language as a means to increase participant comfort with the often-formal processes associated with the IRB.

Furthermore, as a researcher and educator, I also believe that respect extends to the level of professionalism and interpersonal engagement with which I conducted myself for the extended period of time that I was on the Alma Elementary campus.

Beneficence and social justice are also two important ethical considerations for researchers in the field. Beneficence refers to the mandate to 'first, do no harm' that underlies all research regardless of the field. Within education, particularly bilingual education in the state of Arizona, it is critical to think about how to protect the students, educators, and programs of the schools that agree to participate in research. Our dual language schools are a part of only a handful of bilingual schools that persisted through the anti-bilingual education storm of the first part of the twenty-first century. Therefore, it is essential to be sensitive to the histories that bilingual schools serving predominately Latinx and immigrant student populations have endured as sites frequently under surveillance and regulation by the state. With this history in mind, being an advocate for social justice is also a key ethical consideration. Specifically, thinking about the ways that I can ensure that my work at the school site considers who is ultimately benefiting (and who is not) from the work in which I engage. Throughout the research process, I plan on engaging in active researcher reflexivity practices particularly surrounding issues of power, voice, and the ways my work can potentially contribute to larger conversations about *how* within this state and beyond we can collectively work to redress past societal and educational injustices. In my research, this especially relates to issues of linguistic diversity, language rights, and positioning primary languages as resources.

Researcher Positionality

In all forms of research, but particularly in research framed from within an ethnographic perspective, it is important to explicitly recognize our roles as an 'instrument of the research' process (Maxwell, 2013). Therefore, I recognize that what I research cannot be fully separated from my subjectivities. Instead, I believe it is important to tap into our research backgrounds, personal experiences, and other funds of knowledge as sources of strength from which we build the basis for the stories that we ultimately tell (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992; Strauss, 1987). In fact, more often than not our personal ideologies and goals

are aligned with the research topics that we chose to pursue. As Maxwell (2013) pointed out, "attempting to exclude your personal goals and concerns from the design of your research is neither possible nor necessary. What *is* necessary is to be *aware* of these goals and how they may be shaping your research" (Maxwell, 2013, p. 27). Therefore, it is from this perspective that I present my background and experiences as they relate to the present study.

My own background and personal ideologies unquestionably influenced my decision to pursue this particular area of research. I am bilingual, and of mixed Chicana and white-European heritage with experiences both as a bilingual elementary teacher and as a Spanish high school and college instructor, now pursuing my doctorate in education. It is also important to disclose that I did not grow up bilingual. Although I grew up hearing Spanish when I spent time with my paternal side of the family, I did not formerly begin learning Spanish until the 6th grade.
I recall not being able to understand what my Spanish speaking family was saying at times, but wishing and sometimes pretending that I could. I have many memories of my family talking about our heritage as Hispanos who "came with the territory" of the Southwest and whose presence in this region outdated all but the local Native American tribes. I also remember hearing my grandmother talk about being punished in school for speaking Spanish. I mention these memories because I know that both my family's history and my individual agency served as catalysts in my desire to become bilingual. However, it was not until having spent time abroad living in Spanish speaking countries as a student in college and as an English bilingual teacher post-college that I truly began to identify as bilingual.

At the core of who I am as an educator is the belief that pedagogies that cultivate multilingualism, multiculturalism, and (multi)literacies rooted in tolerance, love, and empathy for others, will help us build a better future for all. From a methodological perspective as researcher at a bilingual school, I aimed to make deliberate choices to bilingually engage with participants, acknowledging the unspoken power dynamics between the two languages even in a bilingual setting. Therefore, I provided my participants with opportunities to speak in Spanish, English, or to translanguage as they desired. Through this statement I acknowledge the ways that my

experiences and values influenced the way I ultimately designed, implemented, and interpreted my dissertation research.

CHAPTER 5
ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEWS

This chapter presents the findings from the four administrator interviews conducted at the school-level of analysis. InVivo and Values Coding generated an initial list of 46 codes which were then grouped into two larger categories and five subcategories. The two overarching categories identified relate to the school administrators' perspectives on issues of compliance and resistance in EB education. The findings presented in this chapter focus on answering research question one: At the school-level, how do administrators conceptualize (bi)literacy development and enact language policies impacting emergent bilinguals?

State of Compliance

Administrators in this study discussed the ways that they felt their hands were tied by the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) and SEI law more broadly. As a result, there was tension around certain elements of SEI law, but particularly where the administrators felt they had less freedom to interpret the law based on the needs of their EB student population and their own values as educators. Specifically, administrators discussed being opposed to the state's grouping requirements, certain elements of AZELLA testing, and "English-only" classrooms, but at the same time feeling as if there was little to nothing they could do to change these requirements when they continue to be mandated and monitored closely by the State. Below I discuss each of these areas in more detail.

Student grouping.

Across all four interviews, the administrators expressed opposition to and concern with compliance issues tied to the requirement to group all EBs together in the same classroom. This was viewed as a problem for a number of reasons, but predominately due to what the administrators viewed as the importance of peer role models in language and academic learning. In discussing the SEI student grouping requirements the principal stated, "I don't necessarily agree with it, but the state requires us to do that." She went on to describe how she has reached out to the state requesting to divide the EB students across classrooms but said "they generally say no" unless you have more than 30 kids in each grade, then they might let you group them into large clusters across two classrooms. She said in many cases they have had 20 or 22 in a grade

level and have been required to keep them all in the same classroom regardless of their English proficiency level. She felt strongly that this was “ridiculous” for a number of reasons, but most importantly because:

> You figure those places where your kids build relationships and have conversations that kids understand, are amongst the other kids, so I am not for having full classrooms of English language learners, because I just don't think they have those role models in other kids and when they're building those peer relationships.

The fifth-grade master teacher added to this perspective by discussing the ways that the SEI grouping requirement limited EB opportunities to learn. She felt that the current SEI system was problematic for EBs because it was not “giving them any push” through grade-level peer role models. The LAS was equally troubled by the grouping requirement and provided a number of reasons for this concern, including the unique challenges that non-Spanish speaking EBs face when in SEI classrooms where the majority of the students come from Spanish-speaking backgrounds. She shared that the lack of peer role models created a unique issue where:

> My non-Spanish speaking kiddos that are in the [SEI] classroom are learning Spanish instead of English because they want friends. The majority of the students in the SEI program are Spanish speakers and so these kiddos that are in there that don't speak Spanish have no motivation to learn English because if they want friends and if they want to be accepted on the playground well then, what language do they need to know? Spanish. So now you have a kiddo that speaks Chinese at home, is learning Spanish from his friends and English from the teachers… because there's not that peer support in that program.

Having recently relocated to Arizona from a state where there are no SEI requirements, the current LAS was shocked by Arizona’s EB grouping requirement and the SEI system in general. The former LAS provided some historical perspective in his interview when he explained how during the 15+ years he was at Alma he sought to do everything he could to get EBs from Spanish speaking backgrounds into the DLE program to avoid the SEI model whenever possible. He shared that there were many challenges, but that:

> the rules have changed depending on who is the leading person at the state level and the rules can be interpreted differently, just like with the new person in there now. But you know, for the last 10 to 15 years they were really strict in terms of allowing ELLs to be a part of the dual program.

He added that having the DLE program at Alma made the request a little easier both because the students were older (i.e. 4th – 6th) and because they had data to show that "every year the rate of reclassification of ELLs in the dual language classrooms almost doubled or tripled the SEI classrooms." He attributed this largely to the fact that EBs in the DLE program were:

> …put in classrooms with peers who spoke two languages and who were going to help them advance not just linguistically but also academically, in all kinds of areas. By the time those kiddos got to sixth grade they were rarely if ever in the ELL category because they had already exited out by the time they were done with fifth grade, or earlier... which wasn't necessarily the same for the SEI classroom.

AZELLA testing.

Likewise, nearly all of the administrators interviewed expressed some concerns about AZELLA. Testing for English language proficiency was a central piece of Alma's compliance with state and federal EB laws, yet they were apprehensive about the validity of the exam for a number of reasons. The principal, who regularly helped with administering the exam, stated:

> There are some pieces of it, where I wonder, you know, what are we measuring? Are we measuring them academically in terms of what they're able to do in reading a writing or is it about them being able to understand English? Because we have other students that are not ELL students who struggle more with reading than some of our ELLs.

She then reiterated how she was really unsure about what the test was trying to measure and elaborated on some of the issues she witnessed first-hand when administering the test to their EB students. More specifically, she shared that, "on the listening and speaking portion of the test, a lot of times our higher-preforming students in reading and writing really struggle with the speaking and listening portion because when they hear the questions, they respond but they forget to say it in a complete sentence." She felt this was problematic for a number of reasons, including that as

a test proctor she was not permitted to repeat the initial instruction requesting students speak in complete sentences when answering and also because there was a mixture of question types where:

> They ask that they answer in complete sentences but then the second question will be that they want them to say a word broken down by syllables, so for that one you don't want them to respond in a complete sentence, but then there's another one where they want them to respond in a complete sentence…"

In the current LAS's interview, she was also concerned about the validity of the speaking portion of the exam because the students were interfacing with a recording on a speaker phone and not with an actual person. As the person in charge of overseeing AZELLA testing throughout the district, she felt that it was not a test that accurately measured language proficiency but focused inordinately on discrete language and grammar skills. She elaborated on that point by adding:

> What they are asking of the students doesn't really, in my opinion, portray what they know fairly. It's more on do they know academic English and do they know the rules, which I don't know a lot of those rules myself… [they're] asking about differences between certain types of words and any kiddo in those grades is still trying to figure that out. So, it's really interesting and it doesn't seem appropriate time-wise or content-wise. And to me it's not an accurate portrayal of what they actually know in English and I really think that if you pulled a mainstream kiddo they would struggle with it.

She went on to provide a specific example of a native English-speaking student who recently transferred to Alma's feeder elementary and who was inappropriately classified as an ELL in another district. According to the parents this happened because:

> the babysitter filled out Spanish as one of the languages spoken in the home, because the babysitter speaks Spanish, but the child does not speak Spanish, the parents do not speak Spanish, and it has never been a language spoken in their home. But all the same, she got tested and did not pass. So now we have the parents saying we need to exit her from the program, this isn't right, but the state still requires that we keep testing her. So even though she's not a second language learner she couldn't pass the test.

The LAS was also concerned about the demands that the length of the test placed on students in their elementary years. She explained that they are required to administer the first three portions of the AZELLA exam (i.e. listening, reading, and writing) in one school day (i.e. over seven hours) with minimal breaks between sessions and many still struggle to finish. The LAS felt strongly that "…it's a lot for those kiddos to have to sit through." She then added that the exam was particularly difficult for their youngest students who by the end of the experience were exhausted "laying on their desk and I mean they don't care [about the test anymore]."

The former LAS provided some historical and contextual perspective when he discussed the changes that AZELLA has undergone over the years. He shared that the changes made to AZELLA have been largely tied to the pressure placed on ADE by the federal Office of Civil Rights. He went on to state:

> …this is the third version of AZELLA. The first AZELLA was too hard, the second one was too easy and this one is supposed to be the perfect AZELLA, but it seems the data speaks otherwise and ADE did not want to come up with a new AZELLA so all they did was just move the cut score to show that the test is reclassifying students correctly and that the [ELL] students are not preforming at the same level that the English speaking kids are preforming on AzMERIT. Because that's really what it comes down to.

He added that:

> Third through eighth grade was very affected by the cut score change and the reason why is because ADE looked at a study of students who got reclassified in the last few years, [specifically] at how they did on the ELA AzMERIT test and they noticed that there was a huge gap between the English-speaking kids and the kids who were reclassified ELLs. So to address that they moved the cut scores up.

He emphasized that in his experience the achievement gap data between native English-speaking students and their reclassified EB peers is particularly striking, noting that in Arizona the difference is "like night and day" with a huge disparity between reclassified EBs and their never EB peers.

The former LAS also added some perspective when he discussed how even students with minimal Spanish in the home or from bilingual households end up getting assessed via AZELLA and often classified as ELLs. He shared that this happens at a dual language school like Alma because "sometimes… the parents think that if they put Spanish they're going to some sort of special treatment on the DLE waiting list, but it actually triggers the AZELLA test." Then the students are placed in SEI and "by Federal law, you have to keep testing the student [until they pass], no one can get out of it." The current LAS shared that she has seen it go both ways. On one hand, parents who only speak Spanish minimally with their child or have bilingual households where one parent speaks Spanish and English, and the other only speaks English trigger AZELLA testing because they put Spanish down on the HLS. She said:

> A lot of parents, you know, they're really excited that they speak Spanish at home and that's wonderful, so they'll put that [Spanish] down on there even though it's not necessarily the language used all the time and then find out that it affected the student's placement, and that is really unfortunate because parents then regret that they put that language on the survey.

On the other hand, she has seen cases where parents are astutely aware of the disadvantages that putting a language other than English down triggers and gave the example of having a parent fill out the HLS and "write English. English, English for everything, but she filled it out in Spanish. And I was like okay that's not going to work, but she knew, she knew. She just didn't quite have the English skills to, you know."

The role of English in classroom instruction.

Despite the fact that the administrators were largely against the current Arizona SEI system, even (as this chapter broadly illustrates) defiant at times, there was still a sense that they were required to enforce the state requirement to speak English in SEI classrooms. This came as somewhat of a surprise given it is an area that ADE arguably would never be able to observe and because an actual reading of the law states "nearly all classroom instruction is in English," but not *all*. This was an area that the administrators discussed openly, although with some doubts with regard to the "English-only" requirement in SEI classrooms and when discussing how to best help

EBs acquire advanced English proficiency more broadly. When asked about the “English-only” requirement the LAS explained that English was the expectation because it’s a state requirement. The LAS shared that this is not something that’s explicitly discussed in the district’s SEI teacher professional development sessions, but rather knowledge that the teachers enter with from their teacher preparation programs. She said that in her first year in Arizona she quickly learned that “it's pretty widely known and spread throughout all of these requirements and compliance materials that they are very focused on English.” She added that they have EB paraprofessionals who speak Spanish but while in the classrooms “are required to speak to them in English,” yet in the same breath stated that, “it would be wonderful if they could help them throughout their day in Spanish and get them transitioned faster but it's a state requirement that there is no Spanish in an SEI classroom.” At the same time, she clarified that at Alma it is only a requirement during classroom time, but not in other spaces. This conversation led to the LAS openly discussing her perspective on Arizona’s SEI program for EBs. She shared that when she was initially moving to Arizona the summer prior, she was looking for districts with DLE programs that served EBs but found very little outside of one-way foreign language immersion programs (i.e. dual language programs that do not serve EBs). She added:

> I've done that in the past and they're wonderful programs but there's also a huge population of students here who already have that Spanish proficiency in speaking or just that Spanish-speaking background and who can add English as their second language and be fully biliterate. I feel like that's what this state is missing and not focusing on. It's like they're trying to teach all these other kiddos Spanish, but they already have a community of students that have that foundation, but really just need to be supported and then add English.

She also discussed how she found it surprising that at a local conference for EB educators there was a big presentation on preparing students to graduate from high school with the “Seal of Biliteracy” on their diplomas. Yet she was perplexed because:

> they're not doing the programs the way that they would be the most impactful for that. They're waiting, like they will offer all of these programs starting in high school. So they’re

taking away Spanish from all these students and then when they get to high school telling them 'okay now remember your Spanish' so that they can get the Seal of Biliteracy.

Ultimately, the LAS expressed that she felt that Arizona's SEI system was highly problematic and initially wondered how it was legal. Yet as the individual in charge of overseeing the program at Alma she worked to support teachers in spite of the constraints that SEI placed on their students and programs.

The fifth-grade master teacher confirmed that English was the expectation in SEI classrooms, but also suggested that first language supports were at times utilized. She also talked briefly about the challenges associated with incorporating first language supports due to the wide range of home languages spoken by the students in their SEI classrooms. She stated, "we can't really provide any first language support, or you could provide language support to a student in their home language, but none of us speak Mandarin for example, so we can't really do that unless we have a dictionary or technology support." At the same time, when discussing Spanish-speaking EBs, the master teacher felt that dual language was not necessarily always the best option EBs due to her observation that EBs at times struggled in both languages. The principal echoed this perspective as well. In the following section I elaborate on the placement of EBs in DLE further in addition to discussing the ways in which the administrators contested the state-mandated SEI curriculum.

State of Resistance

The SEI curriculum.

Despite the hour by hour mandate detailing the structure and time allotments of the SEI curriculum in Arizona, the implementation at the school was a place of widespread resistance at Alma. In fact, educator agency combined with the school's widespread culture of ensuring EB education was aligned with the mainstream academic subject-area content was central to Alma's ELD approach.

Both the current and former LAS led these efforts, which was largely due to the fact that they were in charge of both SEI and DLE teachers' professional development sessions. The former LAS who served as a DLE teacher, instructional coach, and master teacher prior to taking

on the LAS role discussed his approach to SEI quite openly. Specifically, he made it quite clear that SEI as conceived and mandated under Arizona law was something he openly viewed as antithetical to EB academic development, and therefore he actively worked with teachers to understand ways to approach curriculum and pedagogy in SEI classrooms differently. When discussing the 4-hour block model, he put it this way, “I can tell you that very plain and simple. We never followed it, I never required it. I wanted the SEI classrooms to be treated as a regular classroom.” He emphasized that he was referring to typical grade-level academic content, not second language acquisition (SLA) teaching strategies. In fact, he immediately clarified by sharing that:

> the teachers were instructed to teach the same things that were being taught in the mainstream classrooms with the exception that the strategies were different. So that’s the way you could tell the difference. You could walk into two classrooms, one being the SEI and one being the mainstream classroom and you would see the same lesson, but you would see different strategies being utilized in the SEI classroom.

When asked about how this was approached with the State’s SEI reporting requirements, he explained that there was a de facto type agreement between the LAS, principals, and teachers which established that in actual practice, “the only time we would actually adhere to the four-hour model is if we were being audited.” He called it putting on “the dog and pony show.” Which meant, he would submit a schedule to the auditors that adhered to the four-hour block content and structure and notify the teachers. He strongly believed that focusing on content area instruction and quality teaching is why Alma and the district achieved higher EB passage rates on AZELLA than their peer districts. At the time he was interviewed, he was working toward transitioning EB programs in his new district away from the state SEI model. He shared that “every year we would reclassify at least 35% of our students and that’s something you don’t see in all the districts. Most are lucky if they break the 20% mark.” He mentioned that this year was different across the state (i.e. much lower pass rates) due to the changes in the AZELLA cut scores, but he still felt strongly that despite the changes, schools and districts that approach EB education from the perspective of focusing on academic content and grade level standards

combined with SLA strategies would continue to achieve higher reclassification rates than schools where the SEI four-hour block is followed closely.

Although much more discretely shared, the current LAS confirmed that they continued to approach SEI classroom instruction through holistic content area instruction with the exception of if they were notified of an audit. She put it this way “I mean it’s a little bit different when someone is here watching.” This was because when they were monitored “they start their timer and even if you’re at 58 minutes [in any of the required 4-hour block areas], you’re out of compliance.” She said that when auditors tell us they are coming, she is in charge of providing them with the teachers’ lesson plans and schedules, so they know exactly when they can observe “what the state requires.” Given that the current LAS was new to Arizona, the district, and the LAS position, she was much more reserved in the way she spoke about resistance to the Arizona SEI model, although she was clearly against it. In response to questions about the four-hour block she explained the model, then criticized it for not being based on any well-established research but rather on “research” designed for “this state to back up what they had already decided on.” In a later question, I described my SEI classroom observations as not aligned with the prescribed SEI model, at which point she confirmed that was in fact their preferred approach through strong eye contact, a nod, and brief “um hm.” In her first year there, she explained that the biggest difference she had observed between the SEI and mainstream classrooms was “there's a bigger focus on teaching grammar.” She added, “especially in the lower elementary, the SEI classes spend a lot more time on grammar,” which she critiqued as a language learning approach that is disconnected from “how you really learn a language.” It was through these critiques that she showed her disapproval for the SEI program. It was clear she was frustrated with the restraints the state placed on doing what was best for their EB students, yet she also seemed to have internalized some pressure to do what was required by the state (or at least report that they were). This tension is seen in her response to the SEI grammar requirement, particularly when she discussed how she approached this in her PD sessions with SEI instructors. She said, “honestly I don't know even how to explain that because that's not how I've ever done things as

an educator and it's not how I learned. So it's a little bit interesting but that's what were required to do…”

When asked about SEI curriculum at Alma, the master teacher more broadly spoke about their literacy approaches and the unique challenges faced by the SEI and DLE teachers. The master teacher described the ways that the fifth grade SEI and DLE classrooms followed similar units and taught to the same standard even though at times the exact materials or teaching approaches used in the distinct classrooms varied. She said finding comparable materials was the biggest challenge for the Spanish DLE instructor given the language difference and the unique literacy needs of students during the Spanish portion of the day. She described the SEI classroom as more focused on ensuring explicit ELD strategies were being used, specifically she shared that:

> in general, what we try to teach the SEI teachers is to have that balance of 50/50 conversations, using sentence starters, always having the students trying to orally process their work, things like that, or just providing scaffolding. I think sometimes that’s not as much of a focus in dual language but is more of a focus in the SEI classroom.

The principal further confirmed “they all use of the same curriculum, just the way it's delivered is different.” She went on to discuss some of the budget challenges they have faced and how this influenced their ability to develop curriculum that meets their students’ diverse needs and the state’s standards simultaneously. She then talked about some of the struggles teachers face in appropriately scaffolding materials given the push for more authentic texts in English Language Arts (ELA) classrooms. She was concerned about the materials not always having the proper supports in place to help students make the connections between the functions, forms, and contexts of the ELA content. She said the ELA materials were typically not designed with those supportive elements, so their “teachers were creating all of those pieces… but there’s been struggles there.” She added that despite the challenges, “the fact that we have done so well with AZELLA, and our ELL learners have grown as much as they have, says a lot about our teachers’ dedication through this process.”

Emergent bilinguals in dual language.

Overall, having a dual language program present at the school made Alma a place where administrators had the unique ability to resist the segregated SEI grouping requirement. The administrators expressed the importance of ensuring that students were placed where they would thrive the most as learners. However, there were differences between the current and former LAS and the principal and master teacher in terms of how they conceptualized where EBs would thrive the most as learners. The interview with the former LAS revealed that his philosophy, particularly for Spanish-speaking EBs, was to "to get those kids at least proficient on the oral part of the [AZELLA] test and get them into the dual classroom because you know that they'll have a better chance of reclassifying and plus, it's a better program for them." The current LAS also spoke about this as the preference for their EB students. She shared that their broad goal with Spanish home language EBs in SEI was to help the students "pass that test as soon as possible so that they have the opportunity to be in dual language...". She added, "we'll look at okay are they proficient in speaking then okay we can kind of pass that by as being proficient to get them into dual language" by filing a waiver justifying why they are better served in the DLE program. The LAS shared that they achieve this with greater ease when the child is already 10 years old or considered proficient in speaking on AZELLA. The current LAS went on to discuss some of the unique challenges that the Arizona system presents in terms of the broader goals of DLE programs for EBs. She shared that "our goals are really biliteracy, bilingualism, and biculturalism. It makes it a little bit more difficult with the state requirements to achieve the biliteracy goal but that is the goal… I think we don't always necessarily meet that goal especially when the students are coming in in the fifth-grade." The LAS suggested I add a question to my classroom survey asking the students who speak Spanish as a home language how many years they have been in the DLE program. She thought this would be helpful to me understanding how many students in the DLE program were formerly classified as ELLs and in what grade level they were permitted to enroll in the DLE program. She pointed out that many of the fifth-grade EBs in the DLE program will be in their first or second year in program. From a literacy perspective, she emphasized that:

> if it's their first year in the program their language development might not be where it typically should be for fifth grade and it kind of adds some challenges really specific to this state… with the purpose of dual language being to build these bilingual and biliterate students-- but if we're not able to start with them in kindergarten some of those benefits are lost. At the same time, if you deny a fifth grader who speaks Spanish at home the opportunity to receive instruction in Spanish, then in many ways you're taking away a part of that identity and a part of that culture that they could share with their family and so even though they are not able to receive the full benefit, it's not perfect, but it's better than nothing.

I followed up by asking how EB students and parents were notified that they were eligible for the DLE program. The LAS shared that there were a few ways, but that "typically it's parents coming to us unless we have really low enrollment in one class." She said that in the case of low enrollment in a DLE class, "we look at okay who from first grade will most likely pass the AZELLA, let's reach out to them and let them know that they can enroll." However, she said that it is "typically the parents because they know the dual language programs are here and it's a really close community, so they know, most of them just know like my kid is10 years old so I can put them in dual language now." She added that they don't have "a ton of kiddos that have done that but it's enough that it impacts learning and even if it's only a few each year by the time you get to fifth-grade, many of those kiddos didn't start in kindergarten." She said the parents come into the school and "they sign the waiver saying they are not going to be in SEI anymore, and that they're not going to receive services but that this is the better place for their child." She also explained how they spend time explaining to parents that it might be hard for their child at first because they have not developed some of those foundational literacy skills in Spanish yet. However, they also let parents know:

> …that, yes, we can start them in 5th grade but that's the that's their choice. We are not going to say no, but here's the things that you need to consider. So the parents kind of have that choice of weighing do they want their child to have the choice of being able to receive instruction in their home language. And for a lot of them it's like 'I want them to be

> able to speak with their grandparents, I want them to be able to speak with me' and so it's more of the fact that they want [their child] to maintain the language.

The principal confirmed that the DLE program has a long history at Alma. As a result, she said that many families find out about the program through "word of mouth." She added that in the DLE program there are many families who have been a part of the program for many years and have sent multiple children through the program, therefore, "a lot of it is our families have been together and are like a big family. So, I think for kiddos coming into our school it is a great experience for them when they get into the dual language program because they do have that sense of family…" If a parent desires for their child to be in the DLE program, but their child has not passed AZELLA fully, she said the parents "meet with the teacher or the ELL paraprofessional or myself to go through the options and select it." She also clarified that for the DLE program "they have to sign the waiver here at the beginning of the year." Additionally, she explicitly made it a point to mention that even though they only have two DLE classrooms per grade level, that "we do everything in English and Spanish…. You know everything that goes out to our parents from newsletters, permission slips, you know just whatever it is we send home." When I asked the principal about her perspective on EBs enrolling in the DLE program, she informed me that they look at what is best for each child on a case by case basis. She put it this way:

> I think that for students coming in that are Spanish speakers, to be able to have that access to the curriculum in their home language is beneficial. But, I've also seen the other side of it where kids are trying to be proficient in the curriculum in two languages as opposed to within the ELL setting. You know an SEI classroom where they are immersed in English. So I think it kind of depends on the student. I think it's two different models so like with anything, like with a learning disability or with any challenge, there is no one way to get to that final destination. So it's kind of like looking at what's in the best interest of those children. There's been times we said okay SEI is not the best setting for this child and we think they would be better off in a dual language setting, and vice versa. So I think it's knowing the child.

She also discussed how she was familiar with the extensive research on the benefits of dual language programs, particularly in terms of language development for EBs. Yet at the same time felt that:

> the ELL students in there are sometimes higher-performing kiddos. So it's hard to say, is it the dual-language model? Or is it the fact that really our highest performing students outside of our gifted program are in the dual-language program? And probably have been in that dual language program for most of their elementary years.

She then briefly highlighted that they enroll students from Spanish-speaking backgrounds in a DLE classroom even if they have not always been in the dual language program, yet they do not typically enroll students from English speaking backgrounds after a certain age “unless they’re gifted.”

The master teacher reiterated the principal’s perspective, stating that they look at which program to enroll EBs in on a “kid by kid basis.” She said once they pass AZELLA, if the parents approach them and say:

> ‘You know, I’ve always wanted them to be in dual language, can they be in dual language?’ Most of the time we’re like ‘yes, that’s a great idea.’ And then sometimes [Mrs. DLS] will be the one who calls and reaches out to the parent and says, ‘Your child has passed AZELLA, would you like them to be in dual language?’ Sometimes it's when they're 10 years old and they want them to be in dual language, but maybe that's not the best place for them because they're struggling so much in both languages. I feel like they have at least one kid this year that maybe that's just not the right spot for that kid.

She then also acknowledged that many times it is the parents who come to them and ask if they can enroll their child in the dual language program especially once they are ten. She then indicated that they advise the parents based on their assessment of the students’ needs and abilities when she shared:

> And I know that their parents really want them to be in the program, but then you think like okay but they're switching back and forth constantly with the content every two weeks and they're struggling in both languages, so it's like is this program meeting their needs?

> You know, you want the Spanish to be a support to them, but if it's not a support, you wonder "would it be better for them to be in a SEI classroom where they're getting more of that language support from the teacher… And I feel like sometimes some of the kids who they're on a waiver… I feel like a lot of times they struggle, and they could be in an SEI classroom if their parent wanted them to be.

Although the master teacher questioned some of the EBs placements in the DLE program, she discussed being surprised by the State's anti-bilingual education position when she moved to Arizona from New York the first year SEI became law back in 2001. She said she has always worked in schools with high percentages of EBs and students on FRL. Prior to Alma, she was at a school where a bilingual program was shut down and replaced by SEI. She shared how it was very strange for her to observe what was taking place across Arizona. In recalling that experience she stated that despite not having a bilingual education background herself:

> I always had kind of an initial belief in it. I didn't understand why they thought that bilingual education is bad. I didn't have an experience either way, but I kind of felt like it probably would benefit the students to have some bilingual support.

When asked about her observations after having been a master teacher at a school with a DLE program for the last five years she shared the following perspective:

> When I came here [to Alma], and I saw how well the students do-- even the students that have English as their first language but they're learning Spanish. You just see that they're able to do so much more and be challenged. And the proficiency tends to be a lot higher than kids in the general education classroom. And so I just feel like it's a benefit not only to our English language learners but also to our other students who are able to pick that up as well. So I think it strengthened my belief that it's a good thing to have bilingual classrooms.

Chapter Summary

Ultimately, these interviews demonstrated that a combination of systemic policy constraints and educator values dynamically influenced the unique ways the administrators

approached EB education at Alma elementary. Prior to discussing these findings in greater detail, I present my findings on the teacher/classroom level of analysis and the students.

CHAPTER 6
FOCAL TEACHERS & CLASSROOMS

In this chapter, I provide a detailed description of the focal classrooms and teachers. My analysis focuses on answering research question two: At the classroom-level, how do teachers conceptualize (bi)literacy development and enact language policies impacting emergent bilinguals? More specifically, at the classroom level of analysis I sought to understand *how* the participating classroom teachers conceptualized biliteracy development and language learning in their classrooms and also *how* language policies, when conceptualized as practice, were engaged in and through the everyday language learning activities and social contexts of the focal classrooms. I organized the findings by classroom (i.e. Mrs. DLS, Mrs. DLE, and Ms. ELD). Specifically, I started by presenting details on each teacher's background and classroom context. Then, for each teacher, I engaged in a detailed description of their (bi)literacy orientations which served to answer the first part of the classroom-level research question. Next, I included a section on *language policies as practiced* within each classroom context as means to address the second part of the classroom-level research question. In this section, I present examples of the perspectives, practices, and activities from within each classroom space.

A combination of formal teacher interviews, observational fieldnotes, and video recordings of class time informed the analysis. Educational language policy perspectives (Menken & García, 2010; Sutton & Levinson, 2001) guided my interpretation and analysis of the classrooms as communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) where sociocultural context, curricular content, pedagogical practices, and teacher values came together uniquely in each classroom. Through the presentation of the classroom-level findings, I aimed to illustrate the ways educator agency at the intersections of their roles as pedagogues and language policy makers/implementers was uniquely reflected in each focal classroom.

The Fifth-Grade Spanish Dual Language Classroom: Luz (Mrs. DLS).

At the time of data collection, Luz (Mrs. DLS), had 10 years of experience as the Spanish dual language teacher at Alma Elementary. She did her student teaching experience at another school in the same district but was drawn to Alma because she was interested in being a part of the dual language program. So, when a fifth-grade position opened up at Alma, she jumped at the

opportunity both because of Alma's dual language program and because she was interested in teaching in either the fourth or fifth grade. With her newly minted degree in multilingual/multicultural education from a nearby university and her teaching certification in hand, Luz began her teaching career at Alma and still considered it "home" over a decade later.

Luz considers herself Mexican-American. She was born in Mexico and immigrated with her parents to Southern California when she was seven years old. She grew up speaking Spanish as her home language and attended a bilingual program when she started school for the first time in California. She recalled feeling "very fortunate" to have started school in a bilingual program. In discussing this experience, she stated, "I believe that is a big part of why I am who I am." She talked briefly about the struggles associated with being an immigrant in a new country at a new school when she said, "it's a whole different world and a new language, I think that's why a lot of kids over the years keep falling more and more behind." She added that "for me, I think that was part of my success…I was able to come to L.A. and have a bilingual program where they spoke my language… just to have that as part of my education I think gave me a lot of confidence."

Luz also shared a memory of being considered a "really good reader," although she was not sure if it was in English at the time, she recalled her first-grade teacher suggesting that she skip a grade. She attributed this in large part to her mom frequently helping her with her reading in Spanish at home. Luz moved to Arizona with her family a few years later where she enrolled in an English-only mainstream school, but she emphasized how formative those first few years were in developing how she viewed herself as a learner. She specifically recalled how her first school made her feel like she belonged and was a strong student even though she was still in the process of learning *English and Spanish*. She said "I liked school. I wanted to be in school, whereas I think some kids don't have that positive experience that I had." As an educator, Luz enjoyed being able to teach in a dual language program and strove to create a welcoming bilingual learning environment in her classroom, much like one she recalled as young elementary student herself. She added how she viewed her work as tied to the importance of maintaining many of her students' home or heritage language when she shared, "I really value the kids being

able to keep their first language while enriching themselves with their second language… Just being able to give that opportunity to our students- not many districts offer that opportunity here."

The DLS classroom context.

Upon entering Luz's classroom, the students were grouped together in groups of five desks so that they form a table or team of students. She strategically grouped the students so that there were strong Spanish speakers mixed with students who struggle more in Spanish at each table. As much as possible, she also grouped students based on ability levels so that each table had a mixture of students who were higher or lower in the content areas. Although it was only on a rare occasion that you saw her there, Luz's desk was in the front corner filled with piles of student work, pictures, and small gifts and mementos that students gifted with her over the years. The walls were filled with posters in Spanish, examples of student work, and important reference information such as math place tables, important steps to take when solving problems, and hand-written posters outlining reading and writing strategies or definitions. In the front of the classroom, there was a Smart Board Luz typically taught from with the objective for the day and a monthly calendar always posted just to the right of the board. The far side of the classroom had a dry erase board that always displayed the daily schedule and listed diverse student roles in the classroom (e.g. messenger, line leader, etc.). In the back of the classroom, a bilingual library lined the wall and there was a table with a stack of small dry erase boards where she sat to work with small groups of students on a daily basis. There was also a bean bag circle-area where the students sat on the floor in a large circle for their "morning" meetings.

I observed Luz's teaching style to be both welcoming and demanding. During their daily whole class meeting time, she talked with the students about both personal and academic issues. It was common to hear her ask students to share about their weekend experiences or their families, and she often shared about her own as well. She also used the time to discuss important takeaways from their lessons and homework each week. In her classroom, she made it clear to her students that she had high expectations for their efforts. As a result, you could frequently hear her praising students, but also sternly correcting them or giving mini-lectures on her expectations.

Her caring, yet exacting demeanor as a teacher created a classroom environment where there was an underlying sense of trust, respect, and responsibility.

Luz: Heritage language pedagogue, dynamic Bilingualism, and content area mastery.

In both my interviews and observations of Luz's classroom, I identified three overarching categories related to how Luz conceptualized bilingualism and biliteracy in her classroom. These three categories surrounded Luz's dedication to heritage language development, dynamic bilingualism, and her belief in the primacy of content over language mastery.

Heritage language pedagogue.

At various points throughout her interview Luz articulated an additive bilingualism perspective that positioned the role of developing her students home languages and cultures as central to her work as a dual language educator. Specifically, she shared, "I want them to be proud of who they are and the abilities that they already have and to then also learn something new." In her words, "a lot of them already have Spanish," so as a teacher she wanted her students to know "that's something great. Value it. Appreciate it. Expose it. Don't be afraid of it. Don't be afraid to speak it." She added that her students are often aware of the hostile Arizona climate that surrounds their cultural and linguistic backgrounds as Spanish speaking Latinx students when she said, "some of these kids have heard what's going in the media and certain things like that can be scary for them, like maybe who you are, you're not accepted." As a result, she viewed it as central to her role "to empower them so that they know they can be someone big. They can accomplish their dreams."

One way Luz did this was by ensuring her students knew her background. In fact, upon entering the shared fifth-grade classroom area at Alma, there was poster where Luz highlighted her background as a part of a display highlighting the languages and countries of origin of a number of fifth-grade students from first generation immigrant families. She also shared:

> I have a couple kids that weren't born here. I've noticed that they're afraid to say, 'I was born in Mexico.' So, I'll be like 'I was born in Mexico, so don't be afraid. Don't ever put yourself down for that. Be proud of that.

In that same breath she added that she talked with the students about how she felt:

> very proud of where I came from and who I am… so really, I think it is my passion to empower students to trust in who they are and to believe that they can become whoever they want to be in this country.

Luz overtly positioned herself as heritage language pedagogue deeply committed to developing students home languages and cultural identities through her work as a dual language classroom teacher. At the same time, she described how she viewed her work as extending beyond the classroom and out into the community where she was able to build relationships with many of the dual language families at Alma over the years. In this way, she connected her work to her and her students' identities. She put it this way:

> I think it's also the culture that we have. I know in my Mexican family, you treat everybody like they're part of your family. You want to help everybody… Every parent that comes in, I guess they remind me of my parents. They remind me of me. They remind me of my relatives.

Over the years, Luz has become a staple of and leader within the dual language program at Alma. She has seen siblings, cousins, and family friends come through her classroom, and naturally developed a deep sense of connection and community within the dual language program. In her own words:

> I'm like part of their family and I build close relationships with a lot of them. You'll see me at their quinceañeras, or at their birthday parties. It's tough when you obviously have your own family, but if I have a little moment, at least I try to go to the *misas* [masses] or at least pop in and say, 'here's your gift,' 'I wanted to say hi,' or 'I'm proud of you,' at let's say a graduation. I think it's a continuous relationship that is built.

As a classroom teacher, Luz also taps into her identity by positioning herself as a language learner in order to help her students understand language development as a journey. She put it this way, "I always tell them English was my second language and I still always look to get better. If there's a word I don't know, I'm not embarrassed. I'll be like, 'Hey, what does that mean?' She shared this with students because she wanted them to feel comfortable takings risks,

making mistakes, and freely asking for help from peers and teachers “without being fearful of being laughed at…” or embarrassed.

Luz encouraged this type of classroom environment in a number of ways. For example, she had explicit pep talks about diverse issues with the students, such as when she talked with her students about the fact that:

> we all come from different backgrounds. We didn't all grow up with parents reading books to us with high vocabularies or where they spoke with high vocabularies in English or even in Spanish. Some of us just didn't have that. How are we going to get better? If there's something we don't know, ask like, ‘hey can you tell me what it is?’

She let the students know she had high expectations for them especially in terms of their effort, yet she also tried to ensure:

> they know that if I'm being harsh on something, it's not that I'm putting them down. It's more like… I try to relate it back to the importance of…. preparing them for their future. And if I'm being harsh about something, it's not that I'm punishing you or I want to embarrass you in any way.

She further shared that when encouraging their effort and involvement in class activities, she felt strongly that, “it's more than teaching them math. It's more than teaching them reading. It's more of letting them know, "you've got to be involved. Don't be making excuses.” She said that while she knows they are still young, she has “those many talks with them” about things like being good citizens, striving to make a difference, and “just getting more involved.” She said that the message she wants to send is “once again, that empowerment, instilling that belief in them.”

Luz also tried to make their classroom activities engaging and relevant to their lives as much as possible. Luz did this by carefully selecting materials that she thought they would find interesting whether that meant translating from English or searching out new Spanish-medium materials. In math, she said that some of the word problems were disconnected from the students’ lives, so she would leave the numbers alone but insert the students’ names or change the names of foods, objects, or places to those with which the students were familiar. She added, “they actually do get excited when they hear names” or when they hear foods they love like

"chucherías, Takis, raspados, and that kind of stuff." She said that as team of fifth-grade teachers they tried to incorporate these types of things as much as possible both in math and in language arts. She also discussed a "culture unit" she did with the students each fall because "it's just such an engaging unit and the kids really love it." This year, she said they focused on comparing their own cultures to other cultures around the world.

Luz clearly viewed the students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds as strengths that had the potential to transform their futures. This was also present in her comments about how she saw their biliteracy as tied to their future career opportunities. Specifically, she encouraged her students to work hard at mastering both spoken and academic uses of Spanish and English so that they could potentially add a third or fourth language down the road. She said, "I want them to realize that knowing more than one language is powerful, but knowing more than two languages can get them even better opportunities in the future…" She told her students things like, "you will be multilingual or at least bilingual and you will have been exposed to different cultures. Even that experience can allow you to have a bigger job, or better opportunities." Luz's dedication to her students and teaching was evident in both word and deed. She was especially passionate about helping students who come from homes where Spanish was a home language maintain and further develop their first language alongside English. Rooted in her own identity as well as that of her students, Luz was a heritage language pedagogue at her core.

Dynamic bilingualism and content mastery as key.

Garcia (2010) defines dynamic bilingualism as the complex, fluid, and often hybrid language practices bilinguals utilize to make meaning in diverse social contexts. In describing the language practices associated with dynamic bilingualism in traditional classroom spaces, Garcia (2010) paints a picture of bi/multilingual educators who exhibit a high degree of linguistic tolerance, who recognize and seek to build upon the hybrid language practices of their students, and who view controlling the separation of languages as secondary to their roles as educators. In many ways, Luz's beliefs about teaching and learning in a dual language setting mirrored these values. Although, during the interview Luz at times framed her hybrid practices as "a challenge" due to her explicit role as the Spanish dual language teacher in a 50:50 model, she also spoke of

her language choices candidly as contextual, pragmatic, and rooted in her desire to ensure students were able to fully master subject-area content.

In terms of literacy, her students were between second-grade and high school levels in English and between kindergarten/first-grade and just above grade level (6th grade) in Spanish. As a means to differentiate based on student needs Luz adjusted her Spanish and incorporated some English at times because "it's not about me testing your language skills, but now I want to know if you really understand the skill that needs to be learned." She added that depending on their level in Spanish, "they might know how to do it, but they just didn't understand." She explained it in a way that was contextual and rooted in her knowledge of each individual student. For example, she talked about Darin who is one of the English dominant students who she said, "I know he's going to do his best to tell me what he can in Spanish, but it could get to a point where the vocabulary or just the conversation can't get any higher and he might not be able to express it in Spanish." In this case, she said she allows students to express themselves the best they can, and then she would "repeat it back to them in Spanish, for them to repeat it back to me or at least so they can hear how it's supposed to be said." On the other hand, she had many students who were strong Spanish speakers who in that same context she would tell "*tú sabes bien tu español, dímelo bien*/[you know your Spanish well, tell me it correctly [in Spanish]]." She again emphasized that "at a certain point it's not testing your language skills but testing the content knowledge that you know."

In discussing peer-to-peer interactions, she talked about grouping students with diverse abilities in Spanish and English together so that they could support one another in learning and developing in both languages across the content areas, which she felt for the most part was effective in her classroom. When I asked her if there were any tensions surrounding language choice, dominance, or grouping between the students, she said, "I don't see that" and then shared:

> …a lot of them have been together since kindergarten or first grade. You have some new kids coming in, but I think they're like this group of little brothers and sisters…. I think they watch out for each other. I don't think they make that distinction of like, "you don't know

Spanish very well," or, "you don't know English very well." I think they all try to support each other if they don't know something.

She added that even during years when they have had larger percentages of “kids that were Anglo or Black” it was similar and “they were all just part of dual language… they all supported each other, how they could.”

Given the 50:50 model, she encouraged her students to speak in Spanish but recognized that the strict separation of languages was not something that was natural to many students in the dual language program, particularly those from bilingual households. In fact, when discussing the often hybrid and fluid language practices of her students, she reflected on her own bilingual practices and said “I know sometimes it’s hard. We as humans too, we are going to do the same thing.” That said, she felt that she adhered to the 50:50 model pretty closely in terms of teaching mostly in Spanish, yet she did not view her classroom as a place where there was a strict separation of languages at all times. She then talked about how she thought “it's important to make those connections from English to Spanish too” and brainstormed a bit out loud about how she thought they could do a better job of “bridging” as a team teaching pair. Specifically, she thought they could carve out a time where they could go “over things that we learned in both classes… in both languages… to prepare them for the next [two weeks of] class” in the other language (i.e. Spanish or English).

Luz also typically selected materials that were in Spanish or had side by side bilingual translations depending on what they were focusing on at the moment. For example, in writing they often needed to see source articles many times especially when they were working on incorporating evidence, in which case she translated the articles so that that they had the articles in both English and Spanish. For reading, she used Spanish or bilingual articles depending on their objective for the day. Finding quality materials in Spanish that coincided with the unit, grade level, and standards they were working on at any given moment was one of her “biggest challenges.” Therefore, how she mixed the languages was at times a result of text availability and time needed to translate. Over the years, she spent a lot of time translating, making her own materials, and compiling Spanish language resources. When it came to using audiovisual

multimedia, there were moments when only English-medium educational content was available. For this reason, her fluid practices were sometimes rooted in Spanish medium material availability that aligned with the broader fifth-grade curricular units and goals.

Luz: Language policies as practiced.

In this section, I grouped themes that emerged from Luz's interviews and classroom observations into three larger categories related to how Luz practiced and implemented language policies as a classroom teacher. Specifically, Luz's interview themes surrounded the unique design of biweekly content area rotations as a part of the dual language schedule, the ways EB students were incorporated into the dual language program starting in the 5th grade, and her use of language development strategies in her everyday teaching practices.

The Dynamic Duo.

The dual language program at Alma sought to ensure that students were exposed to each content area in both languages throughout the year. They followed a 50:50 model but were given freedom as a dual language teaching team to determine what this would look like in their specific classrooms. In discussing this freedom, Luz spoke about how she felt lucky to be a part of a smaller district that "really looks out for what teachers need" and added that she felt she really had a voice and a lot of autonomy in deciding how they wanted to schedule the 50:50 language-content split. In her words "they usually give us that freedom with our schedule to do what works best to meet the kids' needs."

While all the fifth-grade classrooms at Alma were following the same overarching curriculum, the dual language programs implementation space looked different than the other classrooms both because the students' days were split between the separate English and Spanish classrooms, and also because of the way they switched content areas every two weeks. This meant that for two weeks Luz taught reading and writing in Spanish while her counterpart Emily taught math in English, and then they switched. Luz shared that in the past this breakdown has looked different. For example, the year prior they switched content areas every week. This year they decided it was better to switch every two weeks so that the students had each subject for a longer period of time in each target language and so they had more time to cover key

concepts with the students before switching. Also unique to the dual language program was their team decision to switch the time of day they taught each subject area. They said this was because there was research showing that time of day (i.e. morning vs. afternoon) can affect how well students learn, therefore they switched the order of the subjects every two weeks as well so that both classes received math and ELA in the mornings versus afternoons equally.

Overall, Luz felt that they followed the two-week rotation schedule pretty closely but added that there were times when they would tweak the format slightly to accommodate students' needs. She added that at times the switch off was a struggle due to the students' work pace not always idyllically matching the lessons they planned, the sometimes not knowing "exactly what's going on in the other classroom" and needing to "see where the kids are at" on any given objective they were working toward, or just the fact that certain units felt truncated because they were meant to stretch over a longer period of time than two weeks.

Writing can be particularly difficult to manage because by the fifth grade they were often asking the students to engage in multistep writing processes. Therefore, Luz felt that at times it was hard for the students when "you did all this research [and] all of this writing in Spanish [and] now you're moving to English." For this reason, during the last few months of the term when the writing assignments were getting more difficult, they decided to shift the schedule so that students could finish their writing pieces in the language they started. Luz said this meant that they rearranged the last portion of the day so that it did not matter which content area they were "technically" teaching, thus allowing the students to finish assignments without feeling like they had to write two pieces (one in each language) and without translating. By the end of the spring semester, the students completed an opinion/argumentation piece in English, an informative five paragraph essay in Spanish, a creative writing piece in English, and a series of short poems in Spanish. Luz was planning to rearrange the schedule in a more formalized way next year so that they could incorporate more writing options in order to help students improve their writing stamina and fluency in both languages.

Emergent bilinguals in dual language.

When I first asked Luz about EBs in the dual language program, she looked at me with frankness and said that most of her students tested out of that label, but not to be mistaken, both the EB and the formerly EB (F-EB) students were *still learning English*. For this reason, she considered most students in her class to still be in need of supplemental support and felt that the dual language program met most of their needs.

EBs in Luz's classroom were typically new to the dual language program because it was the first year they were eligible for a waiver under Arizona's SEI laws. Luz explained to me that given the large Latinx and F-EB student population in their dual language program they typically "make all parents sign a waiver even though it's only the ELL students who should sign it." She added that given the recent history in Arizona, "it's just one of those things like just in case you want to…" When I asked her specifically about her role in the schools' waiver process, she shared that she was typically the one who reached out to parents over the summer once the fourth-grade teachers or the language acquisition specialist provided her with a list of eligible students. The fourth-grade teachers and the administration gave their recommendations and at times she said "they might believe that [a particular] student won't be successful" in dual language. The reasons given usually surrounded the perception that the dual language program was more rigorous and that a student might not be well equipped or willing to adjust to the demands of having two teachers/classes instead of just the one. Luz said she considered their recommendations, but added "it's one of those things where I believe that if a kid has Spanish as their first language, why not give them the opportunity to continue learning in their first language? I believe they will be more successful than in just all English."

She added that "it also depends on if there's room." Depending on how many students they had coming up from the fourth grade, there may not be very many spaces for new waiver students to come over from the SEI classroom. But if there was room, she viewed the dual language program as a good opportunity for EB students with a basic foundation in Spanish and also as good for the SEI program because it decreased their class size, which she believed "should be smaller." In the case of limited space, she tried to determine "if there's kids that I think

would be appropriate or if [the fourth-grade SEI teacher] recommends that this would be a good student....” She added that the dual language program in the lower grades is currently “packed” and she was not sure if there would be room for her to bring SEI students over the following academic year.

Once these determinations have been made, Luz called parents to inform them of their option to sign a waiver and have their child enrolled in the dual language program. She shared that many parents were eager to have their child enrolled in dual language once they learn that it was an option. Additionally, there were always a few parents who were already aware that when their child entered the fifth-grade they could request to have their child switched out of SEI and into the DLE program. Parents who went out of their way to make a request to be in dual language often had other children in her classroom in prior years and they wanted their younger children to be in Luz’s classroom if possible.

Once enrolled, Luz said EB students do sometimes struggle. Specifically, she said they noticed right away that “one of the classes was definitely lower academically than the other class [and] a lot of those kids were recruited or brought over from SEI.” She said “that’s where you’re like hmmm, is it the language? Is it because they were in all ELL classes? There’s so many factors. Did they have teachers that gave them that support that they needed?” At the same time, Luz said she has had EB students who thrived even though they had never been in the dual language program prior to fifth-grade. She noted that these students typically had stronger literacy skills in English and Spanish to start with, it was just “they don’t know how to read or write” in Spanish yet. She said they did well because they “just transfer” their literacy skills and “they pick it up really quick.”

Language Development in Spanish language arts.

Luz used a number of strategies as a means to engage students in language development during Spanish language arts (SLA) time. Naturally, one of these strategies was to teach and engage students in Spanish for the duration of their time in her classroom. When providing direct instruction or introducing a new concept, Luz nearly always adhered to the 50:50

model and could rarely be heard speaking English with the exception of an occasional word or short phrase in English for emphasis.

As mentioned previously, there were times when she used video clips or other supplemental materials in English. For example, when she was teaching the students about the rainforest she showed them a YouTube video about the role of ants in the rainforest's ecosystem in English, but as soon as it ended began engaging the students in Spanish and then provided a handout on *hormigas/ants* for the students to synthesize and summarize what they had learned from the video. In my interview with Luz, she shared this was something she did because she often had difficulty finding high quality videos in Spanish that aligned with the topic, language level, and interests of fifth-graders. She engaged in a similar practice around test preparation time in that she generally continued providing class instructions in Spanish but passed out the AzMERIT test preparation materials in English. However, there were times during test preparation time when Luz switched entirely to English to make a point. Another area that showed greater fluctuation between English and Spanish was the writing portion of the day. If the students were finishing up a writing piece from their time in English class, she often assisted them in finishing those pieces during her class time, if needed. At times this meant there was a mixture of Spanish and English on the white board or on her easel.

On the other hand, when she shifted from whole class instruction to working with students one-on-one or in small groups, her language practices became noticeably more fluid and she could be heard translanguaging, adjusting her register, translating to English if needed, and just fluidly moving between languages as a way to support students wherever they were at in their Spanish language development journey. It was rare to see Luz sitting still. She was in constant action as she navigated the classroom answering questions and supporting students in small group work. Below I provide greater detail on how her language practices played out in specific strategies she used to support student learning in SLA.

Visuals.

Luz shared that it was her practice as well as a school wide policy to ensure there were always a lot of visuals throughout the classroom to help students see "how to do certain

problems" or "for them to refer back to as they're doing work or making connections to new things that they're learning." Upon entering Luz's classroom, this was immediately obvious, and she could frequently be heard referring students back to the strategies she displayed on her walls. As the students were reading any given text, she would remind them to "talk to the text" or to read for the "GIST." This was reinforced on her "*Lectura/*Reading" wall which had a large laminated yellow poster board that outlined "Como hablar con el texto/How to talk to the text" with specific strategies for the students to reference. Acronyms were also on display and referenced throughout the classroom. Luz frequently asked students to find the GIST, an acronym she defined in Spanish, but also saw as a way to help the students make connections between English and Spanish when they were identifying the main idea of a text. In similar fashion, the "*Escritura/*Writing" section of the wall was filled with visual displays outlining the key elements of diverse text-types such as memoirs, historical narratives, poetry, opinion/argumentation letters, and informative essays.

Through whole class instruction and the wall displays, she guided students visually and linguistically towards the specific strategy or step she wanted them to engage in on a given day. Depending on what she was asking of them, students could frequently be seen engaging in diverse practices such as numbering paragraphs, circling words they didn't understand, summarizing, brainstorming, or outlining. The walls in a way spoke to history of learning in the classroom as Luz frequently converted her SmartBoard or whiteboard notes into a poster for students to refer back to when needed. In her interview she shared that "those strategies that are taught within both languages," which was confirmed when I observed the English classrooms each week as well.

Participation.

Another way that Luz encouraged Spanish language development in her class was through embedding different levels of verbal participation throughout their SLA time. She said her philosophy, which she openly discussed with students was "you cannot hide in here." She felt that students knew the expectation was that "you're going to get called on especially if you're not participating." In my observations this was evident as well. She even kept a small canister at the

front of the room with each student's name on a stick so she could draw a name from the canister at random. In my observations, this was such a common occurrence in the class that it did not seem to incite a sense of stress among students. In fact, if a student did not have an answer or response to share, the other students would step in to help that student out. Additionally, Luz often encouraged small group or partner conversations prior to a whole class discussion. She said this was intentional so that the students could hear other students' perspectives and ways of thinking, then have time to formulate a response should they be asked to share with the class.

During whole class discussions and interactions, I frequently observed the students responding to Luz in Spanish depending on their level of proficiency. I noticed that the students for whom Spanish was their home language, spoke up more frequently in Luz's class than they did during the English portion of the day. At the same time, even when students who were less proficient in Spanish participated in whole class discussions, their peers were patient and gracious with their efforts. There was a sense that they were all learning Spanish and that it was normal for students to struggle with language. At the same time, it was not uncommon to hear students respond in English or code-switch strategically in their responses. When this happened, Luz typically recast what the student was saying in Spanish for the class to hear and at other times simply responded to the English in Spanish.

On the other hand, when Luz asked the students to engage in small group discussions at their tables, there was almost always a rumbling in both languages at first. Luz regularly stopped to check on the table discussions or group work and in almost every case she initiated conversation with the students in Spanish. The students typically responded to her in Spanish as well, unless for some reason they were struggling to communicate their point, then they would mix the languages or switch to English. Luz embraced this language fluidity in her conversations with students, although she stayed in Spanish unless she felt there was a comprehension issue. However, it became evident as I walked around the classroom that the peer-to-peer interactions were occurring almost entirely in English. Even native Spanish speakers often chose to speak in English when speaking to another native Spanish speaker. This was is part due to the fact that each table had at least one student who had low or beginner level proficiency in Spanish.

Therefore, it appeared that the more advanced Spanish speakers were accommodating the student(s) at the lower proficiency level. This was also visible at the table where there was a newly arrived student from Mexico. At this particular table, there was more peer-to-peer Spanish interactions than at many of the other tables.

Differentiation and small group support.

Small group or one-on-one instruction was an everyday approach to (bi)literacy development in Luz's classroom. This meant that during all SLA (and ELA) blocks the students received a formal lesson and a period they referred to as "*lectura guiada*/guided reading," followed by a writing period. The guided reading time was when Luz pulled students one-on-one or in small groups for individualized reading support. She said this was in part because they had pretty big classes and "every group or almost every kid needs something different." In writing, this was a commonly seen as well. She shared that when possible she grouped students with similar needs together so that during that time, she could do targeted "enrichment or re-teaching." Depending on the period, the students who were not working with her, would either be reading a book silently, working on a project or activity in small groups, or developing a writing piece. For writing she said "I like to do one by one" but added that "it takes a lot time" so her goal was to work with one or two students individually each day. She wanted to be able to see how they were writing, if they were on track, and how she could better support them so that she knew "what would be helpful to do as lesson with them." Because giving this type of attention to students in both ELA/SLA and math took time, she and her English counterpart decided to each take a subject area to focus on during guided reading or math time for an entire month, regardless of what content area they were focusing on at a given time. Luz felt that this provided greater continuity in student learning because with a whole month she felt she had time to "know I've taught him this…." instead of not being able to finish a concept in two weeks, sending a student to the other classroom and wondering if "what she is teaching them in small groups" aligned with the support she was giving. With this schedule adjustment, Luz would often pull students from both classes during guided reading or math time. I observed this happening on numerous occasions

during my visits. More than anything, it was clear that providing as much individualized support as possible was a priority in Luz's classroom.

During small group and one on one time, I really noticed a more fluid movement between English and Spanish. During this time Luz exhibited both strategic uses of Spanish and English and more fluid dynamic bilingualism at times as well. Differentiation, reprimanding, and test preparation were examples of where she tapped into her linguistic resources to achieve a strategic purpose or effect with students. For example, during guided reading time the recordings show Luz helping students read through an article, assisting them with pronunciation, and guiding their vocabulary development in Spanish. Yet when a student approached who she knew was at a lower level of speaking and comprehension, she quickly shifted to using a mixture of English and Spanish to meet that particular student's needs. Reprimanding was another instance when you heard her switch to English and mix languages. She did this to ensure students understood the message she was sending, in a way acknowledging that the shift to English by the fifth grade was strong. However, perhaps the most telling example of classroom language policy in action was the way guided reading and math time shifted into English during the weeks leading up to AzMERIT testing. During this time, Luz also had the students working on English-only test preparation packets in math and reading. When Luz discussed their standardized test growth during her post-interview, she said she was not as pleased with their reading growth as she was with their math growth. She then talked about better aligning practices with her English counterpart and reevaluating her SLA practices to determine how she could "help the most on the Spanish side." Luz indicated that she viewed her role in their language development as secondary to that of her English counterpart when she stated, "whatever I do is going to support them, but it's going to be most important in English." She then acknowledged how standardized testing determined the importance of English when she followed up her supportive role statement with "… because all those tests are in English. Let's be real." Because Luz's classroom was the only Spanish DLE classroom I observed, I did not know if this was standard practice across the school or a classroom specific choice. Yet prior research has indicated that this practice is widespread. In fact, bilingual education researchers often refer to standardized testing

requirements as de facto English-only policy (Menken, 2008; Henderson, 2016). It was clear as the test approached, that Luz felt obligated to provide the students with their test preparation in English.

There were also instances of less strategic language choice, where Luz would almost unconsciously switched into English and then pretty quickly returned to Spanish. Although Luz's language adhered pretty closely to the 50:50 model during whole class instruction, she was observed on multiple occasions engaging in dynamic bilingualism with no apparent strategic reason. To provide some examples, she was heard saying things such as "Okay guys, bajan las voces/Ok guys, lower your voices" or "vivían en el forest floor, escuchen/they lived on the forest floor, listen" when discussing the rainforest. When talking to other bilingual adults in her classroom she could often be heard saying things like "if you could make a go at this page, porque ya hice la primera página/because I already did the first page." I outline these instances briefly as a means to show that Luz was far from a language purist and she both articulated and embodied the belief that language fluidity was natural. Perhaps this was why she was never heard overtly requiring her students to speak in one language or the other, or correcting their grammar, but rather gently guided her students in their understanding of Spanish and encouraged their use of the language as someone dedicated helping her students maintain their heritage language and grow in their confidence in Spanish.

The Fifth-Grade English Dual Language Classroom: Esther (Mrs. DLE)

At the time of data collection, Esther (Mrs. DLE), had four years of teaching experience. She went to college in Southern California where she completed a liberal studies degree in preparation for entry into a post-baccalaureate teacher credential program (a statewide structure in California). She then relocated to Arizona with her family where she briefly worked as a preschool teacher and enrolled in a Master of Elementary Education (M.Ed) program at a local university. Upon completing her M.Ed., her first full-time teaching position was as a long-term substitute in a second-grade English dual language classroom at Alma's lower elementary feeder campus.

Esther was drawn to the dual language program because as a M.Ed. student, she participated in multiple "teaching rotations," two of which were in Spanish dual language classrooms. She shared that she enjoyed being a part of the dual language program but did not consider herself fluent enough in Spanish to lead a self-contained bilingual or Spanish language DLE classroom. On multiple occasions I overheard Esther speaking in Spanish with some of her students outside class time, but when I asked her about her Spanish she shared with me that she was more "colloquial" and did not consider herself fully biliterate. She said that during her time in the Spanish dual language classrooms "I really had to get my academic Spanish up to speed to be able to give those less producing speakers the support they needed." After finishing her M.Ed and completing her elementary education credentialing requirements (including an SEI endorsement), she applied to and accepted a full-time position as the fifth-grade English dual language teacher at Alma. Esther shared that she preferred "the accountability of the older kids and just having them be able to own up to their own learning." Esther was in her third year as the fifth-grade English DLE teacher at the time of the interview.

When asked about her personal background, Ether self-identified as Mexican-American. She grew up in a rural area in the Sonoran Desert region of Southern California. Her father immigrated to the region from the Baja California area and was a native-Spanish speaker. She shared that her father worked in cotton ginning as a foreman and he learned to speak English there. She said that they did not speak Spanish at home because her "mom's Spanish was not up to par." Although her mother was born and raised in California by Spanish-speaking Mexican-origin parents, her mother identified as "an English-speaker" and as a result so was the household Esther grew up in. She added that she did learn some Spanish from hearing it at home and she said that she spoke in Spanish when she visited with her nana (grandmother). When I complimented her on her Spanish, she shared in a half joking way "my English is all right, but my Spanish is just okay. I feel like my fluency is not, you know, it's not professional. It's not academic." I also asked her about her schooling. She went to English-only schools throughout K12 and in high school took a Spanish "foreign language" course for credit.

As an educator, it was all about the kids for Esther. She shared how she loved music and art and said that while in college she thought about studying music and child psychology. However, for her, “when it came down to it, it was about children and what we need to do to make an impact with them” and then added “counseling, the artsy part, it’s all a part of it.”

The DLE classroom context.

Esther had the students in groups of five or less so that their desks formed a table. While the groups were at times different during Esther’s English half of the day, she too had the students grouped strategically so that each table had a mixture of ability levels in English and Spanish. She said this was so that “if a student needs help, you know, understanding English or Spanish, they’ll be with someone who can help them at the table.” She added that behavior is also a factor but said that they did not have as many behavioral issues as they had in the past.

Physically, the room had a similar, almost mirror layout to the Spanish classroom that shared the west wall. Esther’s desk was in the front right corner of the room. Behind her desk was a large poster that highlighted who Esther was on personal level with sketches and some information about her family and the instruments she played. To the right of her desk there was a wall displaying student work prominently for others to see upon entry. There was an artistic touch to the classroom with different drawings by Esther placed throughout the room. As an example, behind the Smart Board that she taught from at the front of the classroom, there was a sketch of the school’s mascot next to the character values that they asked the students to exhibit. On the left-hand wall white boards stretched the nearly the length of the classroom and detailed the schedule for day as well as other important information of which students needed to be aware. Her remaining walls were organized by content area with the math wall displayed at the front of the classroom and the writing wall stretching across the back of the classroom above her library wall. The writing wall was filled with examples of student writing and posters detailing how to write in different styles for different audiences. Reading strategies, such as ‘talking to the text’ were highlighted nearby as well. Finally, along the back wall there was also reading area and large living room-type chair next to a U-shaped table where she regularly worked with students in small groups.

There was a sense of warmth and consistency that filled Esther's classroom on the days I observed her. She spent time greeting and checking-in with the students when they entered but was quick to transition to the lesson or tasks of the day. Her calm demeanor was often mirrored by her students, who responded to her quickly and obediently with a unison "yes, yes?" when she called out "class, class" at various points throughout the day. When she was not guiding them through a lesson, she was either walking around the classroom checking on student progress or working one on one or in small groups with students. Her calm and steady demeanor facilitated a classroom environment where the students seemed eager to please her and knew exactly what to expect from the day ahead. There was a palpable sense of mutual care and respect between Esther and her students.

Esther: Language separation, student motivation, and building relationships.

In my observations of and interviews with Esther, I generated a list of codes which I then grouped into three overarching categories related to how Esther conceptualized the role of multilingualism and (bi)literacy development in her classroom. The categories identified related to language separation, student motivation to acquire a second language, and Esther's commitment to building relationships with her students.

Language Separation.

In my interviews with Esther, she discussed her fidelity to the 50:50 dual language model as in compliance with the district's policy on dual language classrooms when she stated, "it's a 50:50 model as far as this district is concerned with dual language. So Luz teaches in Spanish. I teach in English and we break the day up 50:50… I'm not teaching anything as far as how to do things or the ways to accomplish the standard in Spanish. All I can do is reiterate directions." She went on to share that at times it can be a challenge when there are many students who are not at a fifth-grade level in English, in which case she said, "for them, you know, I have to break it down [and] I have to make sure there's someone next to them who speaks English or speaks Spanish or speaks whatever the case is because I cannot translate for them… I cannot teach them in their native tongue because I'm not allowed to. So for me, I have to strictly be English-speaking and I have to teach in English." She added that for certain students, particularly the few emergent

English speakers in dual language, she “can give directions in Spanish for those students that need it” but emphasized that because “…this is not a bilingual class, it would be directly to them, so it’s not whole class at all” but more to “reiterate those instructions.”

As the above excerpts show, she viewed the strict separation of languages as central to her role as the English dual language teacher as well as central to the students linguistic and academic development. In other words, she saw her role as helping her students *in English* to make connections between English and Spanish. When she specifically discussed EBs, she talked about them a subgroup of students who “…they made a position for” in dual language but who “do not know English.” Her comment seemed to indicate that the enrollment of EBs in the dual language program was a decision external to her, which upon further questioning was the case. The enrollment of EB students was not something she directly participated in the same way that Luz or the LAS did. She found the diverse levels to be a challenge at times, but said she addressed this by differentiating and doing “individual work with them during guided reading.”

When asked about student language use during class time, she said, “they know, and I’d like to say they try to keep with the language in English” and then added that “they do, because a lot of them understand it, [whereas] in Spanish I think they have more difficulty.” In my observations this was generally true. In fact, I rarely heard students code-switching or using Spanish in her classroom in the same way they used English and translanguaged in their Spanish DLE classroom. Esther was acknowledging that by the fifth grade, the transition to English dominance was a factor in their program. She considered this transition natural and attributed it to the fact that at school “everyone around them speaks English and they speak English…”

Along with her perspective on the importance of the strict separation of languages in the dual language program, Esther also spoke highly of the goals of the dual language program in promoting bilingualism and biculturalism. In discussing the families specifically, she shared:

> I’d like to think that people choose the dual language program because they see the value in it and they see the value in biculturalism [and] bilingualism, and they would like their students to continue to be a part of that and strengthen their-- *whether it's English or*

> *Spanish*-- and kind of continue on with the culture that they instill at home and hopefully see that in school as well.

Similar to Luz, Esther discussed how she strives to really make her classroom a place that incorporates "words or ideas or things that the kids can relate to that they might see at home in a real-world situation." For her this could be something as simple as adjusting the cultural references in a word problem, but it went beyond that to also include places within the curriculum where she tried to make connections to the students' lives and interests. In her words, "I'm constantly trying to make it sensitive to their needs because that's something that I wondered as well as a kid, like why do I have to learn this?" To do this, she made connections in her lessons to their "their interests" and at times their "cultural backgrounds" as well. She viewed connecting student interests to her classroom practices as an engagement strategy rooted in figuring out ways "to keep them wanting to learn" and also in "what they find fun at the time." It was therefore common to hear Esther incorporating humor or pop culture references (e.g. Pokémon, Super Mario Brothers, or the latest Justin Bieber song) into her lessons, particularly at times when it was harder to explicitly connect content to their lived realities. In ELA and writing specifically, she strived to make connections through the selection of readings she used and then connected the readings to their writing activities as well.

In summary, Esther really conceptualized her role in the development of the students biliteracy as *English literacy*. She maintained her classroom as an English-speaking and doing space and viewed the separation of languages as central to her contribution to the biliteracy development of her students, whereas Spanish language development was viewed as her teaching partner's role. Despite this strict view on the separation of languages, Esther also espoused a sense of pride in the dual language program as important to developing and maintaining their students' bilingualism and biculturalism. At the same time, she viewed the dual language program as secondary to student agency and motivation to learn their home or second language. Below I explore this theme in greater detail.

Student motivation.

One of the themes that emerged from Esther's interviews was her view of language learning as having "a lot to do with the child's motivation." She felt that overall their students do really well in the dual language program, which she attributed to the way it "really builds up those cognates and makes those connections" to the students' first languages. At the same time, she positioned the dual language program as requiring high levels of cognitive demand and felt that:

> if a student doesn't have that motivation, regardless of how fluent they are in Spanish or how fluent they are in English, it's going to be a lot more difficult for them to be successful because dual language moves quickly and they're constantly having to produce …. and grasp information… in a time span that other kids might take a little longer. And so, if the students themselves aren't a motivated or aren't motivated to learn, with the [two] languages they're going to struggle.

Esther shared that they emphasize the rigor of the program with parents who decide they want to transfer their student to the dual language program in the fifth-grade. She said that they let the parents know "that this is a very rigorous program…[and] there's a lot expected of the students [because] they have to produce in English and in Spanish. And if the student is motivated… [and] willing to work really hard" then they will be successful regardless of their language background. Esther said she shared this with new parents because she wanted to ensure that the dual language program was "something that they want for the student and that student wants, because if they're coming in at fifth-grade and they don't want to be here, they're not going to be as productive I don't think." She positioned dual language as more challenging and thus requiring students with motivation to rise to the challenge. However, she also clarified that despite the fact that dual language students often "have a reputation for being higher achievers," she found that "it's not necessarily always the case." Instead, she felt that the students' demographics, achievement levels, and personalities varied and came together uniquely from year to year.

In following up on this point, Esther gave an unexpected example. She talked about her work with one of the newcomer EB students, Rosa (pseudonym), who had recently moved to the U.S. from Mexico and spoke very little English at the start of the academic year. In discussing her

development over the year, Esther lamented, “I really would have loved to have seen her make more growth in her English vocabulary just because I know she's motivated.” The issue from her view point was that Rosa was “very shy [and] she was very embarrassed to attempt to speak English.” Esther voiced a palpable frustration about Rosa’s growth in English when she shared that:

> at the beginning of the year she was focused on doing some cue cards, making connections with books and breaking down cognates… [but] she didn't attempt to actually put it into action. There wasn't, you know, going to be nearly as much growth as if she would have put motivation into trying and not necessarily caring about what other people thought.

Esther quickly added that she understood that it “is a big deal” and it was normal for Rosa to care about what her peers thought. She then related it to her own experiences as a child when she was learning Spanish and “was always afraid to make mistakes and be laughed at for it.” In sharing this point, she acknowledged that “…on one hand, I relate to her,” but then returned to her point that “on the other hand” she was concerned about her effort and therefore felt compelled to have “those conversations with her, saying in order for you to be successful you need to try.” In this brief conversation, Esther seemed to wholeheartedly believe that she was helping Rosa by pushing her towards tying harder to speak English in her classroom. One way she did this was by requiring Rosa to use English for basic requests such “may I use the restroom? May I wash my hands? May I drink water?.” Esther did not require her to do this in front of the whole class, but asked Rosa to come over and make the request directly to her. She said Rosa would often repeat back her commands in Spanish indicating she understood what Esther was asking. As this went on throughout the year, Esther said that it "was a struggle for me too-- making sure that I did not, you know, quickly resort to speaking to her in Spanish so she can hear it in English and see my gestures in English.” Esther added that “she's fortunate that I know Spanish because the dual language English side doesn't necessarily have to.”

Building relationships.

Esther conceptualized language learning, and learning in general, in her classroom as tied to trust, care, and focusing on students as individuals. She put it this way:

> I know I have a job to make sure that these students are ready for the next school year academically... but for me it's about them as human beings. It's about the kind of people that they become and making sure that they understand that they're cared for and that they have someone that they can trust. I feel like if you have a student that understands that you care about them, they're more willing to learn and more willing to put that focus in… even if it's something that they don't like, they'll do it for you because they know that you care.

As the quote above illustrates, she viewed building relationships with her students as central to their learning experiences in her classroom and her ability to meet their needs as learners. In reflecting on the year in her post-interview, she again talked about her students relationally and shared how much she enjoyed "getting to know them, being able to build those relationships and mess around with them, be playful." She added to this point by discussing areas she felt she could improve on "getting to know them." Specifically, she said that "as far as some of the quiet kids, you know, and maybe they're more reserved and that's completely fine, but how do I figure out what makes them work and trying to be able to dig deeper to find that time to be able to help them more so."

Additionally, she positioned building relationships with the students' families as important to the students learning as well. She felt that the dual language program had "pretty strong parental involvement," but said they also have parents who are not as involved. She said that she communicated regularly with the parents, especially if they were having difficulty understanding what she was asking their child to do. Much of the time she said that "they contact us, they email us, they text us." She said they also had a number of parents who would "come over after school" if they needed something. While I did not observe parents in the dual language classrooms during the school day regularly, I did observe (and on a few occasions meet) parents on campus afterschool or especially on fieldtrip days. In many ways, Esther viewed her relationship with the

families as an extension of her relationship with her students and she conceptualized her contribution to the students' academic and social development as closely tied to relationships.

Esther: Language policies as practiced.

In order to get at Esther's practices and how she implemented language policies in her classroom, I grouped themes from her interviews and my observations in her classroom into the same categories that I used with Luz. These categories related to the dynamic implementation of the split classroom design, the place of EBs in the ELA classroom, and the way she engaged language development through her classroom practices.

The Dynamic Duo.

Esther mirrored Luz's description of the schedule they implemented as a part of the 50:50 DLE model. The two worked together synergistically to deliver ELA/SLA, writing, and math equally in both languages. Switching every two weeks was something Esther described as requiring "constant communication." She said this meant they met regularly to discuss "what are the things that the kids got? And what are the things that the kids did not get?... [then] we get together, and we say, *this* we need more work on *this*." She felt their constant communication was one way to ensure "that we know where the kids leave off so that we know where to start with them and at the beginning of the two-week segment that we have with them." In order to avoid teaching repetitive concepts, skills, or information, she said they align their lessons to specific standards and they "try to have a closing point for the standard." In her eyes, this was particularly important for report cards and communicating with parents "to make sure we have a clear picture" on each student's growth and challenges. Esther's goal was to get the students "to the point they need to be within the two weeks" so that they are ready to move on to something new with Luz, even if it's within the same overarching unit. Where inevitable grey areas arise, Esther said they "pick their [the students] brains" to see what they recall and adjust their lesson plans if needed.

Again, similar to Luz, Esther shared that the constant switch off also presented some challenges. She also gave writing as an example of where "it's always been a struggle to kind of figure out that balance of what's going to be the completed product in English? What's going to

be a completed product in Spanish? So that we both have something that we can grade and that should demonstrate the student's knowledge in that particular language." In the past, Esther shared that they sometimes had the students produce two writing pieces one in each language each trimester but said that was also a challenge "because we only have, we have the same timeframe as everyone else." To make it more doable for the students, they often had one big piece in one language and a smaller piece or element of the writing process in the other language. She gave the example of the historical narrative as a writing project that "needed to be in English," so then the following writing project was in Spanish. She referred to their writing dynamic as imperfect, "juggling," and "trying to find that balance." She also talked about the ways they moved a few things around towards the end of the year" that made finding that balance somewhat easier. Specifically, she said they tried "to figure out different ways that we could accomplish meeting our writing goals with looking at our schedules differently." She then added, "we can change it as long as you know, we meet the requirements of the 50:50 model."

Emergent bilinguals in dual language.

As previously described, Esther viewed the dual language program as a place for students who were motivated to learn in two languages and who worked hard to meet the demands of the program regardless of the students first, home, or heritage language background. In this sense, she did not position the dual language program as necessarily the best fit for all EBs, but instead indicated that it depended on each particular student's needs and motivations. At the same time, she identified the dual language program with promoting bilingualism, biculturalism, and reflecting home cultures at school, yet she seemed to equally apply these values to all students regardless of their background when she emphasized "whether it's English or Spanish" as their first language in the midst of discussing the DLE program's role in building connections between school and home.

When it came to the movement of EBs from the SEI classroom to the dual language program in fifth-grade, Esther said, "I don't necessarily partake in that. Luz does that." It was her understanding that Luz took the lead on that due her many years at Alma, her deep personal commitment to the program, and because it was a way for Luz "to make sure that the dual

language program continues and always has enough students moving from fourth to fifth-grade" so that they keep both classrooms full. Esther added that she thinks "fifth grade is an interesting year" because the EB "students can enter once they have signed the waiver." At the request of Luz or the administration, she did help with getting waivers signed during meet the teacher nights at the start of the school year but reiterated that she was not typically a part of the initial calls, recruitment, or decisions on student placement. In her time at Alma, she learned that there were many families who had been a part of the program for years (i.e. families with many children or extended family in the area). Therefore, she felt they also maintained enrollment "through word of mouth" within parent networks, especially when "they've had a family member who's been in it [the program] and they're also interested in building that [biliteracy/bilingualism]" in their child."

Esther also talked about her approach to preparing EBs for AZELLA testing. She said "They will actually practice some strategies for their tests separately" because AZELLA and AzMERIT "just don't go together" as far as the skills and content tested. As the test approached, Esther communicated with the ELD instructor and asked if her handful of EBs could be included in their AZELLA test preparation. She felt this was more productive for her EB students because it was a means for them to focus on preparing for specific elements of the AZELLA test with an instructor who "has a lot more students as a whole that would be taking that exam." She then added that she was aware "that recently there's been a change with the test cut scores to make it equivalent to the rigor of AzMERIT," which in her opinion was "ridiculously unfair and just saddening… because the kids do work so hard." She referred to the cut score increase as a "façade" to make it look as if they were making the test more "rigorous'" but felt that moving the cut score up was an arbitrary choice that was undermining the students' hard work and progress out of that label.

Language development in English language arts.

In Esther's classroom language development was taught primarily through content, but also through the teaching of explicit strategies during their ELA time. Similar to her Spanish-teaching counterpart, Esther used a lot of visuals around the classroom which highlighted the explicit strategies they worked on in class or provided recall information for the students to

reference as needed. Below I discuss her classroom in light of the themes of her focus on differentiation and community as key in her classroom.

Differentiation and small group work.

Esther used small group differentiation as a means to support the students' diverse needs in her classroom. In fact, her and Luz often coordinated their targeted support for the students by content area and by the students' needs, progress, and challenges. Esther talked about using guided reading time to really "focus on a student's individual needs." During this time, students were assigned various reading tasks to work on independently at their desk and then one by one or in small groups Esther would call the students to work with her at the semi-circle table in the back of the room. When I noticed that the students worked in a number of programs on diverse tasks when they were not working at the back table with Esther, I asked her more specifically how they assigned students to tasks during guided reading time. She said, "they're doing a lot of different things," but clarified there were two main programs in which the students worked on most days. One program was used with students with lower reading achievement levels. When I surveyed which students who were on the program, it did not always coincide with the ELL label. She said this particular program was assigned by the administrators based on a combination of academic indicators and who they thought would most benefit from the program given the limited number of licenses they had. In this program, she said "students that are still working on their proficiencies or skills in English use it so that while reading they see phonograms and hear how to pronounce words" as they read through short excerpts or stories that help them build on the concepts introduced. She said at the beginning of the year, she also requested permission to use another program that was initially only available to students in the SEI classroom. It was a program designed for newcomer students who were emergent English speakers, but she decided to move those students into their main reading program which was more like an online library where the students could pick books they wanted to read at their specific reading level. Esther felt the library program served their EB students well because it had Spanish and English books, it read to them while they were reading, and it checked for comprehension at the end "some of which entails writing." She added that if the students were on

that program, they are not using the other programs. She also had a group of students reading hard-cover books they chose from the library and these students were asked to write summaries or reports on what they were reading.

This independent time allowed Esther to call the students back to work with her in small groups or individually nearly every day I observed her. She said she worked with them on whatever they needed support on at that moment and gave examples of specific skills such as vocabulary building, analyzing readings, phonemic awareness, "talking to the text," text structure understanding, or "whatever the skill is for that week" scaffolded to the student's level. She shared that her goal during this time was "how can I help you grow where you're at?" as a way to bridge struggling students' understanding for whole class instruction (when she was not right beside them) and also to prepare students for what they were expected to know on assessments.

For her lowest readers, she would often incorporate visuals or try to make connections between Spanish and English. For example, she would often make words "phonemically something that they can say in Spanish, like how they can sound it out in Spanish, but it would be in English, so they can make that connection." With her more advanced students, they focused on "analyzing words, taking them apart [and] doing some word work" such as looking at "Latin root words so that they can apply that to Spanish as well." Overall, she felt that the wide range of different levels in ELA was a "struggle" at times, but she hoped that the individualized attention helped to scaffold their learning so that students who struggled in ELA would be able to be exposed to grade level content and find it accessible.

Community as key.

To ensure classroom content was accessible to students at diverse levels, Esther also used other strategies such as repetition, images, graphic organizers, sentence starters, and providing models for the students. However, she communicated that nearly everything she did required the support of the larger classroom community as well. She gave the example of her teaching partner, Luz, who worked hand in hand with her in supporting the diverse needs of their students. She also often used peer-feedback as a strategy. She said depending on the assignment student to student feedback might be the main form of feedback provided, whereas at other times,

she used what she referred to as “peer-conferencing” for the first part of an assignment “like when they are first building their ideas.” Peer conferencing was also a way Esther built in accountability particularly on multi-step writing assignments. She said that way she can check with them, provide verbal feedback or guidance as necessary, and ensure they have completed the necessary checklist items prior to her providing more substantive written or verbal feedback on “how to improve.”

Esther also used student grouping strategically as a means to enlist additional support from grade-level or more advanced peers in helping to support students who needed additional help at times. She said her goal in placing students in pairs or small groups of diverse achievement and language levels was to encourage them to work together and try “to build a kind of a teamwork community so that they would succeed together, so that they would help each other to succeed together.” As an example, during one of my class observations when they were working on their rainforest unit, Esther posed the following question to the class, “What is the relationship between the animals and the plants in the rainforest?” She told them to be sure and find evidence from the text to justify their answers. As I walked around the classroom, I stopped to listen to Elena and Eduardo talking about the question. Eduardo, an advanced student in the class, was talking to Elena, one of the EB students, about the symbiotic relationship between plants and animals. He said it so matter of fact that I asked him to explain what he meant by that and he then explained it to both Elena and myself, and to later to the whole class. This is just one example of the ways strategic and variable grouping worked to support students at very diverse English language and reading levels. Overall, it was clear that Esther was dedicated to her students and viewed her role in her students’ language development as closely tied to developing their English literacy across the content areas and meeting them where they are at academically.

The 5th English Language Development Classroom: Emily (Ms. ELD)

At the time of data collection, Emily (Mrs. ELD), was in her second year as a certified teacher and her first year as a self-contained elementary classroom teacher. Although she did not initially study education as an undergraduate, she decided to pursue teaching almost immediately after graduating with her degree in International Studies from a large public university in the

Pacific Northwest. Upon graduating, Emily returned to her hometown in southern Arizona where she began volunteering in a Title I classroom as a means to explore her interest in teaching. Following this experience, she enrolled in a M.Ed./certification program at a nearby university and upon completion was hired as an academic interventionist at another school in Alma's district. At the end of her first semester, she was informed that there was an opening for a fifth-grade teacher at Alma. Despite being initially hesitant because she was more interested in a third or fourth-grade position, she applied after hearing great things about the leadership and teacher collaboration structures in place at Alma. She was sold when she met Luz (Mrs. DLS) during her interview, who as veteran teacher/the fifth-grade team lead made her feel welcome and was very open to her ideas as a new teacher. Emily shared that she did not initially apply to be the ELD/SEI teacher but was asked to take on the position after the other new fifth-grade teacher expressed that she did not want to teach SEI. She felt comfortable taking on the SEI group because she did her student teaching in a first-grade SEI classroom in the district and she knew the SEI classrooms followed the same general curriculum as the other classes in each grade. Emily then added that in hindsight she did "not really fully understand what I was getting myself into."

Emily self-identified as Jewish-American. She was born in Miami and raised in a Jewish family in southern Arizona. Emily identified as a native English speaker, but said she had experience with Spanish and Hebrew as a child. Having lived the first part of her life in Miami, she said her parents always joked that Spanish was her first language and added "apparently it was" because in Miami she had a Cuban nanny who spoke to her all day in Spanish while her mother was at work. A few years later they moved to Arizona and her mother started staying home with Emily and her newborn brother. At that point, her parents enrolled her in a local Hebrew school several days a week. Through that experience, she learned to read and write in Hebrew, but said that she struggled conversationally with the language although she managed "to get by" when she visited Israel as a young adult. Emily said she took Spanish throughout her K12 school years as well but "became really fluent" in college when she studied abroad in Argentina. When I asked her about her Spanish during the initial interview, she considered herself conversational in

Spanish but said that she felt “rusty” at parent teacher conferences in the fall and needs “to get back into speaking it more often” again. She said that she speaks Spanish well enough that she does not require an interpreter with her Spanish speaking parents at conference time, but feels her local/colloquial Spanish vocabulary needs improvement.

The ELD classroom context.

As a first-year classroom teacher, Emily was mentored and coached by her more veteran fifth-grade colleagues and the master teacher. Naturally, her classroom was laid out very similarly to the other fifth-grade classrooms. When you walked in, her desk was in the front right corner and the Smart Board she taught from most frequently was front and center. On the two adjacent walls, there was a long row of white boards to the left and a counter where she displayed student work with a long row of windows facing the school parking lot to the right. The decorations were similar to the other two classrooms with different sections of the walls dedicated to the different content areas. Her posters were visual references for the students and gave definitions of things like text types, examples of transition words, a list of ‘things good readers do and know.’ There was also a wall where student names were displayed next to their writing fluency achievements for the year (i.e. the number of words they wrote). Additionally, there were two U-shaped tables in the room where she or the resource teachers would work one on one or in small groups with students regularly.

The students were grouped into tables of four of less. There was also a table of students connected to her desk in the front right corner. She did not start off the year with the students there but over time a table naturally formed as an extension of her own desk. When I asked if she assigned students there for closer monitoring, she shared that it was actually the opposite. One spring day, a student asked if he could sit next to her there and he ended up staying for the rest of the year. Then at some point two other students joined him with her approval. She seemed to enjoy having the student desks attached to hers and she shared that the students seated there often requested additional help from her, so in a way it was convenient to have them there. There was also a young man who sat at a desk in the back of the classroom by himself. When I inquired

about it, she informed me that he was on the autism spectrum and said he seemed to prefer being there, so she allowed it to continue.

Emily seemed wise beyond her years of teaching experience. There was a natural flow to her classroom routines and it was clear she had positive rapport with the students. Her class was slightly smaller than the other classes, and her teaching style was direct and upbeat. This meant she called on students regularly and encouraged teamwork, but also allowed a certain degree of freedom in allowing students to work independently if they preferred. She referred to her class as "chatty," but said she did not mind because she wanted her ELD students to be conversing regularly. She did not micro-manage students but would publically ask "what are you doing?" if they appeared to be off-task. While Emily exuded confidence as a first-year teacher and clearly established good rapport with her students, in private she also shared some of her challenges and questions as a first-year teacher at Alma. Below I explore these themes in light of the classroom-level research question.

Emily: English-only, Multilingual learners, and "We're just not there *yet.*"

In the analysis of Emily's interviews and observations, I grouped all codes related to the way that she conceptualized the place of bilingualism and (bi)literacy in her classroom into three categories. The overarching themes that informed these categories related to the use of English-only in the SEI classroom, her diverse multilingual students, and her perspective on their (bi)literacy development as in progress.

English-only.

Emily discussed her English-only classroom as a question of compliance over choice. In her words, "I'm technically not allowed to speak like any other language. I'm allowed to speak English and that's how I have to give my instruction." She added that "if someone were to come in here from the state or the district…. they don't really like look at that as friendly" (i.e. using non-English languages in the classroom). She said that they view it more as "you're in this class" for a reason so "make sure you're becoming proficient in English so that you can pass" the AZELLA test. She attributed the focus on AZELLA to someone, although she didn't recall who, telling her that "the district in the past had issues with like a really low percentage of kids passing AZELLA

and they had to have someone come in during guided reading for like the whole year until they took AZELLA, who was basically doing AZELLA training with them so that kids would pass AZELLA." In this way, she attributed the English-only "rule" to both state and district compliance as well as linked to student pass rates on the AZELLA. She also attributed it to fear of consequences when she shared that she thought that "you have to have a certain percentage of kids passing AZELLA according to the state," but she said that "I don't really know what happens if you don't. I'm not sure what the ramifications are."

At the same time, she explained student home languages in her classroom were permitted "if the kids are speaking to each other in another language." She gave the example of if "someone's not understanding… like some Spanish speaker can help another Spanish speaker in Spanish and tell them what to do." She then paused, reflected, and said:

> there's actually not that much of it in here. Every so often one of them will say something to another one in Spanish. But it is actually interesting that most of the time English is spoken in here. Now that I think about like it is.

At which point, she paused again and articulated how she found the SEI program limiting in the way it focused so much on English and AZELLA. She put it this way:

> so that's when I think like, oh, it could be so- like there are so many opportunities. Especially because I know I do have so many different languages and I know I have a couple of kids in here who have siblings or family members in the sixth-grade or the fourth-grade SEI classrooms and I'm like, there would be some really cool opportunities for sort of more language and culture integration, but it's just not really being done I guess.

Yet she felt that "you know, I think there is definitely that opportunity." She said sometimes her students' languages, home lives, and different cultures come up during their morning meetings, but added "I don't think there's enough of it like really kind of built into the curriculum." She then shared that they are "ending the year with the culture unit, which I'm looking forward to…"

She also compared the opportunities given to the dual language students to her students. She discussed how she felt language and culture were more imbedded in the dual language

program through the use of “the Spanish language and Hispanic culture” as a central component of the program. She also pointed out how the school does “a whole dual language showcase” to highlight how the students are “speaking two languages all day long,” whereas her SEI students, despite speaking many languages including Spanish, are not included in that afterschool assembly. She added that she knows that even in the English dual language classroom the use of Spanish is “allowed,” again highlighting how her classroom did not have that same freedom.

Within this same conversation, she also seemed to have some questions about the movement of students to the dual language program in the fifth-grade. She mentioned how about six of her students were moved to the dual language classroom at the start of the school year and how she knew “it's a wonderful program,” but wondered how it affected the students given they do not offer dual language past the sixth grade and given that many of those still classified as EBs in the fifth grade “were struggling in English to begin with.” She expressed some concern for them because:

> now you've pulled half their instructional day in English and so I don't know how they're necessarily… I guess I'm just more curious how it helps them further down the line. What the ramifications are for pulling the student out of SEI or do they then have to go back into an SEI classroom when they hit middle school? I don't know how all that works.

She clarified that for “those kids that are highly proficient in English and Spanish, like that's awesome. It's only gonna help them like further down the line to be that bilingual and bi-literate.” In this way, she positioned the dual language program as place for more “proficient” students. At one point she even referred to the way the two dual language classes “are looked at as like a gifted program in and of itself kind of.”

Despite this view of the dual language program, she also indirectly critiqued the high degree of tracking and the degree to which her students were segregated from grade-level and more advanced peers. Having worked at another school in the district, she emphasized that:

> it's not just the school, it's the district itself tends to um, group the students in every grade as like a mainstream classroom, a classroom with mainstream but with like a gifted cluster of kids, then there's the two dual-language classes… and then this last classroom

> ends up being the SEI kids and then also the SPED kids or the ELD kids, which kind of tend to overlap.

She felt this created a quandary for her as new classroom teacher and stated, "this is an interesting sort of dynamic they've given me that I wasn't necessarily expecting." She was concerned about her students' peer-level role models and her ability to meet all of their unique needs. In fact, she asked, "where are kind of those higher, not even like higher those mid-level kids that other students can look up to as good examples of speaking English and good examples of academics." She shared that they were able to hire a new fifth grade teacher part way through the fall semester (as a result of some newly allocated proposition funds), but added that:

> when the new teacher came, they kind of forced me to give some of my kids up, which was a kind of a bummer because I ended up having to give up some of those higher students I had which were being really good role models for the other kids. So that was kind of a bummer.

She also acknowledged that the reduction in class size was helpful for a number of reasons, but primarily because her students who were shy and "weren't as comfortable speaking in English… became much more comfortable when the class size got smaller."

Multilingual learners and language barriers.

Having grown up not far from the Arizona-Mexico border and having completed her student teaching in an SEI classroom that was heavily Latinx, Emily conceptualized what it meant to be an EB still in the process of learning English in Arizona as mainly Spanish-speaking Latinx before taking the position as the fifth-grade SEI teacher at Alma. She was familiar with the "heavily Hispanic" population in Arizona and said "I was like, oh Spanish, like that's okay. Great, I speak some Spanish." The multilingual population in her classroom was new to her and she pointed out that she "was not expecting that a lot of my kids would be from other countries that don't speak English, that *aren't* Spanish speaking" which she said was "awesome." She then added "*but*" and began explaining a number of the unexpected challenges she experienced as a result. Her Spanish helped her to communicate with the parents of her majority (57%) Latinx student population, however, the other 43% spoke a mixture of different Asian, African, and

Middle Eastern languages. She said that this became an issue when “I want to call this kid's parent to tell them that he's had a great day or a horrible day [and] now I need to find a translator for Dari or Farsi or for Pakistani.” She then named some of the other languages in her classroom and shared that she felt a little disappointed that she could not communicate with parents, especially when she saw, “some of the other teachers are having really great relationships with students and their families, and their parents have really clear communication and that's definitely not been the case for me.” She said the district does not have the resources to support translators regularly, although for parent-teacher conferences she “can plan ahead” and make special requests if needed. However, she knew it was “very, very expensive to get outside interpreters and translators to come in and spend that time” and worried about no-shows after an Arabic-speaking district employee come by for parent teacher conferences one time and the parent “didn't show up.” She emphasized that “the communication is hard” and felt that really making those home-school connections was difficult without the time and resources to do so.

Emily then spoke of the challenges of having newcomer students in her classroom who were pre-emergent English speakers. She spoke specifically about two students, Lily from China and Elijah from Afghanistan. She was concerned about her ability to help them in an English-only classroom and felt like she was not “adequately prepared to help [them] get to a level where they need to be.” Lily struggled at times, but I learned that her father spoke some English and I observed that she regularly used a Chinese-English translator at her desk. In fact, at times she would call adults in the classroom over and point to a word she did not understand even with the translator, as a way to ask for help.

In the case of Elijah, Emily explained that she was not sure where to really begin in helping him acquire English. She gave the example of trying to explain things one-on-one to him especially when she was sending home some sort of permission form or information for the family. She said it was clear he was not understanding her especially when she would open his backpack and find everything still in there untouched. For all assessments and assignments, she would “read them out load” to him and try to explain things to him in any way she knew how. She noticed that “he was trying to figure out ways to answer things” when he would appear to guess

on multiple choice items and for anything open-ended “he just ended up flipping it over to the multiple-choice questions and writing them in as the answers for the essay questions.” In my observations and interactions with Elijah, he tried the best he could, but it was clear that he was unable to fully participate because he spoke no English in an English-only classroom and there were no other students in the classroom who were able to help him understand. Emily also had “no idea about his school history” and she wondered “if he was going to school before” he arrived in her classroom in November. Emily articulated that she felt unable to reach him and talked about how he “needed to get some real one on one” with someone who could help him transition to life, school, and using English in his new home in a more personalized way.

Emily’s SEI classroom also had a number of EBs that were beginners with diverse home languages, although they were not as pre-emergent as Elijah and Lily. I used these two examples to paint a picture of the way that Emily felt blindsided and unprepared to serve the needs of her multilingual students who were at such “different levels of English and different levels academically.” She shared that she struggled with finding a differentiation point where she was able to meet the needs of her pre-emergent and emergent speakers, while not making it too easy for her intermediate and advanced students, especially those on grade-level.

“We’re just not there yet.”

In discussing her students’ literacy more broadly she talked about their progress towards reading and writing proficiency in English. Her perspective was to help her students understand how they were “just like everyone, like, we're just not there *yet*.” Day-to-day this meant she tried to “focus on the positive” by helping students believe that they will “get there, no matter what.” She gave the example of how she displayed and rewarded their writing stamina by having them write about any topic they wanted at least once a week. To get them thinking she gave them fun prompts, then at the end of the exercise had them count all the words they wrote. Each week, she gave a prize to the student who wrote the most words during their free-writing activities. On the first day, she said one student wrote “like five words” and then the next day he asked if he could write a list of words to which she responded “absolutely.” She said that day he wrote 34 words and they had a conversation about “why writing a list is a legitimate form of writing” and how “you

don't just read or write for school purposes." She said her goal was to help improve their confidence by "trying to approach it like no matter what kind of progress it is, it is progress" as long as "as you're being better than you were." She added that this was particularly important in her class because "a lot of them get stuck…. or they're comparing themselves to others."

Another way she approached reading and writing in her classroom was by "kind of trying to tie in that literacy everywhere and in all subjects." She said she did this as much as possible in math because "a lot of them are not even just necessarily stronger in math. They identify themselves as stronger in math and in being more comfortable with doing math and less so with reading and writing." She described it as having more to do with their confidence in English and referred to many of them as "like undercover good at reading." She said they tell her things like "I'm not good at reading. I don't like to read. I don't know how to read," yet when she sat down to read with them one on one or in small groups she knew "it's definitely there." Emily, therefore, conceptualized her role in her students' literacy development as helping build their confidence. She stressed her personal belief in their progress and abilities in English as well.

Emily: Language policies as practiced.

In what follows, I present findings from my interviews and classroom observations as they relate to the ways that language policy was practiced and implemented in the fifth grade SEI classroom. I identified four overarching themes related to teacher support and professional development, the dual classification of EBs, issues surrounding AZELLA, and language development in the SEI classroom.

Teacher support and professional development.

One of more the prominent themes from my interviews with Emily was her desire for more professional development and support as an SEI instructor. When I first asked her about her teacher certification program, she referred to her SEI endorsement coursework as "a joke" that "certified me, but that was it." She felt "it wasn't actually practical" because it only covered basic definitions, the laws, and the rules in Arizona as opposed to providing her with tools and strategies for addressing the needs of EBs. Emily was vocal about both the lack of preparation in

her master's program to work with EBs as well as the lack of professional development and support she received as an SEI teacher in her district.

At Alma all three SEI teachers (4th-6th) were brand new the year Emily started (in addition to the LAS being new). She highlighted this point to inform me that:

> it's not like there was, you know, the sixth-grade teacher who was like, oh we need to be doing this. Or like someone who could have been a mentor, right? We're all just like, oh, we didn't even think to ask that because we didn't know we needed to ask that kind of thing. So that's something.

She added that there were some things that were "super clear" and acknowledged "some of that is the teacher's responsibility too," but felt overall that as an SEI team new to teaching in general they needed additional SEI/ELD specific support. Emily expressed disappointment that "we haven't gotten really anything" and "I never meet with just the SEI teachers here." Emily did meet with her fifth-grade colleagues at least one a week, but really felt it would have been beneficial to also have team collaboration meetings with the other SEI teachers when she stated that "I would've loved to like, even if it was like an extra meeting sometimes I think I really would have benefited from getting more actual SEI professional development."

She clarified that all SEI teachers did meet six times at the district office throughout the year, but again felt that those meetings were unproductive because half focused on a remedial (in her view) online reading program being provided by the state and the other half were about AZELLA testing/results, which she felt came far too late in the year. Particularly with AZELLA testing she felt they needed some very specific training. Then explained that when the spring semester hit and "no one really told us what was on AZELLA or how we can be preparing our kids." At that point, she went to ask someone directly about it and was given "a whole list of things that I could be doing" but thought "that would've been great to have in August, so I could've been doing that up until February." She also wondered about the potential state-level observations that she heard occurred in past years and seemed concerned about knowing that "the state comes and does some sort of check every so often or every year about like what the teacher's doing and no one's told me anything about that." In observing her teaching each week,

Emily maintained a confident and upbeat style, however the excerpts taken from her interviews here tell a different story about her struggles and authentic concern for being prepared to do her best for her EB students. She informed me that she shared her thoughts and concerns with the administration as well. My interviews with the current and former LAS revealed that professional development for SEI teachers was something that became less prevalent during the transition from the former LAS to the current LAS. While I will not go into the details here, it was clear there was a nearly perfect storm involving professional transitions and illness related turnover that impacted the reality of SEI teacher support at Alma during Emily's first year. Below I explore the themes surrounding AZELLA testing as language policy in practice in greater detail.

AZELLA testing.

In addition to feeling that she needed better information to adequately prepare her students for AZELLA testing, she also expressed quite bit of concern about the actual test itself once she wrapped up helping her students through it for the first time. She was very concerned that the speaking portion was a poor, invalid representation of her students actual speaking abilities. The first red flag she described was a series of tasks that she felt were more so evaluating her students' reading out loud and recall abilities than their speaking abilities. The minute she heard it on the speaker phone, she said she was "really shocked" it asked her student to read a long passage with compound words because she knew that many of her students are proficient English speakers, but "some of them can't read well." Next, she described a long story that the telephone read out loud to her students that asked them to "tell it back to us." She again raised concern about the fact that "they can't take any notes" when she felt "I'd probably need to jot down a couple things to tell you back what I heard kind of thing." She also felt like those were also "test taking skills" that need to be explicitly taught and practiced with the students prior to the exam.

Once the test scores came back, she was even more surprised to learn some of her most proficient speakers scored in the emergent and basic ranges for the oral portion of the exam. She talked specifically about, Nicole, an outgoing top-student in her class who regularly won the free-writing word count activity in class. Emily expressed disappointment and frustration when she

said, “I don't know what exactly they're hearing when she’s speaking.” Another student, Raul, who she also viewed as advanced in speaking scored as pre-emergent on the oral portion of the exam. In this case she expressed ever greater shock and felt that most adults who interacted with him “wouldn’t even know he spoke Spanish.” She recalled that the first time she met him “I just thought he just was like an English speaker,” and added “I mean he obviously has a Hispanic name, but he like hardly ever speaks in Spanish.” Between the recorded phone prompts and who she viewed as her most advanced speakers scoring dismally low, she felt “the whole thing is very weird.” Emily added “I don't know how they score it” and thought perhaps it was scored incorrectly. She also briefly discussed how she felt that the exam was “not even relevant” to the students and the oral proficiency section was “not natural.” Thus, emphasizing that she did not see it as a fair representation of the students’ actual abilities. In discussing the results more broadly, she shared that “no one from my class tested out.” In fact, only one fifth-grade EB student in the dual language program tested out which Emily described as “not a surprise.” She shared that they had a meeting recently about how the state made the cut scores for the students “15 to 20 percent higher to test out” so that the test was supposedly aligned with proficiency on AzMERIT in some way.

Emily positioned her students’ ability to test out of AZELLA as connected to better curricular opportunities in their future. At one point, she talked about how they encouraged the students “to try your hardest this year because it changes… and the next year when you go take it in sixth, like, that's going to be harder again.” She also talked about her orally proficient EBs and the former EBs in her classroom as not well served by an SEI-specific classroom. She put it this way, students like “Raul, Nicole, and Jorge, they would be just fine in a mainstream classroom. They have no need to continue in this. Honestly, I think it might actually even be like hindering them.” She then explained how the mainstream classroom would benefit them by challenging them both linguistically and academically in many ways she felt her classroom might not have. From an English learning perspective, she said “I don't change my vocabulary, but I think even being in another classroom where someone's using even higher vocabulary because they don't have that in the back of their head like worrying about the newcomer students.” She

again emphasized how for many of her intermediate to advanced speakers, who also happen to be nearly all Latinx students in her classroom, she believed mainstream classrooms “would be beneficial” to them but added “I don't make the rules.”

She also discussed her concerns about the decision of the state to raise the AZELLA cut scores to align with AzMERIT proficiency as particularly concerning for her students with individualized education plans (IEPs) in reading. She provided the example of one student, who was being tested for dyslexia, that scored as advanced in speaking and listening on AZELLA but as pre-emergent and emergent in his reading and writing. She spoke of another student who had a diagnosed reading disability, but who was proficient in his speaking on AZELLA in addition to testing as gifted in math on their benchmark exams. She worried that these students, despite advanced levels of proficiency in other domains, might never pass out of the classification because of their reading difficulties alone. She said, “that seems kind of silly when he's a proficient speaker, and all the rest. It's just, I mean he wouldn't be a proficient reader if he was only an English speaker anyways, you know?” At various points she also made references to the fifth-grade SEI classroom as the de facto special education (SE) classroom. I explore this theme in greater detail below.

Special education classifications.

In addition to the high percentages of multilingual students from all over world being something that Emily did not expect, she also discussed having a high percentage of students with SE classifications as unexpected. In her words, “there's definitely a majority of my kids that are ELL and SPED.” Additionally, her few never EB students, many times had SE classifications as well. She then gave the examples of Greg, the tall autistic boy who sat in the back of the classroom by himself, and Leon, a non-EB Native-American boy diagnosed with a learning disability. She expressed concern about the obvious grouping of students with disabilities together when she stated “now you're kind of just creating this homogeneous group again and it's like, why is that really? I don’t know.” She shared that meeting the diverse needs of students with various emotional and academic SE needs alongside her very diverse group of EBs was “probably the biggest challenge for me.” She wanted to ensure she “was not bringing it too low for

some of those kids" who were more advanced academically, while at the same time "not making it super unattainable either," especially for her SE, dual classified, and newcomer students.

She then gave her opinion on some of her dual labeled students as misclassified due to their struggles with language as EBs. She put it this way, "I think a lot of them are dual labeled ELL and SPED, and I think as they get older and they get more proficient in English, I don't necessarily think all of them will keep that [SE] label." She then named specific students who had reading IEPs and said:

> I don't think they have any reading disabilities. I think it's just like, not-- and I know a lot them too in their demographic they're not reading at home, they don't have books in English at home or they don't have someone who could read in English at home with them so they're not getting that extra practice. So, it's just like it'll take them, you know, the next couple of years…. I think there are a lot more strengths in here that just kind of aren't coming to the surface yet I guess, because of sort of a bunch of different things.

She clarified that there were some for whom that was not the case but said "that's what I really think about a handful of them in here."

Language development in SEI.

In terms of teaching, Emily's classroom was aligned with the broader fifth-grade curriculum. In fact, it was common that I would observe a lesson in Esther's class and see a nearly identical lesson taking place in Emily's class, although the exact implementation style often differed. Given Emily was acculturated into the teaching profession within Alma's larger school district which purposefully moved away from the narrow implementation of the SEI four-hour block in prior years, Emily was unaware of the time-blocking requirements at the state level. When I asked her directly about this, she recalled learning about Arizona's "crazy laws and policies, especially in education and with non-English speakers" but added "honestly, I probably haven't looked at a lot of those policies since I went through the [certification program] like two years ago, so I don't know how much they have changed." When discussing the grouping practices, she explained how she was "sure some of it is the state that's affecting it," but felt her

unique classroom was the result of a combination of state and district policies. However, it was clear that the exact SEI law's influence was a little unclear to her at this point. In fact, she stated:

> I'm not sure if since there's such a lack of funding, if that means they can't afford to pay another person as a SEI teacher in this grade level or if they choose to just have one class as a SEI class so that it's less for the other teachers to do."

As we moved beyond this point, Emily discussed curriculum, pedagogy, and some of the challenges she faced in practice as a first year fifth-grade SEI teacher. Below I discuss these themes as informed by both her interviews and my classroom observations.

Curricular modifications.

One of the primary themes that emerged was the role of curricular modifications to meet the needs of Emily's diverse and predominately EB students' population. While this was something common across the classrooms observed, Emily's case was similar to Luz's in that it was often necessary for her to build original or scaffolded materials. In discussing how they approached the units at their team meetings, she shared that they end up "sort of picking through elements of it and sort of putting it together on our own." She added that in her case, "I still have to like kind of cut out and modify for mine." Emily articulated that she was overwhelmed by the fact that those modifications were not already built into the curriculum in any concrete way. When it came to the standards, she said "I was just kind of like, oh wow, I don't even know how I'm going to be teaching these fifth-grade standards to kids who can't read very well." For this reason, she spoke of the curriculum with mixed feelings, sharing that at times it felt like rough fit for her students. In its raw unmodified form, she felt the curriculum was "not designed for this kind of demographic or this environment at all really." She then joked that it was perfect for small classes of homogenous youth who live in wealthy areas of Massachusetts. Emily clarified that their school administration called it "guidelines" that they did not necessarily have to follow, but she was not sure as a first-year teacher if that was totally true and then added "but then also, what are we going to do…. make new lessons every night? Make a problem set for tomorrow's lesson? Like realistically, like that's not going to happen. There's not enough time."

She gave the example of the units at the start of the year that were purely text-based. They read two full fictional novels, one based on the Revolutionary War and the other on the Mexican immigrant experience. Emily felt “it was so much just like reading from the book every day.” She recalled the students getting antsy with it and felt she needed “to sort of like figure out what I can take out and like add something else in so that they get more out of it” in the future. She said in the spring semester their interest picked up because “these two units at least, are more designed for someone like an ELL.” This was not only because the units were based around athletes and nature, but also because they had multimodal learning components built into the lessons. For example, in learning about Jackie Robinson, they read a book about him that had pictures, timelines, and other images. They also were able to watch video-clips and listen to some radio podcasts. She felt “that was much more accessible for them” and they were really showing a lot more interest in learning during those units. She observed that the multimodal nature of the rainforest unit was also something the students were “really responsive to.” Going forward, she hoped to incorporate more multimodal elements to improve the students’ engagement and learning**.**

Guided reading.

My first day in Emily’s classroom, she had me shadow one her EB students, Jeff, who agreed to tour me around the classroom for the day. During guided reading time Jeff explained to me that he was playing in a program for “kids who like aren’t from here” he then added that he was from here and briefly shared with me that he was Mexican on one side of his family. He told me that in this program they did not read books and showed me how to play some of the phonetic based video games. One was a memory type game with sounds made by fish wherein the students had to distinguish between sounds like “sh” or “ch” and then find the two fish that made the same sound. Jeff then showed me some of the other games he played, including one where he had to determine if a sound was near or far away. He was quite good at this game, whereas I was new to the program and was not entirely sure how he determined which simulated sounds were near or far away the first time I listened.

When I asked Emily about the program, she referred to it as "interesting," then shared how it was given to the school by the state as a part of a grant. She described it as a program "where the state came in and was like you have to do this." She shared that at one of their district meetings they had a person come in from the software company who talked "about how it works wonders and how we're supposed to have our kids on it for like ninety minutes or more a week, or something absurd." At the start of the year, Emily said that she had the kids use it "pretty regularly because the kids responded really well… I was kind of surprised that they enjoyed it. But now it kind of got to the point where I'm like, it doesn't seem like it's progressing," so she questioned if it was benefiting the students. She said at first "it starts really like remedial" and she thought "that's fine, a lot of these kids need it." And then she noticed that it did not seem to be getting harder at which point she "kind of backed them off that program" because she did not "see it doing the kind of wonders that it's supposed to be doing."

In her class, she said, "the majority are intermediate" so she felt like the program could be somewhat useful for her more pre-emergent and emergent speakers, like Lily and Elijah. However, she said "for these kids that are intermediate, those sounds are not helping." Therefore, when so many had not progressed to reading full sentences or even words in the program she started to get worried. She saw one of her intermediate students, who supposedly tested into the level he was working in, listening to instructions telling him to "mo::::ve the::::: ye::llo:::w square ri::::ght" in a very slow voice. She immediately knew:

> these kids are not at that level, maybe two out of my however many SEI kids needed that. The rest of them needed like quick, multi-step directions. Like they'd be hearing me say, you know? So it was just kind of like at a certain point, I didn't want them in there.

She felt that most of her students needed "to get that practice like whole word reading and memorizing those sight words." Although many of her students enjoyed the game aspect of the phonetic games, by December she started moving most of them into the program used in the other fifth-grade classrooms because it actually required them to be "reading or like reading while they're listening to it being read to so that they can get more of that practice of fluid reading" through fiction and non-fiction reading options. Emily expressed that she was not sure if taking

them out of the program provided via the state grant would be frowned upon, so she clarified that "technically they're on there, they're registered," but she had them log into the other program. In her view, by the time they were in fifth grade "they don't need to be sitting there playing with the sounds or like following the weird directions… they needed just to keep reading…" Similar to her fifth-grade dual language colleagues, while her students were engaging in guided reading time, Emily regularly pulled individual students or small groups to work with her guidance on their reading and writing. However, the larger theme that emerged from her classroom was moving them out of phonics games into reading books during this part of the day.

Growth strategies.

In Emily's classroom she engaged the students in various language development strategies similar to her dual-language colleagues. Specifically, within the themed curricular units, she engaged students through visuals, the teaching of explicit ELA reading and writing strategies, writing feedback, student grouping, and modeling.

Emily generally tried to group students based on both their reading and math levels as well as based on who she thought would work well together. She said, "it's constantly changing," which she attributed to both the shifting needs of her students and the number of students in her classroom at a given moment. The students frequently worked in pairs or small groups at their desks, the back table, on the floor, or outside at the picnic tables just beyond the classroom door. She talked about the group work as way to encourage students to support one another and as way for them to practice their speaking. In acknowledging that this group work sometimes meant they would get off task, she tried to instill a sense of individual "ownership" over their behavior and learning. She felt this was important especially as fifth graders preparing to enter middle school soon. At the same, the students knew that she would "call you out across the room" both if they were doing something well or if they appeared to be off task in some form. She talked with them about ownership over their learning explicitly and let them know that "I can't force you to learn but I can force you to pretend like you're learning."

In observing the students during independent and group work time, there were tables that worked together regularly and others that sat together but seemed to prefer working

independently. Students most frequently interacted in English, but I also heard Spanish now and then, particularly when they left to go work at the picnic tables outside. At the picnic tables, the Spanish-speakers would often converse with one another in Spanish, or at times a mixture of both English and Spanish as they worked on completing their assignments in English. I would regularly offer help to the students sitting at the picnic tables. The first time I did there was a group of three Latinx students together preparing PowerPoints and joking in Spanish about how it smelled outside. One of the students stopped to ask me if I understood Spanish, perhaps as a way to see if they could speak freely without an adult understanding. However, when I responded that I did they continued the conversation in Spanish.

Although glimpses like this were rare, it became clear to me that Spanish was a language they associated with being *outside* of the classroom. Inside the classroom, there was some tension evident surrounding the students languaging. For example, on one occasion when I was helping a student with a math problem, a former EB student who was known for being a bit of a jokester, took it upon himself to inform me (and the student I was with) that she did not speak English. The student who was also a former EB, shot back at him with a glare and asserted that she *did* know English. On another occasion, I overheard one Latinx EB student telling another Latinx student not to speak in Spanish as a means to inform him that he did not speak Spanish well. As a final example Lily, the Chinese speaking newcomer student, burst into tears one day because she was hurt that her table partner did not help her when she asked for assistance. While I also observed many days where the students worked harmoniously together, I share these isolated incidents as a means to illustrate a point. That is, somehow, being in the SEI classroom was linked to a more acute awareness and sensitivity of language and what it meant to be an EB student. In contrast, I never observed these kinds of interactions in the dual language classroom.

Another way that Emily aimed to contribute to her students' development was through feedback. Although, I never observed her explicitly "correcting" their oral English production, she did regularly praise the students when they articulated themselves well or read out loud with confidence. At the same time, she did give corrective feedback as a strategy for improving their

writing. This feedback was provided alongside explicit rubrics that helped the students understand where they were missing key elements or structures on any given writing assignment. For example, Emily frequently pointed students to wall posters with transition words on them as a way to request that the students include transition words. She also made some grammatical and structural suggestions on their writing. In reflecting on her approach to feedback, she shared that "I'm still trying to figure that out too. Like that line between what is helpful correction and what they can learn from. And, what is just me being nitpicky that's not actually going to be beneficial." She then begrudgingly acknowledged at times this meant focusing on reinforcing skills that she knew would be assessed on AzMERIT.

Another key strategy Emily used was modeling explicit strategies during her lessons and through the model-texts provided to the students. She shared that as the year went on she got better at "being very explicit in my modeling and then sort of having them identify what they saw me do and having them kind of try to like repeat that." She said this meant constantly reminding students to refer back to her model texts or to how they saw her "talking to the text" during ELA time. For writing, she felt strongly that the students needed models and examples that they could then replicate. Her goal was "really just trying to be helpful and give them things that they can build on." In my observations of Emily's teaching, modeling was something that was imbedded throughout her practice. For example, during a lesson on 'culture' that served as a precursor to their final novel of the year about a young native-American girl who becomes separated from her tribe on an abandoned island, she started the unit with an essential question asking the students, "How does literature provide insight into a culture?" She then introduced and defined key the vocabulary words, which included *inference* and *evidence,* and went on to present a series of images without captions asking students to describe what they saw, knew, or could infer from the images. The students participated in this type of activity eagerly. Finally, they moved into reading out loud together about the Pueblo tribes of the Southwest. Emily regularly projected the readings onto the smart board, so that they could read together, and she could reinforce how to 'talk to the text' by circling, underlying, and annotating as they prepared to summarize the key themes and information from the reading on a graphic organizer. This was a "typical" ELA lesson in her

classroom and demonstrates her approach to modeling language development strategies. Naturally, many students frequently copied down verbatim what she wrote, underlined, of circled.

Despite the disappointing AZELLA test results, Emily expressed excitement that her students made progress on their final benchmark exam of the year, with the majority either meeting or exceeding their expected growth. As a first-year teacher, she said throughout the year she worried about how many low readers she had and about "making sure I didn't lead anyone too astray." Despite the challenges she faced, Emily remained committed to her students' literacy development. At the same time, she recognized the limitations the SEI program structure placed on her students and was willing to openly critique the system at the state and district level.

Chapter Summary

The classrooms level data revealed that there were both similarities and differences in the ways (bi)literacy was conceptualized and language policies negotiated across the focal classrooms. More specifically, there were similarities based on institutional ELA/SLA norms of engagement (e.g. guided reading, small group work, visuals, test preparation, and mnemonic devices). Yet there were also distinct differences in the opportunities afforded to students across the two classrooms in terms of their ability to tap into their linguistic resources, the separation of language spaces, the positioning of students, assessment culture, and teacher preparation to work with multilingual students. The classroom-level findings also demonstrated the ways that the broader systemic policy constraints and discourses limited the possibilities in both the dual language and SEI classroom spaces, with the findings in the SEI classroom being particularly salient.

CHAPTER 7
FOCAL STUDENTS

In this chapter, I analyzed data related to the four focal students, two from the dual language classroom and two from the SEI classroom. The analysis focused on research question three: At the student-level, in what ways do *identity texts* create spaces for identity negotiation for the focal students? I utilized student interviews to get to know a little more about each students' background and language practices. With each student, I then engaged in a series of identity-text writing sessions aimed at understanding how each focal student incorporated their identities through the opinion/augmentation writing task. Finally, I also engaged in participant observations as a part of the larger classroom observation process. To make sense of these diverse data sources, I relied on the constructs of engagement, imagination, and alignment from within Wenger's (1998) conceptualization of identity within distinct communities of practice.

It should be noted that at the start of my observations, I was not aware of which students were classified EBs and which were not in either classroom. In the dual language program, this was *perhaps* because my first interactions with the students were during the Spanish portion of the day and I was therefore more easily able to identify students who struggled in Spanish. However, even during the English portion of the day, the EB students were not easily distinguishable from their never-EB or formerly-EB peers. The only exceptions to this were the two newcomer EB students who spoke predominately in Spanish at all times.

On the other hand, in the SEI classroom I assumed that all the students were EBs until I learned that there were a few never-EBs and a few formerly-EBs mixed into the classroom as well. Again, with the exception of the newcomer students, it was not immediately clear to me which students were classified as EBs and which were not. However, there was a large poster hanging in the fifth-grade courtyard area which highlighted the different countries and languages of students in the fifth-grade SEI and DLE classrooms spoke.

In what follows, I organized the findings by focal student. I first provide an overview of each student individually followed by an analysis of their identity text artifact' in light of my observations, interviews, the student surveys, and the insights provided by their teacher(s) as well.

Dual-Language Focal Student: Elena

My first day in Luz's classroom, I immediately noticed Elena. She was small in stature compared to her peers with long black hair to her waist and sharp black glasses framing her face. I often circulated the classroom to see if anyone needed help during independent/group work time and I noticed early on that Elena had a quiet, studious, and happy demeanor. She sat at a table with four other peers who were from bilingual households (to varying degrees). During group work, she regularly partnered with her table peers and could often be seen smiling and joking around with them when they had a moment free. However, when Luz or Emily began directing the class again, Elena quickly returned to focusing. I noticed she was frequently one of the first students to enter the classroom after lunch and Luz often praised her for being on task. In my observations, it was more common for her to raise her hand to contribute to discussions in Luz's class, whereas in Emily's class it seemed she preferred to wait until she was called on.

During our interview, Elena shared that Spanish was her first language and that she came from a large family with indigenous roots in Mexico. Specifically, she lived at home with her mother, father, and four siblings. She reported speaking both Spanish and English at home equally, then clarified that she used Spanish more so to communicate with her parents and English more often with her siblings. On her classroom survey she put it this way, Spanish "is good for my family and me," and then she added that it was also good for being able "to do my homework with my mom and dad." In discussing English, she said it was "good for school" and "because my siblings speak English." She also shared that she did most things outside of school in a mixture of both Spanish and English, with the exception of music and church which she participated in mostly in Spanish. Prior to the interview, she also informed me that she had a preference for speaking in English, particularly with her peers.

At the time of data collection, Elena was in her first year at Alma and first year in a dual language program. She started school at Alma's feeder PreK-3 school, then went to a different school in the area for a few years prior to starting at Alma. When I asked her how it was going, she told me she really liked Alma and that "it's much better because over there there's bullies on the school I used to go." She explained how she liked that Alma had many specials, especially

the character class where they talked about combating bullying. I also asked her how she liked having school in two languages. She shared that "I like it better because I couldn't talk that much in Spanish, sometimes I said the wrong- the words wrong." She added that her mom was also happy that she was learning Spanish formally.

When I asked Elena how being at school made her feel, she responded "happy" and said that math was her favorite subject. She also informed me that she needed to work on her Spanish because during conferences "the teacher told my mom that I didn't understand that much because I don't, I- I'm not that much- um good at Spanish." She then explained how Luz also told her mom about the three awards she won this year already for demonstrating character, perfect attendance, and showing improvement. We also talked about her sisters. She discussed how she helped her two younger sisters with school work regularly but clarified that she spent more time with her third-grade sister because she struggled more in school than the youngest sister. At which point, she proudly shared that her first grade sister was reading at a second-grade level. In explaining what she enjoys doing for fun, she said on "the weekends when we're bored, we play school….so I could teach her something." Finally, I asked if she knew what she wanted to be when she grew up, to which she immediately responded, "I want to be a teacher." I followed up by asking her if she thought she might like to teach a bilingual class like Mrs. Luz, to which nodded her head and smiled.

Identity-Text Sessions.

I conducted four identity text writing sessions with Elena that lasted from 20-30 minutes each. Two of the four sessions included the other focal student, Danny. Initially, when I gave her a list of topics to pick from, she told me that she wanted to write a letter to the president about the border wall and without prompting shared "Um because my mom doesn't want to go to Mexico because she likes being in- in here. Plus, she likes the schools and she doesn't want us to go." I told her that sounded like great topic and informed her that I would bring her some articles that we could read together before she started writing to help her formulate her ideas. However, during our second meeting she informed me that she wanted to write about the environment instead. When I asked about why she changed her mind, she said it was "because when I was

reading this," as she lifted up one of the reference articles that I originally brought for another student to read, she added:

> "and I was still choosing first- and when I read this I thought more- and I was reading, and I felt bad about how [ruffling of paper], like from here [pointing to paragraph], I felt bad for like a lot of people that can't-- don't have clean water." I congratulated her on picking another excellent topic.

During the remaining sessions we read together some more, then she outlined her ideas and drafted the letter.

Identity-Text Content.

Elena directed her letter to "Dear Mr. President" and then introduced herself by stating "my name in Elena. I am a student at Alma Elementary and I am writing today to share my thoughts about protecting the environment." Then using her graphic organizer notes, she wrote her body paragraph:

> I think it's good to protect the environment because a lot of people don't have clean water and people could get sick or unhealthy. Did you know that one billion people in the world that have no clean water and two billion people live in a polluted city? In my opinion you should protet the environment by stoping polluted storm water in oceans, lakes, and rivers. also you should reduce air pollution, make more tree, and created more parks with a lots of trees.

Finally, we reviewed the model-text and she wrote a final brief paragraph where she restated her point and signed her name. Specifically, she wrote, "please do these things so that our community can stay safe and strong. Thank you for reading my letter so we can protet our environment…. Sincerely, Elena"

Synthesis.

In my time with Elena, it was clear that she had a big heart and loved school. She showed wisdom and maturity beyond her years in both her active involvement in her own learning and her care for those around her. In her interview, she articulated that she did not view herself as an English learner or as fully bilingual, but rather as an English-dominant speaker from a

bilingual home who was learning academic Spanish for the first time. She had a clear sense of identity as a “good” student, but also as a future teacher and leader of her younger siblings learning. From within Wenger’s (1998) framework, her sense of belonging was connected to the negotiation of meaning in the present, yet also transcended time and place in a way that allowed her to generate a new or future vision of herself. In her writing, she showed sincere care for those around her, which was best illustrated by her debate over choosing to write against the border wall or writing as an advocate on behalf of the millions of people without clean water and air around the world. In this way, Elena *aligned* her identity with the importance of contributing to broader conversations in the world.

From an identity perspective, the writing session provided a place for Elena to utilize the activity as space to reflect positively on her own identities. As a child of immigrant parents, she made connections between the building of the border a border wall and the anti-immigrant discourse which positioned her parents, and her family, on the outside of that wall. Elena’s initial interest in writing about this topic to an individual position in power like the president, showed that she was willing to critique and challenge the institutional structures which sought to reify representations of her family as not belonging. Likewise, her decision to write about protecting the environment in order to protect those harmed by environmental degradation in many ways showed that Elena was deeply connected to those outside of her immediate region where clean water is abundant. Elena was willing to interrogate the idea that social responsibility towards others and the environment extended beyond our current geographical place in the world. Moreover, she recognized that the system as stacked against those without clean air and water and made a direct plea to a source of power to enact change.

Dual-Language Focal Student: Danny

In the classroom, Danny was a quiet and easy-going young man who sat at the back right table near one of the classroom doors. I did not frequently see Danny speaking up during whole class instruction, perhaps because he sat at a table with a group of peers, who at times, overpowered his more introverted nature. His table peers were from a combination of Spanish-dominant, bilingual, and English-dominant homes, and also included one of the program’s only

non-Latinx bilingual students who was a newcomer to the dual language program that year. In my observations of Danny, he seemed to prefer working on his own most of the time. During the writing hour of the day, I noticed he often wrote in his composition notebook under his desk, looking up at times in seemingly pensive thought. During their creative writing and culture unit, I stopped to ask him what he was writing. He informed me that he was writing a goofy song about his mom's tacos, called *The Shape of Tacos.* When I asked if I could take a closer look, I read a witty song thoughtfully dedicated to "my people," his love of his family, and of course tacos.

At home, Danny lived with his mom, two sisters, and his older brother. He informed me that his first language was Spanish but preferred to speak in English. He said he really only spoke in all Spanish with his grandparents and with his mother he spoke Spanish and English equally. With everyone else (i.e. siblings, friends, neighbors, etc.) he said he always spoke in English.

It was Danny's second year at Alma and his first year in the dual language program. When I asked him about the move from his old classroom to Luz's, he said he liked his new classroom, then explained how his mom really wanted him to be in dual language and "she always wanted." He added that he enjoyed being in the dual language program because "it's fun," "I made even more friends," and "my mom is happy." He also shared that he found it more challenging because "…English it's easier, because I know a lot more English, but in Spanish it's a little bit harder because I don't know that much Spanish." He again expressed that he enjoyed the Spanish portion of the day because he was pleasing his mother by being able "to talk to her in Spanish" and because he believed that learning in two languages was good because "you get smarter and understand people more." He explained that he used more Spanish at home now, especially "if she [mom] doesn't understand, then I say it in Spanish." He also emphasized that in reality he still speaks to his mom in a mixture of Spanish and English, because "she understands English too."

Identity-Text Sessions.

I met with Danny four times over the course of the spring semester for 20-30 minutes on the development of his opinion-argumentation rooted identity text. In our early discussions about what he was most interested in writing about, I provided him with a list of ideas including

educational, social, political, environmental, and health issues, but also let him know he could pick something not on the list. As we discussed the possibility of writing a letter to the President, Danny shared with me that he “watched the election” and he felt “kind of scared.” He added that no one is his family wanted the incumbent President to win because “everyone says that he's racist. He, he's gonna build a wall and um, he said he might even remove Mexicans even. And my families, they are Mexicans.” I told him to think about if he wanted that to be the topic of his letter and let him know I would bring reference articles for him to read through at our next meeting. At our next session, he informed me that he did want to write a letter to the president about the border wall or anti-immigrant racism. I told him that was a great idea and I pulled out some of the reference articles I had gathered based on our prior conversation. We spent the remaining sessions reading and drafting the letter in his composition notebook.

Identity-Text Content.

At the start of the letter, Danny penned the date and “Dear Mr. President” in the top left corner of his paper. He immediately followed with a brief introduction of himself and a statement introducing his central argument. He wrote, “My name is Danny. I am a student at Alma and I am writing today to share my thoughts about the Wall. I say you should not build the Wall because it’s going to cause a lot of trouble.” He followed with a brief body paragraph giving examples of the ‘trouble’ it would cause, most of which he pulled from the reference articles. He wrote:

> For example if you build the Wall the animals that live near the border will go extinct. Also if you do build Wall it will cost tens of billions of dollar to build the Wall. Additionally, it will threaten national parks, national monuments and national forests and numerous areas. As well if you do build a wall you will not be nice because you’re going to disrespect people with the Wall.

He ended with a “thank you” and a closing sentence urging attention to the matter.

Synthesis.

In summary, Danny was a dedicated student who expressed love for sports, food, and his family throughout my interactions with him. During class, he was soft spoken and often brief, but to the point. Additionally, he saw himself as more of a Spanish-learner, than an English-learner.

His preference for English was clear, and I did not observe the code-switching he described with him mother in class. Even when I scrolled through his composition notebook, I noticed that it was English heavy but had short examples of his Spanish-only writing as well. Within school he identified as a ‘good’ student who saw his place in the dual language program as tied more so to his mother’s desire than his own. However, he also viewed his place in the dual language program as tied to extend peer social circles, fun, and his belief about his own intelligence as a multilingual user. In this way, Danny’s sense of belonging in the dual language program was connected to what Wenger (1998) refers to as *ownership of meaning*. In other words, Danny was in the process of negotiating the meaning of his first language to him as he simultaneously negotiated the process of becoming and imagining himself as a multilingual speaker.

In his identity-text, Danny closely aligned his perspective with that of his family and linked it to broader discourses about Mexicans in the U.S. as well as the environment. Although, he did not elaborate on his personal connection to the issue in his letter, Danny’s comment that he felt scared after the election was likely linked to his conscious decision to downplay his deep personal connection to the issue due to the threatening nature of target-audience (i.e. the president). At the same time, the letter writing exercise gave Danny the opportunity to raise his voice and claim power in the face of the vulnerability of his family and the broader affront on his extended Latinx community. Danny also wanted to include some information on anti-immigrant racism, which he incorporated via the final sentence of his body paragraph in which he called out the “disrespect” that building a wall engendered. Like his peer Elena, he was willing to openly criticize the pro-wall position and the intuitional racism it represented to him.

SEI Focal Student: Jorge

In my observations of Jorge, he was a diligent student who was reserved during whole-class instruction. He was typically one of the first to put up his hand in the shape of the school mascot, which was a gesture signaling the class to quiet down so that Emily could guide the students toward the next task of the day. When Emily asked for help from the whole class for various reasons, he would frequently respond to her request without drawing much attention to himself. Emily often praised and rewarded his actions as an example to the class. At the same

time, Jorge was also a social and happy-go-lucky peer. Specifically, during small group work he was frequently seen joking and laughing with his many friends in the class. At times, it even seemed as if he were speaking a secret code language with his buddies through the use of gestures or a mere glance across the table or room. Over the spring semester, I observed that he sat with three different tables of EB peers. During guided reading and math time, he would often move around the classroom to work beside those who appeared to be his closest buddies in the class, almost all of whom were Latinx boys.

Though his interview session and student language use survey, I learned that he lived at home with his mother, sister, and uncle all of whom he reported speaking to in both Spanish and English. He added that with his mother and uncle he used more Spanish and with his sister he used more English. He shared that he loved “going places” and “playing” with his family and friends at home, especially hiking, riding bikes, and playing soccer and basketball. He distinguished between home and school in terms of where he used a mixture of both languages and where he always used English. Specifically, he shared that he associated reading, online activity, and extracurricular activities with English-only, whereas he associated entertainment (i.e. movies, music, etc.) and religious activities with a pretty even mixture of both languages. In discussing his feelings about English and Spanish, he was at a loss of words for describing how “communicating in English makes me feel” and described English and Spanish as good for listening to people. On the other hand, he stated that Spanish “makes me feel good,” but said he preferred to speak in English. He explained that this was “because I don’t know that much Spanish and I know English more.” I asked him if it came back quickly when talking with his mom and uncle at home, and he said “yeah” but “sometimes I forget Spanish, so I just say it in English.” In observing Jorge during class time, I never heard him speak in Spanish, which corroborated his student survey that said in class he speaks only in English and at school almost always in English.

We talked about his experience at school and his interests briefly as well. He attended Alma’s feeder preK-3 school “since kindergarten” and shared with me that he liked Alma, especially his teaches and tutors. He was pretty clear about not knowing what he wanted to do or

what he thought he would be good at in the future, although he definitely considered himself a good student because he "liked writing and doing math." He then clarified that math was his favorite subject because it was "challenging."

Identity-Text Sessions.

Jorge participated in four writing sessions lasting 20-30 minutes each. In our early discussions about what he would like to write about in his letter, he came up with an original idea. Specifically, he informed me that he would like to write about helping the homeless. This particular session included Jeff (the other focal student from his classroom) and the two of them discussed how it was sad to see homeless people and then described some of the homeless people they had seen around the area. I told Jorge that was great topic and let him know I would find some articles with ideas about how to end homelessness. In the sessions that followed, we read a few articles about programs in other states that provide individuals with housing, food, and clothing to get on their feet again. In the final two sessions, Jorge wrote a short letter to the president asking that he take action on the nation's homelessness problem.

Identity-Text Content.

As with all the other students, Jorge listed the date and wrote "Dear Mister President." He then introduced himself and the issue. At that point, something occurred that had not happened in the other sessions. The boys began discussing how they did not want to use their real names. As a result, Jorge and Jeff came up with shortened nicknames or fake names for themselves. They explained how they thought it was a bad idea to use their real names because they were Mexican. I let them know I understood and that it was okay to pick another name to introduce themselves. At first, Jorge decided on the name J-TAN, but ultimately, he decided to use his common first name without his last name. Specifically, in his first paragraph he wrote, "My name is Jorge, I am writing today to shere my thoughts about Homelessness. it is important because there is to many peple in the streets. Did you know that they are 549,928 pepole in the street on a given night?"

Before continuing with the remainder of Jorge's letter I want to highlight that because I was more focused on the content of what Jorge was writing, I avoided overly correcting his

spelling conventions during the activity, with the exception being if he asked me how to spell something. In the letter I present below, I have made corrections in italics to the words where spelling obscured meaning, however in those places where it does not obscure meaning I left his original spelling. Jorge's body paragraph read:

> there are many ways to solve The Homelessness. first, we need to provide hoseing at afondble cost that they can pay. Secand, they need *services* for kid, jobs, and *medicine for* helth problems. third They need *friends* to hang out and some pets because *loneliness* and *depressed*.

He then ended with a final request for funding to help with the costs associated with ending homelessness. He wrote, "finaly, I ask that if you can give some of money. Thank you for your time…. Sincerely Jorge."

Synthesis.

My observations and interactions with Jorge pointed to an introverted young man who made his peers smile and was a 'helper' to his teachers. Similar to the other focal students, he described feelings of English dominance and Spanish language loss. His lack of words for describing how speaking English made him feel can be juxtaposed with how speaking Spanish making him feel "good." Given the silence or lack of descriptive words, I can only interpret his words loosely as a form of dissonance linked to an underlying awareness of the tension between his English and Spanish proficiency and between school and home language use.

Jorge's choice of topic for his letter is a reflection of his caring personality. At the same time, I could not help but wonder how close to home his choice of topic might be. Even if not for lack of a physical home, for his awareness of the issues of poverty that affect his school and broader community. In talking about Jorge, Emily expressed some concern about his well-being at the beginning of the year, but said he appeared to be doing better shortly thereafter and did not pursue her concerns further (to my knowledge). When asked about his experiences and understanding of homelessness directly, he talked about people without homes more generally and played off of Jeff's stories about homeless people he had seen around. At one point during our writing sessions, he also showed concern for the size of the living space the homeless would

be given, and also briefly described the type of house (i.e. big) he hoped to have in the future. While the underlying reasons Jorge chose to address this topic were only known to him in the moment he selected it, his process of meaning making aligned with a deep care for his community, his desire to imagine a world without homelessness, and a pathway to exploring new ways of addressing the plight of the poor and disenfranchised.

In looking at his letter through an intersectional perspective, I saw a young man with an emerging worldview who thought critically about the *why* and *how* of extreme poverty. He explored with wisdom beyond his ten years the ideas presented in the focal texts with regard to how to address the multifaceted issues faced by the homeless. By addressing the president with his concerns, he made connections between the issues faced by those in poverty and the broader systemic and societal conditions that contribute to the associated issues.

SEI Focal Student: Jeff

Jeff was the first student I met in Emily's class. Emily introduced me to him as a student who she knew would be happy to show me around the classroom. He struck me as outgoing, thoughtful, and very articulate during our first meeting. I arrived during guided reading time, so he showed me the two different reading programs in which he worked. He shared that he preferred the program where he played phonemic video games over reading online books. I watched as he played and there were times, when I had to stop and ask him how he knew what to do because it was not entirely clear to me. He gave detailed instructions, explaining the nuances of the games. He also told me that the game was for kids who 'weren't from here,' but then quickly explained to me that he was 'from here' and considered himself half-Mexican.

During class, Jeff was usually eager to learn and participate. At times I saw him raising his hand urgently to signal that he wanted to be called on by Emily. During my first handful of observations, he sat at tables with his peers. However, he was one of the students who later in the semester put his desk right next to Emily's almost as an extension of hers. He worked well with his peers for the most part, but he seemed less interested in the social aspect of the classroom than many of his peers. He enjoyed having his desk right next to Emily and I noticed he often engaged with adults when they were in the classroom.

Emily shared that she was initially surprised to learn how much he struggled with reading and informed me that he did not have a SE designation, but he was a student they were monitoring closely throughout the year. Emily said he found reading aloud in front of others and exams especially intimidating and asked if I would work with him one-on-one on an AZELLA test prep day. During that session, I noticed that he seemed more tense than usual. However, when I read the practice questions aloud with him, he seemed to relax and was able to identify the correct answers to most of the practice reading questions. Toward the end of the semester, Jeff approached me and shared in his typical upbeat way that he was excited that he was going to get to work with Ms. Jenny, the fifth-grade SE resource teacher, on his writing and reading next year. It was common for Jeff to show an eagerness for learning and adult attention/interaction. When I asked Jenny and Emily about it, they informed me they were having him tested for dyslexia and referring him for a reading IEP. Although the designation was not official yet, they felt he needed to be evaluated particularly because his speaking and listening were very high on the proficiency scale, whereas his reading and writing, when not assisted, were very low. Emily felt something had to be going on, especially when someone as articulate as Jeff was testing at the pre-emergent level for reading and writing.

Jeff shared that this was his second year at Alma and added that it was his first time being at a school for more than one year. He said, “every year we used to move to a different school” but he “liked this one the best,” explaining how he feels “at home when I'm here… because I'm always having fun here.” Despite the difficulties and concerns reported by his teachers, Jeff positioned himself as a strong student academically. He shared that he had some issues with getting in trouble last year, but said he was doing “better,” having received gold star achievement and character awards at school this year. He named all the subjects he got A’s in, listing off several subjects from science and math to P.E. and band, but leaving out ELA. However, when I asked him about the subjects he liked at school he talked about all of the core subjects, including reading. He then went on about how he enjoyed reading. In sharing what he read the, he said, “I lo::::::::ve comic books” and added that he could not put down one his favorite comics earlier in the year so Emily “had to take it away from me because I kept on reading.” In

discussing what he saw himself doing after Alma and high school, he spoke at length about a number of ideas, which I share here as example of his expressive nature:

> I was thinking about being an adventurer, making my own things, creating other things and people've been, people were bullies, but I just ignore them. They'd say, you would never make anything that's as cool as my project that I did in second grade. So I just ignore them.

He then added that he loves drawing and would also like to be an artist or an athlete or perhaps join the military, proceeding to then tell be a story about his "thío" (tío/uncle) who fought in Iraq.

In his interview, Jeff informed told me that he considered himself half-Mexican on his mom's side and shared that he had a lot of family in both Mexico and the U.S. At home, he lived with his mom and dad, but clarified that dad was not his birth father and was recently released from prison. In terms of language use, he reported speaking with his grandparents and some relatives only in Spanish but said at home he spoke with his parents in both Spanish and English equally. Whereas with his friends, cousins, and brother he always spoke in English. He shared that most of his daily activities from school to listening to music, watching videos, or browsing the internet were in English most of the time. However, he added that for church and talking on the phone he spoke a mixture of English and Spanish. He shared that he felt his English was stronger than his Spanish, but also expressed that he enjoyed speaking both languages. He added that English was especially "good for your parents."

Identity-Text Sessions.

Jeff's writing sessions lasted between 20-30 minutes and included Jorge in three of the four sessions. At the start of the first session, Jeff explained that if he were to write to the president that he would write about combating racism or the border wall. More specifically, he put it this way, "I don't like the way he acts with Mexicans. He's racist. He's rude... except for the people that like him, he thinks that he's better than everybody else, but he's not, he's not better than everybody." However, upon hearing what Jorge's topic was, he asked if he could write two letters. I let him know that we he would have to pick one given our timeframe, but he was more than welcome to write more letters on issues he felt were important later. Ultimately, he decided

on writing against the border wall and chose to use a fake name, which is the pseudonym I have used for him throughout this study. As with the other focal students, Jeff read through some reference articles with me and outlined the key points he wanted to make on the graphic organizer provided. From there he began drafting his letter, the details of which are presented below.

Identity-Text Content.

Like the others, Jeff's letter started with the date and "Dear Mister President." From there he introduced himself by stating, "my name is Jeff and I am a student at Alma Elementary. I am writing to shere my thought about the wall with you." In this hand-written draft, Jeff stopped regularly to ask me how to spell certain words, but as with Jorge I did not intervene unless I was asked. His body paragraph followed and said:

> My opinion is you should not billd the wall. First, it will make people mad because they disagree with you. Second, it will indanger more animls than they are endangered. Third, it will cost aforchin for everybody and we can spend it on houses for homeless or for our schools like food for schools.

He ended with a strong plea, writing:

> So will you listen to the people of the United States? I ask will you build the wall? Yes or No? Listen to your citizens. I beg you to not bulid the wall. Thank you for your time…. Sincerely, Jeff"

Synthesis.

As the descriptions above indicate, Jeff was naturally curious and interested in school. His language practices are reflective of EBs across the focal student participants in that he viewed himself as an English-speaker more than a Spanish-speaker. The vision Jeff articulated of himself as a learner and a top student, contrasted with his teachers views of him as a struggling reader with a potentially more serious disability in need of additional learning support. The way Jeff eagerly shared the news with me that he would be working with the SE teacher next year did not come as a surprise to me given his naturally optimistic outlook on life and his clear desire for one-on-one and small group work with teachers.

In looking more closely at his letter, it was clear that his choice of topic was intimately linked to his identity as a Mexican-American. As his pre-writing comments indicated, he was both offended by and fearful of the degree of racism propagated by the current president. He initially wanted to incorporate more about anti-racism as well but instead felt it was more important to address ways he thought the funds to build a wall could be better spent on combating hunger insecurity and homelessness instead. At the same time, his inclusion of food for schools clearly connected to his knowledge of and concern for the struggles of many of his peers and likely his own family as well. Whereas the inclusion of the homeless in the letter appeared to be linked to what he viewed as Jorge's great idea and his desire to write a letter about combatting homelessness as well.

His letter demonstrated a sense of belonging to his family and also allowed Jeff to define a writing trajectory that connected his personal identity to the experiences of others within his local and extended community. More specifically, the experience of brainstorming and writing the letter allowed Jeff to express both his personal disapproval of the idea of a border wall and his criticism of the way funds were being allocated in a systemically unjust manner. Additionally, like David, his conscious decision to carefully avoid disclosure of his personal connections to the issue as well as his use of a false name, indicated a strong need to protect himself (and his family) from the racial hostility of the current administration to whom the letter was directed.

Chapter Summary

The students opinion-argumentation letters on an issue important to them were identity-texts which allowed the students to reflect positively on themselves through the process of critiquing power structures at the intersections of racial, immigration, environmental, and social class issues. The activity allowed the focal students to engage with writing on a personal level by creating a space for students to express their emerging worldviews in a way that aligned with broader discourses and perspectives on the issues that were important to them. Overall, the focal student data points to the importance of recognizing the process by which social identities are situated within specific communities of practice and connected to broader sociocultural-historical contexts simultaneously (Nuñez, 2014).

CHAPTER 7
DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I connect the findings from the last three chapters to the three research questions broadly speaking by discussing the ways that language policies as practiced and educator beliefs about (bi)literacy came together to shape the learning opportunities of EB students at Alma Elementary. I also consider how the students articulated linguistic and cultural identities converged and diverged across the two focal classrooms in light of broader discussions on the place of multilingualism and related issues of equity in education. In line with the findings, I have organized the discussion according to the school, classroom, and student-levels.

School Level: From Resistance to Student Tracking

As outlined in the chapter on the administrative interviews, the administration was in agreement that at Alma the SEI four-hour block would not be implemented unless there was a state-level audit. The administrators were sincere in their desire to ensure that language, whether English or Spanish, was taught through the use of literacy practices aligned with meaningful academic content and grade-level standards. They believed that their EB students would learn best through instruction that was both cognitively challenging and provided necessary linguistic supports simultaneously. All four administrators interviewed asserted that the only difference between the mainstream and SEI classroom was that the SEI classroom teacher utilized more linguistically scaffolded practices appropriate to working with EBs. Likewise, the academic content of the dual language program was similar to the mainstream classroom with the difference being the language of instruction in the mornings and afternoons. My observational findings converged with this description in terms of academic content, but also diverged other ways.

Specifically, my observations of both the SEI and DLE classrooms corroborated the administrators comments with regard to scaffold practices. However, there was a common perception that the language learning strategies used in the dual language and SEI classrooms were distinct. Whereas, I found similar scaffolding practices across both the dual language and SEI classrooms, with a few small exceptions like the use of occasional spelling tests in the SEI classroom being something I never observed as explicitly taught in the DLE classroom. In both

classrooms, however, it was common to see Luz, Esther, and Emily focus on ensuring academic content was accessible to their students in English or Spanish through routines, visuals, graphic organizers, multimedia, schema building, thematic planning, and explicit instruction in academic tasks (i.e. vocabulary building, etc.) (NASEM, 2017). These strategies were embedded across both the DLE and SEI programs because students were considered either English-learners or Spanish-learners in both classrooms.

Scaffolded academic content across classrooms was where the administration at Alma felt the greatest freedom in resisting state-level policies (i.e. the four-hour block) openly. Another avenue of resistance was the channeling of EBs to the dual language program in the fifth-grade. However, there was a clear divide between the administrators and the teachers on how they perceived the importance of this practice. In other words, those with multilingual/multicultural training (i.e. both the current and former LAS and Luz) viewed the channeling of Spanish speaking EB students into the dual language program in the fifth grade as a way to provide their EB students with a formative educational opportunity to be exposed to their first language as a form of heritage language maintenance, as an important academic experience aimed at strengthening their biliteracy skills, and as a means to provide the students with a classroom context with peer language role models in both their first language and in English. At the same time, they recognized that the constraints placed on them by the exclusionary SEI laws truncated the dual language experience and biliteracy outcomes of EB students, particularly those who were transferred in the fifth grade. For this reason, both the current and former LAS emphasized the importance of getting EB students reclassified as soon as possible so they had the opportunity to choose to be a part of dual language program if they and their parents desired in the younger grades. This trend was clear on the students' surveys which showed nearly all of the students who spoke Spanish as their first language transferred into the dual language program between second and fifth grade (i.e. after they were reclassified). Likewise, Luz and both the current and former LAS each expressed a strong belief that even if their EB students were only able to experience two years of the dual language program, it was an opportunity EB students deserved as Spanish home language users. They also acknowledged that transferring Spanish-

speaking dual language students to the program in the fifth grade was limited by the number of spaces available in the classroom on any given year. To which Luz explained she did partially rely on the recommendations she received from the fourth grade SEI teacher, a teacher that I unfortunately was unable to interview as a part of this study.

On the other hand, the administrators and teachers with little to no professional training in multilingual/multicultural issues (i.e. those only with an SEI endorsement) viewed the transferring of EB students to the dual language program in the fifth grade with greater caution. This included the principal, the fifth-grade master teacher, the English dual language instructor, and the SEI teacher who in different ways positioned the dual language classroom as place for "high" achieving students and therefore only suitable for EBs who were academically prepared to transition to a bilingual classroom space in the fifth grade. This was rooted in their position that schooling in two languages was more rigorous and they therefore expressed concern about EB students struggling if they were placed with two instructors, in two languages throughout the day as opposed to just one. The SEI teacher went so far as to position the dual language program as a space for more "gifted" children, which seemed to be rooted in her cross-classroom examination of student test scores. She also expressed some questions about the benefit of such a brief transfer to the dual language program (i.e. only for fifth and sixth grade) when they would only have the option to enroll in English medium middle schools in the area and would potentially be placed back into an SEI classroom at that point. At that moment, Emily (Ms. ELD) seemed to indicate she believed that the SEI classroom better prepared students to pass the AZELLA exam due to its more explicit focus on English and AZELLA testing. This assumption is contrary to the extensive research base on the academic performance of EBs across program types, which has consistently found that EBs enrolled in bilingual educational programs tend to fare better than those in various types of English-only programs in Arizona and across the U.S. (Greene, 1997; Francis, Lesaux, & August, 2006; Rolstad, Mahoney, & Glass, 2005; Slavin & Cheung, 2005; Thomas & Collier, 2002; Willig, 1985). Esther (Mrs. DLE) also talked about the issue of EBs in terms of their motivation to be in dual language at that point in their schooling. The comments from the two groups demonstrate a clear split between the multilingual/multicultural educators at

Alma and the SEI endorsed educators in terms of the way they positioned students as suited, or not, for the dual language program. However, with Luz and the current and former LAS having served as the primary gatekeepers to the available spots in the DL classrooms, it was apparent that their beliefs about the benefits and importance of the program for heritage Spanish speakers was not always filtered through an academic-preparedness ideology.

At the same time, it was clear across the administrative sample that there was a widespread conviction that the placement of EBs in SEI specific classrooms was problematic, even when they were implementing an academic content-based curriculum that aligned with the other fifth grade classrooms. The administration at Alma felt that they held less power to resist this element of the SEI law due to state monitoring of EB student grouping in their district. Likewise, each administrator expressed a desire to disperse the students in the SEI classroom across the mainstream and dual language classrooms more broadly. With that said, ability-tracking more broadly and ability based channeling practices into the dual language program were not state-mandated but appeared to be an embedded practice at Alma. My conversations with the SEI instructor, Emily, and the demographic data alone were the biggest indicators of this trend. More specifically, the ability-based tracking of students was visible particularly when contrasting the less than 1% of students with special education classifications in the focal dual language classroom with the nearly 40% of students in the SEI classroom with SE classifications. However, it is equally important to point out that 30% were dual EB/SE classified students, making this sort of grouping in some ways tied to the SEI grouping requirement imposed on Alma administrators by the state. This does not take away from the fact that ability-based discourse with regard to how students were positioned as a “good” fit or “bad” fit for the dual language program was present in many of my interviews with the administrators and fifth grade teachers at Alma.

At schools where dual language is a track as opposed to an option for the entire school (like Alma), Palmer and Henderson (2016) documented the ways that students’ placements into one-way dual language (OWDL), two-way dual language (TWDL), or ESL/mainstream tracks was perceived by teachers as linked to the students ability-levels, wherein students in the TWDL

program were consistently positioned as more capable than those placed in the OWDL and ESL/ mainstream classrooms. Given the discursive nature of their data, they also discuss the uncertainty surrounding whether the placement of students by ability-level was an intentional, perceived, or de facto tracking practice at the school in their study. At Alma, one EB student new to the dual language program who was not a focal student in this study, was specifically discussed in terms of her suitability for the dual language program based on her academic performance by the master teacher. While the context of Alma differed from the Palmer and Henderson (2016) study in a number of ways, the perceptions of the fifth-grade SEI, English dual language, principal, and master teacher similarly positioned students in the dual language program as "higher" than those in the SEI classroom and consequently linked this to their suitability for the dual language program. While there is no way of knowing at this point how or if these discourses *might* shift *when* SEI classrooms are no longer a state mandate in Arizona, it is important to highlight the ways that students in the two classrooms were perceived and positioned by teachers and administrators in terms of "ability." There is a substantial body of literature on the ways that ability-tracking based on perceived abilities or standardized measures has the potential to harm students' access to equal educational opportunities, particularly for those from racialized and minoritized groups who are placed more frequently into remedial or lower tracked coursework (Oakes, 2005; Tyson, 2013; Valdés, 2001). Finally, it is also important to point out the potential harm these discourses can have in a state like Arizona where bilingual programs serving EBs were shut down at the turn of the century, while those serving more middle-class non-EB students in the suburbs were opened simultaneously. Broadly speaking, this is connected to a growing body of literature on what many are referring to as the gentrification of dual language education, or the process whereby the needs of EB students are being overlooked in favor of the needs of more historically privileged groups interested in the enrichment benefits of dual language education (Valdez, Freire, and Delavan, 2016). Below I discuss these themes at the classroom level in greater detail.

Classroom-Level: English hegemony, Critical Inquiry, and Embracing Multilingual Classrooms

As previously discussed, at the classroom level teachers engaged in similar thematic units and language development strategies across both the dual language and SEI classrooms. Likewise, students in both classrooms were expected to engage in similar literacy activities. However, despite the alignment of curricula across the two classrooms, there were distinct differences across the SEI, English dual language, and Spanish dual language classrooms. While the differences in language use (i.e. English vs. Spanish) was the most obvious and expected difference, it is one that should not be under evaluated, particularly in unproblematized ways in classrooms with high percentages of language minority and EB students.

The unquestioned expectation that English be used at all times in the English dual language and SEI classroom was tied to teacher beliefs related to their need to adhere to state and district level (i.e. 50:50 model) mandates. In the case of Emily, this even included comments with regard to non-English languages being viewed as “unfriendly” in the SEI classroom. However, even within the dual language program there was also unproblematized discourse about the dominance of English and the place of monolingual standardized testing in bilingual education. There was a sense that the transition to English dominance was expected and that the Spanish portion of the day served more of an enrichment purpose, which was used to explain why test preparations were so frequently done in English even during the Spanish portion of the day. Scholars have frequently referred to standardized testing as de facto English-only policy (Menken, 2008), which appears to be the tendency at Alma as well. However, there is emerging scholarship that examines the constraints monolingual testing policies place on EB and language minority students’ diverse and still developing linguistic repertoires (Flores & Schissel, 2014; Schissel, 2014). In fact, Flores & Schissel (2014) argue that “unless assessments informed by a heteroglossic perspective are developed, teachers will be constrained in their attempt to create heteroglossic implementational spaces in their classrooms” (p. 18). In other words, in this standards-based assessment era, until the languages and dynamic bilingualism of EB students are acknowledged even within standards and assessments, teachers will continue to struggle

with reconciling the tension between bilingual/multilingual pedagogies and standardized testing demands. There are a few states where assessments are beginning to be offered in multiple languages and standards-based reforms are starting to consider the ways that bi-/multilingual knowledge can be incorporated as one way to inclusively acknowledge the skills that bilingual students are using and acquiring in dual language and some ESL programs (Flores & Schissel, 2014; Garcia, 2010).

In this study, there was also stricter implementation of language separation in the English dual language classroom when compared to the Spanish dual language classroom. In the Spanish dual language classroom, the use of both languages by the students was an accepted practice and even encouraged at times as a way to help them make sense of the content they were processing and learning. Although Esther did not enforce the use of English strictly, she did communicate that it was the expectation and the norm even for students who were newcomers to the U.S. or from Spanish dominant homes. Similarly, the use of translanguaging strategies to make sense of content was absent from the English dual language classroom, particularly in the same way accommodations were made for English dominance in the Spanish classroom. There are numerous reasons for why this was the case, including the reality that both the Spanish and English dual language classrooms seemed to be preparing students to transition to English-only middle and high school experiences. Likewise, the imbalance in translanguaging practices across the "50-50" break down of the day communicated the importance of English over Spanish to the students in concrete and palpable ways. This finding is also in line with prior research which found students were subconsciously transitioning to English given they were nearing the end of their elementary years, growing increasingly aware of the sociocultural dominance of English, and intuitively preparing to exit the dual language program (Powtowski, 2004).

Garcia defines translanguaging pedagogies as "all practices that build English proficiency through using the home language as a scaffold" (Garcia, 2010, p. 63). However, when only one classroom embraced this philosophy of learning (i.e. the Spanish classroom) while the other classrooms eschewed the mixture of languages and instead encourage full 'immersion' in English at all times, it is not surprising that the students articulated visions of themselves as English-

dominant and discuss feeling as if they have lost Spanish, even as they described bilingual home lives and continue to be labeled as “English language learners” at school. Given the documented benefits of incorporating home-languages into the classroom, the use of diverse translanguaging pedagogies in traditionally “English-only” spaces should be viewed as a promising strategy for welcoming students’ home languages into classrooms that have traditionally positioned non-English languages as inappropriate, unnecessary, or impossible to accommodate for monolingual teachers.

Perhaps even more surprising is the fact that all three teachers had varying levels of intermediate to advanced oral proficiency in Spanish. In the SEI classroom specifically, despite articulating a sense of disappointment in the tracking structures associated with the school/district/state and simultaneously adhering to the requirement to enforce strict English-only practices in her classroom, Emily herself reflected on the potential creative possibilities of incorporating her students diverse home languages into the fabric of the classroom. Recognizing that despite lacking proficiency in multiple languages herself, there were untapped opportunities for students to engage in utilizing their cultural and linguistic repertoires through collaborative activities across grade levels with peers who spoke the same home languages as her students. Indeed, there are successful models of what it looks like when schools build pathways for teachers and students to incorporate their bi- and multilingualism within and across classrooms throughout the K-12 spectrum. Garcia (2010) highlights what these strategies can look when educators embrace the goal of promoting biliteracy rather than a transition to English-only once students have “passed” the highly variable state reclassification assessments. More specifically, Garcia (2010) provides an overview of key programs and practices at the PK-12 levels which aim to build balanced bilinguals (i.e. bilinguals who are literate in both languages, (Callahan & Gándara, 2014) through biliteracy-rooted approaches across content areas, grades levels, and even diverse languages. Dual language programs that extend beyond the elementary years naturally have this element of this built into them, however García (2010) and Cummins (2009) emphasize that “bilingual instructional strategies can be incorporated into English-medium classrooms, thereby opening up the pedagogical space in ways that legitimate the intelligence,

imagination, and linguistic talents of ELL students" (Cummins, p.xi). Examples such as encouraging students to engage in bilingual peer conferencing and think-alouds, using multilingual technological and online tools as resources, reading books and articles in home languages for assignments both inside and outside of class time, and even completing assignments bilingually in diverse formats particularly through group work (Garcia, 2010). Additionally, Garcia (2010) discusses teaching strategies such as using translanguaging as a scaffold and even having teachers seek out opportunities to speak with individual students and small groups in their home language(s) at times.

Another theme from within both the dual language and SEI classrooms was the positioning of EB students as struggling learners based on their English standardized test scores. Emily, the SEI instructor, talked about the needs of her students as distinct from the students in the dual language classroom and positioned her students as less advanced than the dual language students. She also considered her students "low" achievement in part tied to their homes as places where parents frequently cannot read to their children in English, thus positioning the issue as lying within the students' homes and families, rather than in the inherent problems with standardized testing measures or the structures of the SEI program itself. At the same, Emily gave some sharp and discerning critiques of the system in which she was imbedded as first year classroom teacher. Specifically, without fully being aware of the specific details of the SEI grouping law, she criticized the state, district, and school level policies that grouped "high" and "low" students together and discussed her perception that many of her dual EB/SE students were misclassified due to language. She went so far as to assert that the SE labels were temporary and that they would "lose" those reading IEP designations when they tested out of SEI. However, research indicates otherwise. In fact, Harry and Klingner (2006) found that once an initial SE placement is made, it is unlikely that children will lose that label for the remainder of their K12 careers. For EB students who are mislabeled as Emily suggested, the detrimental effects of being labeled SE throughout K12 outweigh any supplemental help the school or district may believe they are providing. Specifically, there is evidence that a SE label can have a

stigmatizing effect on youth and limit their access to rigorous college preparatory coursework, potentially having long-term consequences into adulthood (Gartner & Lipsky, 1999).

In the dual language program, Luz and Esther also positioned most of their EB students as in need of more remedial attention. While the students home lives were not directly discussed, the students were frequently positioned around their standardized benchmark scores in my end of year interviews. However, Luz's conceptualization of their biliteracy was distinct from Esther's. Specifically, Luz discussed her EB students' difficulties as tied to broader questions related the structure of the SEI program, teacher preparation, and not having had the opportunity to have built up their Spanish language literacy prior to the fifth grade. At the same time, she positioned her EB students as one with her formerly-EB students. In her perspective, they were *all* still in the process of acquiring both languages and in need of additional supports. Her perspective both minimized the differences between her EB and formerly-EB students and showed the wisdom of someone who had been teaching for over a decade in a state still navigating the reality of restrictive language policies. In fact, a recent research study found there continues to be a large and persistent achievement gap between Arizona's formerly-EB (F-EB) students and their never EB peers (López & Santibañez, 2018). This study also found that Arizona's F-EB students lagged significantly behind both California's and Texas' F-EB students, with the case of Texas (a state with a history of strong bilingual education programing in the primary grades) being particularly striking. A few of the more telling findings from the study were that Texas' EBs were achieving at similar levels to Arizona's F-EBs in math, outperforming Arizona's never EB students in fourth grade reading, and that Texas had improved its high school graduation rate of EBs by about 50% over ten years, whereas Arizona's high school graduation rate for EBs dropped by 60% over the same time period (López & Santibañez, 2018). I highlight a few of the findings from this study here to show that Luz's perception, would be reality in other state EB classification systems.

On the other hand, Esther tended to positon the difficulties of her EB students as lying within them. Specifically, when asked directly about her EB students she decentered the place of EBs in the dual language program and linked their language learning to student motivation and agency, suggesting that the ability of the students to maintain their first languages and grow in

their second resided more within each student than within the dual language program, families, SEI program, or the structures of schooling more broadly. Additionally, when I was initially considering including both dual language classrooms in this study, Esther informed me that two of the four EB students in her homeroom (which was not ultimately the focal classroom in this study) were dual EB/SE classified students, however she also positioned the other two as potentially in need of SE testing due to low academic performance. This positioning of EB student abilities is in line with Ahram, Fergus, and Noguera's (2011) research which found that low-income Black and Latinx students were disproportionately overrepresented in special education in part as result of educators "cultural deficit thinking and an unclear or misguided conceptualization of providing academic services for struggling learners" (p.2256). While the overrepresentation of EBs in special education was not an explicit focus of the research questions, it was a theme that spoke to the ways that the linguistic struggles of some (but not all) EB students were at times pathologized within the focal classrooms.

Student-Level: From Internalized to Experiential Narratives

At the student level, the focal EB students constructed narratives of themselves as English-dominant, struggling Spanish speakers. Likewise, all four focal students felt that learning both Spanish and English was important in Arizona and discussed enjoying speaking both Spanish and English. Independent of classroom placement, the students seemed to associate home with a mixture of Spanish and English and school with English. Students across both classrooms professed feeling as if they were losing their Spanish, however the dual language focal students also expressed feeling as if they were improving their Spanish due to the dual language program. Furthermore, they connected the dual language program to improved communication with their families at home. Danny specifically associated speaking multiple languages well with feeling "smarter" as well. Additionally, the four focal students espoused a belief in their abilities and a sense of belonging at and enjoyment with school.

The opinion/argumentation writing piece was an activity that allowed the students to insert their personal identities, values, and interests into their letters. The topics chosen by the students were endowed with meaning and a sense of care for their local and global communities.

By focusing on issues such as combating homelessness, protecting the environment, and opposing the border wall, the students provided a small glimpse into their personal identities through their writing, and also attested to their interest in grappling with issues connected to their families and communities more broadly. Their work emphasized the place of critical inquiry and the positioning youth as scholars, researchers, and activists who learn alongside their instructors as they examine important issues of social justice, race, class, power, and identity. Similarly, the work of Bucholtz, Casillas, and Lee (2017) presented ways that an out of school program for Latinx adolescents helped move educators and students beyond oversimplified notions of what it meant to incorporate students home languages and cultures by helping students engage with "the newly emergent linguistic and cultural practices of families and communities undergoing often rapid change" (Bucholtz et al., 2017, p. 45). Providing students with opportunities to make connections to their lives, families, passions, and community issues can contribute to what it means to make space in the curriculum for engaging students' sense of purpose in school and aligning curricular choices with their lived experiences with family, peers, languages, hobbies, and community experiences both within and beyond the classroom. Writing specifically allowed for greater interrogation of the students' fluid, social, and recognized identities because it provided a space for students to create, critique, and merge their academic and home identities around their often-undervalued experiences outside of the classroom. López (2016) outlined the teaching practices associated with culturally responsive pedagogies and found that first language use (Spanish), critical awareness, and funds of knowledge were associated with an increase in student reading outcomes. In many ways, pointing to the importance of merging students' linguistic and cultural identities with schooling in ways that allow them to engage in a developing a critical awareness of the social, economic, political, linguistic, and racial issues experienced by their communities (Paris & Alim, 2017; López, 2016; García, 2010).

CHAPTER 8
LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, & CONCLUSION

In this final chapter I will address the limitations of this study and explore its associated implications for EB students, language policy, and teacher education. Finally, I will conclude with considerations for future research directions.

Implications

Beyond the clear state-level policy changes both needed and underway in Arizona since the initial stages of this study, the implications for practice remain. This study looked at how educators conceptualized biliteracy for their EB students in addition to the role that teachers and administrators play as ground level policymakers in the implementation of SEI and dual language programs. Likewise, by adding the student level of analysis I sought to contribute a multilevel intersectional approach to understanding how institutional policies contribute to interpersonal interactions and intrapersonal identities in ways that have material consequences for who has access to dual language learning opportunities and who does not. Likewise, I explored how despite equity rooted values and resistance to macro-level policies, educators at Alma Elementary still at times reproduced dominant discourses about EB students' achievement "gap" in ways that positioned them as unsuited or unqualified for dual language education. Additionally, there was light shed on gaps in teacher education and professional development that can help in making sense of some of the findings presented.

More specifically, pre- and in-service teacher professional development could focus more acutely on preparing teachers with the theoretical, historical, and pedagogical knowledge they need to understand, resist, and revision deficit ideologies and policies that persist in schools. For educators who work with EBs and language minorities specifically, this will mean moving beyond both de facto and de jure English-only classrooms through professional learning that exposes them to second language acquisition processes, sociolinguistic research, and bi-/multilingual educational models and methods. While the teacher shortage in Arizona makes this unlikely in the short term, all teachers who work with ESL, dual language, and multilingual student populations more broadly should be appropriately prepared to enter classrooms with robust knowledge about teaching and learning in multilingual environments and EB student best

practices. In the present study, only the Spanish dual language teacher was required to have the multilingual/multicultural background. And while even Luz (and all seasoned teachers) benefit from ongoing professional development, her English teaching counterpart and the SEI teachers at the very least should have been prepared similarly. In fact, there is some emerging research on the connections between specialist training, knowledge of best practices for EBs, and improved student outcomes and teacher self-efficacy (López & Santibañez, 2018; López, Scanlan, & Gundrum, 2013; Master, Loeb, Whitney, & Wyckoff, 2012).

In dual language programs specifically, it is important that programs take into account their specific students' needs as well as the community contexts in which students are embedded. That being said, the hegemony of English is ubiquitous in the U.S., therefore dual language programs have a vital role to play in helping students maintain their first languages while moving them towards becoming fully biliterate over the long term (García, 2010). For this reason, dual language programs should be sensitive to emerging English dominance that does not consider ways to counter and balance this tendency with strategies for encouraging biliteracy at advanced levels in the co-instructional language. Depending on the student populations and context of the program, this could mean implementing more progressive 90:10 dual language models where students initially receive more of the non-English language in their early years and then progress toward 50:50 models in the older grades. Another pathway that is, in my opinion, essential to building balanced biliteracy in our EB and multilingual youth is for school districts and states to begin exploring ways to expand dual language programs through the middle and high school years. Literacy in both languages continues to develop through the high school years, therefore programs that end prior to high school truncate student biliteracy development. While this is not something that would be possible overnight with the degree of expertise in language and content that is required of teachers at the secondary level, it an important step for school and district policymakers to strongly consider mapping pathways towards.

Finally, this dissertation study, particularly at the student level, points to the importance and possibilities of linking curricular content to critical thinking and critical consciousness raising through engagement with issues that connect to the students' lived realties and interests in

dynamic ways. In one of the more recent iterations of youth asset pedagogies, Paris & Alim (2017) define the role of schools in pluralist societies as fostering spaces for culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP) which they define as pedagogy that “seeks to perpetuate and foster-- to sustain-- linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of schooling for positive social transformation” (p. 1). Central to their argument is recognizing the fluid and dynamic ways that youth engage with culture, language, and literacy through their race, ethnicity, and other identity markers in diverse educational contexts. In this way CSP serves as a catalyst for pedagogical activity that engages young people in critical reflexivity, consciousness raising, and building youth agency to be change agents and social justice advocates within their local and global communities (Paris & Alim, 2017). While the writing activity discussed in this dissertation was small in scale, it was intended to generate a space for the focal students to enact their identities and agency through writing about issues important to them and their communities. However, where the activity was limited was in its ability to merge critical reflexivity with the students multilingual repertoires. Although I was limited by teacher requests to engage in an English writing activity, I consider the incorporation of critical multilingual awareness (CMA) content that aims to increase student tolerance of linguistic diversity as a crucial area of inquiry for students in ESL, bilingual, and multilingual settings more broadly. García (2010) defines this as content designed to “build students’ understandings of the social, political, and economic struggles surrounding the use of many languages” (p.65). With fostering critical thinking, tolerance, and social transformation at its core, CMA is a promising avenue for combating “linguistic supremacy” and “linguistic profiling” (Alim, 2004; Alim & Smitherman, 2012; Rosa & Flores, 2017) with critical inquiry that embraces creative and multilingual youth expression.

Limitations

As an institutional, ethnographic case study of one school site, I sought to provide a detailed portrait of the ways that multiple levels within one school (i.e. administrative, classroom, and student) provided insight into the varied ways that (bi)literacy was conceptualized, language policies practiced, and identities negotiated within dual language and SEI contexts. Yet despite

the strengths associated with this qualitative approach, it is important to highlight the limitations of this study.

While the multi-level approach taken was a key contribution of this study, it was also a place of limitation because by focusing in on multiple levels it was possible to have missed some of the complexities situated at the specific levels of analysis (e.g. at the student and teacher levels especially). The small sample size allowed me to take a more nuanced qualitative perspective, however it was also a limitation of the study. Future research could include a focus on one level of analysis (i.e. administrators, teachers, or students) and expand the sample size to allow for greater breadth of perspectives to be included. Given these limitations, the findings are not generalizable. However, the goal was to provide a more in-depth perspective of the specific "community of practice" analyzed, which in this case included four focal students taught by three teachers in two classrooms at one school. The findings could therefore be considered transferable via naturalistic generalizations to other bilingual and ESL/ELD settings (Stake & Trumball, 1982).

Similarly, the focus on the fifth grade, although intentional, also limited the data due to it being the first year that EB students were enrolled in the dual language classroom. Future research might also look more closely at other grade levels to better understand the ways that students negotiate their bilingual and biliterate identities across time, and even after they exit dual language and ELD programs. Likewise, it is important to consider the limitations of the timeframe in which I collected data, especially for the teacher and classroom level data. That is, by collecting the data in the spring semester when both AzMERIT and AZELLA testing occur, it is possible that the findings over represent the place and pressures of standardized testing in the focal classrooms. In the future, it would be helpful to collect data across both the fall and spring semesters to ensure a more balanced perspective throughout the academic year. Or alternatively, collect data over multiple years at the same school site.

Conclusion

The expansion of dual language programs across the country combined with the growing linguistic and cultural diversity of youth in schools, calls for increased attention to questions of

equity, inclusion, ideology, and power within dual language and more traditional ELD settings. Through this dissertation, I have sought to take a multilevel approach to answering questions about the interplay between educators' beliefs about (bi)literacy, language use, the ways language policies come to be practiced, and the intersectional identities of EB students in dual language and SEI classroom contexts. The findings provide a fresh understanding of the complex web of inequality that shadows the EB educational experience in Arizona's restrictive language policy setting.

Through this research, I also explored the role of educator agency within English-only and dual language classroom settings in order to better understand the ways teacher practices and beliefs about biliteracy influence the educational spaces that EB students navigate on a daily basis. The data presented points to the continued hegemony of English within both SEI and dual language classroom settings, yet also provides a glimpse into the ways that translanguaging in multilingual settings can be seen as both a scaffold for learners and a reflection of their dynamic bilingualism (Daniel, Jiménez, Pray & Pacheco, 2017; García, 2010). Likewise, the data reflected the unique ways that EB students engage with language and literacy at the intersections of their socially constructed, recognized, and fluid identities. The glimpse this study provided into the focal school and classrooms was meant to complicate our understanding of the role of linguistic purism, ability positioning/tracking, language policies, and educator agency across distinct classroom contexts.

As with most research, one is often left with more questions than answers. It is therefore my goal moving forward to continue to explore the social, ideological, and pedagogical place of biliteracy development and pluralistic language use across educational contexts. Specifically, I wonder how, if at all, can teacher professional development influence beliefs about language, policy, and pedagogy? How can interactional language analyses provide deeper insight into our understanding of what it means to be bilingual and biliterate? In what ways can identity texts be merged with CSP and extended across content areas and languages to promote student engagement with writing for social transformation?

It is my belief that languages are a right and valuable resource that should be incorporated into all educational programing serving EBs and language minorities. Dual language schooling across the K12 spectrum is a promising way forward, however the expansion of dual language programing must be tempered by equity, social justice, language rights, and linguistic pluralism perspectives if it is to truly serve the diverse backgrounds and linguistic experiences of the U.S.'s increasingly multicultural and multilingual populations. While this type of change is not possible overnight, there are excellent models for what it looks like to embrace these elements within traditional English-only schooling in the meantime. Going forward, educators in K12 settings, researchers, teacher-preparation programs, families, and bilingual education activists all have an important role to play in expanding bi/multilingual educational opportunities while problematizing current and emerging inequities in the field.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM & INTERVIEW

CLASSROOM & LANGUAGE LEARNER STUDY

Study Title: Exploring the intersections of local language policies and emergent bilingual learner identities: A comparative classroom study at an urban Arizona school

Dear Participant:

I am a graduate student under the direction of Margarita Jimenez-Silva, Ed.D. in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College (MLFTC) at Arizona State University (ASU).

I am conducting a research study to investigate the ways that everyday school policies, practices, and discourses impact the experiences of language minority and ELL students. I am inviting your participation, which will involve an interview about your role as a principal/language acquisition coordinator/instructional coach/teacher at Alma Elementary. Please note that interview sessions will be audio recorded and later transcribed. Therefore, you should let me know if you do not want the interview to be recorded.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you wish, you can skip questions or choose not to participate in the aforementioned task. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no consequence for doing so.

Although there may be no direct benefits to you, your participation will help us better understand the unique ways that classroom contexts can influence the educational experiences of language minority and ELL students. Furthermore, you will be provided with all final reports, publications, and official documents that are produced as a part of this study.

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation. All information, including your responses will be strictly confidential. The results of this research study may be used in reports, presentations, and publications, but the researchers will never identify you or the school by name. Instead, I will assign pseudonyms to all individuals participating in this study.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team at: ecbaca@asu.edu or margarita.jimenez-silva@asu.edu. If have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788.

Sincerely,

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Introduction script:

Hello, and thank you for being here. Today I will be asking for your experiences and opinions as ___________________. Your comments will be used as a part of my dissertation study on dual language learning and ELLs.

To keep a record of your comments, I will be recording our discussion on this digital recorder and taking some notes. No one other than myself and my committee chair will see or hear the raw records. Your identity will be kept confidential in all documentation, there will be no identifiers directly linking the audio files with transcripts, and your name will not appear in any report resulting from the study.

To ensure the discussion runs smoothly, I'm going to go over a few things prior to beginning the recorder.

1. If you need clarification on a question or have any questions related to something I am are asking, please do not hesitate to ask.
2. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers to our questions – just ideas, experiences and opinions, which are all valuable.
3. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Let's get started.

Administrator Interviews

First, I want to find a little bit more out about you and how you came to be the Principal of Alma Elementary.

Background Questions

1. Can you start off by telling about how you came to be the _________ of Alma Elementary?
    a. How long have you been in this position?
    b. What did you do prior to accepting this position?
    c. Where you a teacher at some point? If so, at what grade level, for how long, and where?
2. What is your educational background?
    a. Do you have any certificates or special endorsements in administration or teaching?
3. Do you mind me asking, what is your linguistic and ethnic background?

Warm-up: Context Questions (Sociocultural)

4. Now can you tell me a little bit more about what it's like be the principal of Alma Elementary?

Policy as Practice Questions

5. Can you describe a little bit about the diverse curricular options of the school? Specifically:
    a. The curricular options for ELLs
        i. What is the philosophy and goal of SEI/ELD program here at Alma?
    b. The dual language program
        i. what is the philosophy and goal of dual language program here at Alma?
        ii. Do you know any of the history of how it was established back in 1998?

iii. Besides the obvious language differences of course, what are the key differences between the programs?

6. How are ELL parents informed of their child's curricular options?
7. How do parents find out about the dual language program?
    a. Is it possible for students who have not passed the AZELLA test yet to enroll in the program? If so why or why not? What is your opinion about this policy?
8. How are ELLs assigned to classrooms?
9. What state-level policies affect the ELL students here at Alma?
    a. What are your opinions on these policies?
    b. How are these policies interpreted and implemented at Alma?
    c. How does the school handle SEI waivers?
10. In general, what sort of pedagogical policies and expectations are there for teachers who work with ELLs here at Alma?
    a. Are there specific endorsements they are required to have?
    b. Are they required to undergo any additional training?
11. What are the primary challenges faced by teachers who work with ELLs?
    a. Is there higher or lower teacher turnover for the SEI/ELD classroom? What factors do you think contribute to this reality?

Beliefs about Language & Student Experiences Questions

12. Who makes up the ELL student population at Alma?
13. From your perspective, what are the experiences of ELL students like at Alma Elementary?
14. What are the primary challenges faced by ELLs here at Alma?
15. What is your personal philosophy on the best way to educate ELLs?
16. Has being at a school with a dual language program shifted the way you think about the role of language in learning at all?

Document Request – At the end of the interview

Do you have any fliers or information that you five to families that are interested in learning about the educational options available to their child here at Alma?

Teacher Interview #1

Introduction script:

Hello, and thank you for being here. Today I will be asking for your experiences and opinions as a fifth-grade teacher at Alma Elementary. Your comments will be used as a part of my dissertation study on dual language learners.

To keep a record of your comments, I will be recording our discussion on this digital recorder and taking some notes. No one other than myself and my committee chair will see or hear the raw records. Your identity will be kept confidential in all documentation, there will be no identifiers directly linking the audio files with transcripts, and your name will not appear in any report resulting from the study.

To ensure the discussion runs smoothly, I'm going to go over a few things prior to beginning the recorder.

1. If you need clarification on a question or have any questions related to something I am are asking, please do not hesitate to ask.
2. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers to our questions – just ideas, experiences and opinions, which are all valuable.
3. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Let's get started.

First, I want to find a little bit more out about you and how you came to Alma Elementary.

Background Questions

1. Can you start off by telling about how you came to be a teacher at Alma Elementary?
    a. How long have you been at Alma? And, why did you choose to teach this particular grade level and demographic?
    b. How long have you been a teacher in total? If you have taught at other levels/in other places? Where were you and what did you teach prior to your current position?
    c. What, if anything, did you do prior to teaching?
2. What is your educational background?
    a. What did you study in college?
    b. What is your teacher certification in?
    c. Do you have any certificates or special endorsements?
    d. Are you required to do continued professional development to maintain your certificates?
3. What is your linguistic and cultural background?

Warm- Up Context Questions

4. Now can you tell me a little bit more about what it's like be a teacher here at Alma Elementary?

Context & Classroom Policy Questions (Policy as Practice)

5. What is a typical weekly schedule for you?
    a. How is the DLE program scheduled for students?
6. What is your philosophy of teaching?

7. What is your approach toward (bi)literacy and bilingual/linguistic development for your classroom?
    a. Does this vary based on the dominant language of the students you are working with? If so, how?
    b. Does this vary for the students who are classified as ELLs, if so how?
8. What is your view on the separation or the integration of multiple languages into the classroom space simultaneously? (i.e. strict separation or free flow of both)
9. Do you have a written or spoken rules or policies in your classroom that address how students can use their languages to engage each other or yourself during class time?
    a. How do students typically engage one another? (i.e. in English, Spanish, or a combination of both)
10. For DLE/DLS: Are there tensions between the two languages in your classroom? Meaning, is there a tendency for one language to dominate over the other? Even during "Spanish" or "English" time?
    a. Are there any tensions between students surrounding language use and language choice in the classroom?

OR

11. For ELD: Are there any tensions between English as the dominant language of your classroom and the multiple languages spoken by your students? Meaning do any of the other languages have a classroom presence or is the expectation/norm is English?
    a. Are there any tensions between students surrounding language use and language choice in the classroom?

Curriculum and Classroom Policy as Practice Questions

12. Can you describe a little bit about the curriculum you teach? Specifically:
    a. What is its focus?
    b. How is the day and week broken up into the diverse content areas?
    c. Are all content areas given equal time?
    d. For ELD Instructor: Are there any variations in this curriculum for students classified as ELLs? If not, what practices do you employ to actively engage ELLs in the core curriculum?
13. Can you describe a little bit about how you pedagogically engage language and literacy instruction? Specifically,
    a. What practices do you engage in to support content and language mastery for students in your class (i.e. how do you teach reading, writing, and other modes of knowledge)?
14. What is your personal philosophy on the best way to educate ELLs so that they develop both language and content specific competencies?
    a. What sort of explicit language acquisition approaches for ELLs, if any, do you use in your class?
15. How if, at all, are students' diverse cultures, languages, and identities incorporated into their coursework?

Macro level policy – Institutional Relationship Questions

16. How are ELL parents informed of their child's curricular options?
    a. How do parents find out about the dual language program? And what are their options if their child has not passed AZELLA yet?
    b. How does the school handle SEI waivers?
        i. What is your opinion about this policy process?
    c. How do parents of ELLs navigate enrolling their children in the DLE classroom once they are in the 5th grade? Do they approach the school or does the school make recommendations to them?

17. In your view, how do the state-level policies in Arizona affect the ELL students in your classroom, and at Alma in general?
    a. What are your opinions on these policies?
    b. How are these policies interpreted and implemented at Alma?

Student Experiences and Identity Questions

18. Can you generally describe your class(es) this year? The students, their strengths, challenges, and dispositions, in the aggregate?
    a. Approximately what percentage of your students are “heritage” learners in your classroom (i.e. that come Spanish speaking families or have Hispanic heritage)?
    b. Who makes up the ELL student population in your classroom? Do you know how many of the students, if any, were classified as ELLs at some point in the K5 years?
19. From your perspective, what is it like to be a student in your classroom?
    a. How, if at all, does this experience tend to vary for ELL students? Can you give an example?
    b. What are the primary challenges faced by ELLs in your classroom?
20. How would you say the students in your class do in comparison with other students at Alma in the 5th grade?
    a. Is this different for those classified as ELLs?
    b. To what do you attribute differences?

Teacher Interview #2

Focal Student Interview

After having had, [name of student] in your class all year, talk to me about

a. What makes ________ unique, in your opinion?
b. What do you know about _________'s family and background that may have an influence on her/his schooling (e.g. SES, familial struggles, etc.)
c. What have her/his parent(s) interactions been like with you?
d. What kind of student would you say that ____________ is?
e. How are ____________'s relationships with other students?
f. What were __________'s challenges in your classroom this year? Can you give an example?
g. What were __________'s strengths in your classroom this year? Can you provide an example?
h. What are your thoughts on her/his text that was developed this semester? (I will have a copy with me)
i. How do you think ____________________ will do in the years ahead, after s/he leaves your classroom? and long term?

APPENDIX B

PARENT-STUDENT CONSENT FORMS & STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Parent Consent Form

Exploring the intersections of local language policies and emergent bilingual learner identities: A comparative classroom study at an urban Arizona school

Dear Parent:

I am a doctoral candidate under the direction of Margarita Jimenez-Silva, Ed.D. in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University. As a part of my dissertation research, I am conducting research in your child's classroom on bilingual learner development, (bi)literacy, and language policies/practices in classroom spaces.

As a part of this study, I would like to conduct weekly observations in your child's classroom in order to better understand the environments and curricular practices in classrooms with bilingual and English Learner (EL) students. I would also administer a short questionnaire to gather information on the students' language practices and beliefs about their first or second languages.

I am inviting your child's participation which would include one or both of the following activities:

1. Classroom Observations
   Classroom observations will involve the observation of everyday classroom activities, discussions, and interactions. Classroom observations will be audio and video recorded in order to be able to transcribe the observed activities, discussions, and interactions. Once I have transcribed all observations, video data will be destroyed. However, audio files will be retained so that I can verify the written transcripts, if needed.

2. Questionnaire
   The questionnaire is comprised of approximately 15 questions and will take approximately 10-15 minutes of your child's time. I will administer the survey when your child's teacher informs me is best. The questionnaire asks the students questions about their ethnicity, languages, and how they use their languages with family and friends in the afterschool hours. Furthermore, I ask a few questions about the students' attitudes about language and school. The information collected on this questionnaire will be used for descriptive purposes and will help be better understand the backgrounds of the student in your child's classroom.

Both the observational audio-video recordings will be stored in a password protected online data management system, to which only myself and my supervising faculty chair (Dr. Jimenez-Silva) will have access. The questionnaires will be immediately scanned and uploaded to this same online data management system. All hard copies of student questionnaire will then be destroyed. Audio-visual data will be deleted from all devices one uploaded to the password protected system.

Your child's participation in this study is voluntary. If they wish, you can choose not to have your child participate in the observation and/or questionnaire at all. If you choose to not have your child participate or to withdraw your child from the study at any time, there will be no penalty and your child's grades will not be affected in any way. The findings produced as a part of this research study may be used in reports, presentations, and publications. However, all information, including your child's name and individual responses on the questionnaire will be kept confidential. A fake name will be used any place that a direct reference to a student is made in all reports, presentations, and publications resulting from this study.

Although there may be no direct benefits participation, your child's participation could help improve our collective understanding of student experiences in classrooms. By expanding our understanding classroom practices and policies, this study could also aid schools, districts, and educational leaders in better addressing the needs of their students. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your child's participation.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team at: ecbaca@asu.edu or at (602) 481-4965. If you have any questions about the rights of research participants, you may contact the Arizona State University Institutional Review Board at (480) 965-6788.

Sincerely,

Evelyn C. Baca
Doctoral Candidate
Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College
Arizona State University
c: 602.481.4965
e: ecbaca@asu.edu

Margarita Jimenez-Silva, Ed.D.
Associate Professor
Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College
Arizona State University
e: margarita.jimenez-silva@asu.edu

Instructions: Please review t sign to indicate which activities, if any, you consent to your child participating in

(1) Classroom Observations

By signing below, you are giving consent for your child, _________________________ (child's name), to participate in the classroom observations associated with the study described above and as specifically outlined under "(1) Classroom Observations"

_________________________ _________________________ _______________
Signature Printed Name Date

By signing below, you are giving consent for your child, _________________________ (child's name), to be audio and video recorded during the classroom observations.

_________________________ _________________________ _______________
Signature Printed Name Date

(2) Student Questionnaire

By signing below, you are giving consent for your child, _________________________ (child's name), to participate in the questionnaire associated with the study described above and as specifically outlined under "(2) Questionnaire"

_________________________ _________________________ _______________
Signature Printed Name Date

Student Consent Form

Exploring the intersections of local language policies and emergent bilingual learner identities: A comparative classroom study at an urban Arizona school

Dear Student Participant:

I am student in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University. As final project, I am conducting research in your classroom on bilingual learner development, (bi)literacy, and language policies/practices in classroom spaces. Your parents signed a permission form allowing me to participate in this study, and now I am personally inviting you to participate in this research study.

As a part of this study, I will to conduct weekly observations in your classroom and I will also conduct a short questionnaire. More specifically, your participation which would include one or both of the following activities:

1) Classroom Observations
   Classroom observations will involve the observation of everyday classroom activities, discussions, and interactions. As a part of these classroom observations, I will use an audio and video recorder so that I can later write down what I observed in what are called transcripts. Once I have written everything down, all videos will be destroyed. But I will, keep the audio files with the transcripts so that I can verify the written transcripts, when needed.

   I plan to use information from the observations, in reports, presentations, and publications. However, your name will never be used, instead I will use a fake name for all participating in students in any reports, presentations, and publications.

2) Questionnaire
   The questionnaire will take approximately 10-15 minutes of your time. On this questionnaire, I will ask you questions about your ethnicity, the languages you speak, and about school in general.

   Again, I plan to use information from the questionnaire, in reports, presentations, and publications. However, your name will never be used, instead I will use a fake name to protect your privacy in any report produced as a part of this project.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you wish, you can choose not to participate in the observation and/or questionnaire at all. If you choose to not participate, there will be no penalty and you will not be affected in any way.
If you have any questions concerning the research study, please ask me at any time. Below, I have included a signature page for you to indicate you agree to participate in the study.

Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

Evelyn C. Baca
Doctoral Candidate
Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College
Arizona State University
c: 602.481.4965

Margarita Jimenez-Silva, Ed.D.
Associate Professor
Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College
Arizona State University
e: margarita.jimenez-silva@asu.edu

e: ecbaca@asu.edu

Instructions: Please sign and print your name below to indicate which activities you will participating in this semester.

(1) Classroom Observations

By signing below, I agree to be audio and video recorded during the classroom observations.

Signature	Printed Name	Date

(2) Student Questionnaire

By signing below, I agree to participate in the student questionnaire

Signature	Printed Name	Date

Student Questionnaire

Name: ____ Teacher: __________________

1. **What is your race/ethnicity? (Please select all that apply)**
   - ○ Hispanic or Latino/a (e.g. Mexican/Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, Costa Rican, Guatemalan, etc.)
   - ○ Black or African American
   - ○ White, non-Hispanic
   - ○ Native American
   - ○ Asian American
   - ○ Other, please specify: ____

2. **What was your first language?** ____

3. **What language(s) did you speak prior to starting school? (Please select all that apply)**
   - ○ English
   - ○ Spanish
   - ○ Both Spanish and English
   - ○ Other, please specify: ____

4. **What language(s) do you *currently* speak at home <u>most frequently?</u>**
   - ○ English
   - ○ Spanish
   - ○ Both Spanish and English equally
   - ○ Other, please specify: ____________________________

5. **In what language do your parent(s) or guardians most frequently speak to you?**
   - ○ English
   - ○ Spanish
   - ○ Both Spanish and English equally
   - ○ One parent speaks in Spanish and one parent speaks in English
   - ○ Other, please specify: ____________________________

6. **In what language do you most frequently respond to your parent(s) or guardians**
   - ○ English
   - ○ Spanish
   - ○ Both Spanish and English equally
   - ○ Depends on the Other, please specify: ____________________________

7. **Who do you live at home with, please check all that apply:**
   - ○ Mother
   - ○ Father
   - ○ Sister(s) or Brother(s), how many: ___________
   - ○ Grandparents, how many: ______________
   - ○ Other, please specify: _____________

8. **Please indicate the language in which YOU SPEAK to the following people**

	Always in Spanish	**Mostly in Spanish**	**In both Spanish and English equally**	**Mostly in English**	**Always in English**
Mother					
Father					
Siblings (brothers/sisters)					
Grandparents					
Homeroom Teacher					
Friends in Class					
Friends outside of Class					
Other: __________________					

9. **Please indicate the language YOU use to do the following activities**

	Always in Spanish	**Mostly in Spanish**	**In both Spanish and English equally**	**Mostly in English**	**Always in English**
Read books					
Watch movies or videos					
Listen to music					
Text or send messages					
Browse the internet or social media					

Engage in extracurricular activities (sports, religion, band, etc.)					
Other: __________________					

Please fill in the blank with a short answer

10. Speaking in Spanish is helpful for ____

11. Speaking in English is helpful for ____

12. Being able to speak two languages makes me feel ______________________________

____

13. Being at school makes me feel ____

14. As a student, I am ____

APPENDIX C

OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

OPEN-ENDED OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Class:________________________________ **Date:** ___________________________

Focus of Observation:
Observational Jottings

APPENDIX D

PARENT AND STUDENT CONSENT FORMS, FOCAL STUDENT INTERVIEWS, AND WRITING SESSION PROMPT

Parent Consent Form

Exploring the intersections of local language policies and emergent bilingual learner identities: A comparative classroom study at an urban Arizona school

Dear Parent:

I am a doctoral candidate under the direction of Margarita Jimenez-Silva, Ed.D. in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University. As a part of my dissertation research, I am conducting research in your child's classroom on bilingual learner development, (bi)literacy, and language policies/practices in classroom spaces.

As a part of this study, I would like to conduct a one-on-one interview with your child about his or her writing and provide some writing tutoring and feedback to your child. The purpose of this is to help me better understand your child's literacy experiences and development as a bilingual, English Learner (EL) student. All sessions with your child would take place during the regular school day during their typical language arts, writing focused class time.

I am inviting your child's participation which would include one or both of the following activities:

(1) Writing Interview Session

The writing interview would take about 60 minutes of your child's time. The session will involve me asking your child questions about the memoir or poem that they wrote during the fall 2016 semester. I would ask your child questions about what the memoir or poem means to them, and offer to help them translate it to their first language, if not already done so. This interview session will be audio recorded in order to be able to transcribe the conversation later. Audio files will be retained throughout the study, so that I can verify the written transcripts, when needed. Copies of your child's writing will also be retained as a part of the study.

(2) Writing Development Sessions

The writing development sessions will be done in one-on-one or in small group sessions with other students participating in the study. The sessions will take place during your child's normal language arts writing time at a time requested and approved by your child's teacher. During the tutoring and feedback sessions, I will help your child write an opinion piece on a topic assigned by the teacher. These sessions will last anywhere from 30-60 minutes each and will take place 4-6 times over the course of the spring 2017 semester. During these sessions, I will take some notes and make copies of your child's writing.

There may be a number of benefits to your child participating in this portion of the study. Specifically, it is possible that your child could improve their analytical writing skills through participation in both the reflective writing interview and the writing development sessions. In fact, the writing development sessions were designed to help your child further develop his or her ideas and compose an opinion piece as a part of the regular 5th grade curriculum. Furthermore, your child's participation could aid teachers and researchers in better understanding student writing experiences and processes. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your child's participation.

The audio-recorded interviews and transcripts, as well as electronic copies of your child's writing will be stored in a password protected online data management system. Only myself and my supervising faculty chair (Dr. Jimenez-Silva) will have access to these files. Audio data will be deleted from all devices once it is uploaded to the password protected system.

Your child's participation in this study is voluntary. If you wish, you can choose not to have your child participate at all. If you choose to not have your child participate or to withdraw your child

from the study at any time, there will be no penalty for doing so. The findings produced as a part of this research study may be used in reports, presentations, and publications. However, all information, including your child's name and individual responses will be kept confidential. A fake name will be used any place that a direct reference or quote from your child is used in reports, presentations, and publications resulting from this study.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team at: ecbaca@asu.edu or at (602) 481-4965. If you have any questions about the rights of research participants, you may contact the Arizona State University Institutional Review Board at (480) 965-6788.

Sincerely,

Evelyn C. Baca
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e: ecbaca@asu.edu

Margarita Jimenez-Silva, Ed.D.
Associate Professor
Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College
Arizona State University
e: margarita.jimenez-silva@asu.edu

Instructions: Please sign on the following page to indicate which activities you consent to your child participating in:

(1) Writing Interview Session
By signing below, you are giving consent for your child, ________________________ (child's name), to participate in the writing interview session associated with the study described above and as specifically outlined under "(1) Writing Interview Session"

________________________ ________________________ ______________
Signature Printed Name Date

(2) Writing Development Sessions
By signing below, you are giving consent for your child, ________________________ (child's name), to participate in the writing development sessions as described above under "(2) Writing Development Sessions

________________________ ________________________ ______________
Signature Printed Name Date

Student Consent Form

Exploring the intersections of local language policies and emergent bilingual learner identities: A comparative classroom study at an urban Arizona school

Dear Student Participant:

I am student in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University. As final project, I am conducting research in your classroom on bilingual learner development, (bi)literacy, and language policies/practices in classroom spaces. Your parents signed a permission form allowing me to participate in this study, and now I am personally inviting you to participate in this research study.

As a part of this study, I hope to conduct an interview with you on your writing and also provide some tutoring and feedback to you on your writing. More specifically, your participation would include one or both of the following activities:

1) Writing Interview Session

The writing interview would take about 45 minutes of your time and will involve me asking you questions about the memoir and poem that you wrote during the fall 2016 semester. This interview session will be audio recorded and write down what you shared in what is called a transcript later. I will keep all audio files throughout the study, so that I can verify the written transcripts, when needed. I will also collect copies of your memoir or poem as a part of the study.

I plan to use information from the interview, in reports, presentations, and publications. However, your name will never be used, instead I will use a fake name any time I refer to you or a quote from you in reports, presentations, and publications.

2) Writing Development Sessions

The writing development sessions will be done 4-6 times over the course of the semester in one-on-one or in small group sessions lasting between 30-60 minutes each time. The sessions will take place during your normal language arts writing time. During sessions, I will help you write an opinion piece on a topic required by your teacher. I will also take some notes and make copies of your writing at the end of each session.

Again, I plan to use information from the questionnaire, in reports, presentations, and publications. However, your name will never be used, instead I will use a fake name to protect your privacy in any report produced as a part of this project.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you wish, you can choose not to participate in the observation and/or questionnaire at all. If you choose to not participate, there will be no penalty and you will not be affected in any way. If you have any questions concerning the research study, please ask me at any time.

Sincerely,

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Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College
Arizona State University
e: margarita.jimenez-silva@asu.edu

e: ecbaca@asu.edu

Instructions: Please sign and print your name below to indicate which activities you will participating in this semester.

1) Writing Interview Session

By signing below, I agree to be audio and video recorded during the writing interview session.

__________________________ __________________________ ________________
Signature Printed Name Date

2) Writing Development Sessions

By signing below, I agree to participate in writing development sessions, and provide copies of my writing samples.

__________________________ __________________________ ________________
Signature Printed Name Date

Open-Ended Writing Interview Guiding Topics on Memoir or Poem

About Writing Topic:

- Purpose?
- Who?
- What?
- Where?
- When?
- Why/Significance?

About Student:

- Family/Siblings
- Languages
- Interests
- School
- Writing topic choice

Identity Text Writing Prompts

Giving your opinion

Instructions: After choosing one of the options below, write the appropriate text. Give your opinion and argue your point. Be sure to include at least one citation that supports your views.

1. Write a letter to the newly elected President convincing him of an important issue he should address during his presidency.

OR

2. Write a short speech on an important environmental, political, or social issue.

Ideas: Education (e.g. school safety, bullying, etc.) - Poverty issues (e.g. hunger, clean water, wages, etc.) - Combating Racism - Immigration issues (e.g. family unity, border walls, DACA, etc.) – Public Safety (e.g. gun control, etc.)- Environmental issues (e.g. pollution, climate change, animal welfare, etc.) – Health (e.g, nutrition, exercise, healthcare affordability, combating illnesses, etc.) – Gender Issues (women, safety, equality, etc.)