Feature article

"Puro spelling and grammar": Conceptualizations of language and the marginalization of emergent bilinguals

Luis E. Poza

University of Colorado Denver

Conceptualizations of language and language learning underlie language pedagogies (Valdés, Poza, & Brooks, 2015). The present work relies on ethnographic observation and interviews in a dual immersion (DI) bilingual program, as well as a content analysis of the research foundation of the English Language Development intervention curriculum, to show how prevalent conceptualizations reflect US monolingual ideologies and monoglossic perspectives (García, 2009a). The work further shows how such views marginalize students classified as English Language Learners, referred to here as emergent bilinguals,[1] by excluding them from important content instruction, engaging teaching methods, and primary language instruction, all for the sake of expediting their reclassification as proficient in English.

Keywords: bilingual education, emergent bilinguals, English Language Learners, translanguaging, Second Language Acquisition

Introduction

While bilingual education programs in the US proclaim to value their two languages of instruction equally, pressures from official accountability requirements and from broader societal language ideologies typically push non-dominant language practices into marginal positions, receiving less support in curriculum (Menken, 2006; Menken & Solorza, 2014, Shannon, 1999) and in student-student and student-teacher interactions (Potowski, 2007; Tarone & Swain, 1995; Valdés, 2001). By marginalizing non-dominant language practices, these ideologies also marginalize the students for whom these practices are central elements in their communicative repertoires.

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[1] The term *emergent bilingual* is a term drawn from literature (García, 2009b) used in lieu of *English Language Learner* unless specifically referring to official designations to recognize that students learning English in schools are advantaged by their multiple linguistic resources rather than emphasizing their deficit.

These ideologies are twofold. First, there are the monolingual ideologies widespread in the US that prize English above other languages and devalue the bilingual competencies of students acquiring English in schools (García & Leiva, 2014; Shannon, 1999). Second, there are monoglossic ideologies that frame language as a bounded set of component parts—phonemes (sounds), letters, morphemes (minimal meaningful letter groupings), words, and sentence-level rules—that can be acquired to some culminating degree of full proficiency. This "complete" acquisition, moreover, is often conceptualized as the competency of a monolingual raised with the given language. This raises questions as to how these ideologies shape students' schooling experiences and what alternatives exist. The field of Educational Linguistics can shed a great deal of light on the marginalization of emergent bilinguals in urban schooling contexts by showing how the English Language Learner (ELL) classification problematically tracks students within schools and denies them important opportunities to learn. Educational linguistics elucidates the fallacious ideologies underlying both the classification and the subsequent curriculum for students with the ELL label.

Research Questions

This work, which draws from a larger research project investigating language ideologies and language practices in a bilingual program, investigates two principal questions. The first was present at the outset of the investigation, while the second emerged through the recursive process of ethnography wherein observations and literature continue to inform inquiry (Heath & Street, 2008).

1. What language ideologies are embodied in the curriculum provided to emergent bilinguals within this program?
2. How do monolingual and monoglossic ideologies marginalize emergent bilinguals from important learning opportunities?

In this work, I show that these monolingual and monoglossic ideologies are present throughout the process of students' linguistic classification, their daily instruction, and their evaluation for state and national accountability. Further, I show that these ideologies marginalize emergent bilingual students in one particular dual immersion (DI) bilingual program by excluding them from: 1) important discipline-specific academic content, 2) primary language instruction that supports learning of this content, and 3) the target discursive practices (what is often referred to as *academic language*) that students classified as English Language Learners (ELL) need to thrive in their school trajectories. I begin by introducing my theoretical framework, which challenges these dominant ideologies of language, bilingualism, and second language acquisition (SLA), along with more recent perspectives that stress the social and dynamic nature of all three. Then, I proceed with a review of the literature on the marginalization of emergent bilingual students, stressing once again a need for these new perspectives on language and language learning to inform pedagogical practice and research in these spaces. Subsequently, I describe the context of the study, introducing the setting, teachers, and students observed during the study, followed by methodologies of the study as well as the findings and a discussion of their implications.

Theoretical Framework

Language Ideologies

This paper operates from the position that making schooling outcomes for emergent bilinguals more equitable requires challenging and reforming current dominant language ideologies. With this in mind, this work warrants a brief overview of what is meant by *language ideologies.* Silverstein (1979), whose work was seminal in the study of ideology and language, offers that, "ideologies about language, or linguistic ideologies, are any sets of beliefs about language articulated by the users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structures and use" (p. 173). That is, language ideologies serve to normalize linguistic patterns as objective truth, a notion reiterated by Rumsey, who defines the term as "shared bodies of commonsense notions about the nature of language in the world" (1990, p. 346). Of course, any such normalization or creation of a "shared commonsense" comes inherently at the expense of difference and disagreement. Thus Kroskrity (2004) adds an explicit note of hierarchy in his definition of the term, stating that language ideologies are a "ubiquitous set of diverse beliefs, however implicit or explicit they may be, used by speakers of all types as models for constructing linguistic evaluations and engaging in communicative activity. They are beliefs about the superiority/inferiority of specific languages" (p. 497).

In the United States, prevalent ideologies prize the speaking of particular varieties of English over other languages and stigmatize bilingualism or bidialectalism, believing that the latter disrupt national unity and indicate lower education (Crawford, 2008; Lippi-Green, 1997; Schildkraut, 2005). These ideologies correspond to the monolingual ideologies of US society that reinforce the hegemonic position of standardized varieties of English above other language practices (Shannon, 1999). García and Leiva (2014), describing these monolingual pressures in the context of a secondary school classroom of bilingual students, point to the "Anglophone ideology" (p. 199) of English proficiency and monolingualism as correspondent to American identity. Similarly, Urciuoli (1996) observes Puerto Rican women in New York and notes the fear, anxiety, and resistance they experience using Spanish or Spanish-influenced varieties of English in public. California indeed capitulated to these monolingual pressures by passing Proposition 227 in 1998, which banned bilingual education except with parent waivers. Matas and Rodríguez (2014) note how this resulted in the dismantling of many of the state's bilingual programs. With all this in mind, however, a final important dimension to understanding language ideologies, as Woolard (1985) and Kroskrity (2004) highlight, is that the values and notions that constitute a dominant ideology are not universally held nor above contestation, and in this final point rests the hope that emerging perspectives in the scholarship on language and language learning can ameliorate the marginalization of non-prestigious language practices and their users in the face of these monolingual pressures.

Theoretical Perspectives on Language and Bilingualism

The first ideology to overcome in improving access for emergent bilinguals is the one that frames language as a finite set of component parts. This ideology, which

García (2009a) and García and Leiva (2014) refer to as *monoglossic* because of its emphasis on singular forms of language, stresses standardization and uniformity associated with notions of language purity and correctness. Woolard and Schieffelin (1994), in their review of the literature around language ideologies, trace much of this ideology to the imposition of standards, particularly in the European imperial furor. They note that standardization relies on conceptualizations of languages as unitary and fixed, unaffected by "non-native sources of innovation" (p. 64). Flores (2013) makes the same observation, tying these monoglossic perspectives to impulses of governmentality and colonialism. Blommaert (2006) likewise critiques this fallacious ideology stating, "a uniformizing, singularized notion of language obscures the crucial sociolinguistic differences that occur within that language" (p. 511).

Countering these conceptualizations of language as static and bounded are views of language as dynamic, locally situated, and socially constructed. These approaches point to the inevitable variation of language practices across time, contexts, geography, and social categories (such as class, gender, and race) to demonstrate the illusory nature of any "pure" or "standard" form (Chambers, Trudgill, & Schilling-Estes, 2002; Lippi-Green, 1997). Moreover, these understandings emphasize how interlocutors negotiate meaning and identity through interaction, challenging or reifying communicative norms in situated social contexts (Flores, 2013; García, 2009a; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007; Pennycook, 2010).

Thus, if language is better understood as a social process rather than as an object – as *languaging* rather than *language* (García, 2009a), then it follows that bilingualism is not the simultaneous possession of two bounded linguistic systems. Cook (1997; 1999) and Grosjean (1989; 2010) both specifically caution linguists and teachers of language against upholding a monolingual paradigm for bilinguals noting the impossibility of such demands. Instead, they note the locally responsive and individually variable conditions of language development to argue that bilingual repertoires should best be considered dynamic and interacting sets of communicative practices. Heller (2007) presents bilingualism through a social lens by analyzing bilingual societies internationally and noting the importance of sociopolitical and historical contexts within language users' interactions. Jessner (2008), which argues for a "bilingual view of bilingualism," and May (2013), which describes a *multilingual turn,* both spurn monolingual paradigms of bilingualism as well as prescriptivist notions of how language should be used. Instead, they favor perspectives that focus on actual language use and that normalize bilinguals' experiences and practices. Crucial to this particular analysis, García (2009a) offers the framework of *translanguaging,* which refers to how bilinguals make use of their full linguistic repertoires at all times to make meaning of their communicative and lived experiences. In short, these perspectives urge us to view language as a dynamic social practice and bilingualism as a matter of language use among those with bi/multilingual repertoires rather than the internalization of two separate and bounded linguistic systems. García (2009a) refers to these perspectives as *heteroglossic,* in reference to the work of Bakhtin (1981) and as a direct contrast to the prevalent monoglossic ideology. It follows from these understandings of language and bilingualism that the process of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) must also

be revisited to account for the fact that what is being acquired is a set of practices and social understandings, rather than simply a predictable collection of words and syntactical rules.

Theoretical Perspectives on SLA

For much of the latter half of the 20th century and continuing into the present, SLA has been conceptualized as an individual cognitive process of internalizing the component parts of language. This approach certainly does not negate the importance of social interaction and exposure to target language forms, but it still maintains monoglossic ideals by viewing language to be learned as a predictable set of linguistic features and rules. (For a thorough overview of the field of SLA, including a detailed description of the individual cognitivist perspective, see Ortega, 2009). More recently, scholarship in SLA has also been influenced by heteroglossic perspectives similar to those prominent in the field of bilingualism, along with sociocultural learning theories that stress interaction, apprenticeship, and social meaning of activities (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1962).

Rather than viewing SLA as a linear, predictable, piecemeal internalization of linguistic building blocks within the individual mind, these socially-oriented perspectives conceptualize the development of additional languages as socialization into particular linguistic features rooted in language users' situated experiences and communicative needs. Atkinson (2011), Ortega (2009), and Valdés, Poza, & Brooks (2015) all describe this shift currently dividing the field of SLA, highlighting the following:

- Socially-oriented approaches stress that the acquisition of a second language consists of gaining communicative competence (Kramsch, 2003; Hymes, 1972) for language use in authentic experiences. This contrasts with the cognitivist notion that what must be acquired is a fixed linguistic system comprised of structures and forms.
- Additional languages are acquired, according to socially-oriented perspectives, through experiences in a variable, non-linear fashion rather than in the predictable, piecemeal ways imagined by the individual cognitivist model.
- The SLA process has no discernible end-point according to socially-oriented perspectives, as one's linguistic repertoire is constantly evolving in response to communicative needs and experiences. On the other hand, the individual cognitivist model proposes a stage of ultimate or complete attainment mirroring the proficiency of monolinguals. (Valdés, Poza, & Brooks, 2015, p. 62)

In short, emergent bilingual students encounter two prevalent ideologies in their struggle to access the curriculum and opportunity of schooling. The first is the monolingual ideology dominant in the US that prizes English over other languages and standardized varieties of English that conform to prestige norms over those that do not. The second is the monoglossic ideology that reinforces these ideas of language purity, both in English and in other languages, and that positions language as a bounded set of features and rules. This latter ideology is prevalent in individual cognitivist approaches to SLA, which view the acquisition process as linear, predictable, and with the goal of competencies resembling those of

monolinguals. As the current paper will show, the pressure of these two ideologies weighs heavily upon those students acquiring English in school.

Review of the Literature: Marginalization of Emergent Bilinguals

A great deal of literature investigates disparities between emergent bilinguals and their English-proficient peers. This literature, however, pursues various paths of inquiry. A good deal of it investigates matters through a racial and ethnic lens, for instance analyzing test scores, graduation rates, and schooling experiences of Latino youth (see Gándara & Contreras, 2009; NCES, 2010; Valdés, 2001). To be sure, there is a great deal of overlap between ethnicity and linguistic classification in US schools. Payán and Nettles (2008) in a report prepared for the Educational Testing Service (ETS), note that over 10% of the nation's students were classified as English Language Learners in 2005, and that 79% of this group spoke Spanish primarily. This pattern is even stronger in California, the site of this research, where 25% of all students are classified as ELL and 85% of these identifying Spanish as the primary language (Payán & Nettles, 2008). That said, the aforementioned investigations of Latino experiences and outcomes in US schools also explore challenges posed by structural problems such as poverty, residential segregation, and racialized anti-immigrant sentiment, and not just the marginalizing effect of language ideologies.

As this work focuses on language ideologies, the literature I review here deals specifically with students classified as ELLs, and reports findings on their schooling trajectories, educational outcomes, and broader experiences. In the educational policy sphere, students' bilingual repertoires are continually undervalued, ignored, and even suppressed in favor of English monolingualism. Petrovic (2010), San Miguel (2004), Santa Ana (2004), and Wiley (2013) all review federal policy with respect to education of emergent bilinguals and note the decline of support for bilingual education since the latter half of the 20th century. This decline is even more apparent after the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2001, which removed the word *bilingual* entirely and instead favoring an emphasis on English Language Acquisition, a notable change from previous iterations of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Contributors to an edited volume by Gándara and Hopkins (2010) consider not only federal policy but also restrictive policies passed in states such as California, Arizona, and Massachusetts to show how bans on bilingual education actually amplify disparities rather than ameliorate them. Finally, Menken (2006) and Menken and Solorza (2014) look specifically at New York City, noting that even without restrictive state policies, the pressure of high stakes tests in English and the shifting focus of NCLB away from bilingual education has led to an appreciable decrease in the number of bilingual programs and curricular supports for bilingualism generally.

The educational pathways and outcomes of emergent bilinguals are likewise unfavorable compared to those of their English-proficient peers, even those who share their ethnic or racial profiles. Valdés (2001) follows four Mexican immigrant students in an American middle school, finding that their classroom learning activities are either inaccessible due to language barriers or unengaging and undemanding as a result of being linguistically and cognitively watered down. Moreover, she notes that students designated for English language development

(ELD) services are frequently isolated from their peers, and that this classification relies on testing replete with cultural bias and monoglossic notions of language that overlook their bilingual competencies. Mora (2011), similarly follows 30 Latina/o middle school students and finds that their curriculum, adapted to the demands of high stakes tests, is unchallenging and uninteresting to students. Callahan (2005) analyzes outcome data such as GPA, language test scores, and subject test scores to gauge the impact of ESL placement and language proficiency upon these variables. Her work shows that students classified as ELL receive less rigorous curriculum that fails to prepare them for college admission or coursework. Callahan, Wilkinson, and Muller (2010) review data for over 2,300 students in 523 schools in the nationally representative Educational Longitudinal Study. Their analysis finds that placement in ESL programs corresponds with dramatically reduced probability of enrolling in honors level courses and that, despite some benefits for recent immigrant students, ESL tracking has slightly negative effects for native-born emergent bilingual students. Similarly, Hungerford-Kresser and Amaro-Jiménez (2012) note through a series of focus group and individual interviews with five Latino/a students that even their high performance in high school failed to develop the literacy practices they needed to succeed and identify with the demands of a four-year university. This scholarship points to a need for better-informed instruction and assessment for emergent bilingual students to support their simultaneous learning of academic content and development English communicative competencies. The present work echoes these calls, and advances them by specifically pointing to the role that language ideologies play as foundations for emergent bilingual students' marginalized schooling experiences on the basis of their English language proficiency classification.

Methods

As mentioned, this work draws from a larger ethnographic exploration of language ideologies and practices within Rivera Elementary.[2] This larger study relied on field notes and audio recordings during ethnographic observation as well as semi-structured interviews with all students and teachers in the two 5th grade dual immersion (DI) classrooms. In the present piece I focus on one student who received remedial ELD support outside the DI classroom to show how she was systematically excluded from the benefits of bilingual instruction because of her linguistic classification. The ethnographic methods employed in this study drew largely from the work of Heath and Street (2008), who offer that diligent ethnography "means not only describing what is currently happening at the local level but also documenting how organizational and institutional forces select and shape their preferred cultural patterns and imbue them with particular values" (p. 7). Thus, Heath and Street note that ethnography relies on a *constant comparative perspective* (p. 32), with a recursive inquiry cycle between data from observations, inquisitiveness, and hunches based on observed events and patterns, and theories and concepts established in the literature (p. 34). Transcripts of audio recordings from observed interactions were coded using HyperResearch software, noting what Martin-Beltrán (2009) calls *language related episodes* (LRE), and it was in observing these LRE events that made

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[2] All names of individuals and places are pseudonyms

evident the significance of the intervention curriculum as part of the meaningful experience of the focal student.

This recursive approach to finding socially meaningful patterns, categories, and events led to a separate line of inquiry into the intervention program in place at Rivera for students classified as ELL. Given the pressing concern at the school that students should all be reclassified as English-proficient by the time they left Rivera to enter middle school, the administration implemented daily instruction using the *Language!* curriculum, a scripted intervention curriculum designed to raise test scores for students with learning disabilities but also frequently targeted at emergent bilinguals. Upon observing reluctance and dislike for this instructional program on the part of the selected focal student, I interviewed the teacher who led the intervention program and also carried out a content analysis of research articles provided as support for the *Language!* Curriculum. This content analysis drew on principles from Critical Discourse Analysis (Bloome, et al., 2008; Fairclough, 2001), which analyzes language in written, spoken, and visual texts in the context of social relations of power.

Context of the Study

The school. Rivera Elementary is a K-5 elementary school in the Silicon Valley region of the San Francisco Bay Area. Rivera enrolls just over 500 students, 63% of whom are classified as ELL. Like just about all schools in this area, it grapples with achievement disparities among students classified as ELL and those classified as native English speakers, with the former group scoring approximately 20% lower on state achievement tests than the latter. The school boasts a DI bilingual program, the only one in its district, initially designed to better support struggling emergent bilinguals, all of whom were poor or working class Latinos, but now an increasingly attractive model to the cosmopolitan White and Asian professionals increasingly moving into the community (Poza, 2014).

The people. For the larger, original study, 35 students and two teachers were observed and interviewed. Eight focal students were chosen to represent an array of linguistic, socioeconomic, and ethnic categories. Of these eight students, two were deemed sufficiently at risk of not reclassifying as English proficient to qualify for the *Language!* intervention (one other focal student was also classified as ELL, but was far enough advanced in California's ELD scale that her reclassification could be reasonably expected in one year without intervention). Only one of these students was an active enough participant in the *Language!* block (the name of the curriculum is also used as the name for the instructional time) to provide useful transcripts.

The focal student, Melissa, struggled with a number of academic tasks, including standardized tests. She is classified as "Intermediate" in terms of her English language development, scored "Below Basic" in ELA and "Basic" in math. She missed part of her language arts instruction time every morning for *Language!* class to boost her test scores and English proficiency, and she also depended heavily on classmates to help her with schoolwork. Despite all this, Melissa was remarkably confident in social interactions and a vocal leader among her circle of friends. She frequently gave orders to other girls in the clique such as what games to play or what music to listen to, and she was not shy about complaining

to her teachers, asking for help, or rebuking classmates who teased, bothered, or interrupted her.

The teacher leading the *Language!* intervention block was Ms. Christine, a respected teacher with a decade of experience in the classroom (although not all of it at Rivera). Ms. Christine did not teach in the DI program, but rather in its Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) strand. She recognized that the shift to English in SEI was not without its drawbacks, naming specifically students' decreased ability to communicate with family and connect their schooling lives with their home. Nevertheless, her track record of raising students' test scores earned her tremendous respect among the faculty and the responsibility of having some of the most "at risk" students in her homeroom and of teaching the *Language!* intervention block, including students like Melissa from Rivera's DI strand.

Findings

Before reviewing findings of the study, it is worth revisiting the research questions that underlie this inquiry. This work seeks insights into the language ideologies that are embodied in the curriculum provided to emergent bilinguals as well as how monolingual and monoglossic ideologies marginalize emergent bilinguals from important learning opportunities. Analyzing classroom interactions, an interview with Ms. Christine, and the *Language!* curriculum's research basis provides some answers to these questions.

Classroom Observations

One crucial pattern of the instructional intervention for emergent bilinguals was the level of resistance that it elicited. Students were pulled from their morning instructional time, which was theoretically language arts. However, within the DI program, language instruction and content were thoroughly intertwined, so different subject areas were occasionally covered during this morning time as well. In a particularly telling moment, Melissa one day refused to leave her science work during the Spanish block (an independent research project on an element from the periodic table) despite the teacher's insistence that she had to report to *Language!*. In a field note capturing the incident, I recorded:

> Melissa refuses to go to *Language!*. She whines that she doesn't want to go as the kids from the other class wait at the door. She looks at *Maestro*[3] and asks, 'Do I have to go? Estoy trabajando en mi elemento!' [I am working on my element!] Maestro says, 'Si, m'ija, ya hablamos d'esto.' [Yes, sweety, we already talked about this] Melissa insists, 'But it's so boooring. No aprendemos na-da! Puro spelling and grammar!' [We don't learn anything. Pure spelling and grammar!]" (Field note, 1/5/12)

Melissa obviously relented, but her argument and displeasure clearly communicated the learning priorities for emergent bilingual students as they were perceived at Rivera. As opposed to the content knowledge that Melissa deemed valuable, she was instead being pulled away from science and Spanish instruction

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[3] *Maestro* is Spanish for *teacher*, and it was the affectionate honorific students used in reference to their instructor during the Spanish block.

in favor of English language-as-subject instruction. The message, for Melissa and students throughout the school as these routine classroom extractions occurred, was that "spelling and grammar" in English matter more than just about anything else (keeping in mind that other students are being pulled from social studies, art, or music, which, although taught in English, do not segment and isolate linguistic elements the way this targeted intervention does).

While Melissa's resistance to the program is noteworthy, her claims about its content are of greater concern at present. Her removal from Spanish instruction for English language support speaks to the monolingual ideology at play, and the bits-and-pieces approach to English language development likewise provides evidence of the monoglossic notions underlying the curriculum. Rather than have students engage in authentic and meaningful discourse, the intervention asks them to memorize spelling words, test-taking strategies, and grammatical rules.

To appreciate the routine and rule-based nature of this ELD intervention, we can further look to a representative interaction during instruction. Working with students to help them read for comprehension and expand their vocabulary, Ms. Christine is having students copy down poems and commit them to memory. While this stage of the unit is followed by lessons that involve greater depth and creativity, such as learning features of poetry as a genre, a standard that is frequently tested, and composing their own poetry, the time and energy devoted to this very basic task speaks volumes as to the ideologies informing the teaching practices supposed to foster language learning. In this interaction, Ms. Christine (MC) is preparing to pass out books of poetry for students to peruse, and by the end of the 30-minute block they are to have chosen a poem and copied it in their notebooks. Melissa (M) and her partner (E), a student from a different homeroom, are discussing the poems they hope to copy, but only after a rather lengthy and specific introduction from Ms. Christine.

Excerpt 1:

1	MC:	I'm gonna pass out the poetry books
2		So here's the deal
3		For the first week of poetry
4		It's pretty simple
5		You guys get to read poems
6	E:	Yay!
7	MC:	Any poem that you really like
8		You can copy down into your notebook
9		When you are copying a poem (.)
10		When you are copying a poem into your notebook
11		You may add
12		Illustrate it if you want
13		But you need to copy the title of the poem
14		The author of the poem
15		And you need to copy it as it's written
		[Breaks to address student side conversation]
16		When you're copying a poem down
17		Make sure you copy it as it is written

18		Are there any questions?
19	E:	(Be careful [Telling Melissa how to grab the books]
20		There's (xxx)
21		Find "Hate that Cat" or "Love that Dog" poetry book
22	M:	[Gasps]
23		This is my favorite book
24	E:	September 12 [Speaking aloud as she writes in her notebook]
25		Hate that Cat
26		Like a dog hates a rat
27		I say I h-
28		I hate that cat
29		Like a dog hates a rat
30		My dog does my homework
31	M:	It's such a good book
32		I'm gonna write all the poems in here
33	E:	La-
34		Love that dog
35		Hate that cat

Certainly, exposing children to poetry can be a powerful language learning experience. Poetry is replete with rich vocabulary, figurative language, and unconventional syntactical arrangements that could all be fodder for valuable metalinguistic conversations. The very book the two girls have chosen, *Hate that Cat* (Creech, 2008) is in fact a short novel only slightly below their grade level with complex themes of family, individual expression, and about the merits of poetry. Moreover, it is quite likely the girls have gravitated to the book because they have encountered it earlier in their English Language Arts class within the DI program and engaged in much more demanding work with it. Nevertheless, this activity reduces these language-learning opportunities—opportunities for socialization into target forms of language and meaningful discussions about the language choices that poets make—to rote repetition.

Seeking insight into these pedagogical decisions, I interviewed Ms. Christine. Unsurprisingly, she spoke of pressure to raise students' test scores and usher them to reclassification promptly, and also noted that she had received brief professional development for using the *Language!* curriculum the previous summer, but not enough that she felt confident deviating from fairly scripted lessons. My particular curiosity in exploring monolingual and monoglossic ideologies was how Ms. Christine made sense of students' bilingual repertoires despite a strongly monolingual curriculum. As the following excerpt from our interview demonstrates, the tensions between valuing students' bilingualism and the demands of curriculum and testing seemed irreconcilable.

Excerpt 2:

> Luis (L): What is it like…so you're teaching in an SEI [sheltered English immersion] class that's full of bilingual kids at different levels of bilingualism at a school with a bilingual program… How does that play out in their language use?

Ms. Christine (MC): They do switch back and forth a lot. I remind them "English please." "Practicing your English" because they are technically supposed to be speaking English in class but they do switch a lot, I find. It's funny especially in the ELD because a lot of the DI kids come into my room for giving me a hand, I get more Spanish during the ELD than I do any other time in the day, I have to keep on them. I really, I'm fairly insistent, because it is ELD. That's what we're supposed to be doing is practicing English, I'm fairly insistent then.

L: So then, with respect to ELD and testing, and *Language!* and things like that you imagine that English is like the base standard language that they shift to, so how does that get taught in a monolingual frame with kids who draw on multiple languages?

MC: Right, you know, sometimes we use like refreshers for the vocabulary, we have a vocabulary program through *Language!* and they have on cards, on the vocabulary cards forming the Spanish call native there is one so we'll use that then, sometimes I'll introduce a word and I'll hear some students, I'll hear a buzz over there in Spanish and I know they're talking about the word and explaining to each other "oh I know what this word is" and I just, I mean, I guess in a sense I ignore it, but I just allow that because you're understanding what a word is because somebody else is giving you some context in Spanish then I'm all for that. Now I want you to know what it is in English and I'm going use it in some English sentences and you're gonna say the English sentences and we are going talk about what part of speech it is and all of that, but, and then I have a lot a Spanish in the room recently because I just got a newcomer and so the girls in particular are being, -trying to kind of to bring her up to speed a little bit and because I don't speak Spanish, I mean I have very little Spanish, I rely a lot on them. (Interview, June 8, 2012)

In this interview and plenty of other interactions, Ms. Christine expressed contentment with the fact that students did not have to disavow their home language at Rivera, and that even in the SEI classes there was an appreciation of Spanish. Nevertheless, her statements betray understandings of language and second language acquisition that reflect those in the *Language!* curriculum and broader societal ideologies. She critiques the presence of Spanish in her classroom, noting that at best it serves as a crutch to understanding English vocabulary words, but that this support is insufficient in the context of using words in sentences and such. She emphasizes pedagogical strategies such as vocabulary cards, labeling parts of speech, and repeating teacher-given sentences that suggest language is learned individually by mastering subsets of skills and component parts that add up to a true, pure, standard form.

The *Language!* curriculum and its research basis offered the most convincing evidence yet of the centrality of monolingual and monoglossic ideologies. The curriculum bills itself as a "comprehensive literacy curriculum" that targets students scoring in the bottom 40% of standardized tests. Students deemed in need of remedial instruction in English were pulled from their classrooms, often during Spanish instructional time in the case of students in Rivera's DI program, and given direct instruction in phonics and phonemic awareness, word recognition and spelling, vocabulary and morphology, grammar and usage, listening and

reading comprehension, and speaking and writing (what *Language!* refers to as "all of the necessary strands of literacy,") (Voyager Learning, 2003).

To highlight the prevalent ideologies about language and language learning that this remedial instruction and its very implementation entail, a critical discourse analysis is in order with respect to the *Language!* materials. The following is an analysis of materials from the Voyager Learning website, specifically materials regarding the *Language!* curriculum (Voyager Learning markets a number of curricula for language and literacy remediation, and most of the materials on the website refer to some of these other programs). The corpus, described in Table 1, includes the three publications reporting on the effectiveness of *Language!* in different school districts and with different student populations, an independent evaluation of the program by the Florida Center for Reading Research, the technical guide to the program's "Vital Indicators of Progress"(VIP), and the curriculum research basis from the program website.

Table 1
Description of Language! *curriculum research materials*

Document	Description
Middle School Pilot Evaluation with Students Eligible for Special Education: Hawthorne School District, California	Evaluation of 8-month implementation of curriculum with 775 students in grades 6-8. Sample includes 59% ELL and 25% SPED. Measures growth with California State ELA Test and Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency (TOSWRF)
Upper Elementary and Middle School Retrospective Evaluation with State Data: Caldwell County Schools, North Carolina	Evaluation of 8-month implementation of curriculum with 346 students in grades 3-7. Sample includes 10% of elementary and 14% of middle school students designated from SPED, and 46% and 55% free/reduced lunch. Measures growth with North Carolina End-of-Grade Reading Comprehension test and Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency (TOSWRF)
Program Review: *Language!*, Florida Center for Reading Research	Description of program components and summary of findings from intervention studies.
"Research and Background:" *Language!* white paper	Separately published summary of research that comprises foundation for *Language!* curriculum strands and practices, including research on cognitive development and reading, vocabulary development, and explicit instruction in reading comprehension. Comprised of excerpts from research papers on literacy and language development.
"Research and Background" *Language!* curriculum supplement	Summary of research included in curriculum materials that explains and rationalizes *Language!* curriculum strands and practices, including research on cognitive development and reading, vocabulary development, and explicit instruction in reading comprehension.

Close reading of these documents reveals a number of prevalent themes that resonate with aforementioned societal discourses about language and education. One such theme is the fixation on quantifiable data that captures student learning and the need for "scientifically based research" with regard to instruction and curriculum called for by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Such discourse that limits what constitutes valid evaluation and knowledge about effective teaching practices predictably leads to curriculum and teaching practices that offer a series of distinct drills with quantifiable outputs such as decoding word lists, naming letters, and fluency measurements. In turn, segmenting language learning and assessment in this form reinforces ideologies of language as bound, static, finite sets of elements and skills that need simply to be combined and rearranged for proficiency.

Two other recurrent themes found throughout these documents are references to the discrete skills and elements that supposedly comprise language and the conflation of literacy skills and language proficiency. Given that in the high-stakes testing environments of contemporary classrooms, academic achievement and language proficiency are closely intertwined, this conflation is unsurprising. It points to ideologies of language as static and finite elements that can be accumulated and developed through explicit instruction, repetition, and manipulation, without regard to the social contexts of learning and interaction that actually underlie language development. Resulting from these ideologies are a series of teaching practices that ask students to make meaning from letters, words, and texts out of authentic contexts rather than in relation to genuine functions or interactions.

Finally, the documents that offer logical or research-based justifications for the intervention all conceptualize language learning as a predictable, sequential process. The leveling of lessons and strands in *Language!* are framed as a hierarchy of skills, beginning with phonics and ascending to reading comprehension. Furthermore, "mastery" is determined through summative evaluations at the end of particular lessons, which teach and assess skills in isolation and without recurrence. This approach is undermined by the aforementioned new research in SLA which explores variation across learners and contexts and posits language learning as an indeterminately ongoing process highly susceptible to learning contexts and conditions and marked by high levels of variability within and across individuals (Larsen-Freeman, 1997; 2011; de Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007).

The prevalent ideologies underlying *Language!* come together to advance a particular perspective of language and language learning. From this monoglossic perspective, language is a static entity comprised of distinct elements that can be mastered sequentially through explicit instruction and devoid of interactional context or conceptual meaning, as with the case of developing vocabulary through the word lists and proficiency in written communication through spelling exercises. Table 2 captures particular instances of these ideologies operationalized in the texts within and about the *Language!* curriculum by highlighting cases in which language is conceptualized as the sequential acquisition of language pieces and where explicit instruction of said pieces is recommended. In addition, the table shows how academic skills, particularly around literacy, are conflated with language proficiency and language learning such that addressing student needs in these areas is often diluted by emphasis on linguistic proficiency.

Table 2

Ideologies of language and language learning in Language! curriculum research base

Document	Statement	Underlying ideology about language and SLA
Middle School Pilot Evaluation with Students Eligible for Special Education: Hawthorne School District, California (SWES, 2013a)	"All students in grades 6–8 who performed below the 60th percentile on a test of reading comprehension and fluency were placed in classrooms using LANGUAGE! as a core replacement." (p. 2)	• Literacy of academic tasks is a necessary component of language proficiency • Explicit instruction of language-as-subject is the optimal intervention for language development
	"Findings from the retrospective evaluation of LANGUAGE! in Hawthorne School District suggest that LANGUAGE! positively impacted low-performing students' reading gains." (p. 2)	• Reading comprised of distinct elements (fluency and comprehension). • Performance of academic tasks equivalent to language development
	"Matched pre- and post-LANGUAGE! implementation data from the California Standards Test for English-Language Arts (CST-ELA) and/or the Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency (TOSWRF) were available and analyzed." (p. 2)	• Academic tasks and reading fluency comprise language proficiency • Language proficiency can be measured through observations of individuals on individual tasks rather than in social settings
Upper Elementary and Middle School Retrospective Evaluation with State Data: Caldwell County Schools, North Carolina (SWES, 2013b)	"Matched pre- and post-LANGUAGE! implementation data from the North Carolina End-of-Grade (NC EOG) Reading Comprehension Tests, the Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency (TOSWRF), and the Degrees of Reading Power® (DRP) test were analyzed for 346 students in grades 3 through 7" (p. 2)	• Academic tasks and reading fluency comprise language proficiency • Language proficiency can be measured through observations of individuals on individual tasks rather than in social settings

These problematic framings of language and language learning inextricably tie language proficiency to the performance of academic tasks modeled after those on standardized tests. They present language as the sum of a series of component elements that can be mastered through explicit and systematic instruction. The documents refer to language learning and literacy development as the acquisition

of systematic and sequential mastery of these listed elements and sub-skills. In this vein, they offer that students learning English is school require the same remediation as students with special needs. Egregiously, the pilot study of middle school children notes that nearly 19% of the ELL-classified students in the sample were simultaneously receiving or qualified to receive special education services, a proportion that speaks to the conflation of language development and mastery of academic tasks as well as the bias that marginalizes emergent bilinguals into special education at disproportionately high rates (Artiles & Trent, 1994). With the *Language!* curriculum as its central intervention for struggling students, Rivera's monolingual and monoglossic biases resonate. Language is conflated with mastery of academic tasks and performance on standardized tests, and drill-like training in these test-related behaviors and skills is equated with teaching language.

Discussion

The findings from these various lines of inquiry all point to the central role that monolingual and monoglossic ideologies play in the day-to-day schooling of emergent bilinguals at Rivera. Sadly, this is far from exceptional, as emergent bilinguals are frequently marginalized from important content and authentic communicative opportunities in favor of targeted explicit instruction in vocabulary and grammar (Valdés, 2001). In effect, emergent bilinguals are not only discouraged from leveraging their bilingual repertoires for learning, meaning making, and communication in favor of transitioning to English (admittedly less overtly for those such as Melissa in Rivera's DI strand), but are also being educated in a manner that offers little in the way of communicative competence. Clearly, better pedagogical options exist, and I argue that emerging conceptualizations of language and language learning are fundamental to this improvement.

The first step in this transformation is to reject monolingual English-only ideologies and instead recognize the valuable resource that bilingualism offers. Not only do allowances for students' home languages through bilingual education support learning and understanding manifest in higher achievement (Lindholm-Leary, 2005; Lindholm-Leary & Block, 2010; Lindholm-Leary & Hernández, 2011; Ramírez, Yuen, Ramey, & Pasta, 1991), but they also promote more positive attitudes toward schooling (Lindholm-Leary, 2005; Lindholm-Leary & Borsato, 2001; Potowski, 2007). Of course, bilingual education can be monolingual and monoglossic in its own right (Flores, 2013; García, 2009a) if it insists on language separation and on adherence to standardized varieties of either language rooted in conceptualizations of language as sums of fixed and finite rule-based components.

Translanguaging perspectives on language and socially-oriented approaches to SLA present opportunities for emergent bilinguals to be valued contributors to the collective knowledge of the classroom. As various authors note (Canagarajah, 2011; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; García & Leiva, 2013; García & Wei, 2013; Poza, 2016; Sayer, 2013; Wei, 2011), translanguaging supports students' meaning-making as they simultaneously leverage features from their multiple languages as well as other modalities (visual media, music, gesturing, and so on) to mediate academic tasks, negotiate identity representations, and question conventional hierarchies of language, race, or nationality. In turn, socially-oriented conceptualizations of SLA would encourage emergent bilinguals' greater inclusion and participation in

authentic discourse, particularly involving target language practices, rather than their continued separation and exclusion. This would mean greater opportunity to examine, discuss, and experiment with different language features and structures.

Models of such pedagogies, moreover, are not hard to find. García and Sylvan (2011) report on the guiding principles of the International High Schools in New York City, which educate recently immigrated students from all over the world. Rather than silo these students into remedial language classes away from meaningful discourse and important content, the schools bring students together to engage in problem-based and experiential learning addressing issues of concern to students and the school community. Similarly, rather than enforcing English-only mandates or rigid language separation, the schools invite students' languaging into the classroom as a shared meaning-making resource to enrich everyone's linguistic repertoires. These are practices and dispositions that teachers and school leaders can adopt throughout emergent bilinguals' learning environment. They can cultivate approving atmospheres for students' languaging practices through multilingual signage, class/school libraries, and allowances for students' home languages in the classroom. They can ensure that students are exposed to academic content rather than isolated language-as-subject blocks by supporting teachers' development of scaffolding strategies and construction of student-centered curricula that engage students in authentic communicative tasks rather than patterned exercises with vocabulary and grammar. Underlying these promising educational strategies, of course, are conceptualizations of language drastically different from those currently informing policy and curriculum in most schools, leading to the unnecessary marginalization of emergent bilingual students.

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