Creating a Climate for Linguistically Responsive Instruction: The Case for Additive Models

Arthi B. Rao
P. Zitlali Morales
University of Illinois at Chicago

As a state with a longstanding tradition of offering bilingual education, Illinois has a legislative requirement for native language instruction in earlier grades through a model called Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE). This model does not truly develop bilingualism, however, but rather offers native language instruction to English learners (ELs) for a few years only to later mainstream them to English-only instruction. Contrasting this approach, culturally and linguistically responsive teaching not only supports EL students' first language maintenance and second language development, but can also affirm critical aspects of their cultural, ethnic and linguistic identities. Through this framework, we present qualitative data from two elementary classrooms in Illinois enacting a TBE and dual language program model. Findings suggest that while program models are indeed one factor that influences enactment of a culturally responsive approach, societal factors and ability for stakeholders to mediate and address pressures are equally important.

Ms. Natalie[1]: Well I definitely want them to continue, um, with the Spanish. I really do, because I see them, [her students] um, beginning to favor English and I think we spoke about this earlier.

A1: Right, you were saying that it's the influence of family and society?

Ms. Natalie: Society, and um, for some reason, they're beginning to equate success with English, and that may be from the, you know, the family's perception, or even the community's perception. Um, so you know, I try to, to, ins, ingrain in them, um, a sort of pride in their culture, in their heritage, and that includes the language. So I definitely want to continue, I want them to continue, and if they transfer schools, which I think a couple of them will be transferring schools, I think that's going to be harder. Because it's hard to find a good dual language program that emphasizes the things that we do here.

The above exchange took place during an interview with a bilingual teacher during the course of this research study. Ms. Natalie taught in a dual immersion school – a bilingual program model with the goal being for students to develop proficiency in two languages, considered one of the most effective models. While she did not share the same pressure to teach students English as other teachers, since her role was to develop Spanish language skills through academic content, she acknowledged the existing challenge and the underlying societal emphasis on learning

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[1] All names in this manuscript are pseudonyms.

English. Even in the best of situations, language programs do not operate in a vacuum. Outside influences from society, including family, impact students' preference for one language over the other. This issue particularly impacts the ability of schools serving English learners to deliver the most effective instruction.

Close to 1 of every 10 students in Illinois is classified as an English learner (EL), a number that parallels the national data. As of 2010, there were approximately 183,000 ELs in the state of Illinois (ISBE, 2011), a number projected to continually increase (Soltero, 2011). The growth of ELs in Illinois reflects both long-standing linguistic minority communities, as well as ELs in newer destinations across the state. The increasing linguistic diversity in Illinois in both urban and rural communities, as well as communities who have not had to address multilingualism in their schools before, makes it urgent to examine the experience of these students in school contexts. Another reason to focus on these students is the increased accountability on schools for this large sub-group due to legislation like the No Child Left Behind Act. In addition, a lack of culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy may be contributing to an alarmingly high and pervasive dropout rate, particularly for Latino students.

This article discusses the differences between two schools with different bilingual education program models in the same school district attempting to address the academic and social needs of linguistically and culturally diverse children. We present data from a school with transitional bilingual education (TBE) and a school enacting dual immersion. While we highlight differences between the models and argue that dual immersion is ideologically more culturally and linguistically responsive, we also point out that this model must still constantly mediate the negative messages students receive about their first language outside of the school in the larger society. Some of those messages succeed in creeping into the school in the form of pressure to increase test scores – tests that are only given in English – and may negate much of the work done to validate the language practices students bring from home.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Culturally Relevant and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy

Linguistically responsive pedagogy comes out of the larger umbrella of culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) literature, which rests on three propositions: a) students must experience academic success; b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Also known as culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2010), this approach aims to meet the needs of students by building on background, experiences and prior knowledge and welcoming this into the classroom and curriculum. While most of the work in this field emphasizes the idea of aligning curriculum and pedagogy with students' culture, Ladson-Billings (1995) emphasizes that the other two propositions are just as important. Moje and Hinchman (2004) emphasize that *all* instruction is responsive to a particular culture and way of learning. Some of the assumptions underlying this perspective are that most instruction in schools aligns with the knowledge and values of students from white, middle-class families (Ladson-Billings, 2009). When children start school, they are more likely to excel if the teaching practices and norms (or expectations) of the school match those the children have

learned at home (Heath, 1983). When there is a mismatch, children are more likely to struggle or be considered at risk, and not have their strengths recognized and appreciated (Klingner & Soltero-González, 2009).

According to Villegas and Lucas (2002), culturally responsive teachers should develop these six characteristics: a) sociocultural consciousness; b) affirming views of students from diverse backgrounds; c) a sense of responsibility and capacity for bringing about change to make schools more equitable; d) an understanding of how learners construct knowledge and the capability to promote knowledge construction; e) knowledge about the lives of their students; and f) the ability to design instruction that builds on what their students already know while stretching them beyond the familiar. These are all necessary to view students and their communities from an additive versus a deficit perspective, as well as emphasizing teachers as action-oriented—it is up to teachers to make efforts to make difference and change. Culturally responsive teachers learn about and become involved in the communities in which they teach, developing partnerships and tapping into community resources (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2009).

Subsumed in culturally responsive pedagogy, *linguistically* responsive pedagogy focuses specifically on students' language backgrounds, the variety of language practices and abilities, as well as their language needs. Lucas, Villegas, and Freedson-Gonzalez (2008) identify essential understandings that all teachers should have about second language learning, as well as the pedagogical practices that should be based on these principles. They argue that three types of pedagogical expertise make up linguistically responsive teaching:

1) Familiarity with the students' linguistic and academic backgrounds;
2) An understanding of the language demands inherent in the learning tasks that students are expected to carry out in class; and
3) Skills for using appropriate scaffolding so that ELs can participate successfully in those tasks.

Thus, teachers must make academic content comprehensible regardless of the students' English language proficiency levels.

Counter to the perspective of providing culturally responsive pedagogy would be *assimilationist pedagogy*, or the idea that students must assimilate to the dominant mainstream in order to be successful at school. An assimilationist approach is when the teacher believes that their students should be mainstreamed to the dominant way of being, thinking, learning, and speaking; and employs pedagogical strategies to meet this goal (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Spring, 2013). Even if teachers do not profess to promote assimilation, they may have biases of which they are not aware. These implicit beliefs may underlie their instruction or expectations for behavior. Additionally, providing a curriculum that is predominantly from Eurocentric or Western perspectives or histories, without critique, would also be in line with assimilationist pedagogy.

Ideologically Differing Bilingual Program Models

Similar to pedagogy, all language program models have differing ideological underpinnings (García & Kleifgen, 2010). Illinois has had bilingual education since 1973, when legislation

mandated Illinois school districts to offer TBE in schools with 20 or more emergent bilingual children who speak the same dominant language (ISBE, 2011). Therefore, the prevalent language program, as in most of the country, is the TBE model. While bilingual programs include any program with instruction provided in more than one language, most bilingual programs use the idea of providing primary language instruction only as a means towards eventually transitioning to all English instruction. This is very different from continuing to provide instruction in the primary language, in addition to English. In fact, most programs nationally, and specifically in Illinois, could be classified as subtractive or assimilative (García & Kleifgen, 2010).

Additive language program models continue to develop the first language (L1) of students and thus validate the L1 by not emphasizing a quick transition to all English instruction. These models include developmental bilingual education and dual immersion programs. Developmental bilingual education programs are similar to the TBE model, but provide primary language instruction for two additional years, allowing more substantial time to develop academic content in the L1 (Crawford, 2004). Dual immersion programs provide instruction in two languages from the beginning and throughout the course of schooling (Lindholm-Leary, 2001). Ideologically, providing primary language instruction for the duration of the elementary school years or never ceasing instruction in the primary language signals the academic and socioemotional importance of languages other than English. Culturally and linguistically responsive teachers appreciate that bilingualism and multiculturalism are assets and that learning should be an additive rather than subtractive process (August & Hakuta, 1997). Considering these different program models with varied ideological slants, this paper focuses on research in two schools that enact distinct language program models to address the following research questions:

1) What aspects of culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy are evident in one transitional bilingual and one dual language context?
2) How do teachers address the linguistic and cultural needs of ELs through various program models?

Methods

This study took place in the 2009-2010 school year at two public elementary schools in the same district in the Midwest, referred to as Park School and Fielder School. Given the researchers' interest in the ways pedagogy and curriculum was enacted, the ways in which teaching and learning transpired in real time, and how such activity impacted the lives of teachers and learners, an ethnographic qualitative design was best suited for this study. Data collection occurred in places where people engaged in natural behavior, and the researcher participated and shared in these experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Creswell, 2003).

Sites and Participants

Data collection occurred during a 10-week period in the spring, visiting each school 1-2 times per week. During the 2009-10 academic year, there were 2,081 students enrolled at Park, where 99.3% were low-income, 97.9% were Latino, and 41% were native Spanish-speaking ELs. The school's vision statement noted that they "set high expectations for students" and worked "to

challenge students to be academically and socially successful." An emphasis on multiculturalism was also included, as well as a TBE program to meet the needs of ELs. The TBE language program model provides students some native language instruction in kindergarten through second grade, and as students progress in English, native language instruction is reduced, mainstreaming ELs into an English-only classroom by third grade.

In consultation with school administrators, the first author selected one fourth grade teacher and classroom for observation, since this grade is when the transition from primary language instruction to English is often made in bilingual programs. The classroom was an English-only setting, where the ELs had been in TBE classrooms in preceding grades. Along with the classroom teacher, participants included four Mexican American, native Spanish-speaking EL students (see Table 1). Selection of students was based on the teacher's recommendation, parental consent, and student assent. The classroom teacher, Luisa Palma, was of Puerto Rican descent, a native English speaker who spoke Spanish as a second language. She was in her ninth year of teaching. The focal students were Carlos, Edgar, Jorge, and Marisol, ranging in academic and language proficiency levels, but because of issues of consent and assent, gender equity and years at Park were not consistent across participants.

Table 1
Park School Participants

Name	Ethnicity/Race	Native Language	Years at the School
Luisa Palma	Puerto Rican	English	9
Carlos	Mexican-American	Spanish	5
Marisol	Mexican-American	Spanish	5
Jorge	Mexican-American	Spanish	1
Edgar	Mexican-American	Spanish	1

Fielder Elementary was also an urban public elementary school within the same district, with 372 students in the 2009-10 school year—98.4% were low income and 57.5% were Spanish-speaking ELs with Latinos making up 97.8% of the student population. The school's mission highlighted an emphasis on "development of students' academic and social skills" and the use of a dual language instructional program in English and Spanish. Web-based information about the school also stated the aim to "develop bilingualism and biliteracy in all students by the conclusion of eighth grade".

At Fielder, the intent was to select one-fourth grade teacher through administrator recommendation, but two different teachers were ultimately chosen. The same fourth grade class split their day between two teachers, spending the morning with Ms. Natalie Alonso (called "Ms. Natalie," as Fielder referred to teachers by their first names), a bilingual English and Spanish-speaker who provided social studies and mathematics instruction in Spanish, and the afternoon with Ms. Cynthia Keller ("Ms. Cynthia"), a monolingual English-speaker who provided language arts and science instruction in English. Four Mexican-American, native Spanish-speaking, EL students were participants (see Table 2), with selection based on advice from the classroom teacher, parental consent and student assent. The same consent and assent limitations related to gender representation applied to Fielder student participants. The students also ranged in academic and linguistic levels. The focal students were Ana, David, Joanna, and Mariana.

Table 2
Fielder School Participants

Name	Ethnicity/Race	Native Language	Years at the School
Natalie Alonso	Mexican-American	Spanish and English	5
Cynthia Keller	White/Caucasian	English	25
Ana	Mexican-American	Spanish	4
David	Mexican-American	Spanish	3[2]
Joanna	Mexican-American	Spanish	4
Mariana	Mexican-American	Spanish	4

Data Collection

Observations. The first author was a participant observer in this ethnographic study. Observations of the teacher focused on her whole and small group instruction, instructional practices and methods of delivery, curricular materials and lesson content, questions posed, language use, and interactions with her students during work and social time. Students were observed during classroom instruction, small group work with peers and teachers, and during lunch and recess for situational and contextual variety (Carspecken, 1996). Observations of the ELs focused on classroom behavior and conduct, personality in the classroom, participation in activities and lessons, language practices and language use. Students' interactions with the teacher during large and small group instruction, and interactions with peers in the classroom were also noted.

Interviews. Beyond observations, the first author individually interviewed the three teachers and the students at each site. Student interview questions focused on a) their language practices in and out of school, b) their opinions and attitudes about their learning environment and school experiences, and c) their perceptions of their teachers' opinions on language and schooling. The teacher interviews helped unpack the teachers' beliefs and understandings of culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy, along with teaching ELs and language learning in general. Further, these interviews involved reflection on the students, both ELs and native English-speakers (NESs). Perceptions of the student participants as learners and as individuals (i.e., language proficiency and use, personality, behavior) were also discussed.

Data Sources and Analysis

The data sources for this study were observation field notes, audio recordings, and interview transcripts. Transcripts were read, noting patterns, which were then collapsed into codes that corresponded to the research questions around evidence of culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy in the classroom. Specific codes were language use, language learning, perception of language, and expectations of students. After creating tables with the collapsed codes, appropriate transcript and field note excerpts were entered into each coding category, first by individual participant and then all participants. This action enabled the researcher to see what

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[2] Due to family moves, David had transferred in and out of Fielder School twice between kindergarten and 4th grade.

ideas and perceptions were dominant, which themes overlapped between school sites, and where distinctions could be made.

For the purpose of this paper, we draw from the larger study and focus on the teachers, the different program models, and evidence of culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy across the two sites. Data from student interviews and observations are used to support relevant findings.

Findings

Through analysis of the data sources, with a focus on the presence or absence of culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy in the fourth grade classrooms, we identified four relevant themes: The presence of culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy at the dual language school; Evidence of an assimilationist approach at the transitional bilingual school; Linguistically responsive pedagogy goes beyond native language instruction; and the presence of societal pressure to learn English. We noticed perceptible differences between the two school settings; for example, one site was more representative of culturally responsive pedagogy than the other. However, certain societal pressures and influences were apparent across the two sites.

Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy at the Dual Language School

Auditory and visual presence of Spanish. Several aspects of culturally and linguistically responsive teaching were evident at Fielder School, such as using and embracing native language for both instructional and social purposes. Because of the dual language program model, Spanish instruction was consistently used for half of the school day. Students also switched freely between Spanish and English during small group work and social time throughout the day. When students were in the "English" classroom with Ms. Cynthia, they continued to use Spanish as a resource when necessary to develop and comprehend English language arts and science content. Despite the fact that Ms. Cynthia did not speak nor understand Spanish, she created a safe space where students could communicate in any way they were most comfortable and confident, often relying on peers as language resources. During the interview when talking about her students, Ms. Cynthia said,

> With the fourth graders, the conversation is more so, so that they're not afraid to talk and I love it. They'll start, like Ana, will start to talk and then she'll get caught, she won't know how to say something in English, and I'll say "well that's okay, ask somebody in Spanish." And then she'll say the word in Spanish, and then she'll go back into English, and she kind of, you know, you can see her mind working.

When asked about her views of teaching in the students' native language, despite her inability to do so, she said,

> Because if they don't know how to say it in English, why say "then forget it don't say it." No, I'll tell someone, I can't understand it, "say it in Spanish," and someone will jump in. Then they tell them it in Spanish, they, well I don't know what they're saying really, then they re-direct them and they say it in English. So yes, absolutely. They should use their Spanish. You know, that's their first language.

This exemplifies not only the validation and affirmation for students' native language, and building on this knowledge for instructional purposes, but also positioning students as resources and the teacher as not "all knowing," which are critical aspects of CRP (Ladson-Billings, 1995; 2009).

In addition to the auditory and instructional presence of Spanish at Fielder, the print-rich environment was also representative of a bilingual space. The walls outside the classrooms and office were adorned with posters or student work, most in Spanish, or both English and Spanish. Several posters and signs, either teacher or student made, hung in the hallway, saying such phrases as "Ser Bilingüe es Nuestra Llave para el Futuro," "Dual Language is Cool," or "Biliteracy is our Future." Several published bilingual poems were posted on the walls. Information sheets on upcoming events were posted, written in both Spanish and English. All informational and decorative/inspirational text that was on the walls or bulletin boards was in both languages. On both floors, Mexican flags were hung, along with a map of Mexico color-coded by different states in the country. This portrays a learning environment that embraces students' ethnic backgrounds and first language, not only welcoming a significant aspect of the students' cultures and home lives into the classroom, but also recognizing Spanish as an asset and a resource to build upon when designing and planning curriculum and instruction.

Native language as an asset. In addition to the visual presence of Spanish and that for instructional and social purposes that portrayed implicit respect, value was explicitly placed on students' language backgrounds and their potential to become bilingual. Beyond the nature and goal of the dual language program to develop bilingual and biliterate students, teachers in this study made several related comments both directly to students and during interviews. For example, during one particular observation, Ms. Cynthia told her students how lucky they were to be bilingual and they would have a "leg up" on her because she could only speak one language. To affirm this comment, during an interview with Ms. Cynthia when asking her about her expectations of students once leaving fourth grade, she said,

> I tell them this all the time, they will be blessed if they can walk out of here speaking both languages, they will get jobs that I can't get because I don't speak two languages.

She then went onto say about her students,

> I always tell them that if they really try to work hard in both languages they will have the advantage over someone like me, who speaks one language. And you hope, that if you reach the top 60% even, then you've accomplished something because then they truly become biliterate and bilingual. And they will get places that other people can't.

While Ms. Cynthia, as portrayed by these statements, recognized the advantages of bilingualism in terms of increased opportunity, these comments do allude to the idea that perhaps she is not able to reach 100% of her students in developing these skills. Follow-up questioning by the first author concluded that this teacher felt that there are indeed some external aspects that she does not have control over that may limit all of her students from becoming truly bilingual. Such issues will be explained later in the findings, where societal and political influences may outweigh program models and school climate.

Students also recognized the bilingual aspect of their identity as an important one. During informal conversations, interviews, and focus groups, Fielder participants expressed that they were happy they could speak two languages and felt smarter as a result. Students saw a connection between their bilingualism and increased capability for communication and opportunities post-schooling (i.e., college, jobs, or "visiting places around the world"). They thought that intelligent students needed to be able to speak both their native language and English, not only to be successful, but also to maintain familial connections. David, for example, connected Spanish to his family background and Mexican ethnicity:

A1:   Why do you think it's [Ms. Natalie's class] a Spanish class?

DB: Because, we have a teacher here that talks all the time in Spanish and we need to practice our Spanish too.

A1:   Why do you think that you need to practice your Spanish?

DB: Because that's our language, the first language, our language and if, cuz [sic] I have a cousin that doesn't talk it, and he used to talk only Spanish and now his mom and dad don't understand him because he doesn't know how to talk Spanish anymore. He doesn't practice it.

A1:   So how do you think his parents feel?

DB: Sad.

A1:   That's pretty sad, right? Do you want that to happen to you?

DB: No.

A1:   What would you do? How would you be able to talk to your parents?

DB: If I didn't know Spanish anymore, I would go to a Spanish class and start talking Spanish again, try to talk in Spanish.

Participant acknowledgement of the importance of language maintenance can be attributed to not only the presence of Spanish in their daily school lives, but also explicit and implicit messages received through curricular decisions and attitudes of teachers. This further highlights the culturally and linguistically responsive approach present at Fielder, which does indeed influence students' perceptions and beliefs.

Connection to students' ethnic backgrounds. Another aspect that portrayed culturally responsive pedagogy was the connection to students' ethnic and personal backgrounds. Many students were immigrants or had family members that immigrated to the United States. During observations, Ms. Natalie taught a unit on immigration that started by asking students about what they knew about this topic and their own related experiences. Throughout the unit, various literature sources were used, but students and their families' experiences were consistently incorporated into daily lessons through various activities and discussions. Additionally, a few parents and family members came into the classroom to share their stories with Ms. Natalie and the fourth graders.

Beyond bilingualism and biliteracy, Ms. Natalie felt her students should be instructed in a way that honored their culture and exposed them to others. She believed in teaching through a multicultural education lens, and taught this through classroom community building and in the content area of social studies. When talking specifically about multiculturalism, she stated,

> I really love the multiculturalism aspect of it [dual language instruction]. I think that's very important. I think that with our students, in particular, that's a challenge, because the population is 99% Mexican or of Mexican descent. Um, so we try to do that [expose them to other cultures] in a classroom and to show them the richness of the Spanish language that's spoken all over the world, and the importance and history of it. To me, I think that's a great opportunity, and I wish that people understood that more, the value of it, and not just for society, but the global society.

Such lessons aimed to develop students' critical thinking and problem solving skills, as the use of classroom meetings and discussions were present throughout observations. However, there were shortcomings related to the consistent development of higher order thinking, which will be explained later.

Connection to students' communities. Welcoming families into the school was another asset at Fielder, as parents organized cultural celebrations such as Mexican Independence Day, Mother's Day, el Día de los Niños, and Cinco de Mayo. These were celebrations selected by students and their families, rather than teachers and administrators deciding which "holidays" to celebrate. Beyond lessons, celebrations, and the print-rich school environment, there was a presence of community organizations at the school. The fourth grade teachers and the administrators planned for various presenters from local and city-wide organizations to come into individual classrooms and speak at school-wide assemblies, to not only share the resources available to students and families within their neighborhood and city, but also help teachers become familiar with the potential of such organizations and the influence on their curriculum and lesson design.

For example, a local not-for-profit agency committed to bringing students' backgrounds and cultures into the curriculum, visited the school weekly to help teachers integrate language arts and the culture of the students. They aimed to use students' personal stories to honor diversity and develop appreciation of differences and values. Each year, they selected a different grade level to work with. Terrence Roberts, a member of the *Little Rock Nine*, also visited the school to speak to the middle school classes about racism and segregation—the eighth grade class had recently completed an extensive unit on the Civil Rights Movement. Because Mr. Roberts could not speak to the entire school, he stopped by each classroom and said "hello" with a brief introduction. Additionally, a local children's hospital was also involved in the school. They chose one classroom, which was the fourth grade class that I observed, where they assessed physical fitness levels. Students wore heart rate monitors and pedometers for one week in September and June.

All these were examples observed during the three months of data collection. They demonstrate the school's commitment to not only developing students' language skills and building on this important aspect of students' cultures, but also connecting to students' backgrounds and deepening their experiences to help them learn about themselves, building on community assets and connections between students and community, and helping students make connections between what they are learning and their cultural identities, all aspects of CRP (Ladson-Billings, 1995; 2009; Nieto, 2002).

An Assimilationist Approach was Evident at the Transitional Bilingual School

During the three months of data collection at Park, it became evident that the pedagogical approach present within the school and Mrs. Palma's fourth grade classroom was lacking aspects of culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy. In fact, findings aligned with a more assimilationist approach, one where teaching is viewed as a technical task, putting knowledge into students' minds, where the teacher views him/herself as detached from the community, believes that some students will inevitably fail, and homogenizes students into one "American" identity (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Nieto, 2002; Spring, 2013).

Limited connection between curriculum and students' backgrounds. Based on the observations at Park, it was apparent that the school environment, curriculum and instructional methods were teacher-centered and did not connect to students' backgrounds, experiences, and cultures. Posters, artwork and other visuals hung on the walls throughout the building did not represent students' Mexican-American or linguistic backgrounds. Student work in English was posted across the school hallways. Within Mrs. Palma's classroom, language arts instruction included reading passages from a textbook with limited connection to students' lives and experiences (students were reading about astronauts who have traveled to the moon during several observations). Tasks focused on surface-level comprehension of events that occurred in these stories and other skills such as "identifying main idea" or "cause and effect." The social studies unit that was taught during data collection was memorization of the states and their capital cities. Students had few opportunities to engage in peer-to-peer discourse about academic content throughout the school day, and teacher-student interaction typically followed the Initiation, Response, Evaluation (IRE) discourse pattern (Cazden, 2001), where the teacher asked a question, a student responded with the one correct or incorrect answer, the teacher affirmed or rejected the response, and asked another question, repeating the sequence. These teaching and learning patterns evident at Park are not representative of a culturally responsive learning environment, as there was a palpable disconnect between the content, methods and the students (both ELs and NESs) (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Klingner & Soltero-González, 2009).

Absence of Spanish. Further, the aspect at Park that was most apparent was homogenization of the students and "deculturalization" (Spring, 2013). The absence of native language represents an assimilationist environment. The TBE program model enacted at Park meant that the fourth grade curriculum required English instruction with minimal native language support. As a result, English was the only language heard during all instructional observations, the majority of teacher-student and student-student interactions and interviews. When speaking about the program and administrators' purpose, Mrs. Palma said,

> LP: Ummm, since I've been here it's always been transitional bilingual, so transitional bilingual meaning that little by little we transition them um. But I think we transition them faster than normal, than normal transitional bilingual programs. That's what it has been since I've been here… I believe they [the school administrators] push English. I think they want you to (pauses)… I think they want you to I guess sort of try to see if they can push them into English as soon as possible, kind of…
>
> A1:   Right, right.

LP: Their belief is that the sooner you get them speaking and writing in English, the better they're going to do in the future.

A1:   Okay, so how are you made aware of these beliefs? What makes you think that?

LP: The curriculum, you know… Our curriculum supports making sure we uh (pauses), we do meet their needs, so we do have our ESL time and things like that, so umm I think they support that. And I mean basically everything, most of our texts being in English…

As a result of this administrative "purpose," Mrs. Palma aligned her instruction accordingly. Her actions and responses further validated this notion, as beyond instruction, Mrs. Palma also spoke English in social contexts. She said that her Spanish-speaking skills were not fully developed (Spanish was her second language), and thus did not feel comfortable speaking Spanish at school in any capacity unless "completely necessary."

English was the dominant language of choice during the days I observed. Student interviews supported this observation, as all participants answered my questions in English, indicated that school was a place for speaking English, and said they rarely spoke Spanish when in the building. Also, because instructional tools (i.e., workbooks, books) and tests were in English, students believed they should speak and understand the language well in order to succeed in school. Jorge discussed language practices in school:

JV: I feel comfortable [when speaking English].

A1:   How come?

JV: Because um, that's the language most of the people here speak at Park and that's the way of speaking now.

A1:   Why do you think that's the language most people here at Park speak?

JV: Um, because I don't, I haven't heard of a teacher here that is bilingual. I think the majority of the teachers can't help out that much, students who speak Spanish.

A1:   So do you think that you have to speak English to be a good student here?

JV: Yeah.

A1:   Okay. What about if you just speak Spanish, can you be a good student?

JV: Maybe, but not so much, because if you do tests and it's English and you put the words in Spanish, you're going to get an F.

So while there were several teachers who indeed were capable of speaking Spanish within the building (as earlier grades did receive some Spanish language instruction per the TBE program model), Park student participants did not discern this, nor recognize this as a potential resource. They interpreted the English dominance within curriculum, instruction and assessment, as an invalidation of the Spanish language within the school.

English is "better" than Spanish. All participants attributed academic success to English language knowledge and proficiency. Students said they learned English from their teachers at Park, and felt smarter as a result. Students felt it was an important expectation to learn English because they were living in the United States. Marisol, Carlos, and Edgar admitted to Spanish language loss, since so much of their day involved speaking and learning English. They consequently were "forgetting" Spanish. This meant decreased communication with some family

members, or using a "computer to translate" when speaking to Spanish-speaking family. Marisol alluded to the fact that when she was in school, she suddenly forgot Spanish:

> MV: I don't like to talk in Spanish at school.
> A1: Why don't you like to speak Spanish at school?
> MV: It's because I'm like too shy and I only want to talk, and I don't remember like a lot of Spanish and I only remember how to talk English.
> A1: Oh interesting, so at school you kind of forget (Spanish) and then you go home and you remember and you speak more?
> MV: Yeah (nodding), at school I can only remember like only half of Spanish.
> A1: Interesting. But at home you remember?
> MV: Yeah, a lot.

While it seems unlikely that Marisol would actually "forget" Spanish once entering the building, this conversation indeed exemplifies the pressure to assimilate and lose aspects of culture.

Most students spoke English with friends, in and out of school, but said they spoke Spanish with family at home. Student participants spoke English to help parents and other family members when in an English-dominant setting. During interviews and casual conversations, Carlos and Marisol alluded to feelings of dislike, shame, or embarrassment when speaking Spanish; they wished that their families spoke English so they would not have to speak Spanish. Carlos, for example, said that he preferred English over Spanish simply because "Spanish is boring" and "English sounds more fun." While teachers probably never explicitly stated such sentiments at school, students such as Carlos interpret the absence of Spanish and the favoring of English over Spanish as factors that minimize power and purpose of their native language.

Relatedly, student participants felt that speaking Spanish would hold them back academically and they would obtain better jobs in the future if they spoke English well. All students preferred speaking English to Spanish, and felt stronger in English versus Spanish proficiency, regardless if this was actually true.

Spanish as a deficit. In addition to limited presence of Spanish during both learning and social instances, Mrs. Palma and the focal students viewed English dominant students more favorably and academically "successful." This was evident in both the teacher interviews and student interviews/focus groups. For example, when asking about her perceptions of various individual students in her classroom, Mrs. Palma said that a student, Monica, one who was no longer classified as an English learner (based on language proficiency test performance from previous school years), was a model student because she was the strongest academically and her "English comprehension is off the roof." She felt that "the more exposure to English they [her EL students] get, the better," and assumed that many "students go home to an all-Spanish environment" which can hinder their growth. When talking about the focal students, especially Edgar and Marisol, Mrs. Palma thought they lacked prior knowledge in English, which held them back academically in her class. When discussing Edgar's (a transfer student this academic year) language progress specifically, she felt that he was finally doing better in her classroom because he was improving in his English skills:

> He [Edgar] tries a lot more, puts more effort into his work. Um, but again, his prior knowledge, his English skills, are just not there to help him out when he needs it. Like especially with writing or stuff like that, or comprehension.

Hence, to Mrs. Palma, gains in English proficiency equaled success in her classroom.

This deficit perspective assumes that a student does not have any prior knowledge if knowledge of English is limited. Rather than viewing students' native language as an asset, a resource to build upon and make connections to through curricular and instructional decisions and practices, as Fielder teachers and students recognized, the goal at Park was to teach ELs as if blank slates, and build English proficiency skills and academic content knowledge, without making connections to students' backgrounds, experiences, and cultures.

Consequently, Park participants felt that knowledge of Spanish was a hindrance to success and their learning, and success was attributed to those who were able to navigate through school by accelerating the learning of English and losing Spanish along the way. Because knowledge of Spanish did not serve any significant purpose, according to both students and the teacher, this subsequently resulted in both a disinterest in Spanish and language loss, as affirmed above by student participants.

Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy Goes Beyond Native Language Instruction

As explained in the case studies above, Ms. Cynthia at Fielder did not speak Spanish and taught her language arts and science content with English curriculum. While this seems similar to aspects at Park, it is distinct in one important way. Her actions during observations and her opinions stated during interviews affirmed students' linguistic backgrounds, providing the space for students to use their prior knowledge as a resource to make connections to what they were learning. Students also were able to rely on each other as resources, and Ms. Cynthia did not position herself as the expert in the classroom. This differed from the learning environment in the fourth grade classroom at Park, as Mrs. Palma had the linguistic skills to support, if not enhance, students' learning with Spanish. Yet, students did not recognize this ability, as they believed she only spoke English. Besides not incorporating students' native language into instruction, she created an environment that favored English, so students did not feel like there was a place for the Spanish language, even during social time. This exemplifies the idea that enacting linguistically responsive pedagogy exceeds knowing and speaking the native language, but fostering a learning community with respect and openness, and utilizing students' language and cultural backgrounds and experiences as resources are even more critical.

Societal Pressure to Learn English

The idea that English is the "ticket to success" was prevalent at Park School, as made apparent by the school's language program model, curricular mandates, and the teacher's and students' practices and beliefs. It was consistent across data sources that the only way Park students would be successful during and post-schooling would be to thrive in English, even if that meant abandoning native language in the process. However, despite evidence of culturally and linguistically responsive instruction at Fielder School by enacting a dual language model,

creating a safe space for language development, and incorporating the community and students' experiences into curriculum, the pressure to learn English was still apparent. Conversations with both Ms. Natalie and Ms. Cynthia revealed this.

Ms. Cynthia, though embracing students' linguistic backgrounds and recognizing the importance of language maintenance in their development of bilingualism, still worried about some of her students not developing sufficient English skills. When talking about how she tells her students about the advantages of speaking two languages, she confessed to the overwhelming pressure she felt from the district. She was relieved that the school was now mandating an English-only basal reading series:

> My attitude is that, I always tell them, to get to college, because in college they can decide what area of study they want, but they'll have solid language. I do worry a little bit about their English, but I have to say I'm kind of happy because this year, the board, the area office was instrumental in having our school come on board with the English reading program. I wasn't in the classroom last year, so I can't speak really in detail how it used to work, but I do know that this is a new reading series this year, and I'm thankful for that.

This required language arts curriculum would ensure that students learned the sufficient and necessary English skills across grade levels. The decision could have been influenced by accountability factors and influence of high stakes testing requirements and may lead to related decisions in the future. As exemplified by the opening of the paper, Ms. Natalie expressed concern about the tensions that existed between the external pressures and what they were trying to accomplish at the school. Despite the school's mission and environment created, prevalent beliefs at home and/or within society at large, can bear greater weight in the long run.

Another aspect at Fielder that aligned with societal pressures and influences was instructional delivery. While the social studies curriculum and classroom meetings, along with the consistent presence, development, and affirmation of students' native language was more student-centered than instruction at Park, limited opportunities for critical thinking development was apparent across the two sites. Mathematics instruction at Fielder, for example, while in Spanish, also followed the IRE discourse pattern, where Ms. Natalie posed story or computation problems that sought out one correct answer, rather than emphasizing the problem solving process. During language arts instruction, students read stories in the required reading anthologies that were not connected to their lives, cultures, and/or experiences. Comprehension questions and assessed skills were not relevant to students, similar to that at Park. While the distinctions across the school sites were quite considerable, societal pressures, high-stakes testing, and accountability were factors that may have influenced stakeholders in both spaces.

Discussion

This study investigated two school settings implementing distinct language program models, and their relationship to culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy. Findings showed that only one school really demonstrated CRP, but the larger district climate and pressures, as well as attitudes and beliefs of individual teachers, impacted the ability to meet the needs of English

learners.

Teachers' Understanding of Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy

In order to appropriately address the academic and linguistic needs of the increasing EL student population in our schools, it is critical for teachers and administrators to be aware of what pedagogy is most appropriate. They should first have knowledge about their students' cultural practices and the process of learning an additional language. Teachers also need to accept and embrace the role of parents in their children's education. Thereafter, they can develop the skills to adapt curriculum and instruction accordingly.

If possible, teachers should instruct in students' home language in early grades to allow development of L1 literacy skills (Baker, 2006; Crawford, 2004). If primary language instruction is not possible, at minimum, teachers should provide a safe space for students to speak it. Teachers can also leverage knowledge in the first language when developing English literacy skills and academic content (Reyes, 2001). "Time to talk" in both languages is vital in establishing a linguistically responsive learning environment (Rao, 2011). Most importantly, teachers and administrators should draw on the linguistic and cultural resources of the students and families they serve (Zentella, 2005).

Beliefs Affect Pedagogy and Impact Students

Teachers' practices and attitudes regarding ELs have a strong influence on students' identities, their perceptions of school, and subsequently how they perform and engage (or disengage) as learners and citizens. Although teachers may have the best intentions for their students, the impact of their beliefs may be academically and emotionally harmful to students. For example, teachers may believe that it is in children of immigrants' best interest to hear only English at school. However, if an English-only curricular perspective or little to no L1 is used in the classroom, anxiety or tension can emerge between teachers and students. Students may feel that their teacher is insensitive toward their cultural identity, since language is a significant component of culture (DaSilva-Iddings & Katz, 2007). By limiting L1 use in the classroom, children take home a message that speaking their first language is not important and may become unnecessary if they progress in their social and academic English skills. Students may eventually refuse to use their home language in any context as a result of the message learned at school, even with family members who only speak the home language. In many cases, this results in inter-generational family conflict and loss of familial knowledge, especially from grandparent to grandchild (Fillmore, 1991).

When teachers create an inclusive climate in their classrooms and schools structure a supportive environment, this fosters confidence in ELs. This also contributes to more positive relations among students. One of the ways to do this is to show equal value of languages. Dual language programs, which are designed to honor, involve and maintain the use of first language instruction, aid in positive cultural identity construction, as students are exposed to affirmative opinions about their language (Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Reyes & Vallone, 2007). Teachers should not only be properly trained and educated, but also need to possess an empathetic and social-justice oriented disposition toward multilingual populations (Bartolomé & Trueba, 2000). It is

important for teachers not to see native language use as a limitation or a weakness to overcome, but rather an asset and resource from which to draw.

Understanding and Navigating the Political Context of Current Educational Spaces

Teachers must develop an understanding of the sociopolitical context and recognize how their decisions to enact or push back against the status quo impact their students (Trinder, 2014). For example, a school district may not support providing primary language instruction because it means waiting for long-term growth across two languages, rather than short-term gains in test scores. Given the realities of the current climate of accountability and high-stakes testing in education, teachers and administrators must believe in their language programs, remain true to their visions, and stand behind their pedagogical decisions. Similarly, teachers must develop understandings of the sociopolitical environment of their schools' communities to understand the effects on their students. They should have knowledge and awareness of sociopolitical and economic factors that influence students' lives, but must also realize their ability to be transformative in their teaching (Bartolomé & Balderrama, 2001).

Limitations and Future Research

The findings from this study are not necessarily representative of *all* schools that enact TBE or dual language models. The qualitative approach sought to describe the settings, which consisted of distinct bilingual programs and looked very different based on attention to a culturally responsive approach to instruction. Another limitation was that this analysis is based on one point in time of the academic year. Time spent in the schools across an entire year may have provided a chance to see the students and teachers evolve. Finally, due to grade level placements, observation at Fielder involved two different teachers' instruction, as there was not one teacher who provided dual language instruction in fourth grade. This provided a difference between Park, where students spent a full school day in one classroom with one bilingual teacher, and Fielder, where students experienced instruction with two teachers in two different languages.

Future research studies could focus on different grade levels and classrooms within the same school to focus on variation within one language program model or look at two different schools enacting the same model. Based on the findings in regards to the pressures to focus more on English instruction because of standardized testing, it would be instructive to hear from more teachers and administrators to verify whether this is a larger trend across other school districts.

Implications and Conclusion

Implications from this study emphasize the importance of particular knowledge and skills that teachers must possess in order to effectively teach ELs, the impact that teacher beliefs also have on students, and the need for teachers and administrators to know how to navigate within the political context of schools. Ultimately, implications for students are of paramount importance. ELs need to be in learning environments that allow them to realize their endless potential and maintain pride in their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The abilities they already possess in their first languages should be acknowledged and their rights to speak their L1s respected, as they develop the skills they need to maneuver in this society as proficient writers and thinkers in

both languages.

Author Notes

Arthi B. Rao is a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

P. Zitlali Morales is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Arthi B. Rao at arao6@uic.edu

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