Elementary Students’ Perceptions of School Belongingness and (Bi)cultural Identity in English-only and Dual-language strands

by

Rhianna Henry Casesa

Claremont Graduate University and San Diego State University
2015

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IDENTITY AND BELONGINGNESS IN DL AND EO CONTEXTS

APPROVAL OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

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Abstract

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In two-way immersion (TWI) models of dual-language education programs, majority language speakers and minority language speakers learn alongside each other with the expectation that they will all become biliterate by the end of the program. Research indicates that students in TWI programs perform at least as well as their peers in English-only (EO) programs (Lindholm-Leary, 2006); however, there is limited research regarding sociocultural factors of different programs (TWI or EO) that may impact students. Given that sense of school belongingness (Anderman, 2003) and bicultural identity development (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001) have both been shown to positive effects on students, this study focused upon students’ sense of school belongingness and bicultural identity development in EO and TWI schools.

As TWI (and other dual-language) programs are increasing in popularity throughout the United States, and with a particular emphasis on Southern California, students from two Southern California schools participated in this mixed-methods study. Surveys, open-ended questions, observations, dialogue journals, and photo-elicitation interviews were used to examine the bicultural identity development and sense of school belongingness for 4th through 6th grade students in English-only and TWI programs. Results suggest a quantitative relationship between bicultural identity development and school belongingness for some students, particularly for those with access to TWI
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education. Qualitative findings reveal complicated similarities and differences in the
ways students perceive (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness, as well as multiple
ways of actualizing a (bi)cultural identity based upon language and context. This study
adds to the limited literature regarding sociocultural factors and impacts of different
language programs, and it presents important pedagogical implications related to
schooling in general.
Acknowledgments

This project would not have been possible without a great deal of support and guidance. I am deeply appreciative of Dr. Cristina Alfaro (San Diego State University) and Dr. Mary Poplin (Claremont Graduate University) who are skilled mentors and scholars, and who gave generously of their time and feedback—beginning with the very seed of an idea in Spring of 2013. Dr. Marva Cappello thoughtfully offered her feedback and expertise in the area of qualitative data collection and analysis, particularly with the photo-elicitation interviews.

A special thanks to “Pleasant Valley” and “Language Academy” elementary schools for agreeing to participate in the study, as well as “Mrs. Robby” and “Ms. Gomez”, the sixth grade teachers in this study. I want to thank the eight focal students, “Arturo,” “Delia,” “Jeff,” “Ella,” “Sara,” “Emiliano,” “Mercedes,” and “Devon,” all for allowing me into their lives. It was a pleasure to work with such insightful kids.

And to my dissertation buddies—Karen, Paula, Liz, and Melissa—who offered advice, guidance, and moral support through all phases of this project. I am so blessed to have become a scholar surrounded by such intelligent, strong, and articulate women.

Finally, my husband, Marco Casesa, who has gone for “two and a half years of no golfing on Sundays” and my parents, Anna and Philip Henry, have been unconditionally supportive of this seemingly never-ending work. My toddler, Gia, has been so accommodating and patient while I worked on my dissertation, and her “aunties” (Erin Wilcox, Jane Christensen, and Melinda Wetherby) essentially helped raise her while I was off collecting and analyzing data, and writing, writing, writing and Marco was at work.

I couldn’t have done it without any of you.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

“I want my kids to learn Spanish, because, you know, I used to speak it when I was a kid.”

—Angelica, age 10

My interest in school belongingness and bicultural identity began as a bilingual 4th grade teacher at a school close to the U.S./Mexico border. This school did not promote Spanish development; instead, the focus was on the rapid acquisition of English—at whatever cost. By 4th grade, my students had internalized the dominant rhetoric that in order to be successful, they must only speak English. Some Spanish-speaking students denied speaking Spanish; others really didn’t speak Spanish anymore and required a translator to be able to communicate to their grandparents—or even their own parents. They didn’t know who they were, and they didn’t really belong anywhere. A few years later, I began to study belongingness and identity formally. This study looks at the concepts of (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness in two different educational contexts—mainstream English-only and the two-way immersion model of dual-language—with the intention of promoting a discussion about the importance of these concepts for all students, everywhere.

Dual-language (DL) programs are considered to be some of the most successful program types at promoting academic success in both the primary (home) language as well as the second language (DeJong, 2012). Although all DL programs in the United States are different, the goal is to teach at least 50 percent of the school curriculum in the
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*partner* (non-English) language. The expected result is *biliteracy*—children who are academically and culturally literate in two languages. There are other benefits as well, including cognitive advantages (Cummins, 1998; Esposito & Baker-Ward, 2013), enhanced creativity (Cloud, Genesse, & Hamayan, 2000), and bicultural identity development (Izquierdo, 2011; Palmer, 2009).

There are several different variations, or *models*, of dual-language education in the United States. They range from *full immersion*¹, in which the amount of the partner (non-English) language gradually reduces from 90% to 50%, to *partial immersion*², in which the partner language and English are balanced from the beginning. The types of students can differ in different programs as well: some programs are *one-way*, meaning that all students enrolled in the program are not native speakers of the partner language³; other programs are *two-way*. In two-way immersion programs, native language speakers from both the partner language and English are in the same classroom. The dual-language strand investigated in this book is a two-way full immersion Spanish program.

While dual-language programs have differences, the history of North American DL programs can be traced to French immersion programs established in the 1960s in Canada. These dual-language programs resulted from middle- and upper-middle-class parental pressure for more effective French language instruction for their children. The United States quickly followed with dual-language programs⁴ of their own. Research focusing upon dual-language throughout the United States and Canada over the past 50 years indicates that dual-language education results in high levels of academic achievement in English and the partner language. Nevertheless, as a society we have gone beyond basing a child’s success solely upon academic achievement. Given the call
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of current educational reform—particularly Common Core State Standards—to focus upon skills required for “globally competitive society” including “what it means to be a literate person in the twenty-first century” and “broaden[ed] worldviews” (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2010, p.2), it is important for research to look beyond (not past) the academic markers of achievement (such as standardized test scores) to include positive sociocultural attitudes that are required of twenty-first century, globally competent citizens.

At the same time, the demographics of the United States are changing. By 2025, culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) youth will no longer be in the “minority” in the United States (The Forum for Education and Democracy, 2008). When considering youth currently enrolled in public schools, CLD students surpassed the number of White students in 2014. Finally, the number of students enrolled in public schools who identify as two or more races is projected to increase by forty-four percent between 2011 and 2022 (Hussar & Bailey, 2014).

Considering both educational reform and demographic shifts, bicultural identity and school belongingness are increasing in relevancy throughout the United States. Therefore, we need to expand our definition of success past the mainstream benchmarks of achievement to include sociocultural, sociolinguistic, and psychosocial dimensions. Therefore, bicultural identity, defined as the ability of individuals to function in two sociocultural environments (Darder, 2012), and sense of school belongingness, defined as the feeling of being respected by the school community (Goodenow, 1992; Goodenow, 1993, Osterman, 2000), may be two critical indicators of a student’s ability to develop important skills related to cross-cultural and global competencies.
While research indicates that dual-language strands promote academic achievement (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2009), we know very little about the role of (bi)cultural identity development in these programs. Likewise, we do not know if or how these programs promote a feeling of school belongingness. These, and other, critical issues in DL education were published in the 2009 report: *Urgent Research Questions and Issues in Dual-language Education* (Parkes, Ruth, Anberg-Espinoza, & De Jong, 2009). This dissertation attempts to address some of those questions.  

Although there have been several studies that demonstrate a relationship between academic achievement and bicultural identity development (Feliciano, 2001b; Kiang, Supple, Stein, & Gonzalez, 2012), as well as others that suggest a relationship between sense of school belongingness and academic success (Anderman, 2003; Fite et. al. 2014; Nichols, 2003), there are few, if any, that explore the relationship between identity development, belongingness, and dual-language education. The literature does not describe the relationship between bicultural identity and sense of school belongingness, nor does the literature examine identity and belongingness specifically for students in well-implemented, research-based dual-language strands, particularly as compared to those in EO programs. The present study combines a quantification of both biculturalism and school belongingness with a qualitative investigation of bicultural identity development and sense of school belongingness.

**Purpose of the Book**

The purpose of this book is to explore the relationship between (bi)cultural identity development and school belongingness for 4th through 6th-grade students in two
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educational contexts in Southern California: dual-language and English-only (EO). It also seeks to describe, interpret, and explain the forms and self-perceptions of (bi)cultural identity development and sense of school belongingness for eight 6th-grade students (four DL and four EO) at the same school. Unlike much dual-language research that focuses upon standardized achievement scores, this study uses validated measures of (bi)cultural identity development and school belongingness, as well as extensive qualitative methods including observations, dialogue journals, and interviews.

It was found that elementary schoolchildren do not significantly differ in their sense of belongingness or (bi)cultural identity development based upon program (DL or EO). Nevertheless, there was a positive correlation between school belongingness and (bi)cultural identity for students at the school with a DL strand, whether or not they were enrolled in the dual-language program. For students at the English-only school, there was no correlation between school belongingness and (bi)cultural identity. Qualitative data revealed that students have similar perspectives regarding what it means to fit-in at school, regardless of educational program; furthermore, for both groups language played a crucial role in defining their developing (bi)cultural identity. This study suggests that most elementary students still have very positive perspectives of school belongingness and (bi)cultural identity. As the literature suggests that sense of school belongingness begins to decline in middle school, and that (bi)cultural identity develops (or does not) through middle and high school, this study calls for an in-depth analysis of the possible protective factors of a dual-language elementary education on sense of school belongingness and bicultural identity development in middle and high school students. It also calls for an in-depth investigation of different typologies of (bi)cultural identity.
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including whether certain patterns of social integration are more adaptive than others. Finally, this study proposes a critical examination of the role of language and language status within dual-language strands and its role on (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness.

Having summarized what I will attempt to achieve in writing this book, it may be useful to mention what I will not. Given that I focus upon two schools in Southern California (one with a two-way immersion model of dual-language education and one that is English-only), results cannot be over-generalized to address the overall identity development or sense of school belongingness for students in schools across the country or for students in different types of dual-language strands. Nor do I analyze curriculum, instruction, or teacher positionality within these schools. So, while this is not a “how-to” book detailing pedagogical strategies that promote (bi)cultural identity development and school belongingness, I do think that this book is helpful nevertheless: it gives you, the reader, the opportunity to look at (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness from elementary students’ perspectives, and it encourages you to think about the role of the educational system in promoting and developing (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness.

Theoretical Framework

This study takes a sociocultural perspective (Vygotsky, 1978) and incorporates the bicultural/acculturation models of Darder (2012) and Berry (1983) into the analysis. Sociocultural theory posits that learning—both academic (such as content) and personal (such as who we are)—is socially constructed. We learn from and about each other, the surrounding cultural environment, and the preferred beliefs and attitudes through our
experiences, which then influence who we are as individuals. Schooling is a critical component of these experiences. In the words of Moll, a critical Vygotskian sociocultural theorist, “Education makes us not only what we are, but who we are, and who we could become” (Moll, 2013, p.1).

Figure 1 illustrates the sociocultural development of identity. According to Darder (2012), there are five response patterns that relate to identity development of bicultural individuals: cultural alienation, cultural negotiation, cultural separatism, cultural dualism, and bicultural affirmation. These individual response patterns are influenced by the relationships that the individual has with his/her environment, such as context, culture, educational practices/systems, history, language, relationships, etc., as well as the interactions between these factors.

Sociocultural theory is particularly relevant in studies of (bi)cultural identity development and dual-language strands, as the background context—including the cultural, racial, social, educational, and linguistic identities of the community, the school, and the home—influences the student’s perception of belonging, identity, and language, which can then impact what and how they learn (Nieto, 2012).
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Figure 1. The sociocultural development of (bi)cultural identity.

Organization

Throughout the book, you will see italicized words that will be briefly defined in text whenever possible, and also more thoroughly defined in the “Definition of Terms” at the end of the book. Furthermore, at the conclusion of many chapters you will see a section of notes. Within this section, you can find further exploration or explanation of
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concepts within the chapter—explanations that were left out in favor of overall
readability of the text.

Following this chapter, chapters 2 and 3 review relevant research relating to dual-
language strands, biculturalism, and belongingness, and the relationships among the
three. Chapter 4 explains the methodology of the study, including the research questions
and design. A particular focus of that chapter is on the use of photoelicitation interviews
as a tool for data generation and analysis. Chapter 5 describes the settings of the two
schools, Language Academy Elementary School (LAES) and (PVES) Pleasant Valley
Elementary School. In Chapter 6, I present and discuss the quantitative results and
qualitative findings taken from the surveys for both schools. Chapter 7 focuses upon the
individual stories, voices, and images of eight focal students, including an analysis and
discussion based upon five months of observations, journal entries, and participant-
generated photography. Finally, in Chapter 8, I present my own conclusions about the
role of formal education in the development of (bi)cultural identity and school
belongingness, as well as suggestions for future research studies.

Notes

1 Full immersion programs are also called 90:10 programs, based upon the fact that in the
early years 90% of the instructional day is spent in the partner language and 10% of the
instructional day is spent in Spanish.

2 Partial immersion is also called 50:50 immersion, because for the duration of the
program 50% of the day is spent in each language.

3 Most students in one-way immersion programs are native English speakers learning the
partner language as an enrichment language.
It is important to make a brief but important distinction between dual-language strands and bilingual programs. The goal of dual-language strands is balanced biliteracy—the ability to read, write, comprehend, and speak both languages equally well. The goal of bilingual programs is English proficiency, which often occurs at the expense of the native language. The United States has both types of programs: dual-language and bilingual, as well as English-only. A detailed review of the educational programs in the United States is available in Chapter 2.

The published questions stemming from *Urgent Research Questions and Issues in Dual-Language Education* (2009) that relate to this book are: *How is student identity addressed in dual-language strands* (p.1); *What practices, behaviors, knowledge, and attitudes are defined by cross-cultural competence, and how should it be measured?* (p.11); and, *How does peer interaction differ among various groups (ethnicity, language background, SES, gender, etc, across different configurations (L1, L2, integrated groups) and in different context (elementary/middle/high school, classroom, playground, cafeteria, instructional setting)?* (p.11)

Actually, I could not find any studies whatsoever that explored the complex relationships between and among school belongingness, (bi)cultural identity, and language education.

This study uses the Mixed Ethnicity Identity Measure (MEIM) (Phinney, 1992) and the Psychological Sense of School Membership (PSSM) (Goodenow, 1993). See Chapter 4 for more information about these measures.

A full explanation of different (bi)cultural and ethnic identity profiles will be discussed in Chapter 3.
9 School names are pseudonyms to protect confidentiality.
Chapter 2: Dual-Language Research

Dual-language strands have three major goals: First, to develop high levels of bilingualism, biliteracy, and bicognition for all students; second, to promote academic achievement in multiple languages; and third, to foster positive language and cross-cultural attitudes (Howard, Sugarman, & Christian, 2003). While all dual-language strands aim to meet these three goals for all students, programmatic differences including time spent in the partner language and student typology differ. This chapter starts with a brief explanation about these basic programmatic differences, including a thorough explanation of two-way full immersion programs as this is the type of dual-language strand examined in this book. As the United States has multiple educational programs (in fact, the majority not being DL)\(^1\), this section is followed by a description of general educational programs with a specific focus of these programs’ supportiveness of biliteracy. This chapter continues with the salient research on student achievement within dual-language strands, and then briefly discusses the role of language status within dual-language strands. It is important to note that within this chapter, and for the rest of the book, Spanish will be referred to as the *partner* language, and English will be the *dominant* language\(^2\).

**Dual-language strand Models**

Dual-language strands are generally described in terms of model, type, and student descriptors. *Full immersion* or *partial immersion* programs refer to the amount of time spent in the partner language (e.g. Spanish). In a *full-immersion* program younger students (those in kindergarten and first grade) spend 90% of instructional time in the
Spanish; this gradually decreases while the amount of English gradually increases until a balance of 50/50 is met, usually around 4th grade. Partial immersion programs begin with, and maintain, this 50/50 balance throughout the program. For this reason, full-immersion programs are also referred to as 90:10 or 90/10 models. Likewise, partial-immersion is called 50:50 or 50/50.

With regards to literacy instruction, in a partial immersion program, formal literacy in both English and Spanish begins in kindergarten. On the other hand, in full immersion programs, formal Spanish literacy instruction begins in kindergarten but formal English literacy does not occur until later, usually around 2nd grade. Research indicates that the full immersion program model is the most effective for the acquisition and mastery of two languages at high levels of proficiency for all students regardless of native language (Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2003; Collier & Thomas 2003; Lindholm-Leary, 2000; Reyes 2001); however, students in these programs often initially appear to be behind in English reading when compared to their peers in 50:50 or EO programs as formal literacy instruction doesn’t begin until 2nd grade. This initial lag in English literacy can be concerning to parents despite the evidence that their children will catch-up to their peers. Additionally, school administrators worry about the standardized test scores of young students in full-immersion programs, as this initial delay in English literacy instruction results in lower achievement scores in English in the lower grades, and English language tests are the measure of academic success in this country. Both of these are the reasons why some schools favor partial over full immersion.

One- or two-way models indicate the type of students enrolled in the program. In one-way immersion, most students speak English natively and are learning Spanish as a
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second language.\textsuperscript{2} In \textit{one-way developmental} language programs, the majority of students are native Spanish speakers who may or may not also be native/fluent speakers of English; they are developing and maintaining their Spanish while learning English at the same time. \textit{Two-way immersion} models include a balance of native Spanish speakers and native English speakers; the native Spanish speakers learn English, and the native English speakers learn Spanish. For a table of programs and models, see Table 1.

Table 1

\textit{Dual-language strand Models.}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Learner</th>
<th>Full Immersion: 90/10 In the early years, students spend 90% of their instructional time in Spanish.</th>
<th>Partial Immersion: 50/50 Throughout the program, students spend 50% of their instructional time in Spanish and 50% of their instructional time in English.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One-way immersion</td>
<td>ONE-WAY FULL IMMERSION</td>
<td>ONE-WAY PARTIAL IMMERSION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native English speakers learn Spanish</td>
<td>DEVELOPMENTAL FULL IMMERSION</td>
<td>DEVELOPMENTAL PARTIAL IMMERSION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-way developmental</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Spanish speakers develop Spanish while learning English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-way immersion</td>
<td>TWO-WAY FULL IMMERSION</td>
<td>TWO-WAY PARTIAL IMMERSION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native English speakers learn Spanish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Spanish speakers learn English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two-way immersion is the only dual-language program in which native speakers of both languages (Spanish and English) are present in the same classroom. This inclusion of speakers of both the majority language (English) and the minoritized
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language (Spanish) provides opportunities for all students to build language and cross-cultural skills which promotes an appreciation of other cultures are well as other languages (Lindholm-Leary, 2001).

The dual-language strand studied in this book is a typical two-way full-immersion program. Most students entered the program as kindergarteners or first graders speaking either English or Spanish. A few of them were already bilingual. Through second grade the students spent 90% of their instructional day speaking and learning in Spanish and 10% of the instructional day in English. Beginning in fourth grade, the students spend half their instructional time in English and half of the instructional time in Spanish. The few students who entered this two-way full immersion program after first grade were at least orally proficient in Spanish and English upon enrollment.

These are not the only program types and descriptors when discussing dual-language education. There are also heritage language programs, in which native English speakers with Spanish-speaking ancestry learn their heritage language—Spanish. Often heritage language programs overlap with the previously described programs; for instance, many of the native English speakers in this study described themselves as “Mexican-American.” For these students, the program was both a two-way full immersion program as well as a heritage language program. A more thorough explanation of dual-language strands continues in the next section.

**General Program Descriptions**

A description of dual-language strands would not be complete without including a description of other educational options for students throughout the United States. In fact, while dual-language is growing, they are still limited in number, and the majority of
students throughout the United States are not enrolled in these types of educational options.

From a linguistic perspective, we can place educational options into two categories: programs promote biliteracy and those that do not. Table 2 shows the current educational programs available to students in the United States, ranging from least supportive of biliteracy (mainstream English) to most supportive (two-way immersion). Again, Spanish and English are used as the examples for the sake of clarity.

Programs in which the language of instruction is English-only (mainstream English and structured/sheltered English immersion), as well as programs that move into English-only instruction (transitional bilingual programs) are the most common forms of education the United States, yet they are considered to be ineffective programs for the development of biliteracy.

English-only programs, such as mainstream English and structured/sheltered English immersion, aim to expedite the acquisition of English by using English as the only language of instruction. They are based upon the presumption that a second language is acquired rapidly when taught through meaningful context and interaction (Baker, 2006) English-only programs can be split into two categories: mainstream and sheltered. In a mainstream English classroom, English learners and English speakers are in the same classroom. All instruction is in English, and non-fluent speakers of English receive little, if any, instructional support (Baker, 2006).
Table 2

Educational Programs (adapted from Baker, 1993)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Program</th>
<th>Linguistic profile of students</th>
<th>Language of the classroom</th>
<th>Societal and Educational Aim</th>
<th>Linguistic Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MAINSTREAM ENGLISH</td>
<td>Native English speakers &amp; English learners</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Assimilation</td>
<td>English-only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHELTERED/STRUCTURED ENGLISH IMMERSION (SEI)</td>
<td>English learners (e.g. native Spanish speakers)</td>
<td>English with some Spanish support</td>
<td>Assimilation</td>
<td>English-only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRANSITIONAL BILINGUAL</td>
<td>English learners (e.g. native Spanish speakers)</td>
<td>Starts with Spanish, transitions into English (usually by grade 2).</td>
<td>Assimilation</td>
<td>English-dominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEVELOPMENTAL BILINGUAL</td>
<td>Native Spanish speakers</td>
<td>English &amp; Spanish</td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Bilingualism &amp; biliteracy in English and Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONE-WAY IMMERSION</td>
<td>Native English Speakers</td>
<td>English &amp; Spanish with initial emphasis on Spanish</td>
<td>Pluralism &amp; enrichment</td>
<td>Bilingualism &amp; biliteracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWO-WAY IMMERSION</td>
<td>Native English speakers &amp; native Spanish speakers</td>
<td>English &amp; Spanish</td>
<td>Maintenance, Pluralism, &amp; Enrichment</td>
<td>Bilingualism &amp; biliteracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A sheltered or structured English immersion (SEI) classroom is slightly different. These classrooms are comprised only of English learners at a variety of levels. All classroom instruction is in English but the curriculum and presentation is designed for language learners (California Department of Education, 2010). Students in SEI programs may receive small group support in their primary language.

While English-only programs, such as mainstream English and SEI, are designed to promote rapid second language acquisition through meaningful context and interaction, low standardized test scores and low achievement rates of students in these programs indicate that academic language acquisition is not happening (Baker, 1993; Gándara, 2010). This suggests that students in EO programs are not receiving enough meaningful instruction to be academically successful. It also suggests that meaningful content and interaction may not be enough to promote second-language acquisition.

*Transitional bilingual education (TBE)* programs aim to improve academic achievement by providing young students with content matter and instruction in their native language (e.g. Spanish) until they are proficient enough to manage in all-English classrooms. In TBE programs, students are gradually offered less instruction in Spanish and more instruction in English until a basic level of English proficiency has been reached, at which point these students “transition” to an English-only program. In general, this transition to English-only occurs by 2nd or 3rd grade (Baker, 2006). Like English-only programs, the goal of TBE is to promote English language acquisition quickly without considering the impact of rapid English acquisition upon native language or culture.
On the other hand, dual-language strands such as developmental bilingual education (DBE) and one- and two-way immersion programs are considered to be strong forms of education for bilingualism and biliteracy (Baker, 2006). Dual-language strands promote bilingualism, biliteracy, academic achievement, and multicultural awareness for all students (National Dual-language Consortium, 2011). The goal of dual-language strands is biliteracy in the languages (ex. Spanish and English) rather than encouraging students to speak English as quickly as possible, as is the case of English-only and TBE models (Gándara, 2010; Gandara & Hopkins, 2010; Varghese & Park, 2010). All elementary dual-language strands, regardless of the student population, use the partner language for at least 50% of the instructional day (National Dual-language Consortium, 2011). Developmental bilingual education, and one- and two-way immersion programs are all considered strong forms of dual-language education.

Developmental Bilingual Education (DBE) aims to promote native language proficiency and foster English acquisition simultaneously. In these programs, all students are native Spanish speakers who have varying degrees of proficiency in English. In these programs, students develop their Spanish while at the same time learning English. Teachers incrementally increase the amount of English-speaking instruction until the students spend 50% of their instructional time in English and 50% of their instructional time in Spanish. Unlike TBE where the students transition out of native-language instruction and into English-only instruction (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010), DBE classrooms never eliminate native language instruction.

As previously mentioned, one-way immersion (OWI) programs, sometimes called foreign language immersion programs, focus upon teaching Spanish to native English
speakers; and two-way immersion programs (TWI) teach English to Spanish speakers and Spanish to English speakers. Unlike DBE or one-way models of dual-language education, TWI programs provide emerging bilinguals, or students who are learning a second language (generally English) (Garcia, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008), with sustained access to fluent and native speakers of both languages. This provides them with more language models than in DBE or OWI programs, with the overall objective being for both groups to become bilingual and biliterate (Garcia & Hopkins, 2010). See Figure 2 for a pictorial representation of one- versus two-way immersion.

![One-Way Immersion](ENGLISH) ![Two-Way Immersion](SPANISH)

**Fig. 2.** One- and Two-Way Immersion Models. In general, in a one-way immersion program, native English speakers learn Spanish. In a two-way immersion program, native speakers of Spanish learn English and native speakers of English learn Spanish. They are all in the same class.

The combination of classroom demographics/composition and educational/linguistic goal make TWI programs unique when compared to other DL, bilingual, and EO programs. Linguistically and culturally minoritized students (Spanish speakers) and linguistic majority students (English speakers) work together collaboratively to achieve the goal of high academic achievement in both Spanish and English. This unique feature can only be said of TWI programs and may indeed be one of the reasons for their success.
Achievement Findings

Broadly speaking, the effectiveness of dual-language strands has been clearly established for native English speakers and native Spanish speakers across race/ethnicity and socioeconomic background (Callahan & Gandara, 2014; Cazabon, Lambert, & Hall, 1993; Cazabon, Nicoladis, & Lambert, 1998; Christian, 1996; Gándara & Hopkins, 2010; Genesee, 1987; Gilbert, 2001; Howard, Sugarman, & Christianson, 2003; Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Rhodes, Christian, & Barfield, 1997; Thomas & Collier, 1998, 2002). Despite the persistent historical achievement gap between white and Latino students (both English speaking and English learning) in the United States, current research suggests that students in dual-language strands (one- and two-way) perform better than those in English-only programs, regardless of native language and/or ethnicity (Barfield & Rhodes, 1993; Christian, Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, & Howard, 2004; Gándara & Hopkins, 2012; Lindholm-Leary, 2006; Senesac, 2002). In sum, dual-language education “holds great promise as a strategy for closing the achievement gap” (Gandara & Hopkins, 2010, p. 175). The following review analyzes some of the most salient literature regarding achievement in dual-language strands.

In 1993, Barfield & Rhodes studied the effects of program placement (two-way partial immersion versus mainstream English) on fourth graders at one school in Virginia. Results demonstrated that students enrolled in the TWI program outperformed those placed in the EO program on a national norm-referenced test. On this same test, students in the TWI programs also scored above both the statewide and national means. While these results were certainly promising, given the small sample size, other factors could have contributed to improved achievement of the students in the TWI program.
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Furthermore, data was not disaggregated by ethnicity nor English speaker/English learner status, making a thorough analysis impossible. Nevertheless, future studies showed similar results for all students in two-way immersion programs in general, and particularly for Latino TWI students.

Like Barfield & Rhodes (1993), Christian et. al. (2004) analyzed test scores of students from one particular school with two educational programs: a TWI strand and an EO strand. Unlike Barfield & Rhodes, Christian et. al (2004) disaggregated these scores by ethnicity. They found that Latino students in the TWI strand scored in the 38th percentile on the norm-referenced SAT 9 test, whereas Latino students in the EO strand scored at the 34.8th percentile. While Latino students in two-way immersion outperformed the Latino English-only students, given that the SAT is a norm-referenced test, any particular group as a whole should be expected to score at the 50th percentile. As both groups of Latino students scored below this percentile, this indicates an achievement gap based upon ethnicity regardless of educational program.

In 2006, Lopez and Tashakkori found that dual-language strands facilitated literacy development in students’ native languages while at the same time promoting literacy development in the students’ second language. In this study, they compared two groups of English learners: those who were enrolled in a TWI program and those who were enrolled in a TBE program.

Quantitative results indicated no significant difference in academic measures in English between the TWI students and the TBE students; however, TWI students took less time to reach proficiency in English than their peers in the TBE program. Furthermore, students in the TWI programs received higher scores on academic measures
in Spanish than the students in TBE programs. Therefore, quantitative results from Lopez and Tashakkori (2006) indicated that English learners in TWI programs reached higher levels of biliteracy and in less time than their peers in TBE programs.

These small-scale (i.e. school-wide) studies suggested that dual-language students perform at least as well as (though often better) than English-only students regardless of native language. Larger-scale studies had similar results. For instance, Senesac (2002) investigated the differences between schools within the same district in Illinois. He found that, in general, students enrolled in TWI schools outperformed students from the same district who were enrolled in EO schools. Furthermore, students in the TWI programs had scores comparable to or better than the students throughout the state (Senesac, 2002). Likewise, Lindholm-Leary (2006) studied students in dual-language strands throughout California. She found that DL students scored better than average as compared to all students throughout the state, and at least as well as English-only students. Christian, Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, & Howard (2004) found similar results. In studying multiple dual-language strands across different schools and states, they found that students at schools with dual-language strands performed better in almost all areas tested and across all tested grades. This held true even for schools that had higher proportions of culturally and linguistically diverse students than the other schools throughout the districts and the states.

While the studies reviewed above grouped students by program placement (dual-language versus English-only) without considering native language, studies with data disaggregated by English learner (EL) status show similar results regarding achievement in DL programs. For instance, August & Hakuta (1997) and Howard, Sugarman, and
Christianson (2003) all found that ELs in dual-language strands outperformed ELs in non-DL programs. Similarly, Lindholm-Leary and Borsato (2006) found that ELs in TWI and DBE dual language programs scored at least as well as their peers in English-only classes on standardized achievement measures, if not better.

Thomas and Collier (1997, 2002) investigated the effects of different educational programs on EL achievement in schools and school districts across the country. Based on their research, they concluded that dual-language programs (including OWI, TWI, and DBE) were the only programs in which ELs reached or exceeded national averages in both their native languages and English. Students in other programs, such as those in transitional bilingual, pull-out programs, and sheltered/structured English immersion did not reach national means and fell behind native English speakers. English learners in mainstream English-only programs fared the worst: by the eleventh grade they only reached the 12th percentile.

In another large-scale study, Lindholm-Leary (2001) found that English learners in TWI programs scored higher than the English learners’ overall average; however, they scored below overall state averages on norm-referenced tests. Despite lower than average scores, students demonstrated gradual improvement. This study suggests that while TWI programs may not completely close they achievement gap between English learners and English speakers, they may reduce it. Data from this study disaggregated by native language and ethnicity indicated that native English speaking Latino students in 90/10 TWI programs were close to meeting the national norm in third grade (44th percentile), met the norm by fourth grade (50th percentile), and exceeded it by 5th grade (57th percentile). Native English speaking Latino students in 50/50 TWI programs scored
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higher than the national norm in both the third (76th percentile) and fourth (66th percentile) grades.

Studies of achievement in dual-language strands are not without criticism. One of the criticisms is that the research is limited (Lindholm-Leary & Borsato, 2006), and that many of the studies are correlational (Lindholm-Leary & Borsato, 2006). Furthermore, factors such as student language and educational background, socioeconomic status, overall school quality, and small sample sizes can cloud results (Sugarman & Christianson, 2003; Krashen, 2004). There are very few studies with adequate comparison groups (Krashen, 2004).

Therefore, while students in dual-language strands are generally as academically successful (if not more) than their peers in other programs, it cannot be demonstrated conclusively that dual-language strands are the cause of this success. First, dual-language strands are opt-in programs, meaning that parents have to intentionally select this placement for their children. Therefore, it could be assumed that these parents are highly engaged in the education of their children, a known factor in school achievement. Additionally, most students enrolled in dual-language strands enter the program in kindergarten or first grade and stay in this program through 5th or 6th grade (or even longer, if available). This suggests that most students in DL programs have been enrolled at the same school for a few years before being tested—and this educational consistency has also been shown to contribute to achievement.

Regardless of the criticism regarding methodological issues, and the inability to conclusively say that dual-language strands cause academic success, results regarding achievement are generally consistent and should not be ignored: Students in dual-
language strands, regardless of background, do at least as well as students in English-only programs—and often, they do better.

**Benefits of Biliteracy**

There are well-researched advantages to being bilingual and biliterate—regardless of home language. From a cognitive perspective, people who are bilingual exhibit more cognitive flexibility, particularly in the areas of metalinguistic knowledge, metalinguistic ability, and metalinguistic awareness (Bialystock, 2001). They have enhanced metalinguistic development (Ben-Zeev, 1977; Bialystock, 1988; Clark, 1978; Diaz, 1983) and syntactic awareness (Bialystock & Majumder, 1998; Galambos & Goldin-Meadow, 1990). In addition to cognitive benefits, bilingualism positively impacts employability (Callahan & Gandara, 2014) and income generation (Agirdag, 2014; Moore et. al. 2014).

Researchers noted (Agirdag, 2014; Bialystock, 2001; Gandara & Hopkins, 2010) that the “bilingual advantage” (Callahan & Gandara, 2014) is dependent upon the proficiency and balance of both languages.

In response to strong research base suggesting a number of advantages to balanced bilingualism, California adopted the State Seal of Biliteracy (SSB) in 2012 (Porras, Ee, & Gandara, 2015). The SSB is a gold seal appearing on the transcript or diploma of the graduating high school senior who has “attained proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation” (Californians Together, 2011). It is not only a statement by the awarding district or school that proficiency in two or more languages is important, but it is also evidence to future employers and college admissions officers that bilingualism is valued. California awarded 20,000 Seals of Biliteracy in 2014 to bilingual high-school graduates (Porras, Ee, & Gandara, 2015); while most of these students were
bilingual in English and Spanish, these seals are available to any graduates who master two (or more) languages: “standard academic English” and any other (Californians Together, 2011). This legislation has been so successful that New York and Illinois have also adopted State Seals of Biliteracy.

**Language Status**

The status of different languages within DL programs has been a fairly recent subject of interest for dual-language researchers and educators—people who see the tension between the majority language and the minoritized language within their schools and classrooms. *Language status* can be defined as the perceived economic, social, and cultural value of a language. It is deeply influenced by dominant culture and the way in which the people within the society see the language(s) that they themselves speak, or the language(s) that are spoken around them (Fishman, 2006; Tochon, 2009). Furthermore, language status can be influenced, impacted, and reinforced by restrictive language policies such as Proposition 227 in California and Proposition 203 in Arizona (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010). In reviewing literature related to language status, I looked at society from macro- (i.e. the dominant society of the United States or other particular countries) and micro- (i.e. the society of schools and classrooms) levels. When discussing language status, even the terms “minority” and “majority” language are problematic, even though they are the salient terms within the literature. These terms imply that one language is inherently inferior or less important to the other, which can, in turn, affect its status both inside and outside the classroom. Current DL researchers prefer to use “partner languages” in an attempt to promote equal language status within the programs. When absolutely necessary to discriminate between the two languages, “minoritized” replaces
“minority” in order to account for the power dynamics within the relationships. I will attempt to use the same language wherever possible.

According to Garcia, Bartlett, & Kleifgen (2007), there are “carefully [though not necessarily explicitly] negotiated linguistic hierarchies, with some languages (often colonial ones) having more power than others, and with schools often working towards academic monolingualism” (p. 207). Therefore, in order to analyze language status, it is important consider the colonial history of a language as well as socioeconomic factors. For instance, there is a difference between native Spanish speakers learning English in the United States and native Welsh speakers learning English in Wales based upon the minoritized groups’ socioeconomic statuses (SES). While both groups are English learners, the native Spanish speakers in the United States often have lower socioeconomic levels than the Welsh-speaking children in Wales. Furthermore, there is the dominant rhetoric in many parts of the United States that Spanish speakers (primarily those from Mexico, Central, and South America) should not be in the United States in the first place, whereas it is perfectly acceptable for Welsh speakers to be in Wales. These factors all contribute different perceptions of Spanish, Welsh, and the native speakers of these languages. Limiting discussions of language status to the socioeconomic status of the learners is also reductive and problematic. For instance, there is a difference between middle-class, native French speakers who are learning English in Quebec, and middle-class, native English speakers who are learning French in Quebec (Bialystok, 2007). Both groups represent the middle-class, and English is the minoritized language. Yet, English still holds more power and prestige in Canada than Spanish in the United States or Welsh in Wales. Furthermore, based upon their socioeconomic status, the parents of English-
speaking students in Quebec likely have more voice and power than the low SES Spanish
speakers in the United States or the low SES Welsh speakers in Wales.

Language status cannot be reduced to a simple equation. It has to be considered in
terms of context that considers socioeconomic levels of the individuals, as well as
whether the particular language in question is a majority or minoritized language within
the community and the society. It is crucial to consider differences between children in
“privileged” social circumstances (who often learn a second language as enrichment) and
those in “compromised” social environments (who must learn a second language for
survival).

Worldwide, while only 5.43% of the world’s population speaks English natively
(compared with 14.4% native Mandarin speakers and 6.15% native Spanish speakers)
(Government of Sweden, 2007), English is perceived as a “language of power,” meaning
that within and across countries, English is a means of social and economic
communication as well as status (Baker, 2011; Potowski, 2004; Sugarman, 2012; Volk &
Arturoova, 2007). It is a colonial language and is used in international business, tourism,
and global communications (Garcia, Bartlett, & Kleifgen, 2007). All of these factors
positively impact the relative status of English in the U.S., and indeed the world, even
though relatively few people actually speak English as a first language worldwide.

The prestige of English is particularly strong in the United States, as exemplified
by the many students from bilingual homes who are often placed in subtractive (i.e.,
third-person) bilingual or English-only programs with the intention of replacing Spanish
with English. Within the past twenty years, Proposition 227 in California, Proposition
203 in Arizona, and Chapter 386 of the Acts of 2002 in Massachusetts all dramatically
reduced English learners’ access to primary language instruction (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010). This reflects the underlying societal assumption that Spanish is problematic which promotes negative connotations of bilingualism and bilingual education (Wiley & Wright, 2004) and reinforces the status of English in the U.S.

Biliteracy development, at least in the United States, is dependent upon developing the status of languages other than English (particularly Spanish). The natural attraction towards the societal language of power, in this case, English, and the perceived preferred education is very powerful for a child; however, teachers, parents, siblings, and peers can add or subtract value to Spanish and other minoritized languages, making them more or less desirable to learn or use (Pearson, 2007).

In theory, one way to develop language status of minoritized languages would be by promoting dual-language strands. After all, dual-language strands have an explicit (yet hard-to-measure) goal of “positive language and cross-cultural attitudes” (Lindholm-Leary, 2003). Can this goal be interpreted as equal language status? Is an explicitly stated goal of a program enough to make it happen? Maybe, but maybe not. Perhaps reiterating the economic advantages (Callahan & Gandara, 2015) of balanced bilingualism could promote the status of minoritized languages.

Dual-language strands in the United States are often comprised of two languages with unequal status: English (which has more status) and Spanish (which has less). For instance, out of the 441 registered DL programs in the United States, 408 of them are Spanish-English (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2014). While these numbers only reflect the programs registered through CAL (i.e. unregistered DL programs would not be on this list), it is likely a representative sample of the DL programs in the U.S. Therefore,
these statistics demonstrate that approximately 90% of the DL programs in the United States are Spanish-English. This means that, in general, native English-speakers learn Spanish, and native Spanish speakers learn English in DL programs throughout the United States, though obviously there are other programs in which the partner language is not Spanish. As Spanish historically has been considered to have less status than English, considering the power dynamic in Spanish-English dual-language strands is crucial; however, there is very little explicit research focusing upon language in dual-language strands.

While not explicitly studying language status, Lopez and Tashakkori (2006) compared 5th graders’ attitudes towards bilingualism using interviews and Likert-type questionnaires. They questioned 5th grade English learners who were either enrolled in a TWI program or a TBE program. Results indicate that students enrolled in the TWI program had “more positive attitudes towards bilingualism in English and Spanish” (p.6) than those students in TBE programs. To be fair, having a positive attitude towards Spanish and English bilingualism is not the same as considering both languages to have equal status. Furthermore, based upon results from the questionnaire, TWI students considered bilingualism to be an asset for the future. They believed that it facilitated communication between groups, and they asserted that it maintains their cultural heritage. Finally, they emphasized that bilingualism was an academic advantage. Again, while these factors are not exactly the same as language status, they point to positive opinions about Spanish in general, as well as positive attitudes about Spanish-English bilingualism in particular.
Like the TWI students in Lopez and Taskakkori’s study, students in the TBE program had similar views about bilingualism. They thought that speaking two languages would improve their chances at getting a better job in the future; they thought that a lack of bilingualism hindered communication between groups; and they perceived that a lack of bilingualism negatively impacted their ability to maintain their cultural heritage.

Unlike the TWI students, they did not think that bilingualism was an academic asset; in fact, they perceived it to be a hindrance, as many of them were not proficient enough in their first language (Spanish) to use it to their advantage.

Results from Lopez and Tashakkori’s study suggested that native Spanish speaking bilingual students gave Spanish at least some status; however, attitudinal results might be skewed as all students in this study were native Spanish speakers. Ideally, native English speakers, regardless of ethnicity, would have participated in this study as well. It is possible that native English speakers would have different attitudes towards bilingualism, suggesting a different perspective regarding the status of Spanish.

In addition to considering attitudes towards Spanish or attitude towards bilingualism to gauge the status of Spanish (and other minoritized languages) within dual-language strands, language preference (the language that students choose to speak) must be considered. For instance, Oller and Eilers (2002) collected data from TWI (English-Spanish) schools to determine the fidelity to which the students and teachers followed the linguistic program model, both inside the classroom as well as in their personal lives. Essentially, they wanted to determine how much time was spent in each language—Was “English time” really devoted to speaking only in English and was “Spanish time” really devoted to only speaking in Spanish? This could begin to approach
the question of language status, within these TWI programs, as language preference often coincides with language status (Pearson, 2007). Inside the classrooms, the researchers found that the program models were followed: The students spoke English in the English classrooms more than 95% of the time, and they spoke Spanish in the Spanish classrooms more than 95% of the time. On the other hand, when students spoke to one another privately, more than half the time was spent speaking in English, notwithstanding the language of the classroom, the students’ own proficiency in English and/or Spanish, or their peer’s native language. During unstructured time, students were choosing English over Spanish, suggesting a preference of English and therefore a higher status of English.

In another study related to language status, De Jong (2006) documented the reflections of 35 teachers responding to questions regarding the social dimensions of a DL program. The DL program studied was unique. Within the school there were three different language strands: An EO strand, consisting of mainly native English speakers, and two DBE strands, one consisting of native Spanish speakers and the other for native Portuguese speakers. For part of the day, students from the EO strand and the DBE strands were integrated for content-area instruction.

Teachers reported that EO students seemed reluctant to work with the DBE students at first; however, icebreaker activities improved collaboration within the classroom. While students were more likely to work together inside the classroom, there still was an “invisible energy” that separated the groups at recess (p.8). Nevertheless, teachers commented upon the biliteracy development of non-native English speakers resulting from the integration of English-only speakers with emerging bilinguals (EBs). While no formal assessments were taken, teachers commented that EBs were developing
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a stronger academic language due to being “forced to try out” English with their partners who only spoke English.

In this study, De Jong also found that English-only teachers thought that the DBE classrooms were less rigorous. They believed that nothing was taught in English and that the students were not doing (nor even capable of doing) grade-level work, De Jong suggested that EO teachers “treated the bilingual classrooms with a lower status” (emphasis mine); however, this attitude could foster perceptions of emerging bilingual students as having lower status within the school. Because this unique collaborative model forced EO teachers to work with the DBE teachers, it quickly became clear to the English-only teachers that the DBE curriculum was just as rigorous as that within the EO classrooms. According to De Jong, this change in attitude of the teachers impacted the status of the DBE program for the EO students as well, as the students became aware that their bilingual classmates were learning the same rigorous content. This change in attitude regarding the status of the bilingual program could positively impact the status of the languages taught within the DBE strands.

On a less positive note, the bilingual teachers in this study expressed concern that the emerging bilingual students were less comfortable in the integrated (EO + DBE) classrooms. Beyond the scope of De Jong’s study, one teacher asked her students to provide feedback regarding the integration program itself. While 94% of the English speakers felt comfortable speaking aloud in the integrated classroom, only 56% of the emerging bilinguals reported similar comfort levels. This was attributed to students’ concerns regarding potentially being discriminated against if they were not to speak standard English properly.
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The literature reviewed reveals that often the interpretation of language status is based upon individual perceptions. Some scholars (e.g. Pearson, 2007) suggest that language “majority” students learning the minoritized language give status to the minoritized language. Other authors suggest that it can actually lead to a watering-down of the minoritized language in order to make it accessible to dominant speakers (Valdez, 1997). In the case of the school in the De Jong (2006) study, providing non-native English speakers their own space to develop their native languages could contribute to a valuing of Spanish and Portuguese. This individual space illustrates, on some level, the status of these two languages; however, it also suggests that Spanish and Portuguese are not necessary. All students who are native speakers of Spanish or Portuguese learn English; no native English speakers learn Spanish or Portuguese.

A Critical Perspective of Dual-language strands

While dual-language strands do provide cognitive, academic, and social benefits to students, as with any educational program it is important to look at DL programs from a critical perspective. Only focusing upon the positive aspects of dual-language strands—such as bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism, and higher achievement for all students (Izquierdo, 2011)—can obscure some critical challenges of DL programs.

One of the main criticisms of DL programs—particularly of two-way immersion programs—is that inequity issues are inherent when placing dominant and minoritized cultures together. According to Cervantes-Soon (2014) and other DL researchers, theorists, and critics, this “could continue to disadvantage Latina/o children despite well-intended efforts” (p. 64). While there is a vast variability within dual-language strands with regards to curriculum, context, model, etc., it is possible that students from
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minoritized languages, cultures, and socioeconomic groups remain disadvantaged when compared to their middle-class, native English-speaking peers. For instance, while English-speaking parents who select dual-language strands for their children may be committed to equity, cultural awareness, and social justice, they are also very adept and vocal advocates for their children (Delgado-Larocco, 1998). This may not be the case for non-English-speaking parents who do not have the social, cultural, or linguistic capital to advocate for their children. Furthermore, in the case of absence of strong DL curriculum, some programs are forced to translate the curriculum from EO programs. When this happens, equity can be impacted as the acceptable knowledge and notions of success have already been defined from a Eurocentric perspective (Apple, 1990) and are then transmitted through the translated curriculum.

As previously reviewed, language status in DL is another critical issue. Given that schools (including those with dual-language strands) often reflect the languages, experiences, social, and cultural capital of the surrounding community, the status of English and English speakers in these programs can be positively impacted while the status of Spanish and Spanish speakers can be negatively impacted. English tends to have higher status and power than Spanish in DL programs, particularly exemplified by English-only accountability measures (Freeman, 1995; McCollum, 1999; Pierce, 2000; Verghese & Park, 2010) and English-only special programs such as assemblies and field trips. This preference in English is then reflected in the students’ language choices and use (Palmer, 2009; Potowski, 2007).

Finally, the compartmentalization of languages within dual-language strands has been a topic of debate with scholars. In many dual-language strands, bilingualism is
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looking at from a monolingual perspective—meaning that bilinguals have been considered to have two separate linguistic systems (Orellana & Garcia, 2014); however, “real-world” bilinguals have one linguistic repertoire as opposed to two separate languages. The complete “linguistic repertoire” is used in meaning-making. This phenomenon, known as translanguaging refers to “how bilingual students communicate and make meaning by drawing on and intermingling linguistic features from different languages” (Hornberger & Link, 2012, p. 240) and considered to be a crucial—and very real—component in the development of biliteracy and bilingualism. Garcia (2009) suggests that bilingualism is “not like a bicycle with two balanced wheels” but “more like an all-terrain vehicle” whose wheels “extend and contract, flex and stretch, making possible over highly uneven ground, movement forward that is bumpy and irregular but also sustained and effective” (p.45).

Despite the evidence regarding the importance of translanguaging, most DL programs have strict language policies reflected in a “Spanish-only time” and an “English-only time”. These policies perpetuate the monolingualist assumption of separation of languages. Meaning-making and the deeper understandings that we all hope to promote in education are effectively prohibited. Instead of DL programs being Spanish-only and English-only, they should “open up spaces where children are able to translanguage” (Orellana & Garcia, 2014, p. 389) in addition to developing the standardized English and Spanish expected of biliterate individuals.

Conclusion

While dual-language strands are not without their challenges and critics, there is no denying the potential of well-implemented, research-based dual-language strands to
promote academic achievement, biliteracy, and positive cross-cultural and language attitudes (Alfaro et. al., 2014; Lindholm-Leary, 2003). This chapter reviewed research relating to dual-language education. The next chapter will examine the literature relating to affective components of education, with a focus upon identity development and sense of school belongingness. Research from in general contexts as well as dual-language contexts will be reviewed in an effort to begin to “look beyond the language pursuits” of dual-language education (Jacobs & Cates, 2004).

Notes

1. Dual-language strands are the exception rather than the norm. While dual-language strands are growing in popularity throughout the United States and in (and in particular, Southern California), there are still relatively few compared to the mainstream English-only programs. The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) (2012) reports a total of 415 two-way immersion programs nationwide; however, this list does not include other dual-language models. According to the California Department of Education (CDE) in 2013 there were 184 Spanish/English TWI programs in the state of California (CDE, 2013). Furthermore, that same year the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) reported 12 new DL (including DBE, OWI, and TWI) schools or programs established in San Diego county, which is an increase of about 20% (SDCOE, 2013). While there is some overlap between the CAL, CDE, and SDCOE lists, none present a completely accurate picture of the condition of dual-language education throughout the nation—or even the State of California. For instance, the newly established 2013 SDCOE programs were not included on the CDE nor on
the CAL lists, suggesting that there may actually many more DL programs nationwide than the reported 415. Despite the incompleteness of all these lists, it is still safe to say that only a relatively small percentage of students have access to DL programs when compared to the number of English-only programs nationally.

2. Dual-language strands can involve any two languages; however, for the remainder of the book the partner or target language will be referred to as Spanish while the dominant language will be English. This reflects the current trends in DL education in the U.S. as well as the dual-language strand described within this book.

3. We can see “schools working towards relative monolingualism” when we recognize that the majority of students—regardless of native language—are enrolled in English-only programs.
Chapter 3: Research on identity and belongingness

Identity development and school belongingness have been shown to be beneficial to an individual’s overall well-being. This chapter examines the literature relating to general identity development with a particular focus upon ethnic or (bi)cultural identity development and explores the salient literature in the field of school belongingness. Finally, this review concludes with an examination of literature pertaining to (bi)cultural identity development and sense of school belongingness in dual-language contexts.

Ethnic Identity Development

*Ethnic Identity*, or a shared sense of identity with others from the same ethnic group (Phinney & Ong, 2007), is best considered using a developmental perspective based upon the ego identity model established by Erik Erikson (1968). He suggests that identity is something that develops over time. We are not born knowing who we are, but our provoke a process of “observation and reflection” (p.22) that ultimately leads to an *achieved identity*, or a unified self-structure based upon the individual’s perception of personal stability. Generally beginning adolescence and continuing through young adulthood, the personal period of observation and reflection should result in the achieved identity. This personal identity is based upon childhood identifications, individual talents and interests, and context-based opportunities. It is the individual’s own perception of sameness and continuity.

Unlike personal identity, which is individual, ethnic identity affirms a shared sense of identity with others who belong to the same ethnic group (Phinney & Ong, 2007). Phinney and Ong (2007) state that ethnicity is determined at birth or assigned to
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an individual by others based upon ethnic background; however, ethnic identity is not predetermined. Rather, ethnic identity development is a complex social process; individuals make decisions regarding their cultural or ethnic group(s) affiliations. They also attach their own meanings to their ethnic categories. Beginning in childhood (Ruble et. al, 2004), ethnic identity gradually develops as an individual gains a sense of self as related to membership in particular ethnic or cultural group(s) and forms attitudes and understandings of group membership. A major developmental change begins in adolescence/ young adulthood in which the joint processes of exploration and commitment (Phinney & Ong, 2007), result in an achieved ethnic identity by adulthood. Achieved ethnic identity “derives from a sense of peoplehood within a group, a culture, and a particular setting” (Phinney & Ong, 2007, p.271) and is defined as “that part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from knowledge of membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (Tajfel, 1981, p.255). Achieved ethnic identity it is an important factor to an individual’s sense of well-being, as individuals develop positive self-attitudes from belonging to groups that are important to them (Phinney, 1989; Phinney & Ong, 2007; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Ethnic identity development—particularly for people in a multiethnic society like the United States—is best considered in relation with national (i.e. American) identity. While the relationship between ethnic or cultural identity and American identity has been debated for decades, recent research suggests that there are four distinct classifications that represent these relationships. Berry and colleagues (2006) call these classifications acculturation profiles; other researchers (Feliciano, 2001) and theorists (Darder, 2012)
have different terms for similar ideas. Berry suggests that there are four acculturation profiles: *integration profile*, *ethnic profile*, *national profile*, and *diffuse profile* all describe the relationships between an individual’s ethnic or cultural identity (or identities) and his/her American identity. An individual with both a weak ethnic or cultural identity and a weak dominant American identity, would fall under the *diffuse profile*. Those individuals who have weak ethnic or cultural identities but strong American identities are considered to have a *national profiles*. This is a similar concept to Feliciano’s *assimilation*, which reflects the loss of heritage culture and language in favor of the dominant one (2001). Unlike the diffuse and national profiles, which both indicate weak relationships to ethnic identity, two profiles reflect strong ethnic affiliations: the *ethnic profile* and the *integration profile*. The *ethnic profile* is defined as an individual who has a strong connection to his/her ethnic identity, yet a weak connection to an American identity. On the other hand, the *integration profile* of acculturation is characterized by an individual who has a strong ethnic or cultural identity while at the same time having a strong American identity. Integration is similar to Feliciano’s *biculturalism* (2001) in which one has the ability to draw on resources from his/her heritage culture as well as mainstream dominant society. Fig. 3 illustrates the four profiles of acculturation. It includes other salient terms used in ethnic or bicultural identity literature as well as the author(s) that use them.
Fig. 3. Profiles of acculturation (Berry, 2006). The four acculturation profiles are based upon an individual’s ethnic identity and an individual’s American (or mainstream, if not in the U.S.) identity. The most adaptive identity is integration, in which an individual has a strong sense of ethnic identity and a strong American identity.

Darder (2002, 2012) has also critically examined the relationships between “primary” identities (i.e. ethnic/cultural identities) and the “dominant” (i.e. national or American) identities. Unlike Berry, Darder explores the power relationships between the primary and dominant identities, and the roles that resistance versus oppression and
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context play within ethnic identity development. Darder suggests that the most adaptive
identity is *bicultural affirmation* in which an individual would have a *bicultural identity*
(strong ethnic identity and a strong American identity) *across contexts* (i.e. school, home,
clubs, etc.). She suggests that bicultural affirmation “may hold the greatest emancipatory
promise for both individuals and communities with respect to the struggle for cultural
democracy in schools” (2012, p. 53). Darder’s definition of bicultural affirmation is
closely aligned to LaFromboise and colleagues who define biculturalism as “the ability to
function effectively in two cultures without losing one’s cultural identity or choosing one
culture over the other” (LaFromboise, Albright, & Harris, 2010, p.69). Bicultural
affirmation is not unlike the concepts of *integration* or *biculturalism*, yet neither Berry
nor Feliciano consider the impact of context or the role of power within the development
of identity. Furthermore, unlike Berry and Feliciano, Darder articulates the potential of
dual identities, *cultural dualism*, in which an individual would demonstrate the primary
identity in *individual spaces* (such as at home or during culturally-specific clubs like
MEChA or activities such as baile folklorico) yet the dominant identity in *social spaces*
(such as school). Similar to Berry and Feliciano, Darder articulates a profile in which an
individual demonstrates a weak primary identity and a strong dominant identity across
contexts. She labels this as *cultural alienation* while this is called *national profile* for
Berry and *assimilation* for Feliciano. Like Berry’s *ethnic profile*, Darder articulates that
individuals who demonstrate a strong primary (ethnic/cultural) identity across spaces as
exhibit *cultural separatism*.

Empirical results of studies of ethnic identity suggest that the four ethnic
acculturation profiles suggest by Berry (diffuse, ethnic, national, and integration) are
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accurate across ethnic groups and countries. In 2006, Berry et. al. studied almost 8,000 adolescents (about 5000 being immigrants and about 3000 being native-born youth) ranging from 13-18 years old. They lived in 13 immigrant-receiving countries (including the United States). Using independent measures of ethnic and national identity (the dominant identity of the receiving country, e.g. American, Canadian, Australian, etc.), Berry confirmed the four distinct acculturation profiles. Of the approximately 5000 immigrant youth in this study, about 34.7% were first-generation (arriving in the new country after the age of 6) and about 65.3% were second generation (born in the “new” country or having arrived before the age of 7).

Not only did results from Berry’s study confirm the four different profiles of acculturation, but results also indicated that the different acculturation profiles were not equally balanced among the sample. The largest number of immigrant youth (more than one-third) had strong ethnic and national identities and was therefore categorized within the integration profile. Less than a quarter of the group (22.5%) were in the ethnic profile, having strong ethnic identities and weak national identities. This was very similar to the number of immigrant youth labeled diffuse (22.4%) who had weak affiliations with both their ethnic and national identities. The smallest group of immigrants (18.7%) fell into the national profile of having a strong national identity and a weak ethnic identity.

While this study is important, for it empirically confirms four ways in which people identify with their ethnic group, their national identity, and both, quantitatively it may not accurately reflect the experiences of culturally, linguistically, and ethnically diverse youth in the United States—many of whom are not first- or second- generation
immigrants and many of whom identify with multiple ethnic, cultural, and linguistic groups.

Empirical studies have found that having a strong ethnic or cultural identity is a protective factor for culturally and linguistically diverse individuals. It is associated with positive psychological and sociocultural outcomes such as positive social functioning, higher self-esteem, and well-being for African American (Caldwell, Zimmerman, Bernat, Sellers, & Notaro, 2002; Mandara, Gaylord-Harden, Richards, & Ragsdale, 2009), Latino (Romero & Roberts, 2003; Umana-Taylor, Gonzales-Backen, & Guimond, 2009), Asian American (Rivas-Drake, Hughes, & Way, 2008), and American Indian (Newman, 2005) youth. Various studies have found that adolescent ethnic identity is positively associated with self-esteem across ethnically minoritized groups (Phinney, 1995; Umana-Taylor, Diversi, & Fine, 2002). For example, Latino and Asian adolescents with a strong ethnic identity had significantly more positive attitudes regarding other ethnic groups than those with weak ethnic identities (Phinney, Jacoby, & Silva, 2007). Asian American adolescents who strongly identify with their ethnic identity have greater self-esteem and decreased depressive symptoms (Fuligni, Witkow, & Garcia, 2005; Iwamoto & Liu, 2010; Phinney & Ong, 2007; Yip, 2005). Likewise, Phinney et al. (2007) found that adolescents with strong ethnic identities displayed greater awareness and understanding of intergroup relations, and in a recent meta-analysis of ethnic identity, Smith and Silva (2011) found that ethnic identity was positively associated with psychological adjustment and mental health.

In a similar meta-analysis of 46 studies, Rivas-Drake et al. (2014), tested the relationship between positive ethnic-racial affect, or “how good, happy, and proud youth
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feel about their race” (p.79), and overall “adjustment” (including positive social functioning, anxiety, depression, internalizing versus externalizing problems, well-being, self-esteem, academic achievement and attitudes, and risky behaviors) for American Indian, African American, Asian American/Pacific Islander, and Latino youth. They examined developmental variation across elementary, middle, and high school students ranging in age from 8 years through 18 years, and they considered studies that used the various measures of positive ethnic-racial affect, including the Mixed Ethnicity Identity Measure (MEIM, Phinney, 1992), the Ethnic Identity Scale (EIS, Umana-Taylor et al., 2004), the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI, Sellers et al., 1998) and other inventories. They found that positive ethnic-racial affect was inversely correlated to negative adjustment and positively correlated to positive adjustment. Basically, the stronger an individual’s positive self-affect, the less likely it was that he or she experienced depressive symptoms, externalized problems, and engaged in risky behaviors/attitudes; on the other hand, the better an individual felt about his/her race or ethnicity, the more likely it was that he or she had positive self-esteem, greater social functioning, and well-being.

In addition to beneficial psychological and sociocultural factors, a strong ethnic or cultural identity has also been demonstrated to promote academic achievement and outcomes (Adelabu, 2008; Berkel et al. 2010). For example, in a study of second-generation Latino adolescents, ethnic identity affirmation was positively associated with school performance—characterized by higher grades, cooperation, and schoolwork (Supple, Ghazarian, Frabutt, Plunkett, & Sands, 2006). Other studies found similar outcomes in African American (Butler-Barnes, S.T., Williams, T.T., & Chavous, T.M.,
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2012; Byrd, C., & Chavous, T., 2011.), Mexican, Chinese, and European (Fuligni, A.J., Witkow, M., & Garcia, C., 2005) students. In their meta-analysis (which included the studies referenced above), Rivas-Drake et al. (2014) found 25 studies with a combined total of 7,822 participants that examined associations between ethnic-racial affect and academic adjustment. Results suggested that a positive ethnic-racial affect was significant positively correlated to academic adjustment. Furthermore, when academic adjustment was broken into two individual components, academic/school attitudes and academic achievement, positive ethnic-racial affect was positively related to both. While the strength of the correlations varied depending upon the study, the overall statistical correlations academic adjustment and positive ethnic-racial affect was greater in investigations that had used the MEIM as a measurement tool.

In prior studies relating ethnic identity to school achievement, Portes and Zhou (1993) found that assimilation could lead to decreased school achievement. Kao and Tienda (1995) determined that the children/youth of immigrant parents performed better in school than those whose parents were native-born. Rumbaut (1997) described an inverse relationship between length of time in the United States with grades and aspirations; as the time spent in the United States increased, grades and aspirations decreased. Likewise, and Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (1995) noted that youth born abroad had stronger achievement motivation than U.S. born children of immigrants. More recently, Adelabu (2008), Berkel et al. (2010), Hughes et al. (2009), and Supple, Ghazarian, Frabutt, Plunkett & Sands (2006) all found a relationship between positive ethnic-racial affect (Rivas-Drake et al., 2014) and school achievement.

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While a strong ethnic or cultural identity can be associated with positive outcomes, feeling a strong attachment to ethnic identity does not seem to be quite enough. Culturally and linguistically diverse youth who also feel an attachment to dominant culture fare the best. Indeed, empirical research suggests that the integration profile, or strong ethnic and national identities, is consistently associated with positive adaptation (Berry, 2006; Feliciano, 2001). Zagefka and Brown (2002) determined that individuals with a strong desire for cultural maintenance as well as for involvement in dominant national society displayed better intergroup relationships. This suggests that a strong ethnic or cultural identity paired with a strong national (or American) identity is the most psychosocially adaptive. Furthermore, when considered from an achievement perspective, the relationship between biculturalism and academic success is fairly conclusive. For example, Fernandez and Nielsen (1986), Rumberger and Larson (1998), and Stanton-Salazar and Dornbusch (1995) all found that bilingual youth fluent in both English as well as their native language achieved more than English-only or English-limited youth. More recent studies (Kieffer, 2008; Lawrence, Capotosto, Branum-Martin, White, & Snow, 2012) suggest the same. This research indicates that proficiency in some aspects of American culture and language while at the same time maintaining heritage culture and language could promote academic success.

In another study, Feliciano (2001) examined the relationships between school dropout rates and the retention of immigrant culture among Chinese, Cuban, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Vietnamese students in the USA. Using “bilingualism as a proxy for biculturalism” (p. 868), [and noting that “this operationalization of biculturalism is not ideal [but] the closest available proxy” (p.868)],
she had numerous findings: Bilingual youth were less likely to drop out of school than English-only students; youth living in balanced bilingual homes (where both languages were spoken equally and equally well) were less likely to drop out of school than students living in either English-limited or English-dominant households. She also determined that youth living in immigrant homes were less likely to drop out of school than those in non-immigrant homes. She summed up her findings to say that “bicultural youth who can draw on resources from both the immigrant community and mainstream society are best situated to enjoy educational success (Feliciano, 2001, p. 865) and “biculturalism and exposure to immigrant culture protect against dropping out” (p.874).

While the psychosocial, sociocultural, and academic benefits of biculturalism are fairly conclusive, most of these studies either used samples of first- or second- generation immigrant youth and/or students who were monoethnic. Few studies have considered the benefits of biculturalism for culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) youth who are not immigrants, those CLD youth who are multicultural, or those youth who live in border cities. Furthermore, the majority of the empirical literature based upon ethnic identity formation focuses upon college-aged students, with less literature about high-school and middle-school aged youth. Very few studies investigated the role of ethnic or bicultural identity development in late childhood (upper elementary schools), though this period of time is often when children begin this exploration. Given the high number of native-born CLD children in the USA, as well as the high number of multi-ethnic youth, empirical studies investigating the relationships between ethnic identity(ies) and American identity are crucial particularly for upper-elementary schoolers.
Sense of School Belongingness

Sense of school belonging (SSB) has also been called school attachment (Libby, 2004), sense of relatedness, sense of school community, school commitment, school connectedness, and school membership; the generally recognized definition is the feeling of being personally accepted, respected, and included by a supportive school community (Goodenow, 1992). There is a general consensus in the literature that a feeling of belongingness can positively impact students’ physical (Blum, 2005) and mental health (Vaz et al., 2014) as well as school outcomes (Blum, 2005). Feelings of attachment towards school contribute to decreases in anxiety and loneliness while promoting autonomous and pro-social behaviors and extrinsic motivation, impacting the psychosocial well being of the child (Eccles, Midgley, & Wigfield, 1993; Osborne & Walker, 2006) For instance, there is a documented inverse relationship between sense of school belongingness and delinquent behavior and/ or substance abuse and other negative outcomes (Bierman, 2004; Goff & Goodard, 1999; The Forum for Education and Democracy, 2008)

The general relationship between school belongingness and school success is fairly conclusive as well. Students with a greater sense of school belongingness are more likely to be more interested in school, have higher success expectations, and are less likely to experience anxiety (Osterman, 2000). They are more inclined to succeed academically and graduate from high-school (Benner, 2011; Connell, Halpern-Felsher, Clifford, Crichlow, & Usinger, 1995; Lecroy & Krysik, 2008; Ruffalo, 2006; Wentzel, 1998); a strong a sense of school belonging promotes academic achievement and motivation (Anderman, 2003; Booker, 2004; Cemalcilar, 2010; Sirin & Rogers-Sirin,
Likewise, there are well-documented inverse relationships between sense of school belonging and high-school dropout rates (Archambault, Janosz, Fallu, & Pagani, 2009; Bond, et al., 2007; Finn, 1989), meaning that the stronger a student’s sense of school belonging, the less likely he or she is to drop out of school.

The importance of peer relationships is one crucial aspect to sense of school belonging (Henchy, Cunningham, & Bradley, 2009). It seems particularly crucial when considering student achievement. For instance, children whose peers accept them generally demonstrate higher levels of academic achievement, competence, and engagement (Garcia-Reid, Reid, and Peterson, 2005; Osterman, 2000), while students experiencing peer rejection tend to exhibit less interest in school and greater instances of dropping out (Osterman, 2000).

When disaggregated, data suggests that the positive effects of school belongingness are particularly notable with middle-school students (Anderman, 2003), and female students often have a stronger sense of school belongingness than their male peers (Adelabu, 2007; Cheung, 2004; Cheung & Hui, 2003; Nichols, 2006; Sari, 2012). White students report stronger school belongingness than culturally and linguistically diverse students (Goodenow, 1992; Griffith, 1999; Osterman, 2000); however, when these culturally and linguistically diverse students were in a demographically homogeneous school, their perceptions of belonging were greater than those of their white peers (Goodenow, 1992), suggesting that school composition and student demographics may impact students’ sense of school belonging. When comparing sense of school belongingness between suburban and urban environments, Anderman (2002) found that students’ perceptions of school belongingness were considerably lower in
urban schools (which often have more CLD and low-SES students) than in suburban schools (which often have more White, middle class students). Similarly, Sari (2012) found that students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds have stronger senses of school belonging than students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (Sari, 2012). She also found an inverse relationship between SES and perceptions of school rejection. Students with the lowest socioeconomic groups had the highest feelings of school rejection while the students from the highest socioeconomic groups had the lowest feelings of rejection (Sari, 2012).

Research indicates that wealthier students and those in suburban schools have stronger feelings of school belongingness than their peers with low socioeconomic status and those enrolled in urban schools; however, Goodenow and Grady (1993), Gutman and Midgley (2000), and Booker (2004) all assert that sense of school belongingness is a particularly important factor contributing to academic achievement for disadvantaged students. Similarly, Battistich, Solomon, Kim, Watson, & Schaps (1995) determined that the positive effects of sense of school belonging are particularly notable with CLD students and those in low socioeconomic groups. They determined that the relationship between school belongingness and students’ expectations of success were stronger for culturally and linguistically diverse students than for White students.

Historically, most studies of sense of school belongingness were confined to situations involving White teachers and White students (for a review, see Anderman & Freeman, 2004), or if the sample did include students of color, the within-sample number was too small for race to statistically addressed (Anderman, 2003). Nevertheless, as the number of culturally and linguistically diverse students are increasing in U.S. public
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Schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002), recent research has begun to address how school belongingness impacts these students.

Culturally and linguistically diverse students may receive greater benefits from school belongingness than their White peers (Nichols, 2006). Nichols (2006) used mixed methods to study school belongingness of 6th through 8th-grade students at a predominantly Latino middle school. Similar to other studies, she found that female students felt like they belonged more than males, and those students in the majority group of the school (those who self-identified as Hispanic or Mexican-American) reported stronger feelings of school belongingness that the African-American, Native-American, and White students (the minority groups in the school). Despite some students having stronger feelings of belongingness than others, most students in her study (67%) reported that they belonged. Qualitative analysis suggests that they felt this way for interpersonal reasons. In relating school belongingness and academic achievement, Nichols (2006) used student GPA as the achievement measure; she found no relationship between GPA and belongingness.

While Nichols (2006) did not find a relationship between academic achievement based upon GPA and school belongingness, other researchers that have used other measures of achievement have established a relationship between academic success and school belongingness. For instance, Sanchez, Colon, & Esparza (2005) found that school belongingness can predict motivation, academic effort, and absenteeism of Latino youth. Ibañez, Kuperminc, Jurkovic, and Perilla (2004) found that Latino adolescents’ academic competence was positively related to school belongingness and both of these (academic competence and school belongingness) were strongly linked to parental involvement.
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They assert that this link between school belongingness, academic competence, and parental involvement could reflect the importance of collectivist goals found in most Latino cultures, citing Abi-Nader (1990). When they further disaggregated the data into immigration status (U.S. born or not) and language (English speaking or not), Ibañez et al. (2004) found that academic competence (grades and test scores) and parental involvement were strongly related to achievement motivation (the desire to achieve) among students who spoke English or were born in the U.S.; however, this relationship was not evident for recent immigrants.

Investigating the role of White teachers in fostering the sense of school belonging of their Latina/o students, Stevens, Hamman, and Olivárez (2007) concluded that White teachers could positively contribute to their Hispanic students’ sense of school belonging when the classroom had an orientation of “mastery goals” (Ames, 1992), or a focus on learning and understanding over performance. Within this study, Stevens, Hamman, and Olivarez studied 5th and 6th grade low- and moderate-income students. They found that if teachers concentrated upon the process of learning and the content of what was being taught instead of a final grade or exam, students felt a greater sense of school belonging. Furthermore, Stevens and his colleagues confirmed that students’ senses of belonging in school was greater when their teachers promoted “academic press” (Lee & Smith, 1999), or the idea that academic skills that can be generalized to other subjects, grade levels, and life are more important than the grades earned.

The general consensus about sense of school belongingness is that it contributes positively to mental health, physical health, and school outcomes; however, there is limited literature about the role of sense of school belongingness for culturally and
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linguistically diverse youth. Furthermore, there is no literature about the relationship between school belongingness and (bi)cultural or ethnic identity. It could be hypothesized that there may be a positive relationship between (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness; however, to date there is no research that examines the relationship between these two factors—factors that may well promote the overall well-being of our students.

Identity development and belongingness in dual-language schools

Despite the research indicating the potential positive impact of ethnic/(bi)cultural identity development and sense of school belongingness, there is very limited research about these constructs in dual-language strands. The few published studies focus upon the affective factors of dual-language strands, such as cultural maintenance, cross-cultural attitudes, openness, and language use. While these are not specific studies of identity nor belongingness, the affective factors of DL programs may be tangentially related to (bi)culturalism or school belongingness and therefore provide some insight about SSB and (bi)cultural identity in this specific context.

One of the early studies of affective components of DL programs, Cazabon et al. (1993) investigated whether parents of students in TWI programs were biased toward cultural maintenance. While not a direct investigation of (bi)cultural identity, cultural maintenance of minoritized populations is an important factor of biculturalism. Results indicated that there was not bias towards cultural maintenance in the early grades (k-2) of the dual-language strand; however, this changed once the students were in 3rd grade. This change in perspective about cultural maintenance suggests that a favorable attitude
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towards (bi)cultural identity development could actually be a consequence of dual-language strands.

One of the goals of dual-language strands is cross-cultural competence; while this is not synonymous with biculturalism or school belongingness, it may represent a point on the developmental path towards these constructs. In an early study, Lambert (1987) determined that children in dual-language strands developed positive cross-cultural attitudes; this was confirmed by Lindholm-Leary (2001) in a later study. In a different study, Lindholm-Leary (1994) concluded that two-way immersion programs promote positive interdependence, likely because the students all have to rely on one another for linguistic support of their second language. The interdependence developed within these classrooms increased the number of cross-cultural friendships. Likewise, Cazabon et al. (1993) found that by third grade students in two-way immersion programs were forming “color-blind” friendships. Lindholm-Leary (2001) determined that students in TWI programs scored high (3.3-3.6 out of 4) on measures of openness to people of different backgrounds as measured by their perceptions about and willingness to interact with those who are different from themselves.

As previously mentioned, biculturalism is closely linked to bilingualism/biliteracy—and some studies actually use bilingualism as a proxy for biculturalism. Therefore, examining language use among friends may provide some insight into bicultural identity development. Lindholm-Leary & Ferrante (2005) studied dual-language students’ use of Spanish and English with their friends. Not surprisingly, they discovered that native Spanish speaking Latino students were more likely to use Spanish with their friends (85% speak at least some Spanish with their friends); however,
they also found that native English speaking white students also used Spanish with their friends, though at a lower rate (36% speak at least some Spanish with their friends). Native English speaking Latino students fell between these two percentages. About 66% spoke at least some Spanish with friends. These numbers could partially illuminate the (bi)cultural identity development of these particular TWI students.

Conclusion

The research on (bi)cultural identity development and sense of school belongingness for students in dual-language strands is scant; furthermore, many of these studies lack adequate control or comparison groups. Another major issue that arises from these studies of (bi)cultural or ethnic identity, school belongingness, and dual-language schools is the monolithic perspective of cultural or ethnic identity and language. This perspective may not represent the changing face of students in the United States—many of whom are multiethnic/multicultural, or heritage language learners, or both. Additionally, the existing literature on identity and school belongingness generally uses a sample of middle- or high-school youth, or even college students. This is limiting, as it is likely that the development of (bi)cultural identity and belongingness actually begins much earlier—in upper-elementary school.

Therefore, research addressing the issues of (bi)cultural identity development and school belongingness—as well as the relationship between these two factors—is crucial, as is research examining these constructs for youth in different types of school contexts. The current study aims to fill this wide gap in the literature.
Chapter 4: Methodology of this Study

The purpose of this book is to examine the development of (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness for elementary students in English-only versus dual-language strands. I looked at fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade students in two different yet similar schools in two different educational programs (English-only and two-way immersion) to see what, if any, differences there were based upon a variety of factors. I considered the impact school, educational program, home language, gender, or ethnicity had upon the development of bicultural identity and sense of school belongingness; I also looked at the relationship between bicultural identity development and sense of school belongingness.

Given that identity development and sense of school belongingness are complex phenomena, research has approached them from many different angles. This chapter will describe the particular research methodology that I used to study (bi)cultural/ethnic identity development and school belongingness at Pleasant Valley and Language Academy Elementary Schools.

Research questions

The objective of this study was to examine the development of (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness for students in English-only or two-way immersion programs. To investigate this complex relationship, this study was split into multiple layers, each using different methodologies and measures. The first part of this study began with identifying suitable schools that could facilitate the examination of (bi)cultural or ethnic identity and sense of school belongingness. After selecting two schools, one with two educational options: Two-way Immersion or English-only, and the
other being English-only, surveys were administered to the upper-graders (fourth graders and above) at these schools to address two broad research questions. First, what is the relationship between (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness? Second, is there a significant difference in (bi)cultural identity development or sense of school belongingness for students in two-way immersion versus those in English-only programs based upon native or heritage language, gender, or ethnicity? Finally, based upon the survey results, focal students were selected to participate in the third (purely qualitative) phase of this study: examining students’ own expressions, perceptions, and experiences of (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness. One research question guided this part of the study: How do students express (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness?

School Identification

In order to select the schools for this study, I first selected the elementary school with a dual-language option. I looked at the Dual-language Directory for San Diego County (San Diego County Office of Education, 2013) and omitted charter, non-urban, middle-, and high- schools. Of the remaining elementary schools, I eliminated the schools in which the partner languages were not English and Spanish and those that were one-way/foreign language immersion. Of the remaining schools, I then omitted any schools that were not “well-established” (defined as those that did not have at least one graduating cohort of students who had begun the program as kindergarteners and left as 5th or 6th graders, whichever was considered to be the promoting grade for the particular school). This excluded any schools or programs established after 2007. From the remaining schools on the list, I examined the School Accountability Report Cards
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(SARCs), looking for ethnically diverse schools—which I defined as having two or more numerically significant ethnic groups. This left one school, Language Academy.

Once Language Academy was selected, I created a similar schools report on Dataquest, resulting in 13 similar schools in the county. I then looked at the numerically significant student groups of the Language Academy: Hispanic/Latino, White, socioeconomically disadvantaged, and English Learners. Within the similar schools report, I looked for schools which had similar student groups of numerical significance, resulting in four schools. Of these remaining schools, only one is a Title I school (as is the Language Academy); given that Title I funds are given to schools with high percentages of low-income families, high numbers of English language learners, and other “disadvantaged children” (U.S. Department of Education, 2001) it was important to incorporate this factor into school selection criteria. Once the schools were selected (Spring of 2014), I contacted the principals at the two schools to get permission to conduct research there.

**Data Collection: Part I**

The goals of Part I were to determine whether there was a relationship between (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness and to determine the strength of that relationship. Furthermore, I wanted to know if there was a difference in (bi)cultural identity development and/or sense of school belongingness based upon educational program (English-only or TWI), gender, native or heritage language, or ethnicity. I used a measure to assess ethnic identity and biculturalism, the Mixed-Ethnicity Identity Measure (MEIM; Phinney, 1992) and a measure to assess sense of school belongingness, the Psychological Sense of School Membership Scale (PSSM; Goodenow, 1993).
Furthermore, open-ended questions were included in this questionnaire as questions require participants to articulate their own views in their own words which can uncover information that is not revealed in the quantitative data (Krahn & Putman, 2003).

**Method**

**Participants**

The participants were 201 upper-elementary students (102 males, 99 females; mean age=10.02; range 9-12) from seven self-reported ethnic groups (Native American, African-American, White/ Euro-American, Asian, Middle-eastern, Indian, and Hispanic/Latino) attending two public elementary schools in southern California. One of the schools, Pleasant Valley, was a mainstream English-only school with one language of instruction (English). The other school, The Language Academy, had two instructional strands: English, in which English was the only language of instruction, and Dual-Language which followed a 90:10 model of two-way Spanish-English immersion. The schools were matched using the “similar schools report” (CDE, 2014) to account for racial/ethnic demographics, program improvement status, number of English learners, and numbers of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

**Measures**

**Demographics.** Demographics collected from the participants included their age and grade level, birthplace, home language(s), heritage language(s), grade upon entering the school, ethnic/cultural group(s) self-identification, and ethnicity of each parent.

**Bicultural/Ethnic identity.** Ethnic identity was studied using a modified version of the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM; Phinney, 1992), a well-known scale employed in many studies of ethnic/cultural/bicultural identity (e.g. Berry et al., 2010;
Kiang et al., 2012; Phinney et al., 2007; Phinney & Ong, 2007; Phinney, 1992; Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004). It has consistently been shown to be reliable (alpha>.80) across a wide range of racial, ethnic, linguistic, and age groups. The MEIM contains three subscales: 1) a developmental/cognitive component of ethnic identity search, 2) an affective component including affirmation, belonging, and commitment to an ethnic identity, and 3) other-group orientation (OGO) scale, or an assessment of attitudes about different ethnic groups. Factors one and two measure a person’s ethnic identity, including ethnic identity exploration (subscale 1) and ethnic identity commitment (subscale 2). The OGO measures an individual’s attitudes about other ethnic groups. Higher scores on subscale one and two indicate a stronger ethnic identity; higher scores on subscale three indicate a stronger other-group orientation. High scores on all three subscales indicate strong ethnic identification as well as strong other-group orientation, indicating a strong bicultural identity.

The MEIM used in this study was slightly modified in order to make it more comprehensible to the participants. Instead of response options on a 5-point scale, the adapted MEIM (aMEIM) eliminated the neutral response option, and instead had a 4-point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” Furthermore, the aMEIM contained slightly modified language to facilitate comprehension of the youngest participants, nine-year-olds, as well as a Spanish version for those participants who felt more comfortable in Spanish. The Spanish version was translated using standard translation back-translation methods. The aMEIM contained 18 questions requiring 4-point Likert-type responses from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.”
Sense of School Belongingness. Sense of school belongingness was studied using the Psychological Sense of School Membership (PSSM) scale (Goodenow, 1993). The PSSM consists of 18 Likert-type questions “designed to measure youths’ perceptions of belonging and psychological engagement in school” (p.109) and has been used in many studies addressing school belongingness (e.g. Booth & Gerard, 2014; Nichols, 2006; Osterman, 2000; Vaz et al., 2014) with strong reliability scores (alpha=.88).

Like the MEIM, the PSSM was slightly modified to make it more relevant to the sample of students in this study. Instead of the original 5-point Likert scale ranging from “not at all true” to “completely true”, the adapted PSSM (aPSSM) used a 4-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” in order to maintain consistency with the aMEIM used in this study. Some of the language was slightly modified in order to facilitate comprehension and a Spanish version was available. The Spanish version was translated using standard translation back-translation methods. The aMEIM contained 21 questions total.

Open-ended questions and coding. In addition to the 36 Likert-type questions, the questionnaire administered to the 189 students included 4 open-response questions regarding ethnic identity and belongingness (e.g. “In terms of ethnic identity, I consider myself to be _____ because ______.”) These questions were based upon the MEIM (Phinney, 1992) as well as language identity research from Hernandez (2015). Characteristics of bicultural and ethnic identity were thematically coded using both inductive and deductive coding techniques.
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Data Collection and Generation: Part 2

The goal of Part 2 of this study was to investigate students’ perceptions and experiences of identity and sense of school belongingness. As the factors and experiences influencing (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness cannot be solely determined from questionnaires, detailed qualitative methods were used with selected focal students.

Method

Participants

Qualitative data generated during the open-ended questions on the questionnaire from Part 1 indicated that sixth graders were more reflective and willing to articulate their perceptions of identity and belongingness than were the 4th- and 5th graders; this echoes other researchers’ experiences that “11-year-olds, unlike younger children, [were] able to engage in conversation that revealed aspects of their identities” (Potowski, 2007, p. 54). Due to the richness of data generated from these slightly older students as compared to the responses of the 4th- and 5th graders, eight focal students from the sixth grade were selected. Four English-only students and four dual-language students were selected from the Language Academy as Pleasant Valley does not have 6th graders. Students were selected based upon their scores on the aMEIM and aPSSM; bicultural identity statuses were derived from the aMEIM and school belongingness statuses were derived from the aPSSM. Individuals were classified as high on each scale if they scored above the absolute mean of 2.5 and low if they scored below the mean (Phinney et al., 2007); the lowest and highest scoring student of each gender from each program were invited to participate.
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Procedures

I visited the English-only classroom and the Dual-Language classroom, and invited the desired focal students to participate. I met with these potential participants and explained the study to them in small groups; we then reviewed the assent form together, and I answered any questions they had regarding their participation in the study. For the students in the Dual-language strand, these initial assent procedures happened in Spanish. For the students in the English-only program, these discussions were in English. For the remainder of the interactions with the focal participants, all students were told that they could choose whichever language(s) (English or Spanish or both) to use when speaking or writing to me; however, I tried to adhere to the language policy of the classroom. I spoke English with the students in the English-only program, unless they requested to communicate with me in Spanish (which none did); I spoke Spanish during “Spanish time” and English during “English time” in the Dual-language classroom.

Following the assent procedures conducted in small groups, all students gave assent to participate, at which point a consent form in English and Spanish was sent home to the parents. Of the eight original invitations, I was unable to secure parental consent for the lowest-scoring male from the English-only classroom. I returned to this classroom and recruited the second lowest-scoring male student; I was able to secure both assent from the child and consent from his parents. While this is not the lowest-scoring child, his aggregate score on the aMEIM+aPSSM was below the absolute mean of 2.5, as were the individual scores on each of these measures.

Participants agreed to be observed, write in an interactive dialogue journal with the me, take photos using a disposable camera, and be interviewed individually about the
photos that he/she took. Students were observed in the school setting (both inside the classroom and outside the classroom) on a twice weekly basis between January 2015 and March 2015 resulting in approximately 60 hours of observational data (30 for the English-only participants and 30 for the Dual-language participants). Dialogue journals were semi-structured, and students wrote about one journal entry per week in the language of their choice from January through March. In March of 2015, I gave each student a disposable camera with simple instructions: “Show me about yourself and your life through photos.” Students took photos at school, at home, and during after school activities for a week, at which point the photos were developed.

Following the development of the photos, each student was interviewed. Interviews were semi-structured and included questions about ethnic/bicultural identity and sense of school belongingness as related to the student’s photos; these interviews were based upon interviews developed by Phinney (1989). Interviews were conducted in the desired language of the participant, with quite a few of the participants translanguaging—or moving between two languages and two concepts. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for coding.

Observations. All eight focal students were observed. The decision to focus on a small group of students allowed me to examine their interactions with their class- and school-mates, including their friendships, language use and preference, and work/social habits in greater depth. I observed the students during their instructional time across the curriculum (reading, writing, math, science, social studies) and, for the students in the dual-language strand, in both English and Spanish. Students were also observed while working on projects individually or in small groups. I took field notes about their peer
interactions and language use, and about behaviors that appeared to reveal their perceptions about identity or belongingness or both. In both classrooms, the students sat in cooperative groups; I moved between groups during each visit so as to have the opportunity to observe as many of my focal participants as possible. I also observed the students at lunch and recess.

While observations of participants during a study could potentially impact behavior, I believe that my presence only minimally impacted my focal students’ behavior, if at all. The focal students often broke the school rules (gum-chewing and swearing) while in my presence. Furthermore, while I did my best to strictly observe my focal students without participating in their lives, rapport was developed quickly and the line became blurred. I was often asked academic questions (“Can you help me do long division?”); once I was asked to participate in a student-made short film (as the “really, really mean teacher”); and, when one participant was gone for three weeks, I received a huge hug and “I’m so glad to see you!” when she returned. Because rapport is so crucial within qualitative studies, I followed the students’ lead; while I never initiated contact (physical or verbal) during the observations, I did reciprocate it.

Dialogue journals. The dialogue journals were semi-structured. I used a set of themes as a guide, though the written dialogue and questions stemming from students’ responses to the themes were very organic and participant-driven. About once per week, I would ask each student a similar question in writing, and that student would respond. Based upon the individual responses, I asked follow-up prompts to elicit more information if necessary. Although the dialogue journals were semi-structured, I did have a series of
questions based upon the work of Phinney (1989), Hernandez (2015), and Goodenow (1992) in the event that the written conversation seemed stalled.

*Photo-elicitation interview.* Instead of traditional interviews, I decided to use photography as a data generation and analysis methods. The use of visual material encourages “participants to directly share their reality” (Creswell, 2009), and given the personal and complex nature of school belongingness and (bi)cultural identity, providing this opportunity seemed crucial. The photo-elicitation interviewing and coding techniques used in this study were based on Cappello’s photo interviews (2005). Prior to the interviews, each individual’s photographs were incorporated into his/her own “photo interview kit” (Bunster, 1977; Cappello, 2005). The photo interview kit consisted of a large envelope containing each individual’s photos. During the interview, the photos were labeled with numbers in the order in which they were discussed.

Photo interviews can provide the opportunity to expand upon prior ideas uncovered in earlier interviews (Cappello, 2005), experiences, or observations. In this case, the prior ideas came from the observational data and the dialogue journals. Therefore, in preparing for the interview, I considered the data already collected from each participant in the study. While I kept the interviews open-ended, I did have a semi-structured protocol to refer to if necessary. I audiotaped the entire interaction and took field notes to supplement the audio-recordings.

I took each participant individually to a quiet table outside the classrooms and presented each child with his/her envelope of photos. The child was asked to take the photos out of the envelope and lay them out on the table in front of him/herself so that all the images were visible at once. Then I asked each child to choose “the most important
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photo” and tell me about it. The child labeled that photo with a number 1 (then 2, then 3, etc.) and then described what was going on that photograph. Following the brief descriptions of the photo, I then reminded each student that the goal of the study in general, and the photographs in particular, was so that I could “learn a little bit about who you are [identity] and how you fit-in [belongingness].” I intentionally left the reminder vague. I asked the participants to separate the photographs that would show me “something important” about “who you are or how you fit-in” and then describe them to me. The participants chose all photos as being important, even those that were of poor quality. During this conversation, I prompted the students if necessary: “Who is in this picture? What is happening? Why does it matter?”

Once all of the images were discussed, I asked the child to once again place them all out on a table so that they were all visible at once. I then asked the students, “What can we say about the photos that you chose?” Together we began grouping the images, and as the students ventriloquated (Bahktin, 1981) and named the groups (e.g. “Well, these are all my family.”). I began preliminary analysis and documented their words in notes as well as audiotape. Finally, I asked each student to choose the “most important” photo within each group. This additional analysis deconstructed the themes for an even deeper look at what each student perceived to be the most important.

Qualitative Coding

Data were coded for themes using both inductive and deductive approaches using a multilayered process. Deductive coding was based upon concepts found within (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness literature. Initially I coded the data very generally (identity or belongingness); however, it is important to mention that some data
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fell into both categories simultaneously. Then I analyzed these two sets of data for more specific constructs still found within the literature (for instance, language or language use, relationships, culture-specific behavior, etc.). Finally, I analyzed the data that did not seem to belong to determine whether there were any themes or patterns within this data. When possible, particularly when analyzing the interactive journals and the photos, I included the participants in the analysis.

Notes

1. For detailed demographics, refer to Chapter 6.
Chapter 5: The Context

Throughout the United States, the number of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students is increasing rapidly, with Latinos composing the largest and fastest growing population (Pew Hispanic Center, 2005). The U.S. Census Bureau predicts that by 2050 Latinos will represent 25% of the population of the United States; however, this percentage is accelerated for the school-aged population: By 2021, 25% of students in the USA will be Latino (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). In California, these numbers are even more dramatic: 52.71% of the school-age population is already Latino (California Department of Education, 2012).

Historically Latino students have been marginalized in schools throughout the USA and in public schools in Southern California in particular (Gonzalez, 1990). Beginning in the 1920s, when Latino students were sent to segregated and inferior schools (Gonzalez, 1990) through current educational policies and practices that favor the abandonment of heritage languages and cultures, the marginalization and oppression of this growing group of students continues. For example, within the last two decades, two anti-Latino immigrant propositions have been approved in California: Proposition 187 (1994) required “teachers to verify and report the immigration status of all individuals, including children” (American Civil Liberties Union, 1999) (however, many teachers refused to do so), and Proposition 227 (1998) restricted or denied bilingual students’ access to native-language instruction. These public schooling policies have had dramatic consequences: heritage language loss and cultural assimilation (Gonzalez, 1990), low standardized test scores and high drop out rates (Gándara, 2010), and high incarceration rates (Mauer & King, 2007). Although Latino students have traditionally been
discriminated against and underserved in mainstream educational scenarios (Gándara, 2010; Gonzalez, 1990), there have been some advancements at some schools that have aimed to positively impact all students—Latino and non-Latino alike. The following chapter describes and critically examines the two schools participating in this study—Pleasant Valley Elementary (PVES) and Language Academy Elementary (LAES)—to demonstrate how two schools in Southern California are addressing the salient needs and political pressures of our California students.

**Pleasant Valley Elementary School**

Pleasant Valley was a quiet little elementary school in Southern California. It was built in 1960 and was one of 25 elementary schools in a k-12 urban school district in San Diego County. It was a federally funded Title 1 school and served about 500 students in transitional kindergarten through 5th grade. In addition to these tk-5 programs, Pleasant Valley also had two preschools, one state-funded and the other cooperative. During this study, most of the current tk-5 students had started at Pleasant Valley in one of the two preschool programs.

Pleasant Valley was considered a neighborhood public school, meaning that the majority of the students came from the surrounding community with these boundaries being set by the local school district. If space allowed, however, students were allowed to apply for an intradistrict transfer. Its core value was “All students Learning,” and the 24 teachers and additional staff members participated in multiple professional development activities centering upon this theme. Furthermore, PVES promoted a “character counts” initiative for the students with foci of trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. The school hallways were named after these characteristics, such
as Responsibility Road, Integrity Alley, etc. Pleasant Valley was a candidate for No
Excuses University program which joined “together like-minded educators who wish[ed]
to promote college readiness for all students, no matter their circumstance” (NEU, 2013).

Students

The students at PVES reflected the shifting demographics of the nearby
community. The following data come from the 2013-2014 School Accountability Report
Card (SARC) and California Department of Education (CDE) DataQuest. The students at
PVES were 46.9% White/Euro-American, 31.8% Hispanic/Latino, 5.8% Asian; 5.6%
Filipino, 1.4% Black/African American, and .2% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. About 8.3%
of the students were reported to be two or more races. Approximately 12% of PVES
students are identified as learning disabled. These students are included in the
mainstream classes but receive pull-out support from special education teachers.
Furthermore, about 41.7% of students came from low-income households as indicated by
the free or reduced lunch qualifying factors.

The proportion of students labeled as English learners (ELs) has increased
considerably over the last decade from 17.3% in 2003-2004 to 27.9% in 2013-2014. At
the time of this study, 135 out of 500 students at the school were identified as English
Learners as determined by the California English Language Development Test (CELDT),
with 13 (9%) classified as beginning learners (CELDT Level 1), 51 (36%) classified as
intermediate (CELDT 2 and 3), and 76 (55%) classified as advanced (CELDT 4 and 5).
The majority of the English learners (68.15%) are Spanish dominant; however,
Filipino/Tagalog (11.85%) and Vietnamese (4.44%) are languages that are also
represented by the ELs at the school.
Language Use in School

Despite the diversity within the school, in many ways PVES was marked as an English-only place. The signs in the front of the school and the posters hanging in the hallways were entirely in English. While some documents were sent home bilingually (in English and Spanish), most documents and fliers were only sent home in English. The school website was only available in English (even the page dedicated to English learners), and there was not even an invitation in Spanish to call or visit the school for more information. I observed all teachers speaking English to all students, whether inside the classroom or outside, and the school-wide announcements were only ever heard in English.

At all grade levels, English learners and English speakers studied together in English-only classrooms receiving “concentrated instruction in the use of the English language” (principal’s note, 2015). English learners at Pleasant Valley Elementary School were provided with an “English Language Learners program [that] assisted over 150 [ELs] in language acquisition and educational support” (principal’s note, 2015). This included an extended school day and one on-site bilingual instructional aide. Furthermore, a part-time bilingual liaison provided translation for school documents and on-site interpretation services to facilitate the communication between parents and teachers.

While the school provided (minimal) support for English learners, there was a clear preference towards English by the teachers and students. Rapid English acquisition appears to be the goal. For instance, while all study participants were given the option of taking the written instrument in English or Spanish, all but one student chose to take it in
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English, despite the fact that 39 students in the tested grades (4th and 5th) were Spanish-speaking English learners. While one additional student requested the questionnaire in Spanish, his teacher said, “You will take it in English. You read English just fine.” In the following chapters, I will examine how the unofficial English-only policy at PVES potentially impacted the school belongingness and (bi)cultural identity of English learners.

Student Outcomes

PVES students regularly scored above state averages but at or below district averages on standardized tests of achievement. Through 2013, the State of California required the California Standards Tests (CSTs) to test reading, writing, and math annually for all students beginning in the second grade and science in the fifth grade. These CSTs were only ever conducted in English, and all students, including English learners without demonstrated English proficiency, were required to take these tests. Test scores (SARC, 2012-2013) on the CSTs indicated an achievement gap between White students and other students at PVES. For instance, 71% of all students at PVES scored proficient or advanced on the 2012-2013 standardized test of English Language Arts (ELA), 79% were proficient in Mathematics, and 66% were proficient in Science (only administered to 5th graders). When disaggregated by groups, in ELA 78% of white students were proficient or advanced, while only 63% of Hispanic/Latino students, 62% of socioeconomically disadvantaged (SED), and 56% of English learners were. In Mathematics, 85% of White students, 72% of Hispanic/Latino, 71% of SED, and 72% of ELs were proficient or advanced. This achievement gap was most apparent with the CST science exam: 79% of
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White students were proficient or advanced, whereas this percentage dropped to 44% for Hispanic/Latino students, 43% for SED students, and 27% for ELs.

**Language Academy Elementary School**

Language Academy Elementary School (LAES) is one of 45 elementary schools in the largest k-6 district in California. It is one of 67 elementary schools that offer a dual-language strand in the county and one of 19 in the district. Upon enrollment, parents select one of two educational strands within the school: English-only or Spanish-English Two-Way Immersion (i.e. “dual-language”). These educational options have been available since 2007 when the dual-language strand at LAES was established.

**English-only Two-Way Immersion Strands**

While some schools with dual-language strands in San Diego County are magnet or charter schools, meaning that enrollment is based upon a lottery system and is open to all students within the school district at the time of the study, the Language Academy was a district public school. It enrolled only students within its defined neighborhood boundaries. Therefore, the racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic demographics of the school represented these demographics for the surrounding neighborhood. The demographics of the students between and within the strands were comparable.

Like other schools within this district, this school was overly impacted, meaning that there were more students at the school than space to teach them all. While a new upper-grade pod was created with portable classrooms on the blacktop, this did not mitigate the issue. Therefore, in kindergarten through 3rd grade, there was one TWI classroom and two EO classrooms. In fourth through sixth grades, there was one TWI classroom per grade, but one EO grade-specific and one or two EO combination classes.
per grade. The administrators, teachers, and community would have liked to expand the school, particularly the TWI program; however space remained an issue.

While the school as a whole aimed to provide “all students the opportunity to achieve their fullest personal and academic potential in order to become productive and responsible citizens,” the TWI program distinguished itself by promoting “linguistic and cultural pluralism inside and outside the school [to] prepare our future citizens with the necessary academic and linguistic competencies to be highly qualified individuals and to be competitive in a global society.” Kindergarten orientations were conducted bilingually in English and Spanish, at which point parents were informed about the two educational strands in a brief Powerpoint and were given a brochure detailing the TWI program. Academic benefits to dual-language education were highlighted, and parents were “recommended to enroll their children in the TWI program for seven years, beginning with kindergarten through sixth grade.” While there were no enrollment restrictions to participation in the dual-language strand at LAES, the program aimed to enroll 1/3 native English speakers, 1/3 native Spanish speakers, and 1/3 bilingual speakers in kindergarten and first grade. Unfortunately, due to space restrictions, there were always more families interested in the program than could be enrolled in the primary grades. These families were placed on a waiting list for the DL program and given two options: Either enroll their children in the EO program or seek out dual-language placement at nearby charter schools. Many families choose the latter, and when a spot in the TWI program at LAES became available, they moved their children to their local neighborhood school.

The dual-language strand at LAES was a 90:10 model, meaning that in kindergarten 90% of instructional time was spent learning in Spanish. By fourth grade,
50% of the instructional day was spent in English and 50% was spent in Spanish. This balance was maintained through the 6th grade. As is typical for students in a DL program, students tended to outperform their English-only peers on standardized tests of achievement according to the teachers at the school; however, no quantitative data was provided that would confirm this. Additionally, parents of DL students were expected to support their children by encouraging daily attendance, volunteering within the classroom and school, and participation in advisory committees.

**History**

Language Academy Elementary School has a unique history in that it began as an autonomous charter school in a large urban school district in 1994. The first charter school in the district, and one of the first in the county, the Language Academy charter school was exempted from many state and local regulations (as are most charter schools). Teachers and administrators had a certain amount of autonomy and freedom as charter employees—freedom not generally associated with public schools; however, there was an agreement with the supervising district that teachers at Language Academy Charter School could transfer into a typical district school without loss of pay or job seniority. This agreement ended in 2009 and teachers were forced to choose between job security or charter status. The teachers were given the option of non-renewing their charter and becoming a typical district school or maintaining charter status. The majority of the teachers elected to forgo charter status in favor of job security. Teachers who were unhappy with this decision left the Language Academy and formed their own charter school.
Today

At the time of this study, LAES was a federally funded Title 1 school that served about 524 students from kindergarten to sixth grade, with about 30% of the school population participating in the dual-language strand. The students in the dual-language strand knew each other really well—given that there was only one DL class per grade level (about 20 students per grade) and about two classes per grade in the English-only program. As previously mentioned, this was not for lack of demand; in fact, for the 2015-2016 kindergarten class, there were over 50 applications to the TWI program for 20 spaces. Despite this high demand for DL placement, due to space restrictions and the fact that there was still more of a demand for English-only placement, more physical space was allotted to the EO program.

As a school, LAES’s overall mission was to develop “the knowledge, critical thinking skills, and attitudes which empower students to become influential contributors in an ever-changing global society” (principal’s notes, 2015). While its 23 teachers and support staff participated in multiple professional development activities, the majority of professional development activities focused upon writing, providing supports for English learners, and particular teaching strategies (such as the gradual release of responsibility and reciprocal teaching). The district and county offered additional professional growth activities on biliteracy development for the DL teachers. This additional professional development was not mandatory.

Parental involvement and parental engagement were encouraged. Parent trainings and workshops were provided to encourage reading and mental math at home. The school facilitated academic, cultural, and social activities for families—such as family reading
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night, a variety show, a family 5k, and family camp-out. Parents often volunteered inside the classroom as well as on the playground and during field trips and special events. There were opportunities for parents to participate in parent-teacher association (PTA), school-site council, and an English Learner Advisory Committee.

Students

The student population at LAES reflected the community demographics at the time. The following data came from the 2013-2014 SARC and CDE DataQuest. These students were 16% White/Euro-American, 66.1% Hispanic/Latino, 1.5% Asian; 10.2% Filipino, 1.5% Black/African American, and .6% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. About 3.5% of the students were reported to be of more races. Nevertheless, the reported demographics of the school were very different that the way that students self-identified; this will be discussed in Chapter 6. Approximately 9.2% of the students are identified as learning disabled and receive support from special education teachers. About 36.0% come from low-income households as specified by the number of students who qualified for free or reduced lunch.

The proportion of students labeled as English learners (ELs) remained fairly constant over the last decade from 27.6% in 2003-2004 to 34.1% in 2013-2014. At the time of this study, 182 students were identified as ELs as determined by the CELDT. Their classifications follow: 16 (9%) beginning (CELDT Level 1); 74 (41%) intermediate (CELDT 2 and 3); 92 (50%) advanced (CELDT 4 and 5). The majority of the English learners (88.7%) are native Spanish speakers; however, Filipino/Tagalog (7.34%) and Farsi (1.13%) are other languages represented by ELs at the school.
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**Student Outcomes**

LAES students regularly score above state and district averages on standardized tests of achievement. Test scores (SARC, 2012-2013) on the 2013 CSTs indicated that 70% of overall students at LAES scored proficient or advanced in English Language Arts (ELA), 72% were proficient in Mathematics, and 74% were proficient in Science. Like the disaggregated scores at PVES, when the CST scores at LAES were disaggregated by groups, a prominent achievement gap became evident. In ELA 91% of White students were proficient or advanced, while only 62% of Hispanic/Latino students, 59% of socioeconomically disadvantaged (SED), and 43% of English learners received scores of proficient or advanced. In Mathematics, 92% of White students, 64% of Hispanic/Latino, 63% of SED, and 56% of ELs were proficient or advanced. This achievement gap is most apparent with the science exam: 100% of White students were proficient or advanced, whereas this was 68% for Hispanic/Latino, 61% for SED, and 52% for ELs. While teachers and administrators indicated that these achievement gaps were not as evident within the DL program, disaggregated test scores by program (DL or EO) were not accessible, despite being requested multiple times.

**Language Policy and Use**

According to official school policy, English-only classrooms were taught 100% in English for the students’ entire educational career. Those students not proficient in English but enrolled in the EO program received designated and integrated English Language Development instruction. For the dual-language classrooms, 90% of the curriculum was taught in Spanish and 10% in English beginning in kindergarten. The quantity of Spanish was gradually reduced while the quantity of English was gradually
increased until the 4th grade, when 50% of the instructional day was spent in Spanish and 50% of the instructional day is spent in English. This 50/50 balance was maintained through 6th grade. During Spanish instruction, teachers give directions, speak, read books, etc. only in Spanish; the same policy was carried out in English. This policy was expected to be followed by the students as well, who are supposed to speak, read, and write in only in the target language of instruction. When students spoke in the non-target language, they were reminded by the teacher or other students to speak the target language. The teacher would also repeat the comment or question in the target language if the question or comment was made in the non-target language.

As is the policy in most United States and Canadian dual-language strands, language teaching at LAES was content-based. Language was acquired through the learning of content instead of being the principal focus of instruction. For example, students learned science through the use of Spanish. When they wrote science reports in Spanish, the teacher could analyze both the comprehension of science content as well as the development of Spanish. Likewise, when students completed math problems in English and wrote about them in their math journals, the teacher could assess both the comprehension of the math content as well as the acquisition of English. Unlike some dual-language strands, where students have different teachers for English and Spanish, at LAES students spent all day in a self-contained classroom with the same teacher and switched back and forth between the languages based upon the content.

Walking into LAES, it was clear that it was a bilingual space. Notices in the front of the school were written in both English and Spanish, and the front office staff and school nurses were obviously bilingual in English and Spanish. Both English and Spanish
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could be heard spoken in the hallways by students, parents, and teachers, and school-wide announcements were made first in English and then in Spanish. The dual-language strand sponsored a Spanish-language winter variety show in which the only language spoken was Spanish, and parents and students from across campus were invited to attend. Furthermore, the district which governs this school was very supportive of the dual-language strands throughout the district, so district-wide assessments (such as the end-of-year writing, reading, and math performance measures) were administered in both Spanish and English to the students in the dual-language strand; likewise, district-wide competitions, such as the speech competition, were open to entries in either Spanish or English.

Despite the dual-language strand’s goal of valuing Spanish and English equally, and the school’s overt commitment to and demonstration of being a bilingual space, many practices at LAES revealed that English was the preferred and dominant language. While the upcoming chapters will provide greater detail regarding student language use, generally I saw teachers and students remaining faithful to the official classroom schedule while in the classroom; however, once on the other side of the classroom door, most students (and sometimes teachers) would quickly slip into English. I predominantly heard English being spoken during recess, lunch, and group work that was done outside of the classroom. The non-academic classes like P.E. and music were taught by teachers who only spoke English, and the principal only spoke English though appeared to have a basic comprehension of Spanish. Therefore, by the time that the students reached the 6th grade, the dual-language students were receiving a lot less than 50% of their total school day in Spanish. The use of English as social and cultural capital in LAES was similar to
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research done at other dual-language schools in which “English was clearly the preferred language for social purposes for those students who had achieved a certain level of fluency in it” (Christian et al. 1997, p.85). It also demonstrates “leakage” (Freeman, 1998, p.47) from the English-preferred and English-dominant community which gives priority and status to English.

Focal Students’ Classrooms: English-only and Dual-language

Eight sixth-graders were selected as focal students for this study: four from the dual-language strand and four from the EO program. All were students at the Language Academy. Their classrooms were on the lower black top where all the 5th- and 6th-grade classrooms were located. The English-only and the dual-language focal classrooms had their own separate entrances, though they were connected by a door in their shared wall. This allowed their teachers quick access to one another if necessary. In each classroom, the desks had been clustered in groups and the students have assigned seats in groups of six or eight. There was a large open space at the back of each classroom for students to sit on the floor if they were working in groups, and there was also a kidney table in each classroom which facilitated small-group instruction. Each classroom had its own set of student laptops at a 1:1 technology-to-student ratio. There were also four desktop computers in each room. Both rooms were equipped with a document camera and a projector. Bookshelves in both classrooms contained a variety of books, including Spanish books for the dual-language classroom. Students have free access to these books. The walls and shelves were hung with student work or exemplars and teacher-made guide posters (e.g. “How to Annotate” or “Escritura Narrativa”).
It was clear that both teachers had strong rapports with their students and strong classroom management. Both teachers knew the students from the other 6th grade classes (including those from the 5/6 combination class), given there are rotations a few times a week in which all of the 6th-graders are shuffled together and split into three groups for social studies. During rotations, all instruction was in English as students from the EO and DL programs were learning together.

There was evidence of collaboration between the two 6th grade teachers. For instance, both classes were both reading *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio (in English for the EO class, in Spanish for the DL class) during the semester that I was observing; the culminating literature project for both classes was a mini-movie trailer depicting the most important scenes from the book. The choice of this book was intentional; not only was *Wonder* awarded the 2014 student book award, a number one on the New York Times Best Seller list, and listed on the Bluebonnet Award master list, but it was also about a very relevant topic to 6th graders: being “different” and being bullied. In addition to the core literature shared between the two classes, the classes used the same math text and were working on the same concepts. Teachers assigned similar science projects—though the dual-language class completed this project in Spanish and the EO class did it in English.

Despite their collaboration, each teacher had practitioner liberty—they were not “on the same page on the same day”, as is often required of teachers by administrators particularly in Title I and Program Improvement schools. The teachers chose unique texts during reading instruction, had different content and language objectives, and had very different teaching styles.
The student population in Mrs. Robby’s EO classroom was similar to other EO classrooms in the school. There were 26 students—12 came from Spanish-speaking or bilingual (Spanish/English) homes and 14 came from English speaking homes, and the class was equally balanced between boys and girls. Math and English language arts and science were taught in the mornings; social studies rotations and specials happened after lunch. During my semester of observations, the English-only classroom was working on a cross-curricular (ELA and Social Studies/History) thematic unit based upon civil rights. They studied Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “I have a dream” speech, and wrote their own “I have a dream” speeches. They read articles and personal accounts about segregation and civil rights, and they analyzed visual images. They spent two complete weeks reading and learning about Ruby Bridges—in her own words, in news articles written about her at the time, and in Steinbeck’s novel, *Travels with Charlie*. Often, the passages read about the Civil Rights movement encompassed other subject areas as well. For instance, one article mentioned that “six percent of three million children were segregated” in the United States. Mrs. Robby asked her students to calculate the actual number of children who were receiving a segregated education; the students promptly pulled out individual white boards and markers to determine this quantity.

Walking into this classroom, there was an atmosphere of relaxed diligence. Mrs. Robby spent a fair amount of time using explicit instruction, particularly in reading and math; however, once the students had the opportunity to learn from her, they worked in partners—for example, reading articles looking for main ideas and supporting details or solving math problems. Depending upon the day and the subject matter, sometimes
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students worked individually or in pairs. Mrs. Robby expected all the students to participate equally; when asking for responses or answers from the class, she frequently pulled popsicle sticks with students’ names on them out of a jar and then requested that student to respond. If they were not able to, she told them, “I’ll come back to you,” and she always did.

Outside of the classroom, the students in the English-only program socialized in friendship groups that included students of both genders. English was the only language spoken socially, despite the fact that many spoke Spanish at home; almost half of the students were native Spanish speakers and almost one third were still classified as English learners. Although the English-only and dual-language 6th graders had recess and lunch at the same time and knew each other from the rotation program, socially they did not intermingle. The EO students socialized only with their peers from the EO program, and the DL students socialized only with their classmates from the DL program.

Typically, during recess and lunch the EO students played tag, four-square, tetherball, or basketball.

For full disclosure, it is important to mention that Mrs. Robby had son who had been participating in the dual-language strand at LAES since kindergarten. At the time of this study, he was a student in the 6th grade DL classroom that was observed; however, he was not a focal participant.

Dual-Language

The student population in the 6th-grade DL classroom was similar to that of the EO classroom. Of the 24 students, about half came from English-only-speaking families,
while the other half came from Spanish- or Spanish and English- speaking homes; the genders were slightly unbalanced with four more girls than boys.

Walking into the classroom first thing in the morning, students had a daily *palabra del dia* journal that they worked on independently. Their teacher, Sra. Gomez, wrote a Spanish word on the wall, and within their word study journals, students defined the word and found its synonyms, antonyms, roots, and cognates. They illustrated the word, and found examples and non-examples of the word. After about 15 minutes of independent work, they reviewed the *palabra del dia* as a class. Generally, this word work is followed by Spanish language arts (reading and writing) and science (also in Spanish). The afternoon was spent in English: math, social studies rotations, P.E., and ELA.

Sra. Gomez expected class participation. During reading time, she often had the students read aloud, one after the other, until the passage, article, or chapter was over. Unlike Mrs. Roby, Sra. Gomez typically asked for volunteers and repeatedly called on the same students as these were those who tended to volunteer. As an observer, it was obvious to me who her favorite students were; this was confirmed by the students themselves (particularly the non-favorites) in casual conversations with me once I had developed rapport with them. Despite the obvious favorites in the class, the rest of the students generally seemed to enjoy being in Sra. Gomez’s class. She had a strong rapport with all the students, and the students had strong rapport with one another. Sra. Gomez frequently joked with the students and encouraged the use of puns (which the students found engaging). At one point, during a *palabra del dia* activity focused on the word
polisémico [translation: multiple meanings], there was a discussion about the word *pluma* which can mean feather, pen, or flatulence. The students were thrilled.

Furthermore, Sra. Gomez intentionally incorporated “*cosas para divertir*” in her classroom. The students participated in Karaoke Tuesdays, Dance-off Wednesdays, and Throwback Thursdays—quick 5-minute activities at the beginning of the schools day that were, according to Sra. Gomez, “just for fun,” but really aided in the community building and engagement of her students. Their favorite day by far was Throwback Thursday in which they were encouraged to bring photos from their past and explain them. Even when I was not in the classroom during Throwback Thursday, students often approached me during their free time to show me their photos and tell me about them.

While in the classroom, the students were fairly consistent in following the language policy—they spoke Spanish during Spanish language arts and science, and English during social studies and English language arts. It is important to note that this may neither be intrinsic nor socialized. There was an assigned “language monitor” who ensures that the language policy is followed, and non-compliance results in a fine of $500 classroom dollars. Outside of the classroom, most students transferred into English even during the morning when Spanish is the target language. For example, during one of my morning observations, we all left the classroom to go and sing Happy Birthday to the 4th grade dual-language teacher. While all students initially spoke Spanish upon leaving the classroom, by the time that we had returned, most were speaking English. Once we stepped back through the classroom doors, they immediately started speaking Spanish again.
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Socially, the 6th-grade dual-language students self-segregated based upon gender. As opposed to the mixed-gender friendship groups in the 6th-grade English-only class, all of the friendship groups in the dual-language 6th grade class were homogenous by gender. Girls socialized with girls; boys socialized with boys. Like the EO program, English was by far the preferred social language; there was only one group of four girls who generally spoke Spanish during recess and lunch. During recess, most of the DL girls played four-square or sat in the shade and talked; the boys were typically seen playing basketball or soccer.

Conclusions

This chapter described the context of the two schools (Pleasant Valley Elementary School and Language Academy Elementary School) studied in this project, as well as describe the two focal classrooms from LAES in detail. It has illustrated that while the schools were similar, and the particular classrooms were similar, they each had their own unique set of challenges that may have impacted students’ sense of school belongingness and (bi)cultural identity. In both schools, some students were very successful on state-mandated tests while others were less successful. Furthermore, while LAES in general, and the DL program in particular, had really attempted to define itself as a bilingual space, English was clearly the favored language of the students. In the upcoming chapter (Chapter 6), school belongingness and (bi)cultural identity will be quantified, described, and discussed for both schools based upon aMEIM and aPSSM scores. Furthermore, students’ perceptions of these two concepts (as based upon their qualitative responses) will be revealed and discussed.
Notes

1. SARC demographics are very different than what the students report themselves to be.

See Chapter 6 for a detailed description and discussion of student-reported demographics.
Chapter 6: Sense of Belongingness and Identity

The first phase of this project focused on collecting quantitative and limited qualitative data from 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students at Pleasant Valley (an English-only school) and Language Academy Elementary Schools (an English-only school with a dual-language strand). The survey instrument administered measured ethnic/(bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness followed by two open-ended questions related to school belongingness and (bi)cultural identity. Self-reported demographics were collected in order to calculate descriptive statistics to summarize the profile of the entire participant pool (see Table 3).

Of 201 total participants about half were male and half were female. Participants ranged in age from 9 years old to 12 years old, with the mean age being 10.2 years old. The majority of the students (N=81; 40.3%) were fifth graders with slightly fewer fourth graders (N=73; 36.3%). There were even fewer sixth graders (N=47; 23.4%) as only LAES continues through sixth grade (PVES students promote to middle school after 5th grade). Most of the participants were U.S.-born (N=162; 80.7%), and over three-quarter of the students speak English to some degree at home (N=158; 78.6%). Students self-identify as being Latino, White, Asian, African-American, Middle-Eastern, Indian, and Native American, with almost half (N=59; 45.6%) being of mixed race. Quite a few students did not self-identify at all (N=25; 12.4%) with the majority of those being from Pleasant Valley.
Table 3

Participant Demographics by Frequency

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<tr>
<th></th>
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<td>4.4</td>
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<td>English only</td>
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<td>54.1</td>
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<td>Spanish and English</td>
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<td>27.1</td>
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<td>37.0</td>
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<table>
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<th>Language and Identity Type</th>
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Note. a. Includes data for which there were multiple responses (e.g., if a student self-reported as being Latino and Asian, they would be included in both categories, as well as the “two or more races” category). b. Includes Filipino.

About two-thirds of the students were enrolled at the Language Academy, and about forty percent of those students were from the dual-language strand. Sixty percent of LAES students were enrolled in the English-only program. Almost thirty-five percent of the participants were from Pleasant Valley Elementary School, and all of those were English-only students.

Relationships between bicultural identity and sense of school belonging

Preliminary analyses were carried out on the data to quantify the (bi)cultural identity development (based upon the aMEIM) and sense of school belongingness (based upon the aPSSM) for participants by school (LAES or PVES) and language program (EO or DL). In order to answer the inquiry What is the relationship between bicultural identity and sense of school belongingness? Pearson correlations were calculated. (See Table 4.)

Results indicated that there was a significant relationship between (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness for students at Language Academy Elementary School ($r=.30; p<.01$) and for students participating in the dual-language strand ($r=.48, p<.001$). There was also a significant relationship in bicultural identity and school belonging for the English-only students as a group ($r=.31, p<.01$); however, when disaggregated into schools (Language Academy or Pleasant Valley), this relationship was
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not significant for the students from Pleasant Valley \((r=.28, p>.05)\). It was significant for the English-only students from the Language Academy \((r=.28, p<.01)\). Following the correlational analysis, z-scores were calculated to determine if there was a significant difference in the strength of the correlations; there were no significant differences in correlation by upon language program \((z=.97, p>.05)\) or school \((z=.64, p>.05)\).

Table 4

*Means, SDs, and Correlations for aMEIM and aPSSM*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>aMEIM</th>
<th>aPSSM</th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>p</td>
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<td>.051</td>
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<td>5.93</td>
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<td>.28</td>
<td>.051</td>
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</table>

*Note.* Correlations are significant at a <.05 level.

Following a descriptive and correlational analysis of (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness based upon school and language program, data was further disaggregated by the most common self-reported ethnicities (Latino, Asian, and White)
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for each language program. The data reported includes data for students that report as being more than one ethnicity (e.g. “Latino” includes students who report to being only Latino as well as those who consider themselves to be Latino and White, Latina and Asian, and Latino and other ethnicities.) Means, standard deviations, and correlations by self-reported ethnicity for the DL and the EO participants are reported in Table 5.

Table 5

*Means, SDs, and Correlations by Ethnicity and Language Program*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Program/ Ethnicity</th>
<th>aMEIM M</th>
<th>aMEIM SD</th>
<th>aPSSM M</th>
<th>aPSSM SD</th>
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<th>p</th>
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<td>7.70</td>
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<td>48.17</td>
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<td>.38</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.56</td>
<td>.00*</td>
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<td>.10</td>
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<td>5.55</td>
<td>49.78</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.08</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Correlations are significant at a <.05 level.

Results indicate that while the correlations between (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness are significant based upon language program, once the data is disaggregated into self-reported ethnicity, (bi)cultural identity and sense of school
belongingness are not necessarily related. For instance, there is not a significant relationship in (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness for Latino students in the dual-language strand ($r= -.15; p = .57$); however the relationship is significant for Latino students in the English-only program ($r=.56; p<.01$). This trend is reversed for White students. In the dual-language strand, the relationship between identity and belongingness is significant ($r=.97; p<.01$) whereas it is not significant in the English-only program ($r=.31; p=.10$). For Asian students, this relationship was neither significant in the dual-language strand ($r= -.51; p=.38$) nor in the English-only program ($r=.39; p=.08$).

Fisher $r$-to-$z$ transformation was used to compare the correlations by ethnicity. The difference between the correlations for Latinos in dual-language strands and Latinos in English-only programs was significant ($z=-2.91; p<.001$), as was the difference between the correlations for the White students ($z=3.33; p<.01$). For Asian students, the difference in the correlations between the two programs was approaching significance ($z=-1.58; z=.06$), but it was not significant.

Further correlational analysis by self-reported ethnicities was conducted based upon school. Disaggregated means, standard deviations, and correlations based upon school are shown in Table 6. Results indicate that the relationship between (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness was significant for Latinos at the Language Academy ($r=.32; p<.05$) and at Pleasant Valley ($r=.52; p<.05$) and for White students at the Language Academy ($r=.78; p<.05$). The relationship between school belongingness and (bi)cultural identity was not significant for Asian students at either school, nor for White students at Pleasant Valley. Fisher $r$-to-$z$ transformation was used
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to compare these correlations. There was no significant difference in the correlations for the Latino students nor the Asian students; however, there was a significantly greater correlation between (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness for White students at the Language Academy than for the White students at Pleasant Valley ($z=2.88; p<.05$).

Table 6

*Means, SDs, and Correlations by School and Ethnicity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School/Ethnicity</th>
<th>aMEIM M</th>
<th>aMEIM SD</th>
<th>aPSSM M</th>
<th>aPSSM SD</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language Academy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>52.23</td>
<td>6.20</td>
<td>49.57</td>
<td>5.72</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.03*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>51.32</td>
<td>5.56</td>
<td>48.04</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.00*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>50.63</td>
<td>5.97</td>
<td>48.83</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant Valley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>52.79</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>50.17</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.01*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>51.94</td>
<td>5.36</td>
<td>49.22</td>
<td>6.61</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>51.00</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>50.45</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Correlations are significant at a <.05 level.

Following correlational analysis by school and self-reported ethnicity, further analysis was conducted based upon home language (English, Spanish, both) by language program (see Table 7) and by school (see Table 8).
IDENTITY AND BELONGINGNESS IN DL AND EO CONTEXTS

Table 7
*Means, SDs, and Correlations by Home Language and Language Program*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Program/ Home language</th>
<th>aMEIM M</th>
<th>aMEIM SD</th>
<th>aPSSM M</th>
<th>aPSSM SD</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dual-Language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>49.77</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>49.54</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.00*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>54.50</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>51.75</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>56.75</td>
<td>6.64</td>
<td>47.45</td>
<td>6.64</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-Only</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>50.03</td>
<td>6.96</td>
<td>49.15</td>
<td>5.41</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>53.00</td>
<td>6.81</td>
<td>51.50</td>
<td>5.36</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>52.21</td>
<td>6.01</td>
<td>49.90</td>
<td>5.57</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.02*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Correlations are significant at a <.05 level.

Results indicated a statistically significant correlation between (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness for native English speakers in the dual-language strand \( r=0.87; p<0.05 \) and for bilingual students in the English-only program \( r=0.46; p<0.05 \). For native Spanish speakers in either program and native English or Spanish speakers in the English-only program, there was no evidence of a relationship between (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness.

Fisher \( r \)-to-\( z \) transformation indicated that the only significantly different relationship between identity and belongingness was for the native English-speaking
students \((z=3.19; \ p<.01)\); for all other groups the correlation between identity and belongingness was not statistically significantly different.

Table 8

*Means, SDs, and Correlations by Home Language and School*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School/</th>
<th>aMEIM</th>
<th></th>
<th>aPSSM</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>(r)</td>
<td>(p)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Academy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>49.67</td>
<td>7.11</td>
<td>49.45</td>
<td>5.76</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.01*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>53.13</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>52.00</td>
<td>4.99</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>53.58</td>
<td>6.80</td>
<td>49.25</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant Valley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>50.44</td>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>48.92</td>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>55.50</td>
<td>12.02</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.00*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>52.50</td>
<td>5.16</td>
<td>49.23</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.04*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Correlations are significant at \(a <.05\) level.

When grouped by school, the correlation between (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness was significant for native English speakers at the Language Academy \((r=.41; \ p<.05)\) and for native Spanish speakers \((r=1.00; \ p<.05)\) and bilingual students \((r=.59; \ p<.05)\) at Pleasant Valley. For all other home-language groups based upon school site, there was no statistically significant relationship between bicultural identity and sense of school belongingness.
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Significant differences in bicultural identity and sense of school belonging

Following the preliminary correlational analyses independent t-tests were calculated in order to answer the question, Are there significant differences in (bi)cultural identity and/or sense of school belongingness for students in dual-language and English-only programs?

The t-tests were calculated to see if there were any significant differences in (bi)cultural identity development based upon school (Pleasant Valley or Language Academy) or language program (English-only or dual-language) for the entire sample. Following these calculations, t-tests were conducted on two subsamples: The English-only students at both schools (Pleasant Valley and the Language Academy) and all students at the Language Academy (English-only and dual-language).

Results from comparing the means on both measures for students at the Language Academy and the students at Pleasant Valley yielded no significant differences. (See Table 9.)

Table 9

Comparison of Means of MEIM and PSSM by School Site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Language Academy</th>
<th>Pleasant Valley</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEIM</td>
<td>51.12</td>
<td>6.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSSM</td>
<td>49.64</td>
<td>5.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Likewise, a comparison of the means of the aMEIM and the aPSSM based upon language program (dual-language or English-only) showed no significant differences between the groups. (See Table 10.)

Table 10

Comparison of Means of aMEIM and aPSSM by Language Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dual-language</th>
<th>English-Only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aMEIM</td>
<td>52.76</td>
<td>6.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aPSSM</td>
<td>49.04</td>
<td>6.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A comparison of means for all participants at the Language Academy Elementary School as based upon language program (DL or EO) yielded similar results. There was no significant difference in bicultural identity or sense of school belongingness between dual-language and English-only students at LAES. (See Table 11.)

Table 11

Comparison of Means of aMEIM and aPSSM for LAES by Language Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dual-language</th>
<th>English-Only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aMEIM</td>
<td>50.39</td>
<td>7.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aPSSM</td>
<td>49.93</td>
<td>5.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results of these $t$-tests indicated that there were no significant differences in (bi)cultural identity ($t(135)=-.22, p>.05$) or sense of school belongingness ($t(144)=.35, p>.05$) based upon school. Nor were there significant differences in (bi)cultural identity ($t(135)=-1.32; p>.05$) or sense of school belongingness ($t(144)=.51; p>.05$) based upon language program. Finally, for all participants at LAES, there was neither a significant difference in bicultural identity ($t(79)=-1.43; p>.05$) nor sense of school belongingness ($t(84)=.50; p>.05$) based upon language program.

Following these $t$-tests, further $t$-tests were calculated to determine if there was a significant difference in (bi)cultural identity or sense of school belongingness by school, language program, and ethnicity. Dichotomous dummy variables were created to code ethnicity for the three most common self-reported ethnic groups: Latino/non-Latino; White/non-White; Asian/non-Asian. Because many of the participants reported to belonging to multiple ethnicities (i.e. Latino and White), those participants were included in multiple $t$-tests. Table 12 reports means, standard deviations, and comparison of means of the aMEIM and the aPSSM for the Latino and non-Latino subgroup by school and language program.
Table 12

Comparison of Means for Latinos and Non-Latinos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Latino M</th>
<th>Latino SD</th>
<th>Non-Latino M</th>
<th>Non-Latino SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEIM</td>
<td>52.40</td>
<td>5.92</td>
<td>49.72</td>
<td>6.97</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>.02*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAES</td>
<td>52.23</td>
<td>6.20</td>
<td>49.04</td>
<td>7.81</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>.05*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DL</td>
<td>53.83</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>6.51</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EO</td>
<td>51.40</td>
<td>6.29</td>
<td>48.71</td>
<td>8.32</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVES</td>
<td>52.79</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>50.31</td>
<td>6.20</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aPSSM</td>
<td>49.74</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>52.40</td>
<td>5.92</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAES</td>
<td>49.57</td>
<td>5.72</td>
<td>49.79</td>
<td>6.97</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DL</td>
<td>48.67</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>50.14</td>
<td>7.38</td>
<td>-.56</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EO</td>
<td>50.08</td>
<td>5.78</td>
<td>49.67</td>
<td>5.62</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVES</td>
<td>50.17</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>48.75</td>
<td>5.19</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Significant at a p<.05 level.

Results suggested that Latino students at Language Academy Elementary school had a significantly higher (bi)cultural identity than non-Latino students at this school (t(79)=2.01; p<.05); however when disaggregated into language program (dual-language or English-only), this difference is no longer significant. There was no significant difference in means for Latinos and non-Latinos at Pleasant Valley. Likewise, there was
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no significant difference in school belongingness for Latinos and non-Latinos based upon school or language program.

Following a comparison of means of the aMEIM and aPSSM for Latino and non-Latino students based upon school and language program, means for White and non-White students were calculated and compared. (See Table 13.)

Table 13

Comparison of Means for White and Non-White Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Non-White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEIM</td>
<td>51.58</td>
<td>5.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAES</td>
<td>51.32</td>
<td>5.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DL</td>
<td>51.29</td>
<td>6.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EO</td>
<td>51.33</td>
<td>5.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVES</td>
<td>51.94</td>
<td>5.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSSM</td>
<td>48.56</td>
<td>6.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAES</td>
<td>48.04</td>
<td>6.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DL</td>
<td>51.00</td>
<td>7.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EO</td>
<td>46.75</td>
<td>5.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVES</td>
<td>49.22</td>
<td>6.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Significant at a p<.05 level.*
Table 13 shows the means, standard deviations, and $t$-values on the aMEIM and aPSSM for White and non-White students at the different schools and within the different language programs at those schools. Results indicate a significant difference in the sense of school belongingness between White and non-White students in the English-only program at the Language Academy ($t(56)=-2.79; p<.05$). The White students in the English-only program at LAES have a significantly lower sense of school belongingness than their non-White peers. For all other contexts, there was no significant difference between mean aMEIM scores or mean aPSSM scores between White and non-White students.

After running $t$-tests comparing the means on the aMEIM and aPSSM for Latinos and non-Latinos, and then comparing White students to non-White students, the same calculations were made to compare Asian to non-Asian students. Table 14 shows the means, standard deviations, and $t$-values on the aMEIM and the aPSSM for Asian and non-Asian students. Results indicate that there is no significant difference in mean aMEIM nor mean aPSSM score between Asian and non-Asian students, regardless of their school or language program.
IDENTITY AND BELONGINGNESS IN DL AND EO CONTEXTS

Table 14

Comparison of Means for Asian and Non-Asian Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Non-Asian</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEIM</td>
<td>50.76</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>51.35</td>
<td>6.75</td>
<td>-.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAES</td>
<td>50.63</td>
<td>5.97</td>
<td>51.27</td>
<td>7.23</td>
<td>-.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DL</td>
<td>52.20</td>
<td>6.26</td>
<td>52.90</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>-.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EO</td>
<td>50.07</td>
<td>5.99</td>
<td>50.50</td>
<td>7.58</td>
<td>-.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVES</td>
<td>51.00</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>51.46</td>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSSM</td>
<td>49.45</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>49.52</td>
<td>5.56</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAES</td>
<td>48.83</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td>49.85</td>
<td>5.87</td>
<td>-.67</td>
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<td>DL</td>
<td>48.17</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>49.27</td>
<td>6.36</td>
<td>-.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EO</td>
<td>49.17</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>50.13</td>
<td>5.67</td>
<td>-.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVES</td>
<td>50.45</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>49.06</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following these t-tests, two separate 3-way ANCOVAs were calculated to determine if there was a significant difference in bicultural identity or sense of school belongingness based upon school (LAES or PVES), language program (DL or EO), and grade level. Age was used as a covariate. Results indicated that there were no significant differences in bicultural identity development based upon school, \((F(1,129)=2.52, p=.12)\), language program \((F(1,129)=2.38, p=.13)\), or grade level \((F(2,129)=1.18, p=.31)\), nor with any of the interactions between these factors \((F(7,129)=1.183, p=.32)\). Likewise, there were no significant differences in sense of school belongingness based upon these
factors: school \((F(1,138)=.16; \ p>.05)\) or language program \((F(1,138)=2.94, \ p=.09)\). There was a significant difference in bicultural identity based upon grade \((F(2,138)=3.61, \ p=.03)\) and a significant interaction between program and grade \((F(1,138)=4.96, \ p=.03)\).

A 3-way ANCOVA using the dependent variable of the aMEIM scores, independent variables of school, language program, and length of time at school, with a covariate of age was conducted for each ethnicity of significance: Latino/non-Latino, White/non-White, and Asian/non-Asian. There were no statistically significant factors of bicultural identity development for any groups \((p>.05 \text{ for all other comparisons and interactions})\).

The same independent variables and covariate with aPSSM scores as a dependent variable were used in another 3-way ANCOVA to determine the impact of school, language program, and length of time at school on sense of school belongingness. This yielded two significant findings for Asian participants: one being the significance of program (English-only or dual-language) on sense of school belonging \((F(1,12)=4.72; \ p=.04)\) and one being the interaction between school and length of time at the school \((F(3,12)=3.58; \ p=.04)\). Furthermore, the interaction between English-only program and length of time at school was approaching significance \((F(1,12)=4.47; \ p=.05)\). According to this ANCOVA, Asian English-only students had a significantly higher sense of school belonging \((M=49.78, \ SD=5.24)\) than Asian dual-language students \((M=48.17, \ SD=4.88)\) when age in years was considered a covariate and evaluated at being 9.90. For Asian students who arrived at their respective schools in kindergarten, their mean aPSSM score was similar between Language Academy and Pleasant Valley; however, Asian students who entered the Language Academy in third grade had a significantly lower sense of
school belonging than Asian students who enrolled in Pleasant Valley in third grade. This trend was reversed for Asian students who entered their respective schools in 4th grade. New fifth-grade Asian students at both schools had similar senses of school belonging. For all other ethnic groups, this 3-way ANCOVA yielded no significant results.

**Predictive factors of bicultural identity and sense of school belongingness**

Finally, multiple regression analysis was conducted to answer the question, *What are the factors that best predict (bi)cultural identity or sense of school belongingness?*

First, a stepwise regression was conducted to answer the question, *What are the factors that best predict bicultural identity?* Twelve independent variables (ethnicity, gender, school, language program, EL status, birthplace, age, grade, length of time at current school, heritage language, home language, and perceived ethnic importance) were run using the dependent variable of (bi)cultural identity (based on the aMEIM). Dummy variables were created for each ethnicity and for each mixed-ethnicity self-reported by the students in the study, resulting in 15 dummy variables for ethnicity. Home language and heritage language were also assigned dummy variables resulting in six codes (English only, Spanish only, other only, English and Spanish, English and other, Spanish and other). Dichotomous dummy variables were created for gender (M=1, F=2), school (Language Academy=1, Pleasant Valley=2), language program (English-only=1, Dual-language=2), EL status (1=yes, 2=no), birthplace (U.S. born=1, Foreign-born=2), perceived ethnic importance (yes=1, no=2). The probability to enter was .05 (*p* in) and the probably to exit was .10 (*p* out). None of the variables entered the regression.

A stepwise regression with the same independent variables was conducted on the dependent variable of sense of school belongingness as measured by the PSSM to answer
the question, *What are the factors that best predict sense of school belongingness?*

Again, no variables entered the regression.

Further regression analyses were run for the three most frequent self-reported ethnicities in the study (Latino, White, and Asian) to answer the question, *What are the factors that best predict bicultural identity for different ethnic identities?* Many students reported belonging to more than one subgroup and were included in the analysis of all pertinent groups.

A stepwise regression with eleven independent variables (gender, school, language program, EL status, birthplace, age, grade, length of time at current school, heritage language, home language, and perceived importance of ethnicity) was run on the dependent variable of bicultural identity (based on the MEIM) split by Latino/non-Latino subgroups. The probability to enter was .05 (*p* in) and the probably to exit was .10 (*p* out). The results are summarized in Table 15. One variable entered the equation for non-Latino students: heritage language. The variable of heritage language explained 25.9% of the variation of bicultural identity for non-Latino students.

Table 15

*Multiple Regression of Characteristics Affecting Bicultural Identity of Latinos and Non-Latinos*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Latino</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Non-Latino</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>β</td>
<td><em>t</em></td>
<td>sig. <em>t</em></td>
<td>β</td>
<td><em>t</em></td>
<td>sig. <em>t</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage language</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>-.51</td>
<td>-2.21</td>
<td>.04*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: R=.509, R²=.259, sig. F<.05*
Next, a stepwise regression with eleven independent variables (gender, school, language program, EL status, birthplace, age, grade, length of time at current school, heritage language, home language, and perceived importance of ethnicity) was run on the dependent variable of bicultural identity (based on the aMEIM) split by White/non-White subgroups. The probability to enter was .05 \( (p_{in}) \) and the probably to exit was .10 \( (p_{out}) \). The results are summarized in Table 16. Birthplace (U.S. or foreign born), program (English-only or dual-language), and length of time at the school entered the equation for non-White students; no variables entered the equation for White students. The variables of birthplace, program, and length of time at the current school explained 36.5% of the variation of (bi)cultural identity for non-White students. Inspection of the betas revealed that educational program (dual-language or English-only) was the most significant variable.

Table 16

*Multiple Regression of Characteristics Affecting Bicultural Identity of White and Non-White Students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>White</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Non-White</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( \beta )</td>
<td>( t )</td>
<td>( \text{sig. } t )</td>
<td>( \beta )</td>
<td>( t )</td>
<td>( \text{sig. } t )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birthplace</td>
<td>-.036</td>
<td>-.061</td>
<td>.955</td>
<td>.372</td>
<td>2.572</td>
<td>.015*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.992</td>
<td>.403</td>
<td>2.748</td>
<td>.010*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time at school</td>
<td>-.629</td>
<td>-1.103</td>
<td>.351</td>
<td>.369</td>
<td>2.530</td>
<td>.017*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. \( R=.604, R^2=.365, \text{sig. } F<.005 \)*
A third stepwise regression with the same eleven independent variables was run on the dependent variable of bicultural identity (based on the aMEIM) split by Asian/non-Asian subgroups. The probability to enter was .05 (p in) and the probably to exit was .10 (p out). None of the variables entered the regression.

Further regression analyses were run for the three most frequent ethnicities in the study (Latino, White, and Asian) to answer the question, What are the factors that best predict sense of school belongingness for different ethnic identities? Again, students who reported belonging to multiple ethnicities were included in all pertinent ethnic groups.

A stepwise regression with eleven independent variables (gender, school, language program, EL status, birthplace, age, grade, length of time at current school, heritage language, home language, and perceived importance of ethnicity) was run on the dependent variable of sense of school belongingness (based on the aPSSM) split by Latino/non-Latino subgroups. The probability to enter was .05 (p in) and the probably to exit was .10 (p out). No variables entered the equation.

Next, a stepwise regression with the same eleven independent variables was run on the dependent variable of sense of school belongingness and split by White/non-White subgroups. The probability to enter was .05 (p in) and the probably to exit was .10 (p out). The results are summarized in Table 17. Grade level entered the equation for White students; no variables entered the equation for non-White students. Grade level explained 41.7% of the variation of sense of school belongingness for White students.
Table 17

*Multiple Regression of Characteristics Affecting Sense of School Belongingness of White and Non-White Students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Non-White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\beta$</td>
<td>$t$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade level</td>
<td>.646</td>
<td>3.052</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: $R^2=.646$, $R^2=.417$, sig. $F<.05$*

Next, a final regression with the same eleven independent variables was run on the dependent variable of sense of school belongingness and split by Asian/non-Asian subgroups. The probability to enter was .05 ($p_{in}$) and the probably to exit was .10 ($p_{out}$). No variables entered the equation.

**Qualitative data: Ethnic affiliation and ethnic importance**

Following the completion of the quantitative measures, participants answered two open-ended questions: *In terms of ethnic group or groups, I consider myself to be ___ because ______*, and *Do you think it matters what ethnic group or groups you are? Why or why not?* Data from both questions were coded for themes using an inductive approach and were analyzed as a whole group, by school, by language program, and ethnicity. The following section discusses the responses to the first question: *In terms of ethnic group or groups, I consider myself to be ___ because _______.*
Analyses of coded open-ended question data suggested that these participants—children as young as nine—were not only aware of their own ethnic identity and developing an awareness of others’ ethnicities, but they were also able to articulate reasons for their own ethnic affiliations.

Responses to the first part of the question, *I consider myself to be _____*, demonstrated that the self-identified ethnic affiliation reported by students at both schools was different than the affiliation selected for them by their parents as based upon demographic data from School Accountability Report Cards (SARC). Table 18 reflects the SARC demographics as well as the self-reported ethnic affiliation for the study participants by school. The SARC demographics reflect the limited options available to parents when selecting their children’s race/ethnicity on student enrollment forms. Parents may choose one option for race/ethnicity or select “two or more races” without selecting the particular races/ethnicities that they believe represent their child’s ethnic identity. Unlike the SARC, the open-ended question in this study asked the children themselves how they identify; furthermore, it allowed for students to write as many ethnic identities as they wished and provided a space for them to explain their response. This resulted in some dramatic differences between the SARC and self-reported ethnicities for this study.

In reading Table 18, “SARC %” reports the ethnic demographics for the 2013-2014 SARC for each school. “Self-reported” demographics reflect the students’ own reports of their ethnic identity or identities. “Self-Reported—1” reflects the percentage of students from that group who *only* identified with being that particular ethnicity, and
“Self-Reported—2+” reflects the percentage of students who report belonging to that ethnicity as well as another. For example, the SARC 2013-2014 report card for Pleasant Valley indicates that 1.4% of the student population is reported to be Black or African American, as reported by their parents; however, 7.1% of the students themselves report being Black/African-American. Of this 7.1%, 2.8% of the students from Pleasant Valley reported being only Black/African-American while 4.2% reported identifying with being Black/African-American and another ethnic or cultural group. The 4.2% multiracial Black/African-American students are also reported in the other pertinent categories for which they identified, resulting in many percentages being above 100% throughout the table.

There are quite a few important differences between the SARC demographics and self-reported ethnic affiliations demonstrated in the table. At Pleasant Valley, SARC demographics suggest that almost half of the participants (46.9%) are White; however, only 28.6% of the students report to being White or White and another ethnicity. This trend is reversed (though with less dramatic numbers) at the Language Academy, where the SARC reports 16% of students being White but 22.5% of the students themselves report themselves to be White or White and another ethnicity. Furthermore, the SARC for both sites reflect fewer multiethnic students (8.3%, PVES; 3.5%, LAES) than the students themselves report (18.6%, PVES; 27%, LAES). It is also interesting to note that the PVES SARC reports fewer students of color and higher numbers of White students than the students themselves report; this trend is not seen at LAES.
Table 18

*Ethnic Identity/Affiliation Reported by SARC and Self-Reported*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pleasant Valley (n=70)</th>
<th></th>
<th>Language Academy (n=131)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SARC (%)</td>
<td>Self-Reported (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>SARC (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2+</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/ African American</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/ Native American</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israeli</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“American”</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Ethnic Affiliation Rationale*

Further qualitative analyses of the students’ responses provided a rich body of information that added to the understanding of bicultural and/or ethnic identity. In
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answering the second part of the question, *I consider myself to be ____ because ____*, data were coded inductively. Students generally identified belonging to particular ethnic groups based upon family history/background including ancestry, birthplace, language, or skin color.

All participants responded that they based their own ethnic or cultural identity (or identities) on their family history. They described their ancestors’ birthplace(s), their own birthplace, or the language(s) they speak at home as being a consideration for their ethnic or cultural group identity (or identities). A smaller number of respondents revealed ethnic identity(ies) as relating to their appearance, specifically their skin color. Tables 19 through 22 detail representative comments typical of these responses. Themes are reported from most frequent (ancestry, Table 19) to least frequent (appearance, Table 22). Furthermore, these responses indicate that while most students relate their ethnic or cultural identities to the broader category of family history there was often an overlapping of themes. For instance, many participants reported that they based their own identity upon their parents’ heritage as well as their own birthplace, or their parents’ language(s) and their own languages. This suggests that students perceived ethnic and cultural identity affiliation to be multifaceted and dynamic. For the participants in this study, questions of identity could not be reduced to a simple answer or explanation.
Table 19

*Representative Responses for Ethnic Affiliation Based on Ancestry*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>School (Program)</th>
<th>Representative Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Q1: I consider myself to be __________ because __________.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Family Background**

**Ancestry**

PVES (EO)  
Salvadorean-Irish because my mom and dad come from there.
Filipino because my grandma and grandpa was [sic] born in the Philippines but my parents no.
Pakistani because my entire family is from Pakistan and lives there besides my family in California.
African-American because my dad is.
Mexican-American because my dad’s side is mostly Mexican but my mom’s is a little American.

LAES (EO)  
My family is all white so that considers me white.
Mexican because my parents are Mexican.

LAES (DL)  
Latino because my mom and dad were born in Mexico.
White and Mexican because my dad is from Quebec while my mom is from Mexico.
Mexican and Spanish because I am Mexican because my mom was born in Mexico. I am Spanish because my great-grandfather was both in Spain.
Norwegian, German, Irish, American because my ancestors came from there.
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Representative responses basing ethnic identity upon ancestry are displayed in Table 19. Most participants in this study responded that they considered their ethnic identity to be related to their ancestry; this indeed was true regardless of the self-reported ethnic identification of the student. In analyzing these findings, participants who based their own ethnic affiliation upon their ancestors generally considered more recent ancestors, such as parents or grandparents as influencing their own affiliation, rather than much older ancestors. This makes sense, given that parents and living grandparents have more of a concrete roll in their children’s and grandchildren’s lives than deceased ancestors. That being said, one White child did cite his long-deceased “Norwegian, German, Irish, American” ancestors and contributing to his ethnic identity. This outlier could be explicated by social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) –members of dominant groups are less aware of their group identities than those of minoritized groups.

Table 20 lists a series of representative responses for participants who considered their own birthplace to be a factor in their own ethnic identification. Most students who reported their own birthplace as being a contributing factor in their identity were Mexican-American; though there were a limited number of non-Mexican-American students who felt this way as well. For the non-Mexican-American students who considered their own birthplace to be a contributing factor in their ethnic identity, all were U.S. born students of color. There were no students who self-identified as being European-American (or something equivalent) because of being born in the United States. While this is an important fact to consider, it could be due to the limited number of participants who self-identified as White (or other European-American) groups.
Table 20

Representative Responses for Ethnic Affiliation Based on Birthplace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Representative Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Background</td>
<td>Own birthplace</td>
<td>PVES (EO)</td>
<td>I was born in the United States but my family is Mexican.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mexican-American because my mom comes from Mexico and my dad, too. But I was born here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LAES (EO)</td>
<td>My parents are Mexican, and I was born in America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mexican-American because both my parents came from Mexico, and I was born in America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Filipino-American because my parents were raised in the Philippines and I was born in America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LAES (DL)</td>
<td>Nacé en estados unidos pero mis padres son mexicanos. [Translation: I was born in the United States but my parents are Mexican]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mexican-American because my parents were born in parts of Mexico but my brother and I were born in California.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mexicana, cubana, y Americana porque mi papá es de cuba. Mi mamá es Mexicana y yo soy Americana. [Translation: Mexican, Cuban, and American because my dad is Cuban. My mom is Mexican, and I am American.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mexican-American because my ancestors and family members are Mexican and I was born in the U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mexicano-Americano porque toda mi cultura es mexicano y soy de América. [Translation: Mexican-American because all of my culture is Mexican and I am from America.]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Another factor relating to family background that students articulated as impacting their ethnic affiliation was language(s) spoken at home or with family. Table 21 lists representative responses from students who considered language as defining their identities.

Table 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>School (Program)</th>
<th>Representative Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Background</td>
<td>Language(s)</td>
<td>PVES (EO)</td>
<td>Asian because my mom is Asian and I’m learning Japanese.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>White because I don’t speak any other language and [have] no family that is anything.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>American because I can speak English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAES (EO)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mexican-American because I speak Spanish with my family but also English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Latino because I speak Spanish and English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAES (DL)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mexican-American because I speak both Spanish and English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Filipino-American because on my mom’s side she is Filipino and I do a lot of the Filipino traditions and language.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Those students who identified that language contributed to their ethnic identity were generally bilingual, speaking a home or heritage language as well as English. Although many students at PVES speak Spanish as a home language, there were no bilingual English and Spanish students from PVES who considered—or admitted—their bilingualism as contributing to their ethnic/bicultural identity. In fact, PVES students who considered language as relating to their identity tended to consider monolingualism as defining their ethnic identity. Furthermore, while there are a number of native English speakers in the dual-language strand at LAES who are not learning Spanish as a heritage language (for example, generally Euro-American and Asian/Asian-American students), being bilingual was not a factor in determining their identity; this is inconsistent with the very limited literature suggesting that bilingual White students in dual-language strands consider their bilingualism to be part of their identity (Potowski, 2007). It must also be noted that this conceptualization of bicultural identity amongst White native English speakers in Potowski’s study was articulated by much older students than those in this study; perhaps longitudinal findings from participants in this study would reflect similar results.

All participants based their ethnic group affiliation upon the broader category of family history; a small, yet not insignificant, number of participants indicated that their appearance influenced their ethnic group affiliation. In general, these responses were related to skin color or tone, and the majority of these participants were students of color. Table 22 lists the representative responses for this category by school and program.
Table 22 demonstrates the salient quotes that indicate that some students considered their appearance when identifying with a particular ethnic or cultural group. As seen in other responses, the some of the replies related to ethnic group affiliation as based upon appearance overlap with other sub-themes, for instance the student who said, “I talk Spanish and I look Mexican.” The concept of “looking Mexican” suggests a monolithic perspective regarding what Mexicans are “supposed” to look like; while there are many Mexicans who are blonde haired and blue-eyed, this student had darker skin and darker eyes. He had clearly internalized the dominant perception of Mexican-ness: speaking Spanish and having dark skin and eyes.
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The internalization of what specific groups are “supposed” to look like was further supported by analyzing the students who reported being African-American. All had selected one parent as “African-American/Black” and the other parent as “White” on the demographic survey attached to the student questionnaire; however, none wrote “African-American and White” on the open-ended response. Therefore, while these students could have acknowledged belonging to more than one ethnic group, they chose not to, presumably because they look “more African-American than White.”

Unlike the other themes related to family history/background—such as ancestry, birthplace, and language—it is nearly impossible to conceal or change one’s own appearance; it is a very overt characteristic of ethnicity or race. In fact, an individual is more likely to be placed by others in a particular ethnic category based upon appearance than upon any of the other more readily concealed factors. The majority of students who based their ethnic identity upon their appearance were students of color, suggesting that these participants were aware of other’s perceptions of them and that, perhaps, they were choosing the path of least resistance. Furthermore, given that the one White student that identified herself as being White because she did not have “darker skin,” as opposed to calling herself White because she had light skin, suggested a developing awareness of colorism and stereotypes in our society.

Ethnic group affiliation and rationale provided a basic set of findings related to (bi)cultural or ethnic identity; it provides the opportunity to determine how children identify and why. In order to deepen this understanding of children’s perceptions of ethnic or (bi)cultural identity, exploring whether they think ethnic/(bi)cultural identity
matters is crucial. The following section discusses children’s perspectives of ethnic importance.

**Ethnic importance**

Following the question pertaining to their own ethnic-group affiliation and rationale, students were also asked to answer the question, *Do you think it matters what ethnic group you are? Why or why not?* Tables 23, 24, 25, and 26 illustrate some representative responses by theme, school, and program for affirmative (“yes”) and negative (“no”) answers regarding whether or not ethnic group affiliation matters.

While tables are presented intuitively, with the “yes” responses and reasons first (Table 23 and Table 24), and the “no” responses and reasons following (Table 26), it is significant to note that the majority of students who responded did not think that ethnic group membership mattered. While their reasons varied—from differences, to similarities, to non-judgment and cross-cultural friendships—for the most part most children did not think that ethnicity was important. There were far fewer students who believed ethnicity mattered than those who did not.

Inductively developed themes suggested that there was a dramatic difference in reasons for the affirmative answer to the question, *Do you think that it matters what ethnic group you are? Why or why not?* Tables 23 and 24 illustrate some of the representative responses for these students, revealing some dramatically different responses between the schools.
Table 23

*Inductively Developed Thematic Categories for Ethnic Importance Affirmative Responses*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>School (Program)</th>
<th>Representative Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q2: Do you think it matters what ethnic group you are? Why or why not?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treated differently</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVES (EO)</td>
<td>A nadie le gusta que se reían de su cultura. [Translation: Nobody likes to be laughed at for his or her culture.]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People have different cultures and some people might think different ethnic groups are weird and make fun of them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes people are mean and treat people differently because of their ethnicity. And everybody should be treated the same way.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some people might make fun of your heritage.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once I was bullied about being part Filipino. It shouldn’t matter what ethnic group you’re in, it should just matter about you.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t care if someone makes fun of me because [of] who I am. Everyone should be nice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We aren’t the same but people make fun of people who aren’t the same as them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAES (EO)</td>
<td>No responses for theme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAES (DL)</td>
<td>No responses for theme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IDENTITY AND BELONGINGNESS IN DL AND EO CONTEXTS

Table 24

Inductively Developed Thematic Categories for Ethnic Importance Affirmative Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>School (Program)</th>
<th>Representative Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Cultural and linguistic pride</td>
<td>PVES (EO)</td>
<td>No responses for theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Cultural and linguistic pride</td>
<td>LAES (EO)</td>
<td>That is what makes my family special.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I like to speak two languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Cultural and linguistic pride</td>
<td>LAES (DL)</td>
<td>Yes. Because my people invented Cinco de Mayo, tacos, burritos, maracas, and fiestas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Sí porque es importante tener un étnico porque del grupo étnico está en tu cultura y una cultura es una tradición.</em> [Translation: Yes because it is important to have an ethnic group because from your ethnic group you have your culture, and from your culture you have traditions.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I do think it matters because my whole family is Mexican and I don’t want to be only American. I like speaking a different language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes because I want to be Mexican because they do it more different. I love the language Spanish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Es importante para mí porque enseña quién soy y mi personalidad.</em> [Translation: It’s important to me because it shows who I am and my personality.]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the participants who reported that ethnic group matters, responses generally fell into two themes, either, a negative response (i.e. “It matters because someone might
make fun of me”) or a positive response (i.e. “It matters because it’s who I am.”)

Students from PVES who reported that ethnic group affiliation matters reported being treated differently due to their ethnicity. Students’ responses revealed having been laughed at/made fun of or perceived as “weird” by others. One student revealed an incident in which she was “bullied about being part Filipino.” While a relatively small group of students expressed these sentiments, it is clearly important to recognize that these microaggressions and overt ostracism do impact students’ school belongingness and can be traumatic. All of these types of responses were from students at PVES; however, while there were no students from LAES who made these types of comments, without further study it is impossible to know if ethnic ostracism is or is not happening at LAES as well.

On the other hand, the affirmative responses regarding ethnic group affiliation that were conveyed by the students at LAES were overwhelmingly positive, reflecting cultural and/or linguistic pride. It is important to emphasize that there were no examples of cultural and/or linguistic pride from PVES students. In general, students from LAES who revealed being proud of their culture and/or language were Mexican/Mexican-American, though one was Filipino. Furthermore, while the students’ responses reflected a cultural and linguistic pride, they also suggested an oversimplification of culture. In general, most students in this category mentioned overt cultural traditions and/or language. Essentially, they described evidence of culture than can be seen, heard, or experienced rather than deeper sentiments relating to identity. There does appear to be an initial indication of the burgeoning development of ethnic/(bi)cultural identity, evidenced by comments such as “It shows who I am” or “I don’t want to be only American.”
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The quantity of the responses indicating cultural and linguistic pride emanating from the students in the dual-language strand is not insignificant. About one-third of all respondents from LAES were enrolled in the DL program; the other two-thirds were in the EO program. Given these numbers, it would be reasonable to expect similar ratios within these responses; however, less than one-fourth of the responses related to cultural and linguistic pride were reported by students in the EO program. In other words, most students who reported feelings of cultural and linguistic pride came from the DL program. While it could be assumed that this definitively suggests that the DL program promotes biculturalism, it must be reiterated that there may be a self-selection bias at play. Parents who decided to enroll their children in DL programs likely valued home languages and cultures instead of cultural assimilation and may provide support for biculturalism outside of the classroom. Therefore, while the data does not definitively say that the dual-language strand caused cultural and linguistic pride, it nevertheless is a significant finding. It does seem reasonable to assume that a DL environment would not hinder bicultural development nor promote cultural assimilation, and these findings support this assertion.

The vast majority of respondents did not think that ethnic group mattered. Table 25 details some of the typical responses of this group of students. Rationale for the sentiment that ethnic group does not matter tended to fall into four themes: 1) We are all the same; 2) We are all different; 3) We should not be judged; and, 4) Importance of cross-cultural friendships. While there were representative responses from all three groups (Pleasant Valley, EO; Language Academy, EO; Language Academy, DL) for the
first three themes, there were no students from PVES who mentioned cross-cultural friendships.

Table 25

*Thematic Categories for Ethnic Importance Negative Responses*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>School (Program)</th>
<th>Representative Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Sameness</td>
<td>PVES (EO)</td>
<td>No because we are all the same. We’re just people in the same world each living a different life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Todos somos iguales a pesar de dónde vengamos.</em> [Translation: We are all the same regardless of where we come from.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LAES (EO)</td>
<td>It does not matter because we are all the same just different people speak different languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uniqueness</td>
<td>LAES (DL)</td>
<td>I don’t really care if someone is Asian, Filipino, etc. They are still people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I think it does not matter because we are all people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I believe it’s not that important because we are human with a life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PVES (EO)</td>
<td>Because people are different.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LAES (EO)</td>
<td>No because everybody is a different person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Although we are all a little different we are still the same being.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Identity and Belongingness in DL and EO Contexts

**LAES (DL)**

- It doesn’t matter what you are because everyone is different and we have to respect other no matter the race.

- I don’t think it’s importance because you can’t go, “Oh, well, she’s a blond white girl so she’s dumb.” Every person is different.

**Should not be judged**

**PVES (EO)**

- People shouldn’t judge or laugh about where you are from.

- I don’t think it matters because you shouldn’t treat people by their ethnics [sic].

- Everyone in the world should be treated equally not by the color of their skin.

**LAES (EO)**

- People should not be judged by the color of their skin

- Everybody should be treated the same way.

- Should all be treated the same no matter what ethnic group you are.

**LAES (DL)**

- We are all people and we should all be treated the same no matter what ethnic group you are.

**Cross-cultural friendships**

**PVES (EO)**

*No responses for this theme*

**LAES (EO)**

- I have Mexican friends and they do not care what culture I am. (Filipino-American female)

- Some people don’t like people because of their race but I don’t because I have friends all over the world that are different races.

**LAES (DL)**

- It really doesn’t matter what race or ethnic group you are, we can still be together or friends.

- It’s fun to have friends with different cultures.
In general, the responses regarding similarities (sameness) and differences (uniqueness) reflected the same idea—we are all people, and that makes us the same, or we are all individuals, and that is what makes us unique. Based upon these ideas, most students perceived ethnic group affiliation not to matter. These were similar responses regardless of school, program, or ethnicity and were relatively balanced in frequency.

Another theme emerging from the “no” response to the question, *Does ethnicity matter?* was the idea of judgment—essentially, some participants articulated that ethnicity does not matter because individuals *should* not be judged based upon their ethnic group identity. The choice of words is important; respondents did not use the concrete “are” but rather the conditional “should.” This one word makes a difference. The implication in the statements reflecting this theme expose the idea that while people should not be judged, they are. Therefore, these responses actually suggest that ethnicity does, in fact, matter because people are judged based upon their ethnic group(s). The theme of judgment is closely related to the reports of the participants who stated that they or others were treated differently based upon their differences (e.g. Table 25). While being judged is more subtle than being treated differently, both reveal negative experiences related to ethnic or bicultural identity. It is impossible to know whether the particular respondents who reported being judged based upon their ethnic group have actually seen or experienced it or are merely aware that it happens. Nevertheless, clearly these respondents have a developing awareness of the potentially negative impact of their ethnic group affiliation upon other people’s perceptions.

The final theme appearing in the data under the “no” response was the existence and importance of cross-cultural friendships. Quite a few participants mentioned that
identity does not matter based upon their experiences having cross-cultural friendships. While it is important to note that there were no representative quotes expressing cross-cultural friendships at PVES, that does not imply the inexistence of these relationships there. It would be inaccurate to assume that there were no cross-cultural friendships merely because students were not reporting them. Perhaps cross-cultural friendships were not as important to students at PVES than to students at LAES, resulting in fewer reports of them. Alternatively, it is possible that students at PVES were encouraged to be “color-blind” and overlooked or ignored these differences within their friendship groups.

Therefore, assuming the presence (or lack thereof) of multi-ethnic and cross-cultural friendship groups at PVES is impossible based upon the limited qualitative data generated from the students. Nevertheless, the fact that this theme was not salient for this sample of students is an important finding.

Discussion

This chapter identified the quantifiable aspects and described the qualitative aspects of (bi)cultural or ethnic identity and school belongingness. Quantitative information suggested that there were more similarities than differences with regards to identity and belongingness based upon language program, school, and even ethnicity; however, qualitative data painted a different picture. Why might this be the case?

The literature suggests three potential reasons for the quantitative similarities regarding school belongingness between and within the schools. Student age could be a factor (Anderman, 2003; Booth & Gerard, 2014; Osterman, 2000; Rumberger, 1995) as could school size (Howley, 2002) or demographics (Goodenow, 1992; Griffith, 1999; Osterman, 2000). Regardless of the quantitative similarities, qualitative differences
suggest the importance of a critical look at the two schools as well as an in-depth investigation of the DL strand at LAES.

Anderman (2003) and Rumberger (1995) have proposed that sense of school belongingness begins to decrease in adolescence, particularly in early years of middle school. For many students, this feeling of school belongingness begins to increase again generally around tenth grade (Booth & Gerard, 2014); however, as the legal age to dropout of school is 16 (the age of a typical tenth-grader) by then it may be too late. In fact, one of the general reasons for scientific investigation of school belongingness is to identify students at risk of dropping out of high-school, described as “the final step in a long process of gradual disengagement and reduced participation” (emphasis mine) (Aitken, 1995, p.56). While some students gradually re-engage with schooling, for others the sense of school belongingness never recovers (Osterman, 2000), suggesting that lack of school belongingness needs to be address long before the adolescent actually drops out of school.

Furthermore, based upon the literature that suggests a decline of school belongingness in middle school, it is possible that there were no significantly measurable differences in school belongingness amongst students in this study because they are all elementary school children. Statistically anyway, it appears that at the elementary level all students still feel generally well connected and accepted within their schooling environment. Nevertheless, as will be explored further, the students’ own voices provided a deeper perspective suggesting perceptible differences.

While quantitative results reflect no significant differences in school belongingness based upon school or program, qualitative responses reflected a difference
IDENTITY AND BELONGINGNESS IN DL AND EO CONTEXTS

in sense of school belongingness based upon ethnic/(bi)cultural identity between the students at PVES (EO) and the students at LAES (EO and DL). Reports of being treated negatively—either overtly (i.e. being teased) or implicitly (i.e. being judged)—were much more frequent from PVES (EO) students than LAES (EO and DL) students. This suggests that while there were no measurable differences between the groups of students, there were, in fact, differences in experiences and perceptions at the two schools as well as differences between the EO and DL strand at LAES. Obviously, given the small sample of schools used in this study, it is impossible to suggest that the reason for this difference is access to a dual-language strand; myriad factors such as administrator and teacher ideology, curriculum, social and cultural climate of the school and surrounding community, and family values could all contribute to these differences in perceptions and experiences.

Qualitative responses suggested that there were more students at PVES who perceived and experienced discrimination based upon their ethnic/bicultural identities than at LAES. Quite frankly, it does not necessarily matter whether this is a result of access to a dual-language strand or not; these are young children who are experiencing alienation and marginalization at their school—at a place where they go every single day for multiple hours a day to learn. This alienation and marginalization in the elementary years could very well impact a child’s sense of school belongingness in middle- and high-school. While currently these experiences have not impacted students’ scores on the quantitative measures of school belongingness, on-going alienation could eventually push these students out of school. Furthermore, these may be the students who experience a greater decrease in sense of school belongingness in middle school, or these may be the
students who are less-likely to “bounce back” from the typical decline in school belongingness.

From a scientific standpoint, more research is needed to determine whether the children who report marginalization in elementary schools are indeed those who experience greater drops in school belongingness in middle school, are those for whom school belongingness does not recover, or are those whom are forced to assimilate as opposed to developing a healthy (bi)cultural identity. From a humanistic standpoint, it does not really matter. Schools that have students who feel this isolation have a responsibility to engage their whole school communities in a dialogue to promote the belongingness of all students.

There may be other reasons for the quantitative similarity between the students’ sense of school belongingness. According to Howley (2002), “smaller” schools are more likely than “larger” schools to promote school belongingness due to higher achievement and improved achievement equity. Pleasant Valley and the Language Academy are comparable in size and academic performance index (API) scores; therefore it seems plausible that the similarity of scores is a factor of their size. Furthermore, as most middle-schools are fed by multiple elementary schools, thus increasing their size, this could be one of the reasons that middle-school students begin to experience a decrease in school belongingness. Howley (2002) also suggests that the importance of smaller schools is especially crucial for “disadvantaged” students. Many participants in this study could be considered disadvantaged due to low socioeconomic status, ethnicity, or English-learner status (or a combination of these factors), contributing to the importance
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of smaller school size in sense of school belongingness and impacting the similarity in quantitative scores.

Despite the similarities, the qualitative results do indicate a difference in experiences between the two schools, with the students at PVES reporting greater perceptions of marginalization based upon ethnic group affiliation than students at LAES. Again, there is no concrete evidence suggesting the reasons for this difference. Perhaps PVES does not attend to this aspect of students’ development, or perhaps there is a lack of consciousness on behalf of the administration and teachers at PVES that this is happening. Teachers and administrators (in general) are well-intentioned educators who want their students to succeed academically and belong socially; however, good intentions are not necessarily enough to promote sociocultural success.

Another factor that could have contributed to the similarity of sense of school belongingness scores between the two schools and two programs could be attributed to demographic diversity. While White students generally feel a greater sense of school belongingness than their culturally and linguistically diverse peers (Goodenow, 1992; Griffith, 1999; Osterman, 2000), when White students are the minority within the school, they tend to have inferior senses of school belonging than their culturally and linguistically diverse peers (Goodenow, 1992). At both of the schools in this study, CLD students (Latinos in particular) were actually in the majority. This “majority minority” demographic could positively impact the culturally and linguistically diverse students’ sense of school belonging as a whole, impacting the dataset and contributing to similar quantitative scores on the PSSM. This phenomenon could also explain one of the few significant differences that was found in this study: White students in the English-only
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program at the Language Academy Elementary School had statistically significantly lower sense of school belongingness than the scores of non-White students in the EO program at LAES. The DL program at LAES was considerably more diverse than the EO program at LAES. Given that the native languages of the DL classroom were relatively balanced upon enrollment in kindergarten, there were more White native English speakers in the DL program than in the EO at LAES. Considering the statistical similarity in scores between PVES and LAES as schools, yet the difference in PSSM scores for White students in the EO versus DL program at LAES, it is clear that educators need to address sense of school belongingness for all students, in all schools, in all language programs, regardless of ethnic or language group. Even those students traditionally though to be inoculated against lack of school belongingness may, in fact, be prone to marginalization in certain situations.

Like the similarity in scores of sense of school belongingness between the two schools, quantitative results generally demonstrated a similarity in (bi)cultural/ethnic identity development between and within the schools. There are a few explanations as to why this might be.

With regards to (bi)cultural or ethnic identity development, Phinney et. al. (2007) suggest, “a secure self of self as an ethnic group member develops over time” (emphasis mine). Likewise, Quintana and colleagues (Quintana et. al., 1999) found that higher grade levels were significantly related to more advanced levels of ethnic perspective. In a recent meta-analysis of studies related to ethnic or bicultural identity, Rivas-Drake et. al. (2014) found that school level (elementary, middle, or high school) was a significant factor in the development of ethnic identity, with the weakest association being for
elementary school students. These findings are consistent with Huang and Stormshak’s longitudinal study (2011) that found that the majority of adolescents displayed consistent growth in ethnic identity over the span of the 4-year study. Likewise, Ruble et al. (2004) suggest that ethnic identity is “rudimentary” in childhood. Given these studies, as well as the fact that the participants of this study were all elementary students (ranging in age from 9-12 years of age) perhaps they simply had not had enough time or life experiences, or, as Drake and colleagues put it, “exposure to different social experiences” (Rivas-Drake et al., 2014, p.81) to develop an ethnic or bicultural identity—regardless of their involvement in a dual-language educational program or not.

While there seems to be a general belief that children are unable to articulate ethnic identities, and the paucity of literature regarding the (bi)cultural/ethnic identity development of children reflects this assumption, participants in this study—particularly those who did not label themselves as “White”—were able to both articulate a cultural/(bi)cultural identity and provide rationale for this articulation. This ability of culturally and linguistically diverse children to clearly explain their own identity supports social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Social identity theory suggests that individuals are more aware of their cultural or ethnic group identity or identities when they are members of minority groups or other groups that lack social power. Likewise Phinney et. al. (2007) suggest that “ethnic identity plays a less important role in the lives of members of a majority group, and they are less likely to have thought about their identity” (Phinney et al., 2007, p.488). Clearly (at least in the United States), ethnic/cultural group membership matters more to culturally and linguistically diverse individuals than to members of the White “majority.” The students in this study, most of
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whom report being culturally and linguistically diverse, support this assertion. While there were no measurable differences in ethnic or (bi)cultural identity based upon the aMEIM, participants in this study were able to label themselves culturally and/or ethnically and provide a simple explanation for their self-identification. This may indeed be the first step in the evolution of a healthy sense of self based upon the framework of (bi)cultural identity development.

While all students, for the most part, had similar scores on measures of bicultural identity and sense of school belongingness, there was a significant positive correlation between bicultural identity development and sense of school belongingness for all students at LAES—regardless of their enrollment in the English-only or Dual-language strand. The scores on the quantitative measures of bicultural identity and sense of school belongingness were correlated even for those students who were not enrolled in the dual-language strand, suggesting that they benefitted from having access to dual-language education at their school despite not being directly impacted. Perhaps being enrolled at a school where biliteracy is valued, even when not participating in the biliteracy program oneself, contributes an enhanced sociocultural environment for all students. Perhaps dual-language access—and as a consequence, the choice to participate or not—contributes to a sense of educational agency that can contribute to positive sociocultural correlations. Both of these seem to be plausible explanations, though further exploration is necessary.

While there have been no studies (that I could find) that examined the relationship between sense of school belongingness and bicultural/ethnic identity, there are a few studies (e.g. Berry et. al. 2010; Phinney, Jacoby, & Silva, 2007; Ong et. al, 2010) that assess ethnic affirmation with a general sense of belonging or sense of ethnic belonging.
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As students spend the vast majority of their time in school and school-sponsored activities, it seems reasonable to assume that a sense of school belongingness could contribute to a general sense of belongingness and potentially even a sense bicultural or ethnic identity. Therefore, this relationship is also worthy of further study, not only in elementary students, but in middle- and high-school students as well. Likewise, further investigation of the relationship between sense of school belongingness and bicultural/ethnic identity for students in different types of educational programs is important. As this was a small-scale study between two schools, it is impossible to generalize this finding to all English-only schools or all schools with a dual-language strand. It is possible that the difference in the relationship between (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness that was found in this study is a factor of general between-school differences (such as curriculum, teachers, administration, etc.) than actually related to the different language program opportunities at each school. While access and availability to a dual-language strand may indeed be one factor that can influence the sense of school belongingness and bicultural identity development of all students, other factors may be equally important as well, as will be explored in Chapter 7.

Based upon the similarity of scores on the aMEIM and the aPSSM, I expected that the students would have similar responses to questions related to ethnic affiliation and ethnic importance. To a certain degree, this expectation proved true. In both schools, across both programs, students were most likely to base their own ethnic or (bi)cultural identities upon their parents’ or ancestors’ backgrounds. This finding supports the literature, specifically related to culturally and linguistically diverse youth, that articulates this connection between identity and genealogy, ancestry, and/or kinship (Markstrom,
Similarly, the finding that many students perceived their ability (or inability) to speak English and their home/heritage language as defining of their ethnic and/or bicultural identity supports the literature. Torres (2003) had similar finding in her study investigating the development of ethnic identity for Latino college students, as did Casesa (2013) in her study of elementary Latino students. In a recent meta-analysis of the interaction between home language and ethnic identity, Mu (2015) found a positive correlation between the two. Potowski (2007) found that White native English speakers in the dual-language strand considered their bilingualism as contributing to their identity—and therefore considered themselves to be bicultural despite having no Latino heritage. While this was not a finding in this particular study, again this could be attributed to the students’ age. In Potowski’s study, this identification of biculturalism by White students was expressed beginning in 8th grade. The participants in this study were 4th through 6th graders; White Spanish-speaking students were unable to consider the less-obvious factors of less-obvious identities—even those in the dual-language strand who had daily access, interactions, and experiences that could foster a sense of biculturalism. Essentially, while these European-American students could have been developing a bicultural identity, they were not yet able to identify or articulate it. A follow-up study with these students in a few years could further illuminate this finding.

While there were less students who articulated appearance as being a factor of their ethnic or bicultural self-perception, there is support within the literature for this finding as well (e.g. Torres & Magolda, 2004; García, 2013). In fact, Omi and Winant
(1994) refer to this as a perceived and social constructed “racial commonsense” (p.106) in which the way an individual looks impacts his/her ethnic/racial identity as well as the identity prescribed to that individual by outsiders.

Two important findings of the self-described ethnic or bicultural identity reported by participants in this study reflect the changing demographics of the United States. For example, many participants in this study reported themselves to be multicultural/multiethnic/multiracial; however, this was not reflected in the way that their own parents described them. This might be explained in a number of ways. Many of the participants who identified with being bicultural reported belonging to both their mother’s and their father’s ethnic groups; however, when identified by their parents, they were often ascribed to one group or the other. Most likely, the parent completing the form selected the child’s identity based upon his/her own identity. It is also possible that the parent completing the form selected the perceived preferred identity between the two options (mother’s ethnic group or father’s ethnic group). Investigating parents’ descriptions of their children’s ethnic identities warrants further study. Furthermore, this finding supports the suggestion that standardized forms should permit the selection of multiple categories at once; the catchall category of “two or more races” is insufficient at capturing the changing demographics of the United States.

Another important finding, particularly for the English-only school was the over-selection of “White” as an ethnic group by parents and an under-selection of this group by the students. Perhaps the bias towards English in this school perpetuates a perceived preference towards Whiteness, as has been suggested in other studies (Casesa, 2013). Other studies have reported that Latinos and African Americans have been rated as
having lower social status than other groups (Sidanius, Pratto, & Rabinowitz, 1994). Therefore, it is possible that a perception of White-preference is then reflected in the parent’s reports of their children’s ethnic identity. Another possibility for this finding is the perception that their children could be tracked into specific programs (e.g. ESL or ELD) and/or otherwise discriminated against based upon their ethnic group labels; by labeling their children as White rather than a minority group, parents may believe that they are sparing their children from these types of practices.

Many of these findings support current trends in the (bi)cultural/ethnic identity literature; however, it is also important to reiterate that the ethnic/bicultural identity articulations revealed by the participants in this study are fairly one-dimensional and simplistic. Other studies suggest that “ethnic identity… is intricately interwoven with cognitive and interpersonal dimensions of development” (Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004, p.343); these studies focus on middle-, high-school, and even college-aged participants. Given the young age of this study’s participants, the identity rationale provided tended to be based on the tangible, visual, and concrete; very few participants articulated a combination of factors as being important to their identities.

For the most part, quantitative measures of ethnic identity and reasons ascribed to self-reported ethnic identities were similar. However, when asked whether ethnicity mattered, there were some important differences. While many students at both schools responded that ethnicity “didn’t matter” there were some strikingly different responses. Students at PVES were more likely to reveal experiences relating to prejudice or discrimination, while students at LAES were more likely to report (bi)cultural pride. In fact, many students at PVES did not consider speaking Spanish as being related to their
identity, though they did report speaking Spanish at home. On the other hand, students at LAES indicated that speaking Spanish (or other languages) at home influenced their sense of ethnic identity. This may suggest that PVES students perceive English to be the language of prestige, Spanish to be an inferior language, or both. Furthermore, students at LAES reported cross-cultural friendships as important, suggesting both a sense of school belongingness as well as a developing (bi)cultural identity; students from PVES did not report friendships of this nature. To be clear, it is important to reiterate that assumptions cannot be made based on information that is missing. It is likely that there are students at PVES that do identify with Spanish as being important to their identities, just as it is equally likely that there are students at LAES who perceive or experience prejudice and discrimination. Likewise, there may be some students at PVES who are proud of their culture and home languages and who participate in cross-cultural relationships. Nevertheless, the fact that these were not reported by students suggests that these themes are not likely the most salient for these individuals.

There was a small but significant group of students from Pleasant Valley who reported being bullied, made fun of, or teased because of their ethnic group affiliation. This potential to be “teased, threatened, or unaccepted because of one’s ethnicity” has been reported by Berry et. al. (2010, p. 23) and Wu et. al. (2015), and can actually impact sense of school belongingness (Altenbaugh, Engel, & Martin, 1995; Bishop et. al., 2004). Students at the Language Academy did not reveal being treated poorly because of their ethnic group membership; however, this does not necessarily mean that this behavior was not happening. Analyzing the difference between these two schools, it is possible that the English-only context at PVES perpetrated a culture of preferred Whiteness, as previously
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mentioned, which impacted the way students treated others from non-dominant ethnic groups.

On the other hand, there was a group of students from the Language Academy (most being from the dual-language strand, though not all) that reflected a cultural and linguistic pride that was not evident amongst the other participants. As one of the goals of dual-language education is cross-cultural awareness (Howard, Sugarman, & Christian, 2003), it is likely that an intentional and explicit focus on cross-culturalism promoted pride; perhaps this cross-culturalism “spilled over” into the English-only strand at LAES, as students from both language programs have recess, lunch, and special rotations together. This same theory could be applied to the linguistic pride evident at this school: many students reported speaking Spanish at home. As another goal of DL education is that “all students will develop high levels of proficiency in their first language…[and] in a second language” (Howard et al., 2003, p.10), this proficiency in two languages could create a sense of pride amongst the students.

In summary, while statistical differences between the main groups were insignificant, qualitative data revealed some important distinctions between the two schools. There was a significant correlation between (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness for students at the LAES, but there was no correlation between the two measures for students at PVES. Furthermore, many students at LAES indicated a cultural and/or linguistic pride that was not evident amongst the students at PVES. These findings may suggest that all students at a school with a dual-language option—even those not enrolled in the DL program themselves—can benefit from the cultural and linguistic inclusiveness. Based upon these findings, it is possible that enrollment in
schools with DL programs could positively impact students’ sense of school belonging and bicultural identity as adolescents. A longitudinal or cross-sectional investigation of elementary, middle, and high-schoolers, as based upon their enrollment in elementary schools with or without dual-language strands, is warranted to further describe the impact of elementary schooling experiences determined by school policies and practices on the development of (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness.

The next chapter will describe the experiences and perceptions of the eight sixth-graders—four from the EO program at LAES and four from the DL program at LAES—from a completely qualitative perspective. Using observations, notes, interviews, and photography, the following chapter adds insight to the development of (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness that was discussed in this chapter.
Chapter 7: Identity and Belongingness in the Sixth Grade

This chapter seeks to answer the question, *How do students perceive and express bilingual/ethnic identity and school belongingness?* Based upon the results of quantitative measures, eight sixth-grade students (four enrolled in the English-only program and four enrolled in the dual-language strand) from the Language Academy were selected as focal participants (see Table 26). In order to get a broad yet balanced perspective of (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness, the lowest scoring student and the highest scoring student of each gender was selected from each program. Emiliano (low), Ella (low), Delia (high), and Arturo (high) were selected from the English-only program; Mercedes (low), Devon (low), Jeff (high), and Sara (high) were selected from the dual-language strand. All participated in three months of observations, dialogue journals, informal interviews, and informal focus groups. After three months of these data generation activities, they each participated in a weeklong photography project followed by individual semi-structured photo-elicitation interviews that lasted about thirty minutes each. The goal of these multiple measures was to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the students’ perceptions of (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness.

Of the four focal students selected from the English-only program, only one of them, Ella, was not a native Spanish speaker; however, her mother was a native Spanish speaker. The other three—Delia, Arturo, and Emiliano—were native Spanish speakers and all spoke only Spanish or Spanish and English to varying degrees at home. Both Delia and Emiliano were classified as English learners but Arturo and Ella were not.
Table 26.

*Characteristics of the eight focal students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>L1</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>aMEIM</th>
<th>aPSSM</th>
<th>EL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emiliano</td>
<td>EO</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>“Mexican American”</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ella</td>
<td>EO</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>“Mexican American”</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delia</td>
<td>EO</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>“Latino”</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arturo</td>
<td>EO</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>“Mexican-American”</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercedes</td>
<td>DL</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>“Mexican American”</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devon</td>
<td>DL</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>“Mexican-Spanish”</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff</td>
<td>DL</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>“Mexican-American”</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara</td>
<td>DL</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>“Mexican, American, French”</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Ethnicity reflects self-reported ethnicity on the questionnaire. aMEIM and aPSSM indicate total scores on measures. EL=English learner classification as measured by CELDT scores and reported by teacher.

Although the dual-language strand at LAES admits equal ratios of native English speakers, native Spanish speakers, and bilingual (English/Spanish) students upon enrollment in kindergarten, all four of the DL focal students were native Spanish speakers. They all came from bilingual households, speaking both Spanish and English to some degree at home with parents, siblings, or extended family members. Like the English-only classroom, two of the four focal students were classified as English learners.
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Mercedes and Jeff were classified as such; Devon and Sara were not English learners. A brief narrative description of all eight focal students follows, beginning with the English-only students and ending with the dual-language students.

**English-only focal students**

Emiliano (low, EO) was a quiet 11-year-old boy who came to the Language Academy as a 6th grader. He spoke English with a hint of a Mexican accent, and often made grammatical errors typical of an expanding bilingual. He was the lowest achiever of the group as indicated by my observations of his in-class behavior and his work and his own description of his reading and writing skills: “I don’t understand a lot.” He was one of the least active participants in the classroom; while he never volunteered answers to his teacher’s questions, he would respond when called upon directly. Throughout the course of the observations, Emiliano was seated towards the back of the room at a pod with five other boys. He worked quietly and diligently on his tasks, but he said that he was often “bored” in class, particularly in language arts. Emiliano had two siblings, a stepbrother and a younger sister, and he spoke mostly Spanish at home—during the week Spanish and English with his mother and Spanish with his sister; on the weekends he spoke only Spanish with his dad, stepbrother, and sister. I never heard him speak Spanish at school. He told me that he loved his dog, Jackyl, and playing foursquare with his friends.

Ella (low, EO) was the tall, freckle-faced student in her classroom. She often color-coordinated from her ponytail holdersto her shoes. The only non-Spanish speaker in the focal group, she nevertheless wrote “Latino” as her ethnicity on the demographic survey and described herself as “Mexican” because her mother is Mexican and her father
is White. For most of the project, Ella was seated next to Arturo at the front and center of the classroom. When asked to work together, Ella and Arturo collaborated well, though Arturo seemed to do most of the work. Ella indicated that she particularly loved to play sports and was on four different sports teams: kickball, softball, and two different basketball teams. She told me that her favorite television show was the Fresh Prince of Bel Air and that she loved to travel to Hawaii.

Delia (high, EO) was a bright girl who spoke English with a mild accent. She was born in Tijuana, moved to Southern California when she was five, then moved to LAES from another school for 4th through 6th grades “because the principal told my mom that we needed to go to another school closer to my house.” Although she speaks Spanish at home, her family wanted her to speak English. They did not enroll her in the dual-language strand at LAES. Arturo, another focal student from the EO program was her best friend, and they loved to play foursquare together. She was the middle child and the only girl in her family, and she particularly liked math and writing. Delia loved to visit “Universal Estudios and Hollywood”.

Arturo (high, EO) was a small, smiley child with big, brown eyes fringed with thick black lashes. He was born in Tijuana and spoke both Spanish and English at home. He was the youngest of three children and was “getting better at archery.” He considered himself to be helpful, and he confirmed that his best friend was Delia. Arturo likes to dance hip-hop because “it’s kinda stylish” and has been taking hip-hop classes since he was a small child. He loves school and gets good grades.
Dual-language focal students

Mercedes (low, DL) was a quiet 11-year-old girl who felt more comfortable in one-on-one or small-group situations than with larger groups of people. She was one of three children in her family and she loved to “pasar tiempo en familia” [Translation: spend time as a family]. She worked very hard in school, but she was not the top of the class by any means. She would often raise her hand to respond to her teacher, but was frequently overlooked for one of the “brighter” students. One of her favorite hobbies was “DIYs” which she described as meaning “Do it yourself…en lugar de comprarlo yo lo puedo hacer” [Translation: Instead of buying it I can make it myself]. While the majority of the other dual-language students spoke English outside of the classroom (during recess and lunch for example), Mercedes and her group of friends spoke a lot of Spanish together.

Devon (low, DL) was a tall, mature boy who was clearly popular with the other students in the classroom. A friendly child, he was always quick to help others when they needed it and could frequently be found socializing with Jeff (one of the high DL focal students). At recess, Devon and his friends often played kendamas (a traditional Japanese ball-and-cup game) or basketball. He described himself as an “everything guy,” meaning that he had many interests including “sports and technology.”

Sara (high, DL) was an immaculately groomed child with deep brown eyes and an engaging smile. She was the youngest of three children, and she proudly told me that her parents “have been married for 25 years, soon to be 26.” Outside of the classroom, she was on the school basketball team. Inside the classroom, she was enthusiastic about learning and was often volunteering to be a helper in the classroom. She loved her dog,
Canelo, [Cinnamon] because of “his attitude and eyes.” Sara frequently decorated her notebook entries to me with stars, hearts, and glitter.

Jeff (high, DL) was a funny child with glasses and a dry sense of humor. He had lived in Southern California for his whole life, and he had one younger brother who was also in the DL program at LAES. Jeff loved technology and brought his iPad to school almost every day. He loved sports, especially soccer and football and said that he was “dispuesto de inventar y tratar nuevos deportes” [Translation: good at making-up and trying new sports]. He was very diligent at completing school and homework well, and he was frequently called upon by the teacher, particularly when the other students were struggling.

In order to explore the students’ perceptions of (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness, I reexamined the focal students’ responses on the quantitative measures and their responses to the open-ended questions. I reviewed the dialogue journals, my field notes, the informal interviews and focal groups, the photos, and the photo-elicitation interview transcripts. I looked for themes relating to ethnic and/or (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness on two levels: at school and in the personal lives of the individual students. I pursued threads and themes that were common between the focal students, yet given the profound character of (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness, some students naturally had different perceptions and experiences. I chose to include their personal perspectives as well—even if they were outliers. Table 27 outlines the themes related to (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness that will be reviewed and discussed in this chapter.
Table 27.

Thematic relationships between identity and belongingness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationships</th>
<th>(Bi)cultural Identity</th>
<th>Sense of School Belongingness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Affiliation</td>
<td>Traditions and celebrations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarities within Both Sixth Grade Groups

Qualitative data generated during the three months of observations, interactive journals, informal focus groups, and the photos and photo-elicitation interviews revealed many similarities between the ways in which the students perceived and expressed sense of school belongingness and (bi)cultural identity regardless of educational program (EO or DL). This provided a rich body of information that added to the understanding of elementary students in these areas. Importantly, while (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness are two profoundly specific concepts, student data revealed that
these topics were frequently and deeply intertwined. This made discrete analysis impossible. Table 27 illustrated this intricate relationship.

In general, the students expressed that strong relationships between teachers, students, and family contributed to sense of school belongingness and/or (bi)cultural/ethnic identity development. Furthermore, students’ overt displays and presentations of group affiliation (such as traditions, celebrations, and language use) impacted their definitions of (bi)cultural identity and/or sense of school belongingness. The remainder of this chapter described the inductively-coded themes emerging from the data.

“Teachers do care about what happens to me”

Responses indicated that one of the crucial factors contributing to sense of school belongingness was the perception that teachers care. All participants believed that their teachers were interested in them and their work. Delia (EO) put it simply:

They are always smiling at me. And that makes me see like they do care about what happens to me…[They] are interested in how I work… They always choose me to do fun stuff. Also I finish my work to do this fun work.

For Delia, her teachers’ positive expressions suggested to her that they cared. Delia clearly articulated the immediacy of the relationship, explaining that when she completed her work she gets to do “fun stuff” that to her means filing homework, running classroom errands, etc. Not only does Delia’s quote demonstrate the importance of teacher affect on students’ perceptions of belongingness, but her description of “fun stuff” being different than the assigned classroom work begs the question: Is the typical classroom work not engaging? On the other hand, Delia has always shown affinity and pride in “being a
helper;” perhaps offering additional help to her teacher further illustrated the strength and reciprocity of the student-teacher relationship. Being a teacher-helper requires a certain amount of trust and confidence (on behalf of the teacher) in the student. By allowing Delia to perform tasks such as running errands and filing homework, Mrs. Robby was demonstrating to Delia her trust and confidence in her.

Teacher demeanor impacted other students’ perceptions of school belongingness as well. For instance, Jeff (DL) said,

*Cada vez que tengo una idea mi maestra pone una cara de curiosa como si quisiera saber más o como si estuviera más atenta. Lo que hace es que cuando levanto mi mano generalmente me escoge primero antes que los demás.*

[Translation: Every time I have an idea, my teacher gets a curious look on her face, as if she would like to know more or if she were more interested. What happens is when I raise my hand she generally calls on me before anyone else.]

Both Delia (EO) and Jeff (DL) were high scoring students on the school belongingness measure, and they both reported that their teachers’ positive countenances of smiling and *una cara de curiosa* impacted their sense of rapport and connection. Delia knew that Mrs. Robby cared because she smiled, and Jeff knew that Ms. Gomez cared because she looked curious about what he was going to say.

Delia and Jeff were not the only students to report that they felt like they belonged in school because they perceived their teachers to care; the relationship between the act of caring and school belongingness was evident when Ella (EO) described how she knew that Mrs. Robby cared about her. She said,
Mrs. Robby cares because all the subjects that we are learning she is helping us to get better and ready for middle school and high school so we can get a scholarship to go in a 4-year college or university. She also cares about us and our work because when she walks around to see our work and if its wrong she goes ahead takes her time and helps us. She always says if we are confused and need help on a problem she says, “Asks questions it will help.”

Ella mentioned that her teacher offered to help them so that they would be prepared for the future. She recounted that Mrs. Robby told the students that good grades would help them get scholarships (something very important in this neighborhood), and she was willing to help them succeed by answering their questions. Furthermore, Ella perceived that Mrs. Robby cared about her because Mrs. Robby spent time helping them individually; she also encouraged them to ask questions if they were confused.

This individualization of education as contributing to the feeling that teachers care (as was mentioned by Ella, an EO low student) was similar for Mercedes (a DL low student). Mercedes felt like she belonged because her teacher cared about her as an individual. She said,

*A veces la Sra. Gomez me pregunta si estoy bien, si ocupo ayuda....Aunque seamos 20 en nuestra clase yo creo que a todos le importamos.* [Translation: Sometimes Mrs. Gomez asks me if I’m okay, if I need help. Even though we are 20 in our class, I think that she cares about each one of us.]

For Mercedes, the fact that her teacher went out of her way to individually approach her and ask her if she needed anything gave her the impression that her teacher cared about students individually.
Sara (DL) also felt that her teachers’ attention helped create a feeling of belongingness in school. For Sara it was important that all her teachers, including her former teachers and her specials teachers (art, music, physical education), paid attention to her. She said that her teachers “siempre me ponen atención y siempre me están ayudando.” [Translation: They are always paying attention to me, and they are always helping me]. A strong network of past and current teachers who cared and paid attention to her contributed to Sara’s sense of school belongingness.

These students articulated the importance of believing that teachers cared about students; this contributed to a sense of school belongingness. Nevertheless, both Emiliano (EO) and Mercedes (DL), low scoring students from each program, articulated tension surrounding this theme. Emiliano clearly believed that a strong student-teacher relationship was important in creating a sense of belonging in school; however, he may not have felt as connected to his teacher as some of the other participants. He said:

[Mrs. Robby] looks a lot on (sic) our work and checks how are we doing. She shows that she cares because she is always making sure everybody understands the topic we are talking about… [but] I don’t understand a lot. I think she could make it easier if she explained it a little more.

Emiliano’s quote suggests that he perceived that Mrs. Robby cared about the class as a whole, but perhaps there was a disconnect between them as individuals. He used words like “our”, “we”, and “everybody” to describe his teacher’s attitude towards the class in general; she did everything she could to make sure that the class as a whole understood the lessons. On the other hand, Emiliano articulated that his teacher was not explaining well enough for him (as an individual) to understand. An important point to note here is
that in my three months of observations, I never saw Emiliano raise his hand to ask a question; however, I did often hear Mrs. Robby tell the students to ask questions if they were confused. It is likely that Mrs. Robby believed that Emiliano did indeed understand as he did not ask questions. Furthermore, his grades and classwork were adequate; while he was not the highest performing student in the class, he certainly was not the lowest, either. Academically, he was quite average, and he described his grades as “okay.” His average performance in class could have been another indicator to Mrs. Robby that he understood enough. Nevertheless, Emiliano’s quotation reflects a perceived division between himself and the rest of the class, and, perhaps on a deeper level, suggests that Emiliano did not feel as though Ms. Robby cared about him as an individual learner, but rather only as member of her class.

While Mercedes (DL) described that her teacher cared about all students, and indeed felt that her teacher cared about her individually (as previously described), she also described that her past and present teachers cared more about some students than others. She said,

_Aquí hay favoritismo. Los maestros tienen sus preferidos. Todos sabemos quienes son los muchachos preferidos. Es obvio. Porque, cómo en la clase del Señor Montales—um, su hijo es Adam—pero no le bajaba el ‘clip’. O sea, teníamos antes, si hacías algo malo te bajabas el numero… Pues, no le bajaba. Y la Señora Gómez, con Adam y con J.C., cuando gritan o hacen algo no más les da advertencias… Pero nos regaña. Ellos son hijos de maestros._ [Translation: Here there is favoritism. The teachers have their favorites. We all know who the favorite kids are. It’s obvious. Because, like in Mr. Montales’s 4th grade class—
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well, his son is Adam—he never lowered Adam’s clip. You see, the way it was in 4th grade, if you did something bad, you put your clip a number lower… Well, Adam never had to lower his clip. And Ms. Gomez, with Adam and with J.C. when they yell or do something bad, she only gives them warnings…But she disciplines us. They are teachers’ sons.

Although Mercedes’s description of favoritism in the classroom and the school provides evidence for the importance of positive teacher-student relationships, it also demonstrates that the students were aware when some children were preferred over others. This suggests an issue related to equity and fairness as related to school belongingness—and some students clearly perceive inequities within the classrooms. Therefore, it is possible that students would perceive different degrees of belongingness: some children belong more than others based upon the way they are treated by their teachers.

As evidenced by the data, and emphasized by the differences in teacher-student relationships articulated by the high versus low students, the importance of the student-teacher relationship was crucial in fostering a sense of school belongingness; however, it was just one factor in contributing to a positive sense of belongingness in school. The strength of student-to-student relationships was also important in developing school belongingness.

“My closest friends are there for me when I need them”

Analyses of coded qualitative data including journal entries, field notes, and interviews suggested that the existence of strong friendships were crucial to the participants’ sense of belonging in school. Close friendship groups contributed to a strong
sense of school belongingness. Written and verbal data provided support for this finding, as did student generated photography.

All students mentioned that close and strong peer-to-peer relationships were important to feeling like they belonged in school. When the participants were asked to “describe the best part of school,” many mentioned their friends. For instance, Sara (DL) said, “My friends and I like to talk,” and Arturo (EO) confirmed, “I also like that I get to spend time with my friends.” Similarly, when asked to describe the “worst thing about school” Delia (EO) said, “The worst part about school is when we get out of school. Because then I will miss my friends.” Like these three, Jeff (DL) considered friendships important. He mentioned,

*Mis amigos son prácticamente todos los niños de mi clase porque las niñas se quedan en la sombra y hablan.* [Translation: My friends are practically all the boys in my class because the girls just sit in the shade and talk.]

While all participants articulated the significance of friendships in contributing to their sense of school belongingness, the girls were more likely to describe absolutely why their friendships were paramount. Delia (EO) mentioned that her “friendships are unique because we love each other [and] we don’t fight between us…I always keep secrets. If you want more information you should ask Arturo (my bff 😊).”

The impact of the friendship between Delia (EO) and Arturo (EO) was further revealed during Delia’s photo-elicitation interview. During the photo-elicitation interview, Delia was provided with a photo-elicitation interview kit containing all of the photos that she took, and the very first photos that Delia wanted to talk about are seen in Figures 4 and 5.
Fig. 4. Delia’s photo of herself (taken by Arturo) playing four-square with Arturo.

Fig. 5. Delia’s photo of Arturo playing four-square with her at recess.
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She explained the importance of these photos:

I’m playing four-square with my friend, Arturo. I also play with Kayla, but Arturo’s my best friend. I started hanging out with him when we started school. We started hanging out so we became best friends. He’s funny with me.

Like Delia, other girls explained in detail why their friends were important to them. In describing a photo of herself and her best friend, Rosa (Fig.6), Ella (EO) revealed,

My closest friends are Arturo, Olympia, Katia, Alexandra, Delia, Natalia, Rosa, and Kalie…They are there for me when I need them…and bring me up when I am down… My best friend is Rosa. My friends, they are always, like, nice, and they always play with me. If I have a problem, I could talk to somebody and they understand. And they won’t make fun of me if it’s a really big problem.

Fig. 6. Ella (on left) with her best friend, Rosa.
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Ella described the qualities of her friendships that are valuable to her and make her feel like she belongs at school. For her, having emotional support is clearly valuable.

Like Ella (EO), Mercedes (DL) described her friendship group and mentioned her best friend, Kayla. She said, “Yo y Kayla nos gusta platicar sobre muchas cosas y nos gusta hacernos reír.” [Translation: Me and Kayla like to talk about lots of things and make each other laugh.] She continued to describe her close-knit group of friends,


[Translation: I have three friends, Kayla, Carmela, and Daniela. They are good friends. Kayla came to this school in second grade. Years later, Kayla and I began best friends. And in general, we sit in front of the classroom and talk, read.]

During the photo-elicitation interview, Mercedes chose Figure 7, a photo of herself with her friends, as one of the most important photos.
Figure 7. Mercedes with her best friends during Crazy Hair Day at school.

She described it this way:

Son aquí mis amigas, Carmela, Daniela, y Kayla. Son mis amigas desde kinder, pero Kayla la conocí en segundo... Es importante porque siempre estoy con ellas y estamos en el día de Crazy Hair Day. Hablamos y son las que se juntan conmigo y son chistosas. Aquí estamos por dónde comemos. Acá está el salón. Y acá está el área de comer. [Translation: These are my friends, Carmela, Daniela, and Kayla. They’ve been my friends since kindergarten, but I met Kayla in second grade. It’s an important photo because I’m always with them and this day was Crazy Hair Day. We talk and they are the ones who hang out with me and they are funny. In this picture we are near where we eat lunch. Here’s our classroom (pointing). And here is the area where we eat (pointing).]
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Without me asking, Mercedes explained to me how they all met. She said,

   It’s a weird story of how we met. Me, Carmela, and Daniela, like, we were in my classroom. It was recess, [Carmela and Daniela] were in my classroom, and they were going to the teacher’s restroom and I said, ‘No, that’s the teacher’s restroom. You have to use the students’ one.’ That’s how we, like, started, like bonding more.

For these participants, close friendships were considered crucial in developing a sense of school belongingness.

“No tiene AMIGOS amigos”

   The seriousness of close friendships in contributing to a sense of school belongingness was evident when Mercedes (DL) told me about one child who does not really fit-in well in the classroom, Addison. She said this girl “tiene amigos, pero no tiene amigos amigos.” [Translation: She has friends, but she doesn’t have friends friends (emphasis hers).] This student has acquaintances in the classroom or has forced classroom relationships, but she does not have deep and close friendships like the other students do. She is the outsider-inside the classroom. Mercedes perceives that this impacts her sense of belonging within the classroom.

   This impact of outsider-inside tension on school belongingness was further revealed at one point during the study when students from the dual-language strand were allowed to self-select groups for a project. I asked the students to tell me how they chose the groups and why some groups were so big, some groups were smaller, and one student was working alone. (The one student working alone was the outsider-inside the classroom introduced by Mercedes.) Jeff told me, “Muchas personas estaban solas
porque querían. Y algunos no son muy popular. Otros porque no socializan.”

[Translation: Many people were alone because they want to be. And some are not very popular. Others because they don’t socialize.] While Jeff told me that “many people” were working alone because they wanted to be, that was not the case. One student was working alone, and this student did not want to work alone. In fact, according to Mercedes, “She asked Sara [to be in her group]. Sara rejected her.” Mercedes choice of the word “rejected” is important; it implies a strong emotional reaction perhaps approaching ostracism.

Sara’s perception of this same event was different. She told me, “For our group, we were trying to see who wanted to join ours, and everyone did, so we just decided to keep it that way.” Sara did indeed have a massive group, consisting of almost all of the girls in the classroom except for Mercedes, Kayla, Daniela, and Carmela—and Addison. Clearly, for Sara, “everyone” did not actually mean everyone in a literal sense as she “rejected” one student who wanted to work with her. To Sara, the student who was “rejected” did not matter or count as part of the “everyone” group.

I asked Sara if and why some kids didn’t fit-in as well as others, thinking about the outsider-inside who Sara “rejected,” and was thus left working alone. Sara emphatically responded, “Here in my school, kids DO fit-in [emphasis hers]. My school always finds a way for kids to fit-in with others.” Fitting-in is necessarily a condition for sense of school belongingness, and Sara’s declaration that the “school finds a way for kids to fit-in” takes the responsibility off of individuals, herself included, and places the responsibility onto “the school”—meaning the adults who work there. As was evident in this case when one student was forced to work alone, the adults (in this case, the teacher)
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were not necessarily fostering an environment of inclusion or perhaps were unaware or oblivious to the tension within the classroom.

When I asked Ms. Gomez (the DL teacher) why one student was working alone, she told me, “That’s Addison. She wanted to work alone.” These linked anecdotes—that Addison doesn’t have “friends” and is forced to work alone because the teacher perceived that she wanted to work alone—suggest a disconnect between the adults’ perceptions of student belongingness at the school, the students’ perceptions of the adults’ responsibilities at fostering an environment of inclusion, and the students’ own perceptions of school belongingness. Nevertheless, this outlier—the one outsider-inside who does not have friends—adds to the finding that strong friendships promote school belongingness and a lack of strong friendships could contribute to a feeling of ostracism or alienation.

While all students reported a link between strong friendships and school belongingness, Emiliano (EO) revealed a slightly different position regarding his personal friendships as compared to the other students. In fact, he may be a child without “friends.” Emiliano clearly regarded friendships as important to school belonging, as did the other students, but he also revealed that he did not have the same strong friendships as articulated by the other students. For instance, Ella, Delia, and Arturo all reported being a part of the same friendship group and listed each other as being one another’s closest friends; Arturo and Delia both described the other as being his or her “best friend.” While Emiliano mentioned belonging to this group and told me that “Arturo and Delia” were his best friends, Ella, Delia, and Arturo did not list him as being among their friends.
I noticed this tension during my observations. Both inside as well as outside of the classroom Emiliano seemed to be a bit of an outcast. He always walked a step or two behind the group and sat a little bit farther away from the other students than his classmates did. He had friends, but not close friends, physically or emotionally. Unlike the other students who could describe their friends and friendships in detail, Emiliano could not. He said, “My best friends are Delia and Arturo. They go to the same class I am in. I don’t actually know a lot about their life. I only know what they do in school.”

Qualitative data generated suggested that strong relationships, including teacher-student and peer-to-peer, contributed to a sense of school belongingness. Another strong relationship was important to the students: familial relationships. The next section describes data illustrating this theme.

“I enjoy hanging with my family everyday.”

While teacher-student and peer-to-peer relationships impacted students’ sense of school belonging, strong familial relationships was a key theme relating to student perceptions of both (bi)cultural identity and general belongingness. For some students, the feeling of family belongingness may have influenced or contributed to their sense of school belongingness. Academic bonding outside of school impacted a perception of belongingness inside school. The immediate importance of family as being valuable to identity was revealed when all students described their families when asked to “tell me a little bit about who you are.” They perceived their personal identity, and by extension their (bi)cultural or ethnic identity, as connected to their familial relationships.

Sara (DL) told me, “In my family, I’m the youngest. I have one older sister and an older brother…My mom’s name is Larisa and my dad’s is Pedro.” She then described her
relationship with mother and her grandmother, who also lives with her, saying, “We like to read together. We read adventure books and sometimes we read, umm, like, books about people’s lives. I’m the one who reads, and they start imagining it.” Sara not only listed her family members to explain a little bit about herself, but she clearly articulated an academic activity that fostered a strong connection between herself and her grandmother—reading. This academic bonding that happened within the family outside of the schooling context may well have impacted a sense of belongingness within the schooling context by bridging familial belongingness with school belongingness.

Likewise, in telling me about himself Jeff (DL) first mentioned his family. He said,

Yo tengo una familia gigantesca. Mi mama tiene 17 hermanos contando a ella misma…Yo solo me he memorizado un cuarto de toda la familia [y] algunas no las he visto. [Translation: I have a gigantic family. My mother has 17 siblings counting herself… I have only memorized (the names) of about a quarter of my family members, and others I’ve never seen.]

Then, like Sara, he enthusiastically told me about an activity, though not academic, that he loved to do with his family: “Apostar dinero. Mi familia se vuelve loca. En un solo juego de cartas son capaz de apostar hasta $70” [Translation: Gambling. My family goes crazy for it. In just one card game they are capable of betting up to $70]. For Jeff, belonging to a huge family clearly was part of his identity, and participating in family activities—in this case, gambling—facilitated this relationship.
The role of the family in fostering a sense of general belongingness and identity was further evident in Arturo’s (EO) writing. In describing himself, Arturo described his family in his journal, writing,

My dad works at Del Mar. He is also PTA president at school…My mom works at Adams School in the cafeteria…My brother goes to Rancho High School. He likes to rap…My sister also goes to Rancho High School. She loves singing and dancing…I like singing and dancing. I am 11 years old. I am Mexican. I love school. I like to dance hip-hop.

Not only did Arturo describe his family in describing himself, demonstrating an importance of family in creating identity, but, like Sara, Arturo identified a relationship between family and school belongingness. His father, as PTA president, was clearly involved within the school. Arturo’s pride in his father’s position reflected and impacted his sense of school belongingness. He explained,

My dad helps with events that are going to happen and lots of other stuff. People have to vote for him to be PTA president. I’m helpful ‘cause I help my dad with PTA. I do, like, I help him move stuff, like boxes here.

Arturo’s father’s role as PTA president illustrated the importance of family on student school belongingness; Arturo was able to develop a deeper connection to his school based upon his father’s involvement as PTA president.

Furthermore, as other participants, Arturo revealed that a strong familial relationship impacted his identity. As the youngest child in the family, Arturo listed his parents and siblings in order, with himself last, suggesting that he cannot describe who he
is without describing family. He embedded his ethnic identity articulation into his
familial description proclaiming, “I am Mexican.”

While much of the data generated during this project regarding the contributions
of immediate and extended family on school belongingness and (bi)cultural identity was
oral or written, visual data strongly contributed to this finding. Most students took photos
of their family or specific family members and then described them. Even when the
photos were of extremely poor quality, many of the participants insisted upon describing
them. For instance, one of the first photos that Sara (DL) proudly showed me was a photo
of herself and her dad (Figure 8). She said,

This picture, it doesn’t really show much, but it’s my dad and I. He’s like my
sports trainer. For example, when I used to be in soccer, he used to be standing up
and giving me pointers about how to do good. He’d tell me, ‘Just look for the ball.
Don’t be afraid of the ball, ‘cause the ball’s more afraid of you than you are of
it…’ So this picture, you can kind of see the head shapes, but it’s my dad and I
when we were in the kitchen. My mom was cooking, so I just grabbed the camera
and was like, ‘Hey Mom, could you take a picture?’
Like Sara, Mercedes (DL) also wrote about her family in her journal, and then later selected and explained her family photos as being some of the most important within her set. Initially when asked to describe herself, Mercedes described her family. She said,

Somos cinco en mi familia, una hermana, un hermano y mis padres. Una gran parte de mi familia es mexicana. Bueno, es toda mi familia. Mis cosas favoritas son escribir, cantar, arts and crafts, y pasar tiempo con mi familia. [Translation: We are five in my family. One sister, one brother, and my parents. A big part of my (extended) family is Mexican. Well, my whole family is. My favorite things are writing, singing, arts and crafts, and spending time with my family].

Like Arturo, Mercedes connected her ethnic identity to her familial relationship when she said that all her family is Mexican. She also explained her transborder lifestyle as an important factor to her identity. She said,
Yo tengo familia en México. En las vacaciones de verano me voy a ir porque es la primera comunión de un primo. Umm, y sí, hay veces que solo vamos a ir porque mi mamá quiere ver a su familia y mi papa también. [Translation: I have family in Mexico. During summer break I am going to go to Mexico because it will be my cousin’s first communion. But yeah, there are times that we go just because my mom wants to see her family and my father wants to see his family, too.]

Clearly, strong ties to immediate family members as well as extended family in Mexico contributed to Mercedes’s sense of ethnic identity; she spent time in two different worlds, allowing her to create strong bonds with Mexico as well as the United States.

The importance of immediate and extended family to Mercedes was further revealed during the photo-elicitation interviews. She selected Figure 9 to describe to me.
In explaining this photo, she described her relationship with her whole family, and in particular her relationship to her younger sister:

Esta es mi hermanita. Estamos en la casa. Y quería que la tomara una foto.

Entonces, mi hermanita la quiero, como es la consentida. Tengo hermano pero no le tomaba foto. Aquí esta el comedor, la sala está allá, chimenea, mi perro estaba acá. Y arriba está mi cuarto. Mi hermano, cómo que—dice palabras en inglés, pero entiende más el español. Ella tiene para tres… En abril. Este fin de semana nos reunimos con mis abuelos, mis tíos, y mis primos…Viven en Tijuana.
Nosotros vamos para allá porque tenemos más familia y hacen piñata, pastel, comida. Como la mitad de familia está en Tijuana y la otra mitad está en México, o sea, la ciudad, y creo que tengo poquitos parientes que viven acá, pero nada más. Y allí en Rosarito… Mi familia me apoya. En la escuela mi mamá me ayuda con las tareas, mi papá me ayuda con los deportes, y a veces con algunas tareas, escritura. Mi papá habla los dos, mi mama, español. Los dos son medios tímidos. Mi papa no tanto, bueno, si es tímido, pero no tanto como yo. [Translation: This is my little sister. We are in the house, and she wanted me to take her photo.

Anyway, I love my little sister, she’s the spoiled one. I have a brother, but I didn’t take his photo. Here’s the dining room, the sitting room, the chimney, my dog was right there. And upstairs is my room. My brother, like, he says words in English, but he understands more Spanish. My little sister will be three years old in April. We are going to get together with my grandparents, my aunts and uncles, my cousins [to celebrate her birthday] this weekend. Like half my family lives in
Tijuana and the other half in Mexico, or rather, Mexico City, and I think I have a few relatives that live here [in the United States], but no where else. Well, a few live in Rosarito. Anyway, my family supports me. My mom helps me with school work and my dad helps me with sports, and sometimes some homework like writing. My dad speaks both [languages], my mom [speaks] Spanish. They are both a little shy. My dad, not as much, well he is shy, but just not as much as me.]

Like Sara (DL) and Arturo (EO), Mercedes (DL) articulated a connection between her family and school belongingness—explaining that her mother helped her with schoolwork and her dad helped her with homework and writing. This example further supported the idea that a strong familial relationship can contribute to a sense of school belonging.

For Mercedes, her sense of (bi)cultural identity was closely related to her immediate relationships with her siblings as well as the close ties that her family maintained with relatives in Tijuana and other parts of Mexico. She described the languages spoken by her various family members, Spanish or Spanish and English, suggesting that she perceived languages to contribute to a sense of ethnic or (bi)cultural identity, a concept that will be examined further in this chapter.

In her photo, like those taken by other students, family space was described and demonstrated to be important, perhaps due to a sense of place-belonging or ownership. Mercedes’s quote also reiterated the importance of parental support; both of her parents help her as a scholar and an athlete which may positively contribute to her sense of school belongingness. Finally, Mercedes described herself as being shy and suggested
that this personality trait was inherited from her parents. This further illustrated a perception of a strong connection between her parents and herself.

A transborder lifestyle impacting strong familial relationships was also evident in dialogue with other students. Like Mercedes (DL), many discussed the importance of visiting relatives in Mexico. Delia (EO) spent all of Spring Break “at the beach in Baja California” with her extended family, and Arturo (EO) spent two weeks in “ranch in Ensenada…It’s my mom’s sister. Her ranch. My whole family was there.”

Like photos taken by Sara (DL) and Mercedes (DL), Delia (EO) took photos of her family when asked to “show me who you are through photos.” Delia selected Fig. 10 as one of the most important photos in her set. She explained this photo:

This is my dad playing the yo-yo. I didn’t know, but my dad likes to do a lot of tricks with the yo-yo. I didn’t know that…that was pretty cool. I hadn’t seen him with a yo-yo that much. And that’s my mom (pointing to woman on the left) and that’s my little brother (pointing to the child on the right). [He’s] six years old… And this is inside my house. This is the living room. Over here is the kitchen, here’s the counter.
While Delia did not explicitly say that her family was important to her, the decision to describe this family photo as one of the first photos that we discussed reflects the importance of family within her life. She described her father’s hobby—the yo-yo—and then pointed out other important members of her family, her mother and her brother. Like other participants (such as Mercedes), she described her house in describing the photo of her family, suggesting an obvious connection between her family and her home. The importance of place-belonging in fostering familial relationships was further revealed when Delia showed me a photo of her outdoor living room (Fig. 11) and explained,

This is like a little house we have in there. It’s just like a living room, but outside. We have lots of parties and invite our grandparents, our cousins, our uncles, aunties. There’s a lot. My aunties, uncles, and cousins, they live here, but not my
grandma. My grandma lives in TJ. My mom’s family lives in Baja California, in Los Mochis. They all come, but not my mom’s family because they’d have to drive or fly. We hang out, watch movies, or get in the pool… We speak Spanish. Well, my uncle, he speaks English, and my little cousin, but not at the parties.

Fig. 11. Delia’s outdoor living room where they have family parties

While this photo (Fig. 11) was not very clear, it did serve to illustrate the importance of extended family from Mexico in Delia’s (bi)cultural identity, as she explained this communal space as providing a place for her extended family to congregate. Furthermore, she described her family language as Spanish, even though (as will be evident later) Spanish played a role in her Mexican familial identity though not in her identity as a student.
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Like Delia, who chose to take a photo of a family space to describe her identity, Emiliano (EO) took a photo of a family space to show me who he was and what was important to him (Fig. 12).

Fig. 12. *Emiliano’s grandmother’s house in Las Playas, Mexico*

His description of this space further revealed the relevance of a transborder lifestyle on (bi)cultural identity development. He said,

That’s in Mexico, my grandma’s apartment. When I go over there, I sometimes go in the Jacuzzi or go to the beach, that’s right here *(pointing)*. In Playas, she lives there. Well, I sometimes go when, like, when I get off school and then we come back, or my dad comes and picks me up [from home in the U.S.] and he just leaves me there [at my grandma’s house in Mexico] because it’s my grandma from my mom’s family. So he just leaves me there and then he comes and picks me up later.
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It is important to notice that the place-picture taken by Emiliano (EO) was very different than the place-pictures taken by others. Sara (DL), Mercedes (DL), and Delia (EO) all took and described photos of where they currently live in the United States; however, Emiliano took a place-picture of his grandmother’s apartment in Mexico. This may suggest that Emiliano does not feel as though he has a place where he really belongs in the USA, which could contribute to a lack of school belongingness. Furthermore, the place-pictures taken by Sara, Mercedes, and Delia incorporated images of people; the location was the backdrop to the relationship. For instance, Sara described a photo of herself and her father in the kitchen, Mercedes described a photo of her sister taken in the living room, and Delia described a photo of her father, mother, and brother in their living room; in all of these photos, the place was less important than the people and the relationship. On the other hand, in Emiliano’s photo of his grandmother’s apartment, the focus is the place; there are no people. Clearly, Emiliano discloses a very different perception of family relationships than the other participants.

Like other students, Ella (EO) wrote about the importance of her family when I asked her to tell me a little bit about her life. She also told me about her family’s heritage:

I have a [sic] older brother, mom, and a dad. My mom’s side of the family is huge with Mexican, Hispanics, Italian, American, Filipinos, and African-American. My favorite thing of being part of a family like that is meeting new family because it is exciting to know who they are, what their personality, what they like to do. Also, what’s their traditions to see if their traditions is [sic] similar to mine.
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Like other students, Ella mentioned her family’s cultural and ethnic identity in describing herself. Unlike other students she was the only participant to mention the cultural differences and similarities (based upon traditions) within her family.

“They are trying to learn English from us.”

Most students described or took photos of their family to explain “a little bit about who you are and what’s important to you.” A few students further described teaching English to family or learning Spanish from family as being an integral part of this relationship. Given that English is spoken at school, whether full-time (as in the English-only classroom) or part-time (as in the dual-language classroom), teaching English to family members may indeed be one way in which family relationships contribute to sense of school belongingness. Furthermore, as language and culture are interrelated, the act of learning language from and with family revealed a developing potential (bi)cultural identity. For instance, Delia (EO) expressed teaching English to her parents. She said, “My mom and dad [are] trying to learn [English] from us. Just a little bit by a little bit.” Likewise, Sara (DL) described teaching English to her grandmother who only knows “a little bit of English.” She explained,

She used to know a lot of English, but during the years, she’s started to forget it, so I read to her [in English] so that she can remember some of it… I used to teach her English. When I was younger, I would grab those little white boards and start to write English words and I would tell her how to say it and then I’d tell her what the definition was in Spanish… Sometimes I say, ‘Hello!’ and she’s like ‘Hello’ (mimicking her grandmother’s heavily-accented English).
While Delia and Sara described teaching their family members English as a way to connect and form strong family bonds, revealing an important relationship between bilingualism and (bi)cultural identity, Ella (EO) described learning Spanish from her mom as positively impacting their relationship. She said she speaks “a little bit” of Spanish and explained,

My mom knows it fluently, but I’m still learning…If I know some words in Spanish that I would like to say, then I’ll say it to her, like in the mornings sometimes I’ll say, “Hola, cómo estás, Mom?” and then she would say it back to me, but then if she says something I won’t understand then I’ll ask her what it means and she’ll tell me. And if I want milk, I’ll say, “I want leche” and some stuff.

While Ella described learning Spanish from her mom, she also explained how she taught English to her cousin in Ensenada. She said,

I have one [relative] that lives in Ensenada and she’s my cousin and she only speaks Spanish. Well, she would speak Spanish to me, some words I wouldn’t understand, so I would just say, kinda, like, “Yes” and kinda play with her if I don’t understand. But then when I do understand a word, I would kind of be like, “Okay, she said a word I do understand” so I would say something back to her. I told her, “Would you like to learn English?” And she would say, “Yes” and I would like, go on my phone and make, like, a text message and she would try to say it in English.

Ella first revealed the communication difficulties between herself, a dominant English speaker, and her cousin, a dominant Spanish speaker. She also disclosed that she would
conceal her lack of fluency in Spanish by saying “yes” even if she did not understand what was being said to her. This suggested that she felt embarrassed not to be able to speak Spanish—evidence of “language shame” (Alfaro, 2015). Furthermore, like Delia and Sara, Ella mentioned attempting to teach English to her cousin as a way of fostering a relationship.

The important role of bilingualism in a transborder family that was raised by Ella was further described by Mercedes (DL). She affirmed the importance of speaking Spanish with her family as a way to maintain a strong connection. She said,

Our family in Mexico, there is a lot of family over there, so they speak Spanish a lot. So, yeah, that’s important that I can understand them because if I were to only talk English I wouldn’t understand them at all… I wouldn’t be able to talk to them anymore. It would just be really awkward sitting there, like understanding nothing. Like, everyone talking Spanish and [me] being like, ‘Umm, okay?’ So, I think that it’s important to still speak the Spanish language.

Ella had alluded to the potential awkwardness surrounding an inability to speak Spanish, and Mercedes confirmed it. Clearly, the ability to speak Spanish with Spanish-speaking family members, particularly for this transborder group of students, was an important factor in contributing to their sense of (bi)cultural identity.

“*I don’t prefer living with my dad.*”

Analysis of Emiliano’s (EO) qualitative documents revealed a dissimilarity between the other participants’ responses and his own; given that Emiliano was the lowest scoring student on the belongingness measure and the among the lowest on the
bicultural identity measure, analyzing his perceptions of familial relationships can provide greater insight into their importance. While all other students had at least one photo of family within their photo interview kits, Emiliano did not take any photos of his family. Furthermore, all other students chose either a photo of their friends or a photo of their family as one of the most important photos. Emiliano chose his dog (Fig. 13.)

![Emiliano’s dog, Jackyl.](image)

Figure 13 was the first photo that Emiliano wanted to talk to me about. It was actually the first picture that he took as well. He described this picture saying,

Well, this is a picture of my dog… I just wanted to take a picture of him because you said that we could take pictures to describe our lives. [My dog] is, like, with me. He lives with me. I play with him sometimes. He bites me a lot when he wants to play but I don’t. His name is Jackyl. My mom picked that name for him.
In describing this photo, Emiliano revealed that he only lives with his mother during the week. Furthermore, while he did tell me about his family when I asked him about himself, he also revealed that his parents were divorced. He was the only focal student with divorced parents, which was clearly emotionally disruptive. He articulated,

I have one sister and one brother. Because my parents are divorced I spend the week with my mom and the weekend with my dad… My parents’ jobs are nurse and car seller. My mom is the nurse and my dad sells cars… My dad lives in Mexico. He comes and picks me up [from the United States] and takes me back [to Mexico]. I don’t prefer living with my dad because I don’t get along with him as well. He doesn’t really understand me as much as my mom. He, like, he always defends my sister when she does something bad to me. So, he says, it’s my fault instead of hers. Because she’s little—she’s in kinder. So, he’s, like, overprotective of her. And with my mom, she’s fair. She’s not like my dad, overprotecting my sister… [When I’m with my dad I speak] Spanish. [With my mom], I speak both languages. [With my sister,] Spanish.

Unlike other participants, who generally reflected close relationships with their family members, Emiliano disclosed tension within his family—between himself and his father and himself and his sister. Presumably, there is tension between Esteban’s parents as well, given that they are divorced. Furthermore, while the other focal students’ responses suggested an appreciation of a transborder lifestyle, particularly with regards to maintaining connections with family in Mexico, Emiliano conveyed that this lifestyle was
distressing. His description of the process—being picked up and taken back—suggested an unwilling compliance.

When compared to other students’ responses, Emiliano’s perspectives are unique. While other participants had strong familial relationships and expressed positive feelings about their transborder lifestyles, Emiliano conveyed tension and acquiescence. Given his low scores on both the school belongingness and (bi)cultural identity measures, his perspective further supported the finding that strong familial relationships can promote positive bicultural identity development and sense of school belongingness and that weak familial relationships could have the opposite effect.

Identity and Belongingness in the English-only Context

Many of the ways in which the students describe their sense of school belonging and (bi)cultural identity were not related to any specific educational context. The perception that teachers care, the presence of strong friendships, and the importance of family were all articulated in both English-only and dual-language contexts. Despite these similarities, there were also dramatic differences based upon the English-only program or dual-language strand. The following section describes the thematic analysis for (bi)cultural identity development and sense of school belongingness for the English-only focal students. General findings reveal a cultural complacency and the perception of school as a strict English-only space.

“There is nothing that I especially dislike about my culture.”

Findings of the field notes, interviews, and journals of the English-only focal students suggest complacency surrounding cultural/ethnic identity as well as the perception that language plays a central role in (bi)cultural identity. These students often
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used the word culture, ethnicity, and language interchangeably, suggesting that they were not entirely clear about the similarities and differences between these concepts.

Delia was the highest scoring female in her class on the aMEIM, suggesting a developing (bi)cultural identity; however, when asked about her ethnic group, she demonstrated a lack of clarity: “I feel like I want to know who started our culture.” When probed to describe her “culture” (as this was the language that she used), including any strengths or anything that she disliked about it, she replied, “There is no strengths [sic] of my culture…[but] there is nothing that I especially dislike about it.” While Delia’s comments suggested a curiosity about her culture—in that she wanted to “know who started” it—these statements also reflect confusion as culture is not “started” by an individual nor is it static, two beliefs suggested by Delia’s comment. This comment also reveals Delia’s inability to articulate any strengths or weaknesses about her cultural background, suggesting that she has never had the opportunity (in school or otherwise) to think critically about her culture. Taken together, these statements reveal cultural complacency—although she clearly would like to know more about her (bi)cultural identity, she has not had the opportunity to learn about it, nor has she intentionally sought out experiences or conversations that would foster that knowledge.

Like Delia, Arturo revealed inexperience in analyzing his cultural and ethnic identity which contributed to a cultural complacency. When asked about the ethnic group or groups that he belongs to, he described his ethnic group identity as “Hispanic” because “Hispanic sounds like Spanish, and that’s what I speak.” Despite his ability to label his ethnic group affiliation, he was unable to articulate what that means to him or his family. Nor was he able to articulate any perceived strengths or challenges relating to being
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Hispanic. Like Delia, Arturo’s comments indicated a juvenile, basic, and concrete approach to cultural identification—he articulated being Hispanic because of his use of Spanish at home without critically thinking about his own language use. While he speaks Spanish, he also speaks English, and, in fact, he speaks only English at school. Considering his own definition of ethnic group membership as based upon language, he should identify with being the dominant American, English-speaking culture as well. He did not mention belonging to this group. Furthermore, Arturo’s comment reflected his limited perspective regarding the relationship between language and culture; he did not consider that other individuals might identify with being Hispanic even though they do not speak Spanish, as is frequently the case in the United States. Arturo’s own definition of cultural identity suggested metacultural inawareness.

Ella was another student from the English-only program who demonstrated cultural complacency with an inability to think critically about culture and ethnic identity. She was the only non-Spanish speaker in the focal group, and she described herself as being “Latina,” her mother as “Mexican,” and her father as “White.” When asked to describe ethnic identity in general and how she would describe her own ethnic group(s), Ella said that ethnic group means

a culture of, like, people that, like, they have a tradition…I would say I’m, maybe, Hispanic because my mom’s Mexican and my dad’s American. So I’m, like, both. When I go on my mom’s side, they’re like, Mexicans. My ancestors, they’re from Spain. And my mom’s side, they were Mexicans, and they walked with Cesar Chavez back then, way back then. My dad’s side, it’s American with like Irish
and German people. So, I’m like American, kind of. (long pause) So, I’m Mexican-American.

When asked how this impacted herself or her family she told me, “I haven’t really researched about my background and I was going to wait when I am older and can understand about my culture.”

Like Delia and Arturo, who equated culture as being related to something concrete—language—Ella considered something concrete—traditions. For Ella, the only monolingual English speaker, language could not be a factor in her cultural identity as a Mexican-American. Furthermore, like Delia, Ella’s comment suggested a perception that culture is static, and something that has happened in the past rather than being dynamic and participatory. She has not sought out information regarding her cultural heritage, instead preferring to wait until she is “older” and therefore able to “understand” more.

“That’s what I am because my mom told me.”

While Delia, Ella, and Arturo all revealed cultural complacency, their comments did reflect, at least on some level, an awareness about culture and ethnic identity. On the other hand, Emiliano’s responses reflected confusion. He described himself as “Mexican American” on the written instrument, but when I asked him tell me what ethnic group or groups he belonged to, he told me that ethnic group

is like a group of people of, like, their religion they believe in. Umm, [I’m] Catholic because my mom told me. I sometimes go to this church and, when you’re little, you get like, I don’t know what it’s called. Can I say it in Spanish? *Bautizan.* [Translation: Baptized]. And I think that’s it. Yeah, I go to church
sometimes. I pray during the night and when I get out of the house I have to pray as well.

For many Mexican-Americans, religion and culture are related; many Mexican-Americans and other Latinos are Catholic, so it is possible that Emiliano was connecting his religious beliefs to his cultural identity. It is also possible that Emiliano did not understand the concept of ethnic group, or perhaps, like the other participants, he was relating it to something concrete and definable—religion. Regardless, Emiliano’s comment demonstrates confusion surrounding ethnic groups in general, as well as what ethnic group membership means to him.

Data generated from the EO focal students suggested a cultural complacency. They were able to superficially identify their own ethnic or cultural group(s), and they based their cultural identity upon concrete indicators—language, ancestry, and, in the case of Emiliano, religion. On the other hand, there was a difficulty in precise articulation of feelings, attitude, or reasons—almost as if they allowed ethnic group membership to be imposed upon them rather than claiming it for themselves.

“She is going to fit-in fine if she keeps on learning English”

While language played a role in English-only focal students’ interpretation of ethnic group affiliation, it also played a role in sense of school belongingness. For focal students in the EO program, even those who were bilingual, school was defined as a strict English-only zone, despite the institution’s own identification as a bilingual space. The focal students in the English-only program displayed “American-ness” by speaking only English at school; this English-only performance contributed to a sense of school belongingness as it was one overt way for students to fit-in.
At the beginning of the project, all students were told that they could participate in this study in either Spanish or English or both. While three of the English-only focal students were Spanish speakers (Emiliano, Arturo, and Delia), none of those students chose to participate in Spanish. Likewise, in the four months of observations (both in and out of class), I never heard any of the English-only students speak Spanish at school, even with other Spanish speakers. When asked about their language use in school, the three Spanish speaking focal students in the English-only program acknowledged that they only spoke English at school. Furthermore, they frequently disclosed a tension between home and school languages. Navigating this pressure contributed to multiple identities, as Delia expressed:

Ethnic group is like a Spanish group. I do belong to that group because I speak Spanish. And the English group? Does that exist? (giggles) ‘Cause I speak English, too. Yeah, so I belong to two [groups]… If you, for example, if you live here [in the U.S.], you could speak English and Spanish or maybe other, other languages instead of just one. I belong to the English group here [at school] because I don’t speak Spanish that much here. Or, NEVER I have. (giggles) And Spanish at my house. I haven’t speak [sic] English at my house.

Delia described her ethnic group identities as relating to the languages that she speaks—English and Spanish. She reveals that these dual cultural identities are associated with location—English-only at school and Spanish-only at home. Her comment reflects cultural dualism; instead of having a holistic bicultural identity that flows between spaces, Delia has two separate identities—a home identity, primarily operationalized by
her use of Spanish at home, and a school identity, demonstrated by her use of only English at school. School is an English-only space.

Delia explained this tension between Spanish, the language that she speaks at home, and English, the language that she speaks at school: “I never speak Spanish at school. It’s embarrassing. I’m not used to talking Spanish to my friends. The other kids are embarrassed, too. Arturo, for example, he doesn’t talk Spanish with me.” Delia reiterated that speaking Spanish at school could have emotional consequences, not just for herself, but for other Spanish-speakers as well. She illustrated her point by mentioning her best friend, Arturo. While they are both Spanish speakers and self-identified best friends, they do not use Spanish together. This implied that regardless of the emotional connection between individuals, Spanish is just not used at school.

Although Arturo had told me that he was “Hispanic because that sounds like Spanish and that’s what I speak,” I never heard him speak Spanish at school. In fact, like Delia, Arturo was embarrassed to speak Spanish at school as he revealed when trying to tell me about his Spring Break trip to his aunt’s ranch in Ensenada. Arturo didn’t know the word for “aunt” in English, so said, “My—I don’t know the word in English—nina.” When he said the word “nina” he looked down and whispered, suggesting that he felt ashamed to be speaking any Spanish—even just one word—at school. Could Arturo have learned and internalized—from family, students, and dominant culture—that English is preferred or that only English should be spoken at school? Could this language shame be the result of a deficit-based English-only education that did not value home languages?

Like Arturo and Delia, Emiliano mentioned being bilingual outside of school. He spoke Spanish with his dad and his little sister, and both English and Spanish with his
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mom. Despite his bilingual life outside of school, Emiliano clearly acknowledged a preference towards speaking only English at school. He said, “Now it’s harder for me to speak Spanish [than English.]” He continued,

> Not much people here [at school] speak Spanish. And besides, I think it’s good that I practice here English because I’m not that good. I haven’t mastered it yet. I don’t know a lot of words. I need to learn more. Like on my [CELDT] test, I need more of speaking, and that’s it, I think.

When I told Emiliano that “actually most kids in your classroom speak Spanish,” he was visibly surprised and said he “didn’t know that” because he had never heard people from his class use Spanish “even outside” the classroom. I then told Emiliano that his “best friends,” Arturo and Delia, both speak Spanish, to which he looked even more surprised. He explained, “well, they do speak Spanish but they won’t speak it…Here at school we are more used to speaking English.” Despite having a dual-language strand and superficially affirming itself as a bilingual space, the school clearly had two dichotomous identities—one which fostered school-based bilingualism and biliteracy and one which implicitly restricted it.

> Despite the implicit prohibition of school-based bilingualism, and her disclosure of embarrassment when speaking Spanish at school, Delia explained the one exception that she will make to speaking only English at school. She speaks Spanish just with one friend that she speaks Spanish and just a little bit English. She’s nice though. I’ll talk to her if nobody [else] is there, and, like, sometimes I speak quietly. She doesn’t speak Spanish in front of people. She’s trying to speak
English instead of Spanish. She is trying to learn English, and by that she wants to speak English to her friends so that she won’t speak Spanish.

This quote demonstrates a few of Delia’s perceptions regarding language use in the school. First, in describing her limited English-speaking “friend” as being “nice though,” (emphasis mine) Delia reveals a relationship between disposition and English-speaking ability—that individuals who don’t speak English are not typically “nice”. Delia’s attitude regarding her friend’s language use at school is particularly interesting because she was in a similar situation not too long ago:

I was about 5 years old when we first moved here. It was scary at first because I did not know English but now I do… I speak Spanish but I am not in the dual language program at this school because my family wanted me to speak English.

Delia’s lack of sympathy towards her Spanish-dominant friend could be explained by her own experiences; she was enrolled in the English-only program because it was important to her family that she speak English, and she does. If her friend works hard enough, she can learn English, too. Delia’s anecdote also reveals that perhaps her parents did not understand the purpose of a dual-language education. Her parents had clear linguistic goals for their daughter—that she “speak English.” Clearly, had Delia been enrolled in the dual-language program, she would have learned English just as well (if not better) than in the English-only program; in a DL program, not only do native Spanish-speakers learn English, but native English-speakers learn Spanish. Delia’s parents either were not aware of this goal, or did not believe that it would happen, and thus enrolled their child in an EO program. This begs the question: How accessible, really, are dual-language
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programs to low-income Spanish-speaking parents? How educated, really, are they about the programmatic opportunities and challenges?

Nevertheless, Delia’s quote reveals that she has been educationally socialized to prefer English to Spanish while in a schooling context, despite her own initial anxiety about school based upon the inability to understand that world and language around her. Delia now speaks English well. She seems indifferent towards her friend’s current experience—sitting in an English-only classroom without knowing English—and instead of attempting to support her friend academically and emotionally by speaking to her in Spanish, she waits until other students are out of earshot to engage. It is more important to Delia that others perceive her to be an English-only speaker than it is to make a newcomer feel welcomed.

This quote also reveals a relationship between speaking English and school belongingness. Delia explains that the acquisition of English was very important to her family and perhaps even more important than the maintenance of Spanish. She had access to learning English and Spanish at the same time at this school, but her parents deliberately chose an English-only education. Presumably her parents assumed that learning English would contribute to Delia’s assimilation into American culture upon moving to the United States from Tijuana and provide more and better experiences for her.

Throughout my observations of the English-only classroom, I noticed all students spoke only English to one another, even the students who are not considered proficient in English, and even with their best friends. Nonetheless, on one occasion I did observe Spanish being spoken in the classroom between Arturo and Delia’s “one friend that
speaks [only] Spanish,” Luz. Arturo was paired up with Luz to help her complete a science project so that he could support her in reading the science textbook and act as a language broker/translator if necessary. While this could be effective under certain conditions—i.e. if Arturo was actually helping Luz understand the English and translanguaging between the two languages in order to understand the content—instead Arturo did all the work independently and Luz just copied it. There was minimal language exchange between them, and Arturo attempted to communicate using only English. This was visibly unsuccessful as Arturo would read the same sentence from the text over multiple times without explaining it to her in Spanish. He would point to pictures in the text and label them (e.g. “run-off,” pointing to a trickle of water). The limited communication in Spanish was furtive—in whispers so quiet that I was unable to hear what was being said despite my proximity to the two.

As previously mentioned, this could have been a successful support strategy for Luz. Language brokering and native language support can indeed facilitate comprehension; however, roles and guidelines must be explicit. Telling a student to “help” another student is insufficient, particularly in a context in which the students have been socialized not to speak their native language (as in this EO program—whether inadvertently or not). Clearly, Arturo’s difficulty and distress in acting as a language broker in a program that does not support native language use provides another example for the importance of only speaking English in an English-only classroom. His overt display of English-only-ness not only demonstrated that he belonged in an English-only classroom, but it also solidified his identity as an English speaker.
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The impact of emerging bilinguals in this English-only space was further evident by field notes taken outside of the classroom (during lunch and recesses). Clearly, Luz desperately wanted to make friends with Arturo’s group. She would sit by Arturo and Delia at lunch and line up to join them in four-square during recess. While they didn’t deliberately exclude her, they did not deliberately include her, either. Even though there were generally at least three Spanish speakers in the larger group (Arturo, Delia, and Emiliano), no one talked to her in either language. Presumably they did not speak to her in English because they did not think that she would understand; they did not speak to her in Spanish because school, for the English-only students, was clearly an English-only space.

Ella further explained the situation, “The new girl in our class is Luz, and I think she is going to fit-in fine if she keeps on learning English because she knows all Spanish.” Despite Ella being the only English-only speaker of the group, her description of language use closely resembled the other focal students’ perceptions that speaking only English at school created a sense of belongingness. Furthermore, acted as an overt display of identity as an English-speaker. This was a dramatically different perception of language when compared to the dual-language participants’ views, as will be discussed in the next section.

Identity and Belongingness in the Dual-Language Context

Like the students in the English-only classroom, many of the ways in which the dual-language students described their sense of belonging and (bi)cultural identity were not related to any specific context. They perceived that their teachers cared, they acknowledged strong friendship groups, and they affirmed the importance of family.
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Despite these similarities with the English-only students, there were also profound differences between the two groups, primarily in the strength of the peer-relationships, the expression of bilingualism across contexts, and the affirmation, articulation, and metacultural awareness of bicultural identity. The following section describes these themes as they relate to bicultural/ethnic identity development and sense of school belongingness for the dual-language focal students.

“At the end of the day, we’re all family”

While all focal students (those in EO and those in DL) vocalized the importance of strong friendships in creating a sense of school belonging, the students in the dual-language strand articulated strong ties with all classmates, even those who are not their “best friends.” Because of the small size of the DL strand at LAES (about 20 students per grade), the school follows a cohort model; most of the students in this program have had the same classmates, year after year, for about seven years. This consistent cohort coupled with small numbers contributed to a closeness that was unique when compared to the English-only program at LAES (as there were more than twice the amount of EO students than DL students per grade). This cohort model would indeed be unique if compared to many other schools. Therefore, like the English-only students, the dual-language students described close friendships as impacting their sense of school belongingness and identity; however, the DL students described strong family-like relationships with all their peers, even those who were not members of their immediate friendship group.

As a group, they are often chatting and smiling while working in class, waiting in line in the cafeteria, or on the playground—even with other students that are not within
their immediate social circles. Students’ indicated that rapport impacted the quality and strength of relationships between classmates. For instance, Sara said, “¡Como yo he estado aquí desde kinder, me conocen muy bien!” [Translation: Since I’ve been here since kindergarten, my classmates know me really well!]. Mercedes had a similar perspective: “Carmela y Daniela han sido mis amigas desde kinder. Básicamente hemos sido amigas por siete años.” [Translation: Carmela and Daniela have been my friends since kindergarten. Basically we’ve been friends for seven years.] In general, most students in the dual-language strand have been in the same class since kindergarten, creating consistency. Even students who were not members of the same affinity groups knew one another really well and often make remarks like, “she’s always been that way” or “since kinder…” Having known each other for so long, they have developed a sense of camaraderie that positively impacted their learning environment. As Mercedes described her classmates,

I think a characteristic in everyone, each of us have something, like, nice inside of us. We have that kindness inside of us…I fit-in here because I know people a lot and they know me. They already know how I write. If they see, every time they see something on the projector that looks like my handwriting they look at me, like in an ‘I know you’ sort of way… We know each other really close. We already know, like, our weaknesses and our downsides. It’s because we’ve been together for a really long time now…I consider it like a little family.

As Mercedes mentioned, the students in the dual-language knew each other well, and they were able to find the positive attributes in their classmates; as Mercedes put it, each student had “something nice inside.” Furthermore, because her classmates know her and
she knows them, Mercedes feels like she “fits-in.” There exists a reciprocity in interpersonal knowingness, and this reciprocal knowingness contributes to vulnerability. For instance, when she makes an academic mistake, her classmates know that she was the one who made it because they are familiar with her handwriting.

As Mercedes described, the students in the dual-language strand knew one other’s strengths and weaknesses. This mutual vulnerability created out of reciprocal knowingness contributes to a supportive atmosphere. For instance, Ms. Gomez calls out all the students’ scores on their monthly computerized benchmarks. Unlike other schools or classrooms where this information is considered private, everyone knows each other’s scores, and no one seems embarrassed for their scores to be read aloud. At one point, Ms. Gomez calls out Mercedes’s score—752. This was towards the lower-end of the range of scores, but another student congratulated Mercedes for her improvement, “¡Subiste! 752, Mercedes. ¡Muy bien!” [Translation: Your score went up! 752, Mercedes. Nice job!]

Not only was this student congratulating Mercedes on a score that was relatively low compared to the other scores in the classroom (many students’ scores exceeded 1000 on this benchmark), but she knew that Mercedes had improved.¹

The dual-language students consistently demonstrated being a reciprocal community of teachers and learners. In this classroom students were frequently tasked with the role of reviewing other students’ work or collaborating with peers. While this could be a point of stress for students, it did not seem to provoke anxiety even among the lower-scoring students. Struggling students were not teased, and there was a very matter-of-fact attitude about academics: some kids are lower and some kids are higher. As this was just common knowledge, the feeling in the room focused not on the scores but on the
individuals. Everybody was in the room to learn, and it was everybody’s responsibility to ensure that this happened.

This classroom collectivity was evident when students struggled academically or otherwise needed help. They were a helpful community of teachers and learners. For instance, at one point during the semester, Sara was working alone on a math problem. She said quietly to herself, to no one in particular, “I don’t get it,” at which point one of her classmates overheard her, walked over, and began helping her. Another time, Kayla and Mercedes were working together on a project. They needed another pair of hands, and Kayla said to Mercedes, “We need a volunteer. Who can help?” Devon heard this and asked them, “Need help?” This collectivity was also evident in Mercedes’s description of herself in the classroom:

I like everything that has to involve with helping other people. We were seeing a movie in my classroom and I said, ‘Hey, can I go to this person’s class to help them?’ And I went and organized the books. It was fun…Depending on what the topic is, I might ask for help. Like in math I might ask for help.

A strong rapport has been developed between the students in the classroom. It is impossible to know whether this is based upon the cohort-model, or based upon the dual-language teachers’ philosophies and practices that foster community, or even based upon the fact that this is “just a really good class.” Most likely, the collaboration and community evident within the dual-language program is a combination of these factors. Nevertheless, because of the rapport established between the students in the dual-language strand, students are willing to ask for and offer help. The collectivity and mutual reciprocity within the classroom facilitates deep and strong bonds amongst
students within the classroom—even among students who are not immediate members of each other’s social circles. Like Mercedes mentioned, the whole class is like a “little family.”

Like any other family, particularly a family composed of 20 sixth-grade students, the dual-language strand is not without conflict. As Devon put it, “At the end of the day, we’re all a family, but don’t get me wrong. There’s drama. We fight like brothers and sisters but we make-up like brothers and sisters. But we’ve always got each other’s back.” The students are loyal to one another and mutually supportive, and this clearly created strong bonds impacting their sense of school belongingness.

“Hablamos los dos idiomas”

Like for the students in the English-only program, language played a crucial role in defining who students were and how they belonged in the classroom. While the English-only students often refused to speak Spanish at school, even though they could, the students from the dual-language strand openly spoke two languages. Depending upon the context, the students chose whether to speak English or Spanish or both—code-switching or translanguaging back and forth between English and Spanish.

The focal participants from the dual-language strand were given the option of participating in English, or Spanish, or both. Most students responded in both English and Spanish, depending upon the question, the context, and the time of day. For instance, as requested by the classroom teacher, if I was interacting with the students during designated “English time,” I would speak or write to them in English; when it was “Spanish time,” I would speak or write to them in Spanish. Generally, they responded to me in the language that I had used to initiate written or verbal contact, though this was
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not always the case. (For instance, Sara always wrote to me in English.) Often when outside of the classroom the students would switch between the languages regardless of the language of initiation. The fact that the focal students from the dual-language strand responded in both languages while the native Spanish-speaking focal participants from the English-only program only responded in English suggests some very different perceptions about language in general and language use at school between the two groups.

Most focal students responded that they spoke both languages—both at school at home. Mercedes responded that at home she speaks “los dos. Con mi amá hablo español y con mi hermano hablo inglés.” [Translation: Both. With my mom I speak Spanish, and with my brother I speak English]. She continued by explaining to me why she was in the dual-language strand,

[Mis padres] no entendieron el inglés. (laughs) Porque, ummm, mi primer idioma era el español y es que lo que sabían. Entonces, tenía que aprender inglés. En realidad, yo creo que me metieron [en este programa] porque querían que yo supiera más de lo que ellos, que aprendiera más de lo que ellos pudieron aprender, más de ellos cuando estaban chiquitos. Entonces, creo que por esa razón me metieron... ya cuando hablan a las personas que conocían, les decían ‘Ay! Métanla allí’ y así empezaron a conversar a mis papás. [Translation: My parents didn’t understand English. [laughs]. Because, well, my first language was Spanish and that’s what they knew. So, I had to learn English. But, in reality, I think that they put me in this program because they wanted me to know more than them, that I learned more than they learned when they were little kids. So, I think
that’s the reason that they put me here [in this program]. Now they talk to the 
people that they know and they say, “Hey! You have to put your child there in 
dual-language.” And now that’s how my parents talk to other parents.] 

While Mercedes mentioned that she “had to learn English”, she also revealed that her 
parents wanted her to be bilingual because they wanted to provide her with opportunities 
that they had not had as children. While they are clearly advocates of the dual-language 
strand, going so far as to tell other parents to enroll their children in the DL program, 
Mercedes also explained that she hadn’t always been in the dual-language strand; she 
started kinder in the English-only program and then moved to the dual-immersion 
program.

I haven’t been in the dual-immersion program this whole time. Because, I think I 
remember when I was little I started speaking Spanish first, and then they put me 
only in the English program because my parents didn’t know that much about the 
dual-immersion. So, they put me in the English program, that’s how I started 
learning English. So, my parents thought that it was a good idea after that to put 
me in the dual-immersion program so that I would learn Spanish and English at 
the same time…In dual-immersion I got used to speaking Spanish and English in 
school. But it was pretty hard for me at first because I had learned the math in 
English so when they started telling me all the stuff in Spanish I was like, 
‘Umm?’ To this day, I know all the Spanish alphabet but I don’t know it in order! 
(giggles) It’s because there’s, like, letters like ‘double l’, so that was a little hard 
to fit-in… With my friend, Kayla, I talk English and Spanish, but with Carmela I 
talk Spanish.
Mercedes’s parents did not initially enroll her in the dual-language strand, presumably because they did not believe that she would be able to learn enough English in a dual-language classroom as a native Spanish speaker. Mid-year Mercedes’s parents transferred her to the dual-language strand, perhaps because they noticed that other native Spanish speakers were, indeed, learning English in the dual-language strand. Unlike parents from the English-only program, Mercedes’s parents wanted her to learn English and Spanish at the same time. This context provided the space for Mercedes to speak both English and Spanish at school, which she articulated. Mercedes’s experience again begs the question (raised with the English-only students): How does the school educate all parents regarding the dual-language strand? Is the dual-language strand more accessible to some students than others? While this is not a focus of this study, it is an important point to consider.

The importance of being bilingual to Mercedes and her family was further evident when she revealed that they will be moving this summer. There is no dual-language strand at the new school that she nor her brother will be going to. Mercedes said, “My mom said, ‘So, that’s why it’s important to start speaking more Spanish, because I don’t want you to forget your Spanish.’” Mercedes believes that it is important to maintain the Spanish language because All our family over there in Mexico speaks Spanish. And, I mean, my dad was born in Mexico. I mean, he knows English, but not that much. So, if my brother keeps speaking English, eventually he’s going to be at the point where he’s not going to understand him anymore… So, I guess my brother would want to learn Spanish, I mean, he’s like a Spanglish speaker. He starts speaking in the sentence
in English and finishes it in Spanish. He’s six…I’ve been speaking Spanish for a pretty decent time by now, so I don’t think I’ll forget. My sister and my brother look up to me. My brother, he’s learning the Spanish, he understands the Spanish. The same with my mom. They moved a lot when she was little, and her mom used to speak Spanish, and she understood the Spanish, she just didn’t speak it. She just, like, she answered her mom in English. But eventually she grew out of it, and she, like, started speaking Spanish fluently.

Mercedes’s comment revealed anxiety and uncertainty regarding the loss of Spanish; while she was confident that she would not forget Spanish upon enrollment in an English-only school, she was concerned that her siblings would—and consequently would be unable to communicate with their immediate and extended family. Vocalizing her mother’s experience—as understanding Spanish but not speaking it as a young child—suggests that Mercedes is concerned that this might be a possibility in her life as well, as they will be moving as her mother did when she was a child. This quote reaffirms Mercedes’s commitment to being bilingual, and suggests that being both a Spanish speaker and an English speaker was crucial to her developing bicultural identity.

She continued to tell me why it was important to be bilingual with regards to her particular context (living a transborder lifestyle), and provided more opportunities for her future:

*Aquí estamos cercas a la frontera de México. Y podemos entender las otras cuando hablan en ingles o en español. Y si hablas español pueden aprender más idiomas. Y puedes tener mas oportunidades para meterse a mejores colegios y universidades... Quiero ser dentista, arquitecta, o doctora.* [Translation: Here we
are close to the border with Mexico. And we can understand people when they are speaking English or Spanish. And if you speak Spanish you can learn other languages more easily. And you can have more opportunities to go to better colleges and universities. I want to be a dentist, an architect, or a doctor."

In addition to being able to communicate with her family, as was clearly one of the reasons that Mercedes perceived bilingualism to be important, she also articulated more global reasons for being bilingual—communicating with others, learning other languages more easily, being accepted into college, and better occupational opportunities. Clearly, biliteracy was an important quality to Mercedes. The dual-language strand had other advantages when compared to the English-only program, as Mercedes described,

\[
\text{Me encanta la escritura porque me expreso más, y como soy muy tímida en inglés, en la escritura no lo soy. Doy mi punto de vista … Para ser honesta prefiero escribir el inglés que hablarlo. Me expreso más, aunque a veces no escribo bien ciertas palabras. Pero yo me siento bien al escribir inglés. Me siento más segura de mi misma. Las partes más problemáticas es tener que hablar en inglés durante la clase. Lo detesto.} \]

[Translation: I love writing because I can express myself better. While I’m shy speaking in English, in writing I’m not. I’ll give my point of view… To be perfectly honest, I prefer to write English than speak it. I can express myself more clearly, even though I don’t write every word perfectly. But I feel fine writing in English. I feel more secure in myself. The problem is having to speak English during class. I detest it.]

Although I did not perceive Mercedes to be as shy as she proclaimed to be, the dual-language strand clearly gave her more confidence. Unlike the English-only program,
which had an unofficial English-only policy, the dual-language strand allowed for a bilingual space. Mercedes explained how this impacted her own identity as well as the identity of others in her class. She said, “Let’s say, I know a lot of Spanish, and other people in my class know a lot of Spanish, too, and, like, we are a group.” Mercedes identifies with being affiliated with the Mexican culture and people because she speaks Spanish; she mentioned that other people in her class “know a lot of Spanish, too,” implying that this is a way of forming a cultural group identity. She rather obviously does not say “other Mexican people know a lot of Spanish,” suggesting that she considers all bilingual students in her class to belong to the Spanish-speaking group, and by default, belong to the English group as well. Her use of the hypothetical, “Let’s say,” suggests that Spanish is only an example; English could have been used in this sentence. This further affirms her belief that her classmates are bicultural based upon their bilingualism.

In the dual-language strand, there is a clear academic separation between “Spanish time” and “English time;” however, outside of the classroom the students are free to communicate in both languages. This ability to speak Spanish outside of the classroom contributed to the sense of belonging within the program as it facilitated unity amongst the students in the classroom,

Like Mercedes, who was bilingual across spaces, using both languages in multiple contexts, other focal students in the dual-language strand described themselves as being bilingual between and within spaces. Devon said,

Outside of school I speak the two languages equally because, well, I speak Spanish, too. And I sometimes speak English with my mom. And Spanish. So, I, like, speak both languages. I speak them both well, like, I speak Spanglish at
Devon identifies as being bilingual in and out of school. This holistic bilingualism created an attitude of superiority for being overtly bilingual among the DL students (as opposed to the EO bilingual students where they were, in effect, monolingual at school). Furthermore, Devon describes the use of non-standard Spanish (“Spanglish”) within certain contexts; he is able to contextualize when to use what language in a very authentic manner—“it naturally happens.”

Other DL students clearly believed bilingualism to be an asset. For instance, Mercedes told me, “I think that this class is, like, special. Like, it’s like the special one because we are the ones that speak two languages.” Speaking about the students from the English-only classroom Devon mentioned,

Nosotros pensamos que los demás, que ellos son raros. Pero no más es nuestra idea... Es la manera que se comportan. No sé, se portan como niños más chiquitos. [Translation: We think that they are strange. But it’s just our idea… It’s the way that they act. I don’t know. They act more like younger children.]

This finding was further supported by an incident that happened about halfway through the project. On this particular day, Mrs. Robby’s substitute teacher never arrived, so half of Mrs. Robby’s class was sent to Ms. Gomez’s room with their workbooks. When I arrived that morning, a non-focal student from the DL program came up to tell me, “A whole bunch of kids came in this morning who don’t even speak Spanish.” The tone of...
voice and demeanor of this student illustrated arrogance—she clearly thought that she was better than the English-only students as she spoke two languages at school.

Mercedes further described the English-only program as an English-only space in comparing it to her dual-language classroom. She said, “It would be nice for the people who only speak English—would get to know a little bit more Spanish, because I know people in that class, I have a friend there, and she speaks Spanish. But I don’t think she speaks it in there.” The irony of this situation—of the DL feeling superior for being “the ones” who speak Spanish—was that many students in the English-only program do in fact speak Spanish but are too embarrassed to admit to it or do it.

Bilingualism and biliteracy is important to students in the dual-language strand, and observational data suggested that students supported one another in their language development, particularly of Spanish. For example, during a science project, Jeff asked Devon if a particular word was accented in Spanish. Devon responded, “Sí. En la ‘A’.” [Translation: Yes. On the ‘A’.] Another time, Jeff was the one to help another student: “Hojas son leaves. Ramas son branches” [Translation: Hojas are leaves. Ramas are branches.] This mutual language support confirmed both that the dual-language classroom was a bilingual space as well as revealing the students’ commitment to learning and developing Spanish.

While being bilingual across contexts was clearly important to the bicultural identity and sense of school belongingness for the dual-language participants, English still seemed to be the default language for most students when it was not explicitly “Spanish time.” For instance, whenever the students would leave the classroom, most of
them began speaking English. According to the focal students, the use of Spanish or
English was based upon the context. Jeff said,

Depende en la situación en que estás. Si es que alguien que se siente más
confiado hablando inglés o español, y le hablaras en el idioma que él prefiere...
Todo depende donde estés o con quién estás [Translation: It depends on the
situation that you’re in. If somebody that feels more comfortable speaking English
or Spanish, you speak to him in the language that he prefers… It all depends upon
where you are or whom you’re with.]

This quote exemplifies the importance of being bilingual to the dual-language students,
allowing them flexibility of language that does not seem present in the experience of
English-only students. Upon further analysis, this quote, coupled with the observational
data suggesting that students generally use English when not explicitly required to speak
Spanish, suggests a perceived perspective of preference for English, as Jeff suggests that
he chooses the language to speak based the “language that [the other person] prefers.”
Jeff also confirms that the students in the dual-language strand know one another well
enough to know the language preferred by each individual; they cater to those
preferences when given the choice or opportunity. They have developed into
sociolinguists who are able to authentically use language in a very rule-governed way.

Devon had a similar response and provided me with an anecdote. He described his
choice to use English or Spanish as based upon what makes everybody the most
comfortable. He told me that this year his friendship group speaks English outside of the
classroom because everybody speaks English really well, but one group member, Alex,
doesn’t speak Spanish very well, therefore, the group speaks English so as not to leave
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Alex out. However, last year it was different. Towards the end of the year, a new sixth-grade student, Saed, entered the dual-language strand. It was the end of the year and “the other kids already had their friends and stuff” so the other sixth graders “wouldn’t talk to him.” As the fifth and sixth graders all have recess together, Devon and his friends (Alex, Jeff, and Rene) all decided to befriend Saed. Saed “didn’t know anything” about English, so they all spoke Spanish together socially. Because Alex spoke Spanish better than Saed spoke English, this was “fair.”

Interestingly enough, this was an unspoken decision, demonstrating the authenticity of bilingualism within the DL context. The friendship group did not make an overt decision to speak Spanish; rather it “just happened” because they didn’t want him to be left out. Mercedes mentioned a similar unconsciousness about language use she said that speaking one language or the other just “naturally happens.” Being in a bilingual space created linguistic intuitiveness and authenticity that the students were able to articulate when pressed, but did not consciously perceive on a daily basis. Furthermore, Devon’s description of linguistic inclusion reflects a dramatically different story about newcomers than the one discussed in the English-only section.

Although all DL focal students emphatically proclaimed their bilingual identities across contexts, most friendship groups spoke English when outside of class. Nevertheless Mercedes’s group almost exclusively spoke Spanish publicly. She explained:

Nosotras, generalmente, hablamos de español, porque yo estoy aquí. Pero hablamos ingles y español. Hablamos Spanglish. Empezamos en el inglés pero luego empezamos en español... Depende quién empieza la conversación. Hay
niños que hablan inglés afuera porque no saben tanto español. No les gusta mucho el español, y, no sé, pero lo mismo es conmigo en el inglés… Es que unos prefieren un idioma—así crecieron en casa. Es que su primer idioma es el español—digo, inglés. [Translation: My friends and I generally speak Spanish together because of me. But we all speak both English and Spanish. We speak Spanish and start speaking in English but then switch to Spanish…It depends upon who starts the conversation. There are many kids who only speak English outside the classroom because they don’t know and much Spanish. I don’t know, but the same is with me and English. It’s that some people prefer one language over the other—that’s how they were raised at home. It’s that their first language was Spanish—I mean, English.]

Outward identification as being bilingual was clearly important to the dual-language students, and speaking both languages was one way in which they displayed that they belong in the classroom. Despite the predominance of English outside of the classroom, while in class the students take “Spanish-time” very seriously. Even those students who are not native Spanish speakers exclusively speak Spanish when they are supposed to be, and the students hold one another accountable. For instance, at one point during the semester, some other students accused Sara of speaking English during Spanish time. (It is unclear if anyone was indeed speaking English.) Sara got very upset about the accusation and said to her classmates, “Dicen que lo dije en inglés. Están hablando de mí. Están hablando DE MI.” [Translation: You are saying that I said it in English. You’re talking about me. You are talking ABOUT ME.] Sara’s tone of voice and demeanor
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suggested that she was offended that the other students would even suggest that she would speak English when she was supposed to be speaking Spanish.

It is hard to know precisely why Sara was so upset about this. Sara was clearly a high-achiever in the classroom and she liked being the teacher’s pet; she would never break the rules so being accused of breaking them could have been distressing. Additionally, the suggestion that Sara was speaking English could insinuate to her that she was not proficient enough in Spanish and therefore needed to speak English to communicate—which she would clearly find insulting. Finally, clearly the dichotomous “Spanish-time” and “English-time” has been socialized into the dual-language students since kindergarten. Perhaps the linguistic processes inside this dual-language classroom parallel the linguistic processes of the English-only classroom; instead of a bilingual space, it is a dual monolingual space with designated time for English and Spanish. Most likely, it is a combination of these factors that caused Sara to respond so ferociously to the accusation that she was speaking English when she should have been speaking Spanish.

The importance of language as creating a sense of belongingness and fostering a bicultural identity was further revealed through tensions surrounding “proper” Spanish. For instance, Addison, a native English speaker, was often teased by the native Spanish speakers about her pronunciation of Spanish when speaking aloud; however, Sara would often intentionally speak Spanish with an American accent to “be funny.” This reveals a dichotomy of expectations: non-native Spanish speakers are expected to speak accent-less Spanish; however, native Spanish speakers are permitted to intentionally speak Spanish with an American accent because they can speak “properly.”
The use of “correct” Spanish as creating a sense of belongingness amongst bilingual speakers and as proving individual’s bicultural identities was further evident when Sara and Jeff described one particular challenge they have with their culture: Spanglish. For instance, Sara said, “Lo que no me gusta es que algunas palabras no existen cómo parquear y me confundo a veces. [Translation: What I don’t like is that some words don’t exist in Spanish like parquear [to park] and sometimes I get confused.]” Jeff mentioned something similar: “Lo que no me gusta de mi cultura es que dices palabras que no existen cómo parquear y troca. [Translation: What I don’t like about my culture is that you say words that don’t exist in Spanish like parquear and troca [truck].” Both Sara and Jeff mention the phenomenon of language borrowing in their mention of the words parquear and troca. In this case, “park” has been borrowed from English, and a new verb has been created. The Spanish word for the verb “to park” is estacionar. Likewise, the word “truck” has been borrowed from English; the Spanish word for truck is camión. These, and other examples, are very typical of the Spanish spoken the border; words from English influence the use of Spanish creating “Spanglish.” Nevertheless, the comments by Sara and Jeff reveal their perception that prestigious forms of Spanish create and maintain their bicultural identities as Spanish and English speakers.

Sara and Jeff’s perspectives of regarding the prestige of standard Spanish may suggest the imposition of hegemonic practices within the dual-language classroom that value standard Spanish over non-standard Spanish; while it is certainly crucial that students know standard Spanish, and perhaps it is the responsibility of dual-language teachers to teach standard Spanish, imposing privilege in the form of language preference
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is a form of linguicism that could have dramatic consequences upon students’ perceptions of belonging and identity—particularly those who do not speak a “standard” language at home.

On the other hand, Devon and Mercedes’s admitted using Spanglish with friends and family; they did not consider this to be problematic. Therefore, it is important to consider other factors that could contribute to Jeff’s and Sara’s preference to standard Spanish. While it is likely that the dual-language program does emphasize standard academic Spanish over less prestigious forms (such as Spanglish), it is also possible that other factors (such as family, socioeconomic status, parental education, etc.) impact the perception of privileged language. Most likely, language prestige is multifaceted and cannot be reduced to a simple explanation. This, in and of itself, is worthy of future investigation: What are the practices and factors that impose privilege upon certain forms of language? What are the impacts of language prestige upon speakers of less-favored languages?

Devon also commented upon this phenomenon of border language when speaking about his identity as a Mexican-American child who spends a lot of time in Tijuana. Unlike Jeff and Sara, he did not speak about it negatively. He said, “Nosotros en Tijuana tenemos algunas palabras que son, como, combinadas a las de los Estados Unidos.” [Translation: Those of us in Tijuana have some words that are, like, combined with words from the United States.] While this is clearly a different perception of Spanglish than was articulated by Sara and Jeff, it is similar to that of Mercedes who admitted being a “Spanglish speaker.” It is interesting to note that Jeff and Sara were both the higher-scoring students on the measure of bicultural identity while Devon and Mercedes were
the lower-scoring students. While it is difficult to make generalizations based upon the small sample size, it does seem clear that the use of English, Spanish, and Spanglish impacts students’ perceptions of identities as speakers of multiple languages in different ways.

For students in the dual-language strand, overt displays of bilingualism contributed both to the students’ sense of belonging within the classroom and program as well as identification as bicultural individuals by themselves and others. Further exploration of data related to bicultural and ethnic identity development amongst the students in the dual-language strand revealed a metacultural awareness, as will be explored in the next section.

“Mi origen cultural es parte de mi.”

The students from the dual-language strand revealed a developing cultural and/or ethnic identity and curiosity, as well as a cultural and linguistic pride. Despite this burgeoning curiosity, and similar to what was revealed by the English-only students, this ethnic-group awareness was rather superficial. Students often defined their “ethnic group” as “my culture”—a similar, though not exactly the same, concept. Furthermore, they tended to focus on the concrete evidence of culture or ethnic group—such as celebrations, traditions, and language—in describing their identities.

For example, Sara considers herself “Mexican-American and, like, twenty percent French” because her “parents are Mexican. They were born in Baja California,” she was born in California, and she has ancestors from France. Sara revealed she believed that it was possible to belong to multiple ethnic groups at a time because “they’re all a part of you.” Despite Sara’s ability to articulate the ethnic groups that she belonged to, she also
revealed her perception that ethnic group affiliation was related to cultural celebrations. She told me,

But we don’t really celebrate any French things, but my sister, she really likes to learn French. She starts to learn from those [French] things. I’m also American—some of the things Mexicans and Americans do are different—but at one point some of the things we celebrate are the same. Like, Mexicans and Americans both celebrate Christmas, they both celebrate Halloween, Easter.

Like the participants from the English-only program, Sara disclosed a belief that ethnic group membership is based upon celebrations and traditions—concrete evidence of cultural identity. However, unlike the English-only participants who reported a lack of action to discover more about her bicultural identity, Sara indicated that she was interested in her cultural background and had gone to great lengths to learn more about her identity. She said,

*Sí estoy interesada en mi origen cultural porque es parte de mi… Yo he intentado de leer cosas sobre mi origen cultural. Para mí los puntos fuertes son las celebraciones… Quiero saber más sobre mis antepasados y de donde venían. Yo le pongo a mi abuela quiénes eran mis antepasados, de dónde vienen… Eso me hizo querer saber más.* [Translation: Yes, I am interested in my cultural origins because it’s part of who I am. I’ve read things about my culture. For me, the strong points are the celebrations… I want to know more about my ancestors and where they came from. I ask my grandmother who my ancestors were and where they came from… Last week I asked her where they came from… This made me want to learn more.]
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While Sara demonstrated a cultural pride, saying that her cultural is part of her, and a curiosity, revealed in her admission having read about her culture and asking her grandmother about her ancestors, she again demonstrated a rather superficial knowledge of culture. She considers the cultural strengths to be the celebrations. This was further emphasized when she told me,

Well my culture is Mexican. And in mine, we kind of do different things, like we celebrate Halloween still, but as Mexicans we have Day of the Independence.

There was a war against the Mexicans and the Spaniards, and they were having war because the Spaniards were being rude to the Mexicans, and so the Mexicans didn’t like that, and so they had to go to war. And if they killed the King of Spain, Mexico would’ve won the war… The Mexicans, they won, because they killed the King and they got their independence back. The Spaniards had taken it away because they were like, ‘You guys are Mexicans. You guys don’t deserve anything,’ and so the Mexicans later then won the war.

Sara again reiterated the relationship between culture and tangible evidence of ethnic group affiliation. She also mentioned Mexican Independence Day as being an important cultural celebration. While many of the important details were vague (i.e. “The Spaniards were rude to the Mexicans”) or incorrect (i.e. The Mexicans “killed the King”), Mexican Independence Day is an important day in the history of Mexico. Sara’s description indicated an awareness of this importance as well as pride based upon the events.

While the perspective regarding the bicultural identity of dual-language students generally reflected cultural pride, it was often based upon superficial perspectives of culture and ethnicity. Jeff’s responses disclosed this theme as well:
Lo que me gusta es que hay muchos eventos especiales como la feria de tamal, la feria de Yucatán, y mucho más. Además, hay fiestas gigantescas de mil personas hasta un millón. [Translation: What I like is that there are many special events like the Tamale Fair, the Yucatan Fair, and much more. Also, there are huge parties ranging from one thousand people up to a million.]

Jeff’s perspective demonstrated pride yet shallowness when talking about his cultural strengths as related to the celebrations. While he was unable to completely articulate what bicultural identity meant to him, he did consider it to be important as evidenced by his comment, “Aún algunos no saben que porcentaje son.” [Translation: Some people don’t even know what percentage they are.] He alluded to the concept of multiple ethnicities and cultures by using the uses the word “percentage” to suggest that people may be composed of multiple ethnicities and cultures. He clearly believed that people should be aware of their different “percentages,” though he was unable to articulate why that was important.

Like Sarah and Jeff, Mercedes also used to concept of percentages to explain her bicultural identity. She said, “I’m, like, I’m fifty percent American because my mom was born in L.A. and my other fifty percent, my dad was born in Mexico. So, I’m kind of both.” The dual-language focal students used the concept of percentages—or part of a whole—to explain their bicultural identities, suggesting that the different ethnic groups with which they associate are all integral parts of the whole individual; however, students from the English-only program did not use the concept of percentages to explain their ethnic identities, perhaps revealing a belief that their different ethnic backgrounds are separate and not necessarily crucial in the creation of their whole selves.
Like the other three focal students from the dual-language strand, Devon clearly labeled his bicultural identity and demonstrated pride about this identity; furthermore, he defined his bicultural identity as being related to concrete evidence of culture—the food, the celebrations, and the language. He said that he was

_Mexicano-Americano porque si vamos a veces a Tijuana pero no conozco, como, todas las comidas, las cosas que hacemos... Vamos a comer tacos (laughs), pues carne asada... Y las piñatas... Si una persona esté Mexicano-Americano, como yo, puedes tener algunas culturas acá, como el cuatro de julio, y allá, el Dia de la Independencia._ [Translation: Mexican-American because sometimes we go to Tijuana but I am not familiar with all the foods and the things that we do. We go out to eat tacos and _carne asada_. We have piñatas. If someone is a Mexican-American, like me, you could have some cultures from here, like the Fourth of July, and there, like Mexican Independence Day.]

Like the other dual-language students, Devon considered his bicultural identity as related to the tangible evidence of identity—tacos, carne asada, and piñatas. He was clearly proud of being Mexican-American, though like the other dual-language students, he focused upon the external practices of bicultural identification and was unable to articulate what his bicultural identity _really_ means.

The observations and interviews with the dual-language focal students regarding their bicultural/ethnic identities revealed that these students were able to label their bicultural identities. Furthermore, they clearly revealed a bicultural pride that was not evident in the responses of the English-only students.
Unique Perceptions of School Belongingness

As the identity development and sense of school belongingness are two profoundly individual concepts, an analysis of these concepts would not be complete without clearly articulating some of the differing perceptions of the focal students. While many of the themes were not unique to specific students, Arturo, Mercedes, and Devon each revealed individual experiences that impacted their sense of school belongingness.

Arturo. Arturo was the only one to mention bullying as being a reason why some kids don’t fit-in at school. He also was quick to tell me that he wasn’t being bullied. He said,

I don’t like bullying at school because it’s offensive, mean, hurtful, and not nice… I see people on the playground, kids saying mean things to people. They say, ‘Your clothes are so ugly’ and other stuff… I don’t know their names.

Bullying makes certain kids not fit-in.

While Arturo originally told me that he doesn’t know the names of all the victims, once I developed a closer rapport with him, he told me about one of his close friends that was bullied, Talia. He told me that two boys bullied Talia. He said, “They pretended like they didn’t know her name, so they kept calling her Shaniqua.” These two boys managed to fit-in to the school, and even though they were “rude and disrespectful” they “still had friends, because they were funny sometimes, too.” Being called Shaniqua really hurt Talia’s feelings. It is important to note that Talia was the only African-American girl in the classroom, and the two boys teasing her were not African-American. I saw racial undertones to this teasing, as Shaniqua is sometimes considered a “stereotypical” African-American name, and it seemed really unlikely to me that these boys did not
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know her real name at this point in the school year; however, Arturo’s perception of this event was more naïve: “It bothered her because it wasn’t her real name.”

Mercedes. While Mercedes was not the only participant who had an accent while speaking English, she was the only student to mention her accent as causing her embarrassment. She said,

Es que tengo el acento muy fuerte. Porque, es que, en segundo y tercero ya empecé hablar [inglés] en casa. Pero aquí en la escuela, no. Es que, tengo el acento, entonces... [Translation: It’s that I have a really strong accent. Because, well, in second and third grades I started speaking [English] at home. But here at school I don’t. It’s that I have an accent, so…]

Mercedes’s perception of her “really strong accent” impacted her perception of fitting-in at school. Most students in the dual-language minimally used English and Spanish equally; though generally the students in the dual-language strand used more English than Spanish when given the opportunity. This was not true of Mercedes, who tended to use Spanish socially and when working with bigger groups of students. When speaking to her own group of friends, far from earshot of other classmates, the group used Spanish, English, and Spanglish.

Devon. When asked if there was anything else that he wanted to tell me about school belongingness, Devon mentioned the impact of electronic devices and the internet upon the development of close relationships. He said,

Well, I think that today the Internet really cuts off people and their interactions. I remember going to this party that my friend had. And we were like, talking or doing something, and then there was over half the group on their Instagram or
something. I don’t have an Instagram or a Facebook. I don’t have anything… My mom doesn’t think that it’s age-appropriate. She doesn’t want me to become one of those [people] who’s always touching my phone. So, at the party, it was weird. I was like, “Can you turn off your electronics?” And [my friend] was like, “It’s that I have to send this to that person,” and I was like, “Come on!” Recently my cousins came over, they’re teenagers, like, I was right there and I didn’t bring my electronic so I just decided to leave it at home. And they were like, talking, like, “She’s totally following me on Twitter.” And they just kept on taking pictures. They had to have their phones in their hands, so…There’s just not this much personal talking. What happened about talking about this, about that? It’s all about on-line… I still remember back then, just talking about cartoons, but then the iPod came out, and all the social media invaded the country… It also makes life easier, though. My mom and dad say, “Back then we didn’t have Google to give us all the answers, we actually had to go and research on an actual book.” Right now we can go and do all the stuff on-line. I look back and think, “Wow, this century has changed so much.”

Devon’s quote reveals a perception that face-to-face interaction in the absence of technology is crucial in forming strong friendships—and therefore in developing a sense of school belongingness.

Discussion

The previous chapter explained the quantifiable aspects of bicultural identity and sense of school belongingness and described the qualitative aspects of identity and belongingness as reported by the larger sample of students. This current chapter has
described the perceptions of identity and school belongingness using the voices and images of eight 6th-grade students in order to gain deeper insight about ethnic/bicultural identity development and sense of school belongingness. While much of this data supported the quantitative findings, it also reveals similarities and differences between and within the students from each group. This section will discuss the similarities and the differences between the students and groups, beginning with factors that contribute to sense of school belongingness followed by the factors that influence bicultural or ethnic identity development with the intention of gaining deeper understanding.

In general, students believed that sense of school belongingness was impacted by relationships (teacher-student and peer-to-peer) and their language use within the school (only English or English and Spanish). They articulate the importance of strong family ties, which does not directly impact sense of school belongingness but does seem to impact sense of general belongingness that may impact sense of school belongingness. Regarding bicultural/ethnic identity, students explained bicultural identity or ethnic group affiliation by describing concrete “evidence” of culture such as traditions, food, celebrations, and language.

Differences between the groups became clear when articulating bicultural or ethnic identities. Students in the dual-language strand were bicultural (Darder, 2012), as revealed by their language use across spaces. On the other hand, bilingual students in the English-only program had dual identities (Darder, 2012), a Spanish identity and an English identity used in different spaces. Furthermore, in describing their (bi)cultural identities, the students in the English-only program displayed a cultural complacency, actualized by an expressed interest in learning about their (bi)cultural identities but a lack
of commitment in actually doing so. The students in the dual-language strand displayed a
cultural pride, operationalized by a curiosity to learn more about their bicultural identity
and the initiative to learn more.

A detailed discussion of these findings follows, beginning with factors that impact
sense of school belongingness and followed by factors impacting (bi)cultural identity
development.

**School Belongingness: Teacher Influence**

In concordance with several studies that suggest a supportive student-teacher
relationship positively impacts factors that contribute to belonging (Murdock, Anderman,
& Hodge, 2000; Nichols, 2006; Rochester, Ryan, Stiller, & Lynch, 1994; Wentzel, 1994;
Wentzel, 1997), the focal students’ perception that teachers cared about them was an
important factor in sense of school belongingness. While each student articulated it
differently—from teachers knowing the students really well, to teachers checking the
students work or encouraging them to go to college—the feeling that their own teachers
cared about them was important.

While all students articulated a belief that their teachers cared about them,
Esteban’s (EO) response suggested a weaker relationship with his teacher than the other
focal students. As Esteban has a low sense of school belongingness as compared to the
rest of the class as well as the other focal students, the fact that he does not articulate a
strong personal relationship with his teacher is consistent with the findings that teacher
support is highly correlated to feelings of belongingness in school (Nichols, 2006;
Goodenow, 1993).
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Sense of school belongingness has been found to have a significant impact upon expectations for success and the perceived value of academic tasks (Goodenow, 1993; Goodenow & Grady, 1993), appropriate classroom behavior (Wentzel, 1994), and other positive school outcomes (Patrick, Anderman, & Ryan, 2002). Furthermore, a sense of school belongingness has been linked to decreased at-risk behavior (Blum & Rinehart, 1996; McNeely, Nonemaker, & Blum, 2002) such as less absenteeism (Nichols, 2003). As focal students’ perceptions that their teachers care was a crucial component in their descriptions of sense of school belongingness, clearly promoting positive student-teacher relationships is crucial.

Fostering a positive student-teacher relationship is not context-specific. Regardless of the educational program, school, grade-level, or age of the students, teachers can and should advance strong positive relationships with each individual student within their classroom in order to promote a greater sense of school belonging. As students from this study expressed the perception of positive teacher-student relationships in unique ways, it is crucial that teachers put forth the effort to know each student as an individual and learn how each individual operationalizes the experience of a teacher who cares.

School Belongingness: Peer relationships

In addition to strong student-teacher relationships, students articulated strong peer-relationships as impacting their sense of school belongingness. Other studies (e.g. Nichols, 2006) have revealed similar findings. This study’s finding that strong friendships contribute to a sense of school belongingness adds to the literature by suggesting that strong peer affinity groups can positively impact sense of school
belonging. Furthermore, Emiliano’s (EO) experience of weaker or non-mutual friendships, as well as Addison’s (DL) lack of “friends” allude to the possibility that less positive or weaker peer relationships could negatively impact a sense of school belonging.

This study adds to the literature by suggesting that the strength of the relationship between peers in the classroom impacts school belongingness. While strong friendships are important, as articulated by all students, close emotional connections outside of immediate affinity circles were revealed by the dual-language students. Focal students from the dual-language strand divulged not only the close friendships revealed by the students in the English-only program, but disclosed a fierce loyalty towards other classmates who they did not necessarily consider amongst their best friends. In fact, they often described their class as a “family.” This may indeed support Anderman’s (2003) research that found that students’ who perceived mutual respect within a classroom experienced smaller declines of sense of school belongingness in middle school; however, “mutual respect” does not adequately describe the relational experience of the dual-language students as their feelings seem much more intense than “respect.”

It is unclear whether the strength of the peer-to-peer relationships within the dual-language strand are a result of programmatic consistency (most students had been in the same class for seven years) or unity based upon bicultural identity and/or language (as will be discussed further), or (most likely) all of the above, it is clear that the strength of the relationships between the students within the dual-language classroom positively impacted their sense of school belongingness to a degree not articulated by the English-only students.
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While there obviously has been some variation within the consistency within the program (some students leave, others enroll, etc.), for the most part the vast majority of the class has been together for seven years. In fact, it is no wonder that they describe their class like a “family,” for, indeed, they actually spend more time with their cohort-mates than their own families. Considering the positive impact sense of school belonging can have on other factors (McNeely, Nonemaker, & Blum, 2002; Patrick, Anderman, & Ryan, 2002), it seems prudent to explore aspects of this intensely close peer-to-peer relationship that could be replicated.

While peer unity based upon bicultural identity and language could be difficult to promote in an English-only context, the intimate knowledge that the dual-language students have about each other—i.e. they know each other’s handwriting, they know each other’s “strengths and weaknesses”—was based upon having been in the same small cohort since kindergarten. This would be replicable within an English-only (or any other) context by creating cohorts of students who are classmates year after year. Contributing to the peer-to-peer relationships in cohort models of schools would be the utilization and fidelity to character-building curriculum that focuses upon the creation of friendships and respect.

That is not to say that teachers in English-only programs should not intentionally promote sense of school belongingness by fostering a sense of unity within the classroom based upon positive (bi)cultural identity development—merely that it could be more difficult. Engaging students in conversations and activities centered around equity and diversity may be one way to promote cross-cultural unity that could contribute to close and deep relationships within English-only classrooms.
School Belongingness: Parents’ Role

This study also revealed that parental (or familial) support outside of school—generally in the form of parental engagement—may actually impact the perception of belongingness inside school, particularly when the family engages in academic endeavors outside of school. For example, Sara (DL) mentioned reading aloud to her mother and grandmother, Arturo (EO) disclosed his father’s role as PTA president, and Mercedes (DL) confirmed that her parents helped her with homework; while these events did not necessarily happen in school, they contributed to a positive attitude about school which impacted sense of school belongingness.

While there are many studies that suggest the positive impact of parental engagement and involvement on schooling outcomes and behaviors (e.g. Englund, Luckner, Whaley, & Egeland, 2004; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Izzo, Weissberg, Kaspr ow, & Fendrich, 1999; Jeynes, 2007), there are fewer that suggest that students’ perception of parental support impacts school belongingness (Kashani, Canfield, Borduin, & Soltys, 1994). The parental and familial actions expressed in this study—such as reading together, participating in PTA, and helping with homework—may contribute to students’ perception that their parents support them academically, and thus be related to sense of school belongingness.

Promoting parental engagement outside of school is not context-specific. Regardless of educational program (dual-language or English-only), schools should encourage parents to be engaged with academic activities outside of school. As Sara mentioned, an act as simple as reading together could promote students’ perception of parental academic support, contributing to a sense of school belongingness. Furthermore,
expanding our definition of “school support” is crucial in this endeavor. Frequently teachers (particularly White, middle-class teachers) define parental involvement as happening within the school or classroom walls without considering the parental engagement that happens beyond the institutional walls. Furthermore, it is possible that parents’ own definitions of support do not align with their own children’s perceptions of academic support, creating a gap in expectations. As was clear in this study, different children perceived parental academic support in unique ways; encouraging dialogue between parents and children could be one way to promote parental academic engagement that suits the individual student’s needs.

Furthermore, the narrow definition of support, frequently imposed by White, middle-class teachers, is limiting. Given the experiences of the focal students within this study, perceived academic or school support often takes place beyond the classroom walls. Therefore, it is entirely possible that teachers are unaware of the parental academic engagement that happens outside of school. Compounding this issue, many parents and family members, particularly those who do not speak the language(s) of school instruction, may feel inadequate or unable to help their children academically, particularly given the narrowly imposed definition of “support.” Additionally, parents of high-performing and/or older students may feel as though their children do not need their support, and therefore overlook this need. Informing parents that their children not only benefit academically from parental academic support, as has been indicated in numerous research studies, but also reap socio-emotional benefits from perceived academic support may be one way to improve parental engagement in and out of school and contribute to a sense of school belongingness.
School Belongingness: Language

Language use was an important factor contributing to sense of school belongingness. For English-only students, being an English-only speaker was one overt way to prove that they belonged. In this study, students in the English-only program would only speak English at school, even if they spoke Spanish at home. Furthermore, they would essentially hide their ability to speak Spanish from even their closest friends, implying that they were ashamed to be bilingual. On the other hand, students in the dual-language strand would display their bilingualism throughout school, even those who only spoke English at home. Speaking one or both languages was one way that students proved that they belonged in one group or the other.

In the English-only classroom, being a speaker of only English was the preferred implicit outcome, and students who had not yet met a level of basic proficiency were left out. This could be attributed to the perception that English is the language of power in the United States (Baker, 2011; Gandara & Hopkins, 2010; Potowski, 2004; Sugarman, 2012; Volk & Arturoova, 2007) and that students were absorbing these implicit values, even within a school that clearly defined itself as a bilingual space. Furthermore, the fact that Spanish-speaking parents chose to enroll their children in the English-only program gave the students a perception that English is more valuable than Spanish and that speaking only English will make them fit-into the population of only English speakers. To these families, English equals success.

On the other hand, dual-language students “proved” that they belonged in the dual-language strand with overt displays of bilingualism. While they often spoke English outside of the classroom, they did not only speak English outside of the classroom. They
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often code-switched or translanguaged between the two languages when not required by their teacher to speak one or the other. Furthermore, they distinguished between their own group and “the kids who don’t speak any Spanish,” suggesting that they considered bilingualism to be a factor important in school belongingness in their particular context—the dual-language strand. Students in the dual-language strand were able to perceive the value of English-and versus the value of English-only.

One potential reason for school belongingness based upon language could be related to power and language status. This school follows a 90/10 model of dual-language education, meaning that dual-language students in the early grades experience more Spanish than English. One reason for following a 90/10 model is that it can defuse the power of English as Spanish speakers gain status in the classroom (Lindholm-Leary, 2005) thus balancing the inequity. (More) equal language status could contribute to more equitable relationships between the students in the classroom, promoting a feeling of belongingness.

On the other hand, the English learning English-only students do not have this experience. They are learning, in school, from their parents, and from greater society, that English is the preferred language; English is the language of power. In order to belong in the United States, as well as in the English-only program at school, students must demonstrate that they speak only English.

While it makes sense that students from the two programs with different linguistic goals and outcomes would experience the role of language in promoting school belongingness in different ways, it is important to critically consider the potential long-term impacts of language preference on school belongingness.
IDENTITY AND BELONGINGNESS IN DL AND EO CONTEXTS

(Bi)cultural Identity: Family, traditions, and celebrations

The thick and intensive qualitative data collected from the focal students supported the survey findings that children base their (bi)cultural identities upon their family background and their traditions/celebrations. Clearly, familial ties can impact not only how well a student perceives to belong within the school, but how a child begins to define and perceive his or her own (bi)cultural identity.

This finding supports the literature that culturally and linguistically diverse youth associate identity with genealogy, ancestry, and/or kinship (Markstrom, 2010). It further supports the assertion that identity formation is a developmental process. As Phinney et. al. (2007) suggest that (bi)cultural identity is a developmental process, it seems reasonable that a “rudimentary” (Ruble et. al. 2004) concept (bi)cultural identity development would begin with concrete factors—such as family ethnic identity, celebrations, and traditions—as many cognitive developmental experiences begin with concrete reasoning before moving towards the abstract.

All focal students in this study self-identified with being (at least part) Latino or Hispanic, and they generally “proved” this identification with concrete experiences. This ability of the focal students to begin to describe (bi)cultural identity supports social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) that suggests that minoritized populations are more clearly able to explain their identity than individuals from dominant populations.

Nevertheless, the focal students from the dual-language strand were more likely to be more clear in their articulations of bicultural identity than those students in the English-only program. Given the implicit messages conveyed to the English-only students—that English is the preferred language, and, by association, “American” culture
is the preferred culture—it is not surprising that EO focal students had more difficulty in articulating their non-American identity. At this point, it is crucial to reiterate one of the frequent criticisms of research comparing dual-language programs to comparable English-only programs: a self-selection bias. If parents choose English-only over dual-language education, despite access to a dual-language strand, it is not impossible that (bi)cultural identity development is less important to these parents than to the parents of the students in the dual-language strand. Parents of EO students could spend less time than parents of the DL students on cultural activities, traditions, celebrations, and conversations. This could result in differing facility in describing (bi)cultural identity for English-only and dual-language students.

Nevertheless, this does not seem to be the case for the group of students in this study. The EO focal students in this program frequently mentioned visiting family in Mexico, participating in cultural celebrations, speaking Spanish, etc. This implies that the maintenance of culture is equally important to the English-only parents, despite not having selected a DL education for their children. In this case, the selection of an English-only education may have been based upon inadequate access to dual-language programs or insufficient education regarding such programs rather than parental indifference towards (bi)culturalism. It is not reasonable to assume a difference in parental bicultural importance based upon their choice of English-only versus dual-language education for their children. This begs the question: How and why do parents select English-only over dual-language education for their children?

Perhaps the difficulty in expressing (bi)cultural identity from the English-only students may reflect their struggle to become part of the dominant group. They perceive
this to be preferred and, at this stage in their lives, have not likely been exposed to experiences that acknowledge the improbability of success in this endeavor. Therefore, they perceive themselves to be part of the “majority group” (at least at school). As Phinney et. al. (2007) suggest, “ethnic identity plays a less important role in the lives of members of a majority group, and they are less likely to have thought about their identity” (Phinney et al., 2007, p.488). Perhaps the focal students in the EO program have not thought about their identity because they either perceive themselves to be, or are trying to become, “members of a majority group.” Furthermore, the demographics of the EO classroom, as well as Southern California as a whole, may give the EO students the perception that they are, indeed, part of the majority.

(Bi)cultural Identity: Language

As the purpose of social interaction is for individuals to construct and present an image of who they are (Norton, 2013), students’ language choices must been seen as part of their identity performances. Both groups of students had strong ethnic and strong American identities (though not necessarily balanced), a concept described by Berry as integration (Berry et al., 2010); however, I would argue that these students were very different in the way they actualized strong ethnic and strong American identities.

In analyzing the acculturation profiles (Berry et al., 2006) based upon the intensive qualitative data of the focal students, all could be considered to align to the integration profile, characterized by both a strong ethnic or cultural identity and a strong American identity. While the students did not seem to be “balanced” with regards to identities (i.e. most seemed to have “stronger” American identities, as operationalized by their preference of English), they all displayed behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions that
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suggested that they valued both their ethnic identity and their American identity (to varying degrees.) Nevertheless, the students from the English-only program, even those who were bilingual, exhibited different identities in different spaces; the students from the dual-language strand exhibited one identity across contexts.

This difference between the identity performances between groups suggests that the framework proposed by Berry et. al (2006) may be inadequate to describe the perceptions and life experiences of (bi)cultural individuals. While Berry does not consider the impact of context on identity, Darder suggests that bicultural affirmation would be exemplified in an individual with a strong ethnic identity and a strong American identity across contexts (i.e. school, home, clubs, etc.). Indeed, adding Darder’s (2002, 2012) description of bicultural affirmation onto the Berry’s definition of integration may well be one way to explain different levels of biculturalism. (See Figure 14.)

Fig. 14. Spectrum of Integration. Berry’s concept of integration (2006) is described based on context. For individuals who demonstrate a strong ethnic identity in some spaces (i.e. home) and a strong American identity in other spaces (i.e. school), these individuals would further be described as having dual cultural identities (Darder, 2002, 2012). Individuals demonstrating a strong ethnic identity and the strong American identity at the same time without being context specific would be considered to be biculturally affirmed (Darder, 2002, 2012).
In describing integration as (bi)cultural identity, I intentionally used *bi* or *bi-* to affirm that an individual could have one bicultural identity or two separate cultural identities. The students in the English-only program had two separate, or bi-cultural, identities, as evidenced by their use of different languages in different spaces. This concept has been described by Darder (2012) as cultural dualism. On the other hand, the students from the dual-language strand had one bicultural identity that flowed between and across spaces. This concept has been described by Darder (2012) as bicultural affirmation. Nevertheless, (bi)cultural identit(ies) are both manifestations of an integrative profile of acculturation.

Research shows that the integration profile is consistently associated with positive adaptation (Berry, 2006; Feliciano, 2001) and the individuals with a strong desire for cultural maintenance and involvement in dominant national society confirmed better intergroup relationships (Zagefka & Brown, 2002). Furthermore, the relationship between integration and academic success is fairly conclusive (Fernandez & Nielsen, 1986; Rumberger & Larson, 1998; Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995). Therefore, promoting integration—or strong ethnic identities and strong American identities—should be a societal goal.

Dual-language education may indeed be one way to promote a strong ethnic identity and a strong American identity; however, as evidenced by the focal students in this study, ethnic identity can be fostered by family. While there were definitely differences in integration patterns for the English-only versus dual-language students in this study, with the EO students demonstrating dualism with the DL students demonstrating bicultural affirmation, we do not know that one pattern of integration is
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necessarily more adaptive than the other. Perhaps dualism and affirmation are equally well-adaptive. Perhaps not. Clearly, more research is necessary.

Despite the research confirmation that integration is the most beneficial profile of acculturation, what has not been studied are the potential differences between groups along the spectrum of integration. While Darder suggests that bicultural affirmation “may hold the greatest emancipatory promise for both individuals and communities, with respect to the struggle for cultural democracy in schools” (2012, p. 53), there is limited research supporting this claim. Therefore, it is important to determine if there are, indeed, adaptive or academic differences between individuals demonstrating cultural dualism versus those demonstrating bicultural affirmation. Furthermore, are there differences between minoritized groups and dominant groups along the spectrum of integration? Answering these, and other, questions originating from these findings may be one step towards understanding the development of (bi)cultural identity, beginning in elementary school.

Notes

1. As an educator, I want to be clear that this is not a practice that I condone for many reasons. First, announcing scores on computerized monthly benchmark assessments puts an unnecessary and unhealthy emphasis on standardized testing—testing which tends to be inauthentic for all students and inequitable for English learners and other minoritized populations. Furthermore, publicly announcing scores and grades could potentially lead to embarrassment, ostracism, and other negative consequences. While this practice did not seem to have any negative consequences in Ms. Gomez’s classroom, and indeed
served as an example of student solidarity in this context, I would caution teachers against similar practices.
Chapter 8: Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

The purpose of this study was to answer the broad question of the manifestation and perception of (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness of elementary students. Specifically, this study addressed three research questions:

1. What is the relationship between (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness?
2. Is there a significant difference in (bi)cultural identity development or sense of school belongingness for different students in different language programs?
3. How do students identify with and express (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness?

The following conclusions are based upon the results and findings from both quantitative and qualitative data. It is important to remember that these conclusions were made based upon a small study of two schools in Southern California. Comprehensive quantitative data and preliminary qualitative data was collected from about 200 students at two schools (one English-only and the other English-only with a dual-language strand). More focused qualitative data was generated from eight students at the English-only school with a dual-language strand (in both educational contexts: EO and DL). Therefore, these conclusions may not be generalizable to other schools in other contexts; furthermore, they may only represent the attitudes and perspectives of the students at LAES and PVES. Nevertheless, this study revealed some important findings and knowledge about (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness.
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Relationship Between (Bi)cultural Identity and Sense of School Belongingness

Results and findings suggest that the relationship between (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness is heavily based on context. As a group, there was a statistically significant positive correlation between (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness for all students (EO and DL) at Language Academy Elementary School that was not evident for students at PVES (EO). This quantitative relationship was further supported by the qualitative data generated with the eight focal students at LAES. Those who expressed higher feelings of belongingness also articulated greater degrees of (bi)cultural identity; likewise, students with lower scores on the quantitative measures of identity and belongingness also revealed experiences and perceptions suggesting a struggle with both (bi)cultural identity development and feelings of school (and general) belongingness.

Despite the quantitative difference in correlation between LAES and PVES, when the scores were disaggregated by self-reported ethnic group, Latinos at both schools exhibited a strong relationship between identity and belongingness. There was a relationship between identity and belongingness for White students at LAES that was not seen in White students at PVES. Scores from Asian students at both schools indicated that there was no relationship between identity and belongingness.

When these relationships were further examined based upon language program, the positive correlation between (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness was evident for the White students in the dual-language strand and the Latino students in English-only programs. Qualitative data does not necessarily support this result, as Latino focal students in the dual-language strand revealed a qualitative connection between
identity and belongingness. Given the small sample size, it is possible that these focal students do not represent the attitudes and experiences of the other Latino students in the dual-language strand. I suspect, however, that the relatively small number of dual-language students who participated in the quantitative measures impacts these results. Further research is needed with a larger sample of dual-language students in order to determine if there is, indeed, a difference in correlation based upon self-identified ethnic or cultural group(s).

Quantitative and qualitative data reveal that the relationship between (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness are two profoundly complicated and individual processes. This relationship is contextual: For certain students, in certain programs, in certain schools, there is a strong positive relationship between (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness. For others, there is no correlation.

What this study does say, however, is that there is not a negative relationship between the two concepts, for anybody, anywhere. There is no evidence that a strong sense of school belonging negatively impacts the development of (bi)cultural identity or vice versa. As prior research indicates that both are psychosocially beneficial and socioculturally adaptive, schools should be inclined to promote both within their curriculums.

Differences in Identity and Belongingness

Qualitative and quantitative data generated within this study reflect similarities between identity development and school belongingness amongst students. The only statistically significant difference for (bi)cultural identity was found between Latino and non-Latino students; Latino students, in general (both schools, EO and DL), and those at
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LAES (EO and DL), specifically, demonstrated stronger (bi)cultural identities than non-Latino students. Likewise, there was one statistically significant difference in belongingness: White students in the English-only program at the Language Academy reflected lower belongingness scores than their non-White peers in the same program. Therefore, statistical results suggest more similarities than differences.

Qualitative data reflects many similarities as well. Focal students reported that strong relationships with teachers, peers, and family impacted their school belongingness. They also articulated that language played a role in school belongingness, though they reported differences based upon context. English-only students fostered their own school belongingness by only speaking English at school while dual-language students promoted their own belongingness with overt displays of bilingualism in school.

Family relationships and language also played a role in the development of identity for most students. Students who reported strong relationships with immediate and extended family tended to have higher scores on the bicultural identity measure; they also revealed the importance of these relationships in learning more about themselves. Many students reported basing their concept of (bi)cultural identity upon the language(s) that they speak at home and/or at school.

While quantitative scores illustrate a similarity in identity and belongingness, qualitative findings suggest that English-only and dual-language students experience these constructs differently. When considering language, though both groups reported language as being a factor in their identity and belongingness, English-only students insisted upon speaking only English at school; dual-language students were openly bilingual. All focal students (from both groups) reported speaking both languages to
some degree at home. Furthermore, data regarding (bi)cultural identity from the two
groups suggests that the dual-language students are less opaque than the English-only
students regarding their (bi)cultural identity. They also exposed cultural and linguistic
pride that was not revealed by the English-only students. Even the high-scoring English-
only students seemed less able to articulate the strengths and weaknesses of their
(bi)cultural identities than any of the dual-language students.

**Expressions of (Bi)cultural Identity and Sense of School Belongingness**

The purpose of exploring focal students’ expressions of (bi)cultural identity and
sense of school belongingness was to expand and elaborate on the findings of the
quantitative data (Creswell, 2009). That, indeed, it did.

Focal students expressed belongingness as related to student-teacher relationships,
peer-to-peer relationships, and family relationships. They carefully considered their
language use at school to promote feelings of belongingness, with English-only students
only speaking English and dual-language students intentionally presenting as bilinguals.
Students revealed that family traditions, celebrations, and language were closely related
to how they identified as (bi)cultural individuals.

While the findings from the qualitative data generated throughout this study
suggest that (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness are two deeply
complex and personal processes, they also reveal intricate relationships between factors
that influence students perceptions of both identity and belongingness—particularly
language and familial relationships. Therefore, promoting both language and familial
relationships (particularly familial academic relationships) could impact students’
(bi)cultural identity development and sense of school belongingness.
Pedagogical Implications: School-Level Practices

Importantly, a number of the findings from the study are not context specific. Promoting (bi)cultural identity and sense of school belongingness could positively benefit all students academically, cognitively, socially, and culturally.

Policies and activities to promote identity and belongingness

Students in this study clearly articulated that having caring teachers impacted their sense of school belongingness. Schools, therefore, may wish to consider ideas that promote positive, caring relationships between teachers and students.

The challenge here is, obviously, that most teachers enter the profession because they care. If I were to ask any teachers if they care about their students, they would quickly respond, “Of course.” They would be able to list a number of things that they do that prove they care about their students, their job, and the profession.

What this study has made clear is that different students perceive “teacher caring” differently. For some students, such as Ella (EO), just being in a classroom where they were encouraged to ask questions fostered this belief. Students like Emiliano (EO) revealed that individual support and guidance would contribute to this feeling. Mrs. Robby was able to meet Ella’s needs easily; it was just part of what she did as a teacher. On the other hand, she was not meeting Emiliano’s needs, not because she did not care, but because she did not know what he needed. I suspect that she is not the only teacher in this position.

Therefore, this suggests a call for all teachers to be teacher-researchers and take the initiative to learn about their students—and not just assume that what works for one student will work for all of them. One way to address this disconnect would be for
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teachers to ask their students directly, “What can I do to show you that I care about you?” Asking this quarterly would reflect the changing needs of the students, and asking students to respond in writing could facilitate the action. If I were doing this, I would put the written responses in a stack. Each day I would review take one response from the top of the stack, and ensure that I met that specific child’s needs for that day. I would return the response to the bottom of the stack and continue this routine for the entire year—or until the next “caring” assessment when students may articulate different needs.

Students also articulated that strong friendship groups impacted their sense of school belonging. Clearly, close friendships are impossible to force; however, the dual-language students revealed familial-like relationships amongst themselves. Even if they were not in the same friendship group, they revealed a fierce loyalty and camaraderie that was not evident within the English-only program.

One possible reason for this intense feeling is related to the consistency within the cohort. Most students had known one another since kindergarten, and they often said that they “knew each other really well.” This was not reiterated by students in the English-only program. While likely teachers play a role in fostering community, the data generated within this study strongly suggested that the cohort-model dramatically influences student relationships. Therefore, schools may wish to replicate this model regardless of educational/linguistic program. Students would start kindergarten with the same classmates that they would have in first, second, third grade, and so on. By continuing with the same classmates year after year, students would learn each other’s strengths and weaknesses, fostering an intimate vulnerability that promotes deep relationships.
Students also reported that family relationships impacted both their (bi)cultural identity development and sense of school belongingness. While schools cannot dictate what happens within the home, and how parents foster (or do not foster) (bi)cultural identity development, schools may have an impact on parental academic engagement and involvement inside and outside of schools. While white, middle-class teachers often perceive parental involvement to happen within the school—such as attending events and parent-teacher conferences or volunteering in the classroom—there are multiple ways in which parents can be academically engaged inside and outside of the school walls. Students in this study reported multiple ways of authentic familial involvement, from the more “traditional” definition of in-school involvement (for example, Arturo’s father’s role as PTA president) to unique at-home involvement (for example, Sara “playing school” with her grandmother using a white-board).

Developing teacher awareness of the multiple forms of familial academic engagement may be the first step. Encouraging teachers not to privilege one form of engagement over another may be the next. Finally, parents and families need to be informed that academic engagement in all forms and in all places is important, not only for their children’s academic achievement, but also for their children’s sociocultural development. The current focus of high-stakes testing tends to privilege academic achievement (particularly in English Language Arts and mathematics) over sociocultural development; unfortunately, privileging academic achievement over sociocultural development could lead parents of high achieving students to academically disengage in and out of school. Clearly, this could have dire consequences upon high achieving students (bi)cultural development.
Access to dual-language education

Results and findings from this study suggested that all students (EO and DL) at LAES encountered a more positive experience than the students at PVES, possibly related to access to a dual-language education. While not all students at LAES were enrolled in the DL program, their parents had a choice. This educational option was not available at PVES. Choice was not available to PVES parents. It seems reasonable to conclude that providing choice could promote engagement and agency. Perhaps the ability to choose is just as important as the choice itself.

Therefore, providing all students with easy access to a dual-language education may be an important way to promote positive educational experiences for all. Establishing dual-language strands within existing neighborhood schools may be one way to facilitate easy access to DL education. This is just the one piece of the puzzle, however. The mere establishment is not enough. An important component of access to dual-language strands is parental education; parents need to be fully informed about the strengths and challenges of dual-language strand, as well as the impact of an English-only education on their children’s biliteracy and (bi)cultural development. Only then can parents make the informed decision that is right for their family and their children.

For those students and families that choose dual-language strands, changing the perception of Spanish as being the enrichment language and English being the necessary language may be another step. Many parents likely choose to enroll their children in dual-language strands based upon the three goals of dual-language education (DeJong, 2012):

1. High levels of bilingualism and biliteracy
2. Academic achievement in English and the partner language
3. Positive language and cross-cultural attitudes

While academic achievement was not a focus of this project, results from this study suggested high levels of bilingualism and biliteracy and positive language and cross-cultural attitudes from DL students; however, results also suggested that all students preferred English, and even native Spanish speakers (except Mercedes) had stronger linguistic skills in English than Spanish. The students were not balanced bilinguals.

Therefore, dual-language strands may wish to consider ideas for holding all stakeholders accountable for some baseline level of Spanish use and proficiency. Because of the status of English in our society, intentional promotion of the status of Spanish needs to be a focus of dual-language strands if we do, indeed, hope to promote greater use of Spanish outside of the required “Spanish times.” Nevertheless, some researchers (Tarone & Swain, 1995) have suggested that educators should resign themselves to the fact that dual-language students may have academic competency in a minoritized language without expecting social use of that language. Likewise, Caldas (2006) asserts that we should begin to “soberly assess the limits of a school language immersion program, especially when up against adolescence in America” (p.6). He suggests that “even if tremendous effort is exerted to preserve a minority language, if that language is not cherished by the adolescent’s peer group, he or she will likely not speak that language” (p.163). Personally, I do not think that we should concede to this.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study has illuminated (bi)cultural identity development and sense of school belongingness for elementary students in California. Prior to making some final conclusions, it is important to clarify some limitations of this study.
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As this project had two distinct phases, it is possible that the experiences and perceptions of the Phase II focal students are not representative of Phase I students. Phase II students were all 6th graders, and Phase I students were 4th through 6th graders—and the MEIM and the PSSM are measures used with adolescents and beyond. Despite the modification of the MEIM and the PSSM in this study to make it more clear to the younger students, it was a tool not intended to be used in this population.

Furthermore, this study involved a small sample of students at two schools in a relatively culturally and linguistically diverse community in Southern California. One of the schools was an English-only school, and the other school had an English-only program and a dual-language strand. The experiences and perceptions of the students at these schools likely do no reflect the perceptions and experiences of students in more homogenous communities.

Despite the limitations of this study, general recommendations are possible.

First, schools should not merely focus on academic subjects and instruction. The clearest finding to emerge from this research is that sense of school belongingness and bicultural identity are important factors in a child’s psychosociocultural development and that promoting one will not diminish the other.

Second, all students should be given easy access to a research-based dual-language programs. This does not only mean establishing charter schools or magnet programs (though these cannot hurt) as transportation and other issues could create less-than-easy access for many parents and families. Instead, neighborhood schools should establish research-based dual-language strands within a school, offering neighborhood parents a choice of programming for their children. Parents need to be educated about the
opportunities, strengths, and challenges of each option and make a well-informed decision for their family and their children. I understand that this would be challenging, and may require institutional, ideological, and pedagogical change. This would necessitate a pool of culturally and linguistically competent teachers able and willing to teach in these environments (Quezada, Lindsey, & Lindsey, 2012).

Finally, districts, states, and the federal government should promote efforts to provide dual-language access to all students—but particularly those who are emerging bilinguals. Funding needs to be offered to schools and communities in order to provide professional development regarding choosing a dual-language strand based upon the community’s needs, establishing a dual-language strand, and finding well-prepared teachers for their program.

Beyond the results and findings articulated in chapters 6 and 7, this study reveals more questions than answers. These include, for example:

- Why is there a relationship between (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness for students at a school with a dual-language strands but no relationship between the two for students at a school without a dual-language option? Is this related to parental choice? Does this result hold true across contexts?
- What is the relationship between identity, belongingness, and academic achievement?
- Is one type of integration pattern (cultural dualism versus bicultural affirmation) more adaptive than another?
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- As students age, is there a difference in (bi)cultural identity development and/or sense of school belongingness based upon elementary language program (DL or EO)? Could an elementary dual-language strand act as a protective factor against the typical middle-school belongingness slump?
- Does an elementary dual-language strand accelerate the process of bicultural affirmation?

Finally, there is also a great need for additional research on dual-language strands in general, and specifically on language status and prestige. The role of translanguaging in different dual-language models needs to be investigated, as does the relationship between culturally and linguistically competent teachers on student cultural complacency. Investigating parental education about dual-language programs is also crucial, as is a deep investigation about the actual access to dual-language programs for Spanish-speaking low-income students and their families. I would like to consider the role of gender upon the development of (bi)cultural identity and school belongingness.

Regardless of the questions that I am left with upon concluding this study, all the students in this project have inspired me as a researcher, a dual-language educator, and as a parent attempting to raise a bilingual child.
Epilogue

As an advocate of dual-language education, I came into this project expecting to find clear proof that a dual-language education is far superior. Regardless of the achievement research, I expected that the psychosocial and sociocultural impacts of dual-language education as compared to English-only education would be clear.

I have to admit, this project shook up my perspective. I feel that the experience that the students were having at LAES was superior to the experience of the students at PVES. Definitely, the data showed me that. While the quantitative results did not indicate this to be the case, as the results were similar from both groups, the students’ voices—particularly those students who were from minoritized populations—suggested that they felt differently and had less-positive schooling experiences than the other students. And, in addition to the data, was just the feeling that I got while at that school. I was less comfortable there. Students seemed a little more tense and reluctant to answer personal questions. They appeared less happy. The school just felt worse, somehow, particularly when compared to LAES. I understand that “research” does not necessarily care about my own feelings, but I think that they are important to mention.

I expected to find—and actually looked for—evidence of an inequitable experience between the English-only program and the dual-language strand. The negativity that I perceived at PVES (an EO school), was not evident in the English-only program at LAES. I did find differences in perspectives and experiences between the EO students at LAES and the DL students at LAES, definitely. But a difference does not necessarily render it less equitable.
I now realize that assuming that negative schooling experiences are solely related to elementary language program oversimplifies bigger issues surrounding status, hegemony, teacher competency, standardized assessments, curriculum, and power—to name just a few. It minimizes the real experiences that are happening to real kids, all over this country, everyday.

I still *feel* like dual-language education is superior to English-only education, but, again, my feelings do not prove anything. I also *feel* like an affirmative bicultural identity is “better” than bi-cultural or dual identities. But, again, I have absolutely no proof. It is completely possible that both are equally adaptive, positive, and beneficial. I do not really *want* that to be true, but, again, that really does not matter what I feel.

At this point I believe *access* to dual-language education is a fundamental educational right. I think that it is possible that schools with a research-based dual-language strand within their school may provide a superior educational and sociocultural experience than schools that do not have a dual-language strand—perhaps due to ideology and commitment of the teachers, administrators, and school community. At this point, however, the only proof that I have of this is based upon the results and findings from one study—this one.

I also believe that educational choice is crucial. Parents should be able to opt their children in or out of dual-language strands, and, at some point (perhaps beginning in middle school), the students themselves should have that choice. To be fair, I have absolutely no idea how this would be operationalized, or even if it would be possible given the complex nature of the situation. But I do think that we should pass this
IDENTITY AND BELONGINGNESS IN DL AND EO CONTEXTS

educational choice onto the students themselves, as they will be the ones directly impacted by the decisions.
Definition of Terms

Acculturation profiles- The distinct ways in which immigrants adapt to a new culture. There are four acculturation profiles: integration, ethnic, national, or diffuse (Berry et al., 2010).

Assimilation- The breaking down of ethnic, racial, cultural, socioeconomic, and linguistic groups until they appear to resemble the dominant group as closely as possible (Feliciano, 2001a).

(Bi)cultural identity- The degree to which people maintain their heritage culture and identity while at the same time involving themselves with a second culture (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006).

Bilingualism- The ability to orally communicate with varying degrees of proficiency in two languages (Butler & Hakuta, 2006). This is slightly different than biliteracy which includes literacy (reading and writing) in two languages.

Biliteracy- The ability to speak, read, write, and comprehend two (or more) languages at high levels. Basically, the use of two of more languages “in and around writing” (Hornberger, 2003).

Culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students- Students who do not come from White, generally middle-class, English-speaking families.

Diffuse profile- An acculturation profile in which the individual has both a weak primary/native/home identity and a weak national identity (Berry et al., 2010).

Dual-language programs- Educational programs that aim to promote high levels of bilingualism and biliteracy in both partner languages. There are different models of dual-language programs. These are program programs that use the non-English target
language (in the case of this study, Spanish) for at least 50% of the day during the elementary years (National Dual-language Consortium, 2011). *One-way immersion* and *two-way immersion* programs are two types of dual-language models.

**Emerging bilinguals**- Children who are learning two languages at once, generally a home language and English. This perspective of re-naming English learners to emerging bilinguals reframes the deficit-laden label of *English learner* (Gárcia, 2008).

**English Language Mainstream/ Mainstream English-only (EO)**- A classroom in which the instruction is only in English, regardless of the native language(s) of the students. Students in an EO classroom are expected to have “reasonable fluency” or “good working knowledge” of English (CDE, 2006); however, this is not always the case.

**English learner (EL)**- A student who has been identified as speaking a language other than English at home (based upon the Home Language Survey) and is not yet proficient in English as determined by standardized tests in oral language and literacy (CDE, 2013).

**Ethnicity/Ethnic identity**- The way in which an individual labels him-/her-self based upon his/her own perceptions of shared values, beliefs, practices, characteristics, etc. It may be related to race, but it may differ (Phinney, 2003).

**Full immersion**- Also called a *90:10 model* of dual-language instruction, a full immersion program begins with 90% of the instruction happening in the non-English partner language. This percentage is gradually reduced until a balance between the two partner languages is reached, generally around 4th grade.

**Heritage language**- The language(s) (once) spoken by an individual’s ancestors/family members that is not spoken by the individual him or herself. Heritage language programs
reintroduce heritage languages to these individuals with the goal of high levels of biliteracy in both the heritage language and English.

**Heritage language learner**- A student who is dominant in English but whose parents, grandparents, or other ancestors spoke a different language (National Dual-language Consortium, 2014). For example, many Latinos in California do not speak Spanish, but Spanish is their heritage language.

**Home language(s)**- The language(s) an individual speaks at home.

**Integration profile**- Both the dominant identity of the host country as well as the native identity of the home country are strong and positively correlated (Berry et al., 2010).

**Minoritized languages**- All languages not considered standard academic English.

**National profile**- An *acculturation profile* characterized by a weak native/ethnic identity and a strong national identity (Berry et al., 2010).

**One-way**- The goal of one-way programs is to teach a second language to native English speakers with an end result of high achievement in both languages. Generally, the students are native English speakers and are learning a *partner* or *target* language (National Dual-language Consortium, 2014).

**Partial immersion**- Also called a *50:50 model* of dual-language instruction, a partial immersion model maintains an instructional balance of 50% for each partner language throughout the duration of the program.

**Partner language**- The two languages of instruction within a dual-language program.

**Positive racial affect**- How positively youth feel about their ethnicity or race (Rivas-Drake et al., 2014)
Primary identity- The identity that a person develops based upon his or her racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic background (Darder, 2012). This can also be called racial-ethnic identity, home identity, or native identity.

Primary language- A person’s first language(s).

Second language learner- An individual who is learning a second language in addition to the one that is spoken at home. A native English speaker (regardless of ethnicity) learning Spanish is an example, as is a native Spanish speaker learning English (August & Shanahan, 2006).

(Sense of) school belongingness (SSB)- The feeling of being personally accepted, respected, and included by a supportive school community (Goodenow, 1992). Sometimes referred to as “school attachment.”

Structured/sheltered English immersion (SEI)- An English-only program in which all students are native speakers of languages other than English. The goal is rapid English acquisition, often at the expense of the native language.

Subtractive bilingual programs- Bilingual programs whose purpose is to replace the native language with English.

Transitional bilingual- An educational program for English learners, with the intention of moving them from Spanish instruction to English-only instruction as quickly as possible (usually within three years). Transitional bilingual is not considered a dual-language strand (CAL, 2011). Transitional bilingual programs are considered subtractive bilingual programs.
IDENTITY AND BELONGINGNESS IN DL AND EO CONTEXTS

**Two-way immersion** - *Dual-language strands* in which both native English speakers and native Spanish speakers are enrolled with the intention of developing *biliteracy* in both languages (CAL, 2011). The two-way immersion program studied in this research actively recruits 50% native English speakers and 50% native Spanish speakers.

**50:50 program model** - A *dual-language model* in which the partner language (Spanish) and English are used equally (each 50% of the time) throughout the program (CAL, 2011). This is also called *partial immersion*.

**90:10 program model** - A *dual-language model* in which students begin their educational careers spending 90% of their time learning in the partner language (in the case of this study, Spanish). This amount gradually decreases yearly until a 50/50 balance of instructional time is maintained in both languages. The TWI program in this study follows this model (CAL, 2011).
Please fill in:
What is your name? _______________________________________________________
Where were you born? ____________________________________________________

Please circle:
How old are you?  
8  9  10  11  12

What grade are you in now?  
4  5  6

What grade were you when you first came to this school?  
K   1  2  3  4  5  6

In the boxes below, mark whether or not you live with the following people and the language that you speak to them *MOST* of the time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Do you live with him/her?</th>
<th>What language do you speak with him/her most of the time?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grandfather</td>
<td>o Yes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grandmother</td>
<td>o Yes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>o Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>o Yes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Older brothers</td>
<td>o Yes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o No</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o I don’t have any</td>
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<tr>
<td>Older sisters</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o I don’t have any</td>
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<td>Younger brothers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o No</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o I don’t have any</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger sisters</td>
<td>o Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o I don’t have any</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If you have any other friends or family members that live with you, please fill in the boxes below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Do you live with him/her?</th>
<th>What language do you speak with him/her most of the time?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Yes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o No</td>
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<td>o No</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o No</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this country, people come from many different countries and cultures, and there are many different words to describe the different backgrounds or ethnic groups that people come from. Some examples of the names of ethnic groups are Hispanic, Latino, Black, African American, Asian, Chinese-American, Filipino, Indian, Mexican, Mexican-American, White, Italian, and many others. These questions are about your ethnicity or your ethnic group and how you feel about it or react to it.

Please fill in:
In terms of ethnic group or groups, I consider myself to be ____________________________
because ________________________________________________________________.

Do you think it matters what ethnic group you are? (circle)       Yes       No
Why or why not?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Please fill in the blank:
My favorite thing about my school is _________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

The perfect school would have more __________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
**Identity and Belongingness in DL and EO Contexts**

_Circle the numbers below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement._

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I am active in activities and clubs that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I have a clear understanding of my ethnic background and what it means for me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I think a lot about how my life is affected by being a part of my ethnic group.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I am happy that I am a member of the ethnic group I belong to.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I have a strong sense being a part of my own ethnic group.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I like meeting and getting to know people from ethnic groups other than my own.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Sometimes I feel like it would be better if didn’t ethnic groups didn’t try to mix together.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I often spend time with people from ethnic groups other than my own.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I don’t try to become friends with people from other ethnic groups.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I am involved in activities with people from other ethnic groups.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. I enjoy being around people from ethnic groups other than my own.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I feel comfortable in my school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. People at my school notice when I am good at something.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. It is hard for people like me to be accepted at my school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
22. Other students in my school take my opinions seriously. |   |   |   |   |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strongly Disagree</strong></td>
<td><strong>Disagree</strong></td>
<td><strong>Agree</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strongly Agree</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23. Most teachers at my school are interested in me and my friends. |   |   |   |   |
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<tbody>
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</table>

24. Sometimes I feel as if I don’t belong in my school. |   |   |   |   |
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

25. There is at least one teacher or adult I can talk to in my school if I have a problem. |   |   |   |   |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

26. People at my school are friendly to me. |   |   |   |   |
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<tbody>
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</table>

27. Teachers here are not interested in people like me. |   |   |   |   |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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28. I am included in lots of activities at my school. |   |   |   |   |
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<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>

29. I am treated with as much respect as other students in my school. |   |   |   |   |
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<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

30. I feel very different from most other students at my school. |   |   |   |   |
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<td>3</td>
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</table>

31. I can really be myself at my school. |   |   |   |   |
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<td>3</td>
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</table>

32. Teachers at my school respect me. |   |   |   |   |
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</thead>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IDENTITY AND BELONGINGNESS IN DL AND EO CONTEXTS

33. People at my school know that I can do good work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

34. I wish I were in a different school.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

35. I feel proud to belong to my school.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

36. Other students at my school like me the way that I am.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Circle as many as you need:

My ethnicity is
(a) Asian or Asian American (including Chinese, Filipino, and others)
(b) Black or African American
(c) Hispanic or Latino (including Mexican American, Central American, and others)
(d) White, Caucasian, Anglo, European American (not Hispanic or Latino)
(e) American Indian/Native American
(f) Other (write in): ____________________________________________________

My father's ethnicity is ________________________________________________.

My mother's ethnicity is ________________________________________________.

What are your feelings about learning...

English? _____________________________________________________________
Spanish? ____________________________________________________________
Both languages? ______________________________________________________

What are your feelings about students who speak...

English? _____________________________________________________________
Spanish? ____________________________________________________________
Both languages? ______________________________________________________
List your 5 best friends from school. Check their ethnicity and circle the language you speak **together**. Choose as many options as you need for each friend.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Friend's name (First &amp; Last initial)</th>
<th>Ethnicity or ethnicities</th>
<th>Language or languages we use together</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>o White</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Latino/Hispanic</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o African American/ Black</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Other</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o I don’t know</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>o White</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Latino/Hispanic</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o African American/ Black</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Other</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o I don’t know</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>o White</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Latino/Hispanic</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o I don’t know</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ENCUESTA DE ESTUDIANTES

Rellene, por favor:

¿Cuál es tu nombre? __________________________________________

¿Dónde naciste? __________________________________________

Circule:
Cuántos años tienes?
8  9  10  11  12

¿En cuál grado estás en este momento?
4  5  6

¿En cuál grado entraste por primera vez en esta escuela?
K  1  2  3  4  5  6

Marcas si vives o no con estas personas en los cuadros de abajo. Escribe el idioma que hablas con ellos LA MAYOR parte del tiempo.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persona</th>
<th>¿Vives con él / ella?</th>
<th>¿Qué idioma hablas con él / ella la mayor parte del tiempo?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abuelo</td>
<td>o Sí</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abuela</td>
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<tr>
<td>Padre</td>
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<td>o No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Madre</td>
<td>o Sí</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hermanos mayores</td>
<td>o Sí</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o No tengo ninguno</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hermanas mayores</td>
<td>o Sí</td>
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<td>o No</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o No tengo ninguna</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hermanos menores</td>
<td>o Sí</td>
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<td>o No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o No tengo ninguno</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IDENTITY AND BELONGINGNESS IN DL AND EO CONTEXTS

| Hermanas menores | o Sí  | o No   | o No tengo ninguna |

Si tienes otros amigos o miembros de la familia que viven contigo, por favor rellene las siguientes casillas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persona</th>
<th>¿Vives con él / ella?</th>
<th>¿Qué idioma hablas con él / ella la mayor parte del tiempo?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Sí</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

En este país, la gente viene de muchos países diferentes y culturas diferentes. Hay muchas palabras para describir los diferentes raíces o grupos étnicos en los Estados Unidos. Algunos ejemplos de los nombres de los grupos étnicos son hispanos, latinos, negro, afroamericano, asiático, chino-americano, filipino, indio, mexicano, mexicano-americano, blanco, italiano, y muchos más. Estas preguntas enfocan en tu origen o grupo étnico y cómo te sientes o reacciones ante ello.

Por favor, complete:
En términos de grupo o grupos étnicos, yo me considero ______________________________ porque ________________________________________________________________________________________.

¿Crees que es importante a qué grupo étnico perteneces? (círcule)  Sí  No
¿Por qué sí o por qué no?
_________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________

Por favor, rellene el espacio en blanco:
Lo que más me gusta de mi escuela es _____________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________
IDENTITY AND BELONGINGNESS IN DL AND EO CONTEXTS

La escuela perfecta tendría más ____________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________________

Círcule de estos números para indicar qué tan de acuerdo o desacuerdo con cada afirmación.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Totalmente en desacuerdo</th>
<th>Desacuerdo</th>
<th>De acuerdo</th>
<th>Totalmente de acuerdo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. He pasado tiempo tratando de averiguar más acerca de mi grupo étnico, por ejemplo la historia, las tradiciones y los costumbres.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Estoy activo(a) en actividades y clubes que incluyen, a mayor parte, miembros de mi propio grupo étnico.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Tengo una comprensión clara de mi origen étnico y lo que significa para mí.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Pienso mucho acerca de cómo mi vida es afectada por ser parte de mi grupo étnico.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Estoy feliz de que yo soy un miembro del grupo étnico que pertenezco.</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Tengo un fuerte sentido de ser una parte de mi propio grupo étnico.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Entiendo muy bien lo que significa mi pertenencia a un grupo étnico.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. A menudo he hablado con otras personas de mi grupo étnico con el fin de aprender más acerca de mi origen étnico.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Tengo mucho orgullo en mi grupo étnico.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participo en las prácticas culturales de mi propio grupo, como comida especial, la música o las costumbres.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Me siento apegado(a) hacia mi propio grupo étnico.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Me siento bien acerca de mi origen cultural o grupo étnico.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Me gusta conocer a personas que pertenecen a otros grupos étnicos.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>A veces me siento que sería mejor si no los grupos étnicos no trataron de convivir.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>A menudo yo paso tiempo con personas de grupos étnicos distintos que el mío.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Yo no trato de ser amigo/a con personas de otros grupos étnicos.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Yo estoy involucrado/a en actividades con personas de otros grupos étnicos.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Me gusta quedarme con gente de otros grupos étnicos.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Me siento cómodo/a en mi escuela.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>La gente en mi escuela se da cuenta cuando estoy bueno/a para algo.</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enunciado</td>
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<td>21. Es difícil que se aceptan personas como yo en mi escuela.</td>
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<td>22. Otros estudiantes en mi escuela toman en serio mis opiniones.</td>
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<tr>
<td>23. La mayoría de los maestros de mi escuela están interesados en mí y mis amigos.</td>
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<td>24. A veces me siento como si yo no pertenezco en mi escuela.</td>
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<td>25. Hay por lo menos un maestro o un adulto en mi escuela con quien puedo hablar si tengo un problema.</td>
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<td>26. La gente en mi escuela son amables conmigo.</td>
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<tr>
<td>27. Los maestros en esta escuela no están interesados en la gente como yo.</td>
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<td>28. Estoy incluido/a en muchos actividades de mi escuela.</td>
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<td>29. Soy tratado con tanto respeto como otros estudiantes en mi escuela.</td>
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<td>30. Me siento muy diferente de la mayoría de los otros estudiantes de mi escuela.</td>
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<th>Totalmente en desacuerdo</th>
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<td>Question</td>
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<td>31. Puedo realmente ser yo mismo en mi escuela.</td>
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<td>Totalmente de acuerdo</td>
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<tr>
<td>32. Los profesores de mi escuela me respetan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>33. La gente en mi escuela saben que puedo hacer un buen trabajo.</td>
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<td>34. Me gustaría ser en una escuela diferente.</td>
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<td>35. Me siento orgulloso/a de pertenecer a mi escuela.</td>
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<tr>
<td>36. A otros estudiantes de mi colegio les gusta como soy.</td>
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</table>

**Círcule lo/los que necesitas:**

Mi origen étnico es
(a) Asiático o Asiático-Americano (incluido el chino, filipino, y otros)
(b) Negro o Afroamericano
(c) Hispanos o Latinos (incluyendo Mexicano-Americano, Centroamericano, y otros)
(d) Blanco, Caucásico, Europeano, Angloamericano, Européano-Americano (no Hispano/Latino)
(e) Indio-americano / Americanos Nativos
(f) Otros: __________________________________________________________________________

La etnicidad de mi padre es _________________________________________________________
La etnicidad de mi madre es _________________________________________________________

¿Cuáles son tus sentimientos sobre el aprendizaje ...
   de inglés? _______________________________________________________________________
   de español? _______________________________________________________________________
   los dos idiomas? ___________________________________________________________________

¿Cuáles son tus sentimientos acerca de los estudiantes que hablan ...
Enumere sus cinco amigos mejores de la escuela. Marque sus orígenes étnicos y escriba el idioma o los idiomas que usan juntos. Seleccione todas las opciones que necesitas para cada amigo.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nombre del amigo (Nombre con inicial de apellido)</th>
<th>Origen(es) étnico(s)</th>
<th>Idioma o idiomas que usamos juntos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>o Afroamericano / negro</td>
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<td>o Otro</td>
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<td>o Blanco</td>
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<th>Language</th>
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</table>

**References**


doi:10.1017/S0142716407070208


IDENTITY AND BELONGINGNESS IN DL AND EO CONTEXTS


IDENTITY AND BELONGINGNESS IN DL AND EO CONTEXTS

*Education for Students Placed at Risk, 10*(4), 363–385.

doi:10.1207/s15327671espr1004


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