

CHILDREN'S DIALOGUE ABOUT ISSUES
OF LANGUAGE DIVERSITY AND CULTURE

by

Jeanne Gilliam Fain

Copyright © Jeanne Gilliam Fain 2003

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE, READING AND CULTURE

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

In the Graduate College

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

2003

UMI Number: 3119942

Copyright 2003 by
Fain, Jeanne Gilliam

All rights reserved.

INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

UMI[®]

UMI Microform 3119942

Copyright 2004 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA®
GRADUATE COLLEGE

As members of the Final Examination Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by Jeanne Gilliam Fain

entitled CHILDREN'S DIALOGUE ABOUT ISSUES OF LANGUAGE
DIVERSITY AND CULTURE

and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

<u>Kathy G. Short</u>	<u>10/14/03</u>
Dr. Kathy G. Short	Date
<u>Yetta M. Goodman</u>	<u>10/14/03</u>
Dr. Yetta M. Goodman	Date
<u>Toni Griego Jones</u>	<u>10/14/03</u>
Dr. Toni Griego Jones	Date
_____	_____
	Date
_____	_____
	Date

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copy of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

<u>Kathy G. Short</u>	<u>11/26/03</u>
Dissertation Director	Date
Dr. Kathy G. Short	

STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

This dissertation has been submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for an advanced degree at The University of Arizona and is deposited in the University Library to be made available to borrowers under rules of the Library.

Brief quotations from this dissertation are allowable without special permission, provided that accurate acknowledgment of source is made. Requests for permission for extended quotation from or reproduction of this manuscript in whole or in part may be granted by the copyright holder.

SIGNED: Jeanne William Fain

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It has been my privilege and honor to learn alongside a committed group of scholars at the University of Arizona. I feel truly blessed to have had the support of the Faculty of Language, Reading, and Culture and Staff (in particular, Maria Fierro). My dissertation committee Dr. Toni Griego Jones, Dr. Yetta Goodman, and Dr. Kathy Short supported me immensely in my journey as a qualitative classroom researcher and teacher. I am thankful for the ways my dissertation committee continually pushed my thinking. In addition, I feel honored to have had an outstanding mentor in my advisor, Dr. Kathy Short. Kathy continually supported me and encouraged me as a writer and educator.

In addition, I was fortunate to find a special group of graduate students that have supported me as fellow dissertation writers. I am thankful for the support of my writing group: Tracy, Julia, Janine, Mary, and Mili.

This research would not be possible without Robin Horn, the first and second grade bilingual students of Milton Elementary, and their families. They always welcomed me and made me feel a part of their classroom. I feel very privileged to have spent a year intensely learning alongside them. Robin is an exemplary teacher who is always willing to learn and the families in this classroom shared her enthusiasm and vitality for learning.

DEDICATION

To my husband and friend, Guy Fain, whose love, support, and relentless belief in me allowed me to finish this “lap” of my journey as a researcher and educator.

To my sons, Gavin and Camden,
who inspire me to see new perspectives daily.

To all bilingual children and families,
From whom we educators have much to learn from your insights.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES.....	9
LIST OF TABLES.....	10
ABSTRACT.....	11
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	12
Background of Study.....	12
Highlighting Significance.....	15
Exploratory Studies.....	15
Research Context.....	19
Research Questions.....	20
Defining Language Diversity and Culture.....	20
Sociocultural Theoretical Framework.....	21
Overview of Dissertation.....	28
CHAPTER 2: DIALOGUE IN THE PROFESSIONAL LITERATURE.....	30
Classroom Dialogue.....	30
Literature Circles.....	36
Critical Literacy.....	39
Dialogue in the Home.....	41
Parents Without a Voice.....	41
Literacy & Biliteracy in the Home.....	42
Connecting with Home and School.....	44
Summary.....	46
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	48
Theoretical and Conceptual Framework for the Methodology.....	49
Research Context: Constructing Dialogue.....	50
School Context.....	50
Classroom Context.....	52
Teacher, Mrs. Robin Horn.....	52
My Role as a Researcher.....	53
Curriculum.....	55
Highlighting Inquiry Studies.....	58
Selecting Linguistically Diverse and Culturally Relevant Literature.....	60
Establishing Context.....	63
Methodology for Data Collection & Analysis.....	66
(Question 1) Primary Data Source: Tapes & Transcripts.....	66

TABLE OF CONTENTS-Continued-

Response Journals.....	71
Field Notes.....	72
Data Analysis.....	73
Research Question 2.....	75
Data Analysis.....	77
Trustworthiness.....	79
Summary.....	80
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS:	81
Literacy.....	82
Learning to be literate.....	82
Placement of bilingual text.....	86
Identity.....	93
Sense of Place.....	93
Race & Ethnicity.....	97
Positionality within Society.....	101
Social Markers.....	101
Agency.....	105
Oppression.....	107
Racism.....	108
Examining the Oppressor's Role.....	111
Resistance to Structural Inequality.....	114
Discussion of Findings.....	117
Conclusion.....	122
CHAPTER 5.....FINDINGS:.....	124
Raymond and his mom, Linda.....	126
Karen and her mom, Angela.....	131
Diana and her mom, Angelica.....	133
Characteristics of Talk.....	136
Conversational Maintenance.....	139
Personal Response.....	141
Retelling.....	145
Evaluation.....	149
Discussion of Findings (Q-2a).....	153
Issues of Talk within the Home.....	156
Literacy.....	156

TABLE OF CONTENTS-Continued-

Positionality within Society.....	162
Social Markers.....	162
Agency.....	164
Resistance to Structural Inequality.....	165
Discussion of Findings (Q-2b).....	168
Aspects of Parent and Child Talk in School.....	171
Raymond’s Talk.....	172
Karen’s Talk.....	176
Diana’s Talk.....	179
Discussion of Findings (Q-2c).....	180
Summary.....	182
 CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS.....	 184
Purpose of Study.....	184
Implications from this Research.....	193
Perceptions, Expectations, and Voice.....	194
Extending Biliteracy into Non-bilingual classrooms.....	199
Power and Policy.....	201
Concluding Thoughts.....	207
 REFERENCES.....	 208

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1.1, Sociocultural Framework.....	22
FIGURE 1.2, Bakhtin’s unity of language theory.....	27
FIGURE 3.1, Layout for Literature Circles.....	65
FIGURE 3.2, Interview Questions.....	77
FIGURE 4.1, Codeswitching Excerpt from Amanda’s response journal.....	90
FIGURE 4.2, Jamilet’s response journal entry.....	95
FIGURE 5.1, Raymond’s Response journal and his mom’s questions.....	130

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 3.1, Literature circles: Journeys and Reflections.....	62, 63
TABLE 3.2, Children’s Literature Selected for Literature Circles.....	67, 68, 69, 70
TABLE 3.3, Transcript Conventions.....	71
TABLE 3.4, Findings: Issues.....	73
TABLE 5.1, Percentages of Utterances in 6 Parent/Child Literature Discussions.....	138

ABSTRACT

This dissertation study examines urban and bilingual children's dialogue in the contexts of school and home. First and second graders talked about children's literature in literature circles throughout one academic school year. I was guided by the following main purpose in this qualitative classroom study: What issues of language diversity and culture do first and second grade students discuss in home and school contexts? Data sources connected to the children's dialogue in school included audiotapes, transcripts, response journals, and field notes. All families discussed the literature and three bilingual families consistently audiotaped their home discussions.

The findings from this research demonstrate that working class bilingual children and their families do have the resources to construct rich literacy experiences through dialogue related to complex issues of language diversity and culture. Key issues that parents and children discovered to be relevant for discussion in the home and school contexts are: literacy, positionality within society, and resistance to structural inequality. Additionally, this study reveals how the home context ultimately scaffolds the child's native language by acting as a linguistically rich resource for the child. The child draws upon his or her linguistic resources from the home and has linguistic support as he/she enters the primarily English dialogue within small group literature circles in the schooling context. This study demonstrates the significance of drawing upon the home as a resource to support children in their native languages. Additionally, this study examines how one classroom uses children's native languages as a resource (Ruiz, 1984).

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: DIALOGUE AND CHILDREN'S VOICES

Miranda, a first grader, looked at me intently as we were walking toward her classroom, "Mrs. Fain, you are white. Why do you speak Spanish?" At first her question took me off guard. At the young age of six, she was making sense of our linguistic and physical differences, based on her schooling and out of schooling experience that "white" people, as she labeled them, did not speak Spanish. I represented an anomaly for her. Honestly, I do not remember my response but I remember her question. Her question made me think about children's voices and how we, as educators, need to create an authentic context for critical dialogue.

Miranda's question speaks to the issue of bilingualism as connected to the socially constructed concept of race (Mukhopadhyay and Henze, 2003). Her question led me to think about creating an environment in which first and second graders could openly and critically discuss their questions and views on language and culture. Also, I wondered how schooling and home experiences could be constructed to assist all students to think and dialogue about language from a multicultural perspective versus a stereotypical perspective. Particularly, I became interested in how children might explore issues of language diversity and culture critically with other students and with family members.

Background of Study

As a preservice teacher, I interned with a bilingual kindergarten teacher who demonstrated for me the power of literature and dialogue situated in large group discussions within the curriculum. Her literacy practices and her natural connections

with parents influenced me to have high expectations for all learners. Her teaching was grounded in constructivism and whole language theories Her classroom and mentoring allowed me to see constructivist theory in action and influenced my teaching beliefs and practice.

Based upon my seven and a half years of classroom teaching experience in a bilingual classroom with young children, I knew that children formulated and asked thoughtful questions about critical issues. My teaching experience included teaching bilingual kindergarten for five years and bilingual first grade for two and a half years at a school labeled as Chapter One. I learned how to construct teaching experiences that focused upon children's literature in Spanish and English. Children were provided with real reasons to read and write bilingually across multiple contexts (Calkins, 1994; Harste, Short, & Burke, 1988). Funds of knowledge research (Moll et al,1992; Moll and Greenberg, 1990) influenced me to investigate parents' local knowledge by taking surveys in an effort to familiarize myself with the knowledge parents had and were willing to share in the classroom setting. When opportunities presented themselves, I used the information from the surveys to extend invitations to parents to use their knowledge to facilitate learning on different occasions throughout the school year. For example, parents brought in artifacts connected to class studies, sewed poetry pillows and class quilts, taught the class how to make tamales and tortillas, and made special cakes for celebrations. I learned to position myself as a learner and facilitator in the classroom with the children and their parents.

I became interested in researching how children took on the roles of speakers and hearers (Bakhtin, 1981) within the literacy event of a literature circle. My research and the professional literature (Bakhtin, 1981; Martinez-Roldan & Lopez-Robertson, 1999; Martinez-Roldan, 2000) influenced me to realize that children needed to have space within their learning to share their voices about critical issues within the classroom, including bilingual classrooms. Due to a political context that did not value quality bilingual teaching, I became concerned about how to create space for critical dialogue in settings that were not officially labeled bilingual. As I made sense of this professional research, I wanted to explore how classroom teachers without quality bilingual resources could critically talk with their students about issues of language and culture.

In particular, children's literature related to linguistic diversity, bilingualism, biliteracy, second language acquisition, multiculturalism, dialogue, and conversational analysis were fields of study that I examined as an educator and graduate student. I elected to connect these interests from these fields of language study to my dissertation study through examining children's dialogue in the classroom.

Additionally, I believed that I needed to explore the idea of parents talking critically about literature as they actively learn along with their child/ren. When Robin, the classroom teacher in whose classroom I did my research, and I initially presented the idea of parents talking about children's literature in their homes, some of her colleagues discussed how difficult it would be for the parents to take on critical dialogue in their homes. We were certain that families were having thoughtful conversations prior to the literature circles occurring in the classroom. However, we didn't have any research to

back up our certainty. In addition, based upon my personal experiences as a parent, parent-researcher, and research practitioner, I thought that the professional research needed to include a focus on families having thoughtful conversations about children's literature related to issues of culture and language within the home context.

Highlighting the Significance

This study holds significance to teachers, language researchers, children, and the research field. Teachers can examine how the classroom supports and facilitates urban and bilingual children's talk about issues of language diversity and culture. Language researchers can gain insights into how the home context supports children's native languages as they enter schooling that often privileges English Only. Children deserve the opportunity to select books and talk bilingually about children's literature that is connected to their lives and identities. In terms of the research field, this study matters as it demonstrates that young urban bilingual children have significant issues that they want addressed within the curriculum and in the home. We need to make space to hear the voices of children in the home and school context.

Exploratory Studies

I worked as a graduate student and researcher in Robin's classroom for two years prior to this dissertation research. The first study (Spring 1999) involved my perceptions of bilingual literature in the context of literature circles. In particular, the role of a bilingual text (children's literature) was examined within literature circles between first and second graders and preservice teachers in my undergraduate course that I was teaching at the time. Findings indicated that the multi-age students, parents, and

preservice teachers perceived multiple understandings of the bilingual texts to (a) support readers; (b) encourage discussion; and (c) draw upon two languages as a resource in supporting talk within small group literature circles. This study demonstrated for me the importance of using bilingual texts within the classroom and home context. In particular, parents provided Robin (classroom teacher) and me with responses that fully supported the use of bilingual texts in the home and the classroom. This study led me to greater awareness of the significance of selecting high quality Spanish, English, and bilingual books.

A second study (Fall 2000) that I conducted represented Robin's second experience with literature circles. I examined and described three rounds of literature circles that were facilitated in Robin's classroom. My first study led me to this study as I became interested in exploring how small group literature circles facilitate dialogue about linguistic diversity for first and second graders and preservice teachers. Upon completion of each round of literature circle, first and second grade students wrote responses in a pen pal journal to preservice teachers about their ideas related to the literature. Then, preservice teachers self-selected from the same linguistically diverse children's literature used by the elementary students. Preservice teachers wrote reflections related to issues of linguistic diversity directly following the literature circles. In addition, preservice teachers responded to the first and second graders in their pen pal journals or letters in a journal format. Preservice teachers examined transcripts from the first and second graders' discussions and wrote comments related to what they noticed across the literature circles toward the end of the semester. Three types of personal connections

emerged from the data in terms of the research question. Dialogue consisted of personal connections to the texts and was framed as themes such as struggles, strengths, and sharing.

First and second grade students or multi-age students and two preservice teachers had strong connections in terms of struggles in their experiences with linguistic diversity. Two out of twenty-four preservice teachers personally connected with linguistic diversity as a struggle. These two preservice teachers connected to the difficulty of speaking Spanish as a foreign language within a university course. It was common for preservice teachers to take a distant third person voice in their written discussion of linguistic diversity. They wrote from an outsider perspective, whereas the first and second graders used their first person voice to reflect their personal struggles and experiences with language.

Literature circles facilitated dialogue about personal connections such as the benefits of learning and using more than one language. In most cases, dialogue served as an outlet for all students to think about, make sense, and personally connect to multiple understandings in terms of seeing linguistic diversity as a personal strength related to bilingualism.

Personal connections highlighted sharing understandings of language. This “dialogue” facilitated and collaboratively constructed critical understandings of linguistic diversity and represented a beginning in establishing the roles of speakers and listeners across generations and languages. All learners were provided with an opportunity to explore and try out their ideas related to linguistic issues. Essentially, the multi-age

students were able to draw upon their experiences and dialogue critically about language. Preservice teachers were able to learn from the experiences of the multi-age students and reflectively examined their thoughts about linguistic diversity. Connections from the literature were derived from the students' personal experiences.

Dialogue pushed learners of all ages to examine and reflect upon their ideas of linguistic diversity. It is my view that this dialogue enabled all learners to extend their thoughts on bilingualism and broadened their views on language away from the stereotypical notions of language that often prevails in today's society. Children often noticed that knowing more than one language held status for them as learners. In contrast, preservice teachers noticed the strengths of children talking bilingually about children's literature. For the majority of the preservice teachers, this was their first experience listening and seeing the work of young bilingual first and second graders in action. Preservice teachers were surprised by the children's tenacity to dialogue about these critical issues, often in two languages.

Children moved from the association of language with ethnicity toward a broader understanding of language within children's literature. This study essentially served as a pilot study as it allowed me to think about broadening my exploration of linguistic diversity toward language diversity. Also, I noticed from this study that preservice teachers needed to see more examples of how children and families could critically talk about issues of language and culture. In addition, each study demonstrated the importance of refining my strategies for analyzing data. Given these background experiences, I was led to this qualitative classroom-based dissertation study focusing on

first and second grader's dialogue about issues of culture and language diversity in the contexts of school and home.

Research Context: A Brief Description

First and second grade children participated in forty small group literature circles throughout the 2001/2002 school year. Each literature circle consisted of four to five children and a facilitator. Robin Horn (classroom teacher) and I (researcher) served as facilitators for the literature circles. Each discussion was based upon the children's oral and written responses and intertextual connections to the text. Children had the opportunity to self-select books a week prior to the discussion and read these books in their homes. Books were carefully selected by the facilitators to connect to the multiple aspects of language diversity and culture and were either bilingual or in Spanish and English. Generally, each literature circle lasted twenty-five minutes.

In addition, three families volunteered to tape the literature discussions in their home prior to the literature circles that occurred within the multi-age class. Raymond, Karen, and Diana took tape recorders home along with their selected book. Open-ended directions were sent home in a letter indicating that parents needed to discuss the book with their child prior to the literature circle occurring at school. These directions were purposely created to be open-ended in order to allow parents to construct and facilitate the conversations from their insights and perspectives.

Research Questions

The following key purpose guided this study: **What issues of language diversity and culture do first and second grade students discuss in home and school contexts?**

Two sub-questions framed this purpose.

- Research question one is 1) **What issues of language diversity and culture do first and second grade students discuss in literature circles?**
- Research question two was 2) **What types of talk about language diversity and culture do first and second grade students and their families discuss about children's literature?**

Three sub questions frame this question:

What are the characteristics of the talk?

What issues are discussed?

What aspects of these discussions at home become part of the child's discussions at school?

Defining Language Diversity and Culture

I define language diversity and culture to provide the reader a sense of how I see language diversity and culture in the context of this study. Language diversity is broadly defined by Corson (2001) as including: "standard and non-standard varieties, different cultural discourse norms, bilingual and English as a Second Language education, and gendered discourse norms" (p.ix). I prefer to think of language diversity as including language variation among communities (Kutz; 1997). For me, standard and non-standard are socially constructed value judgements connected to defining someone's language. In addition, I think language diversity includes discourse norms within various contexts

including home and school, bilingualism and English as a second language education, discourse norms connected to gender, and language rights affirming language differences (Nieto, 2000). Thus, the issues connected to language diversity discussed within this research examine language from a broad perspective.

Lipka's (1998) definition of culture is in agreement with how I view culture.

"Culture is a frame of reference that creates boundaries, categories, and rules in which meaning is negotiated" (1998; p.23). Negotiation of meaning occurs within a given time and space. Lived-through contexts, objects, and history are associated with culture (Lipka; 1998; Vygotsky, 1978). Culture, like language, is not static but dynamic and within this research children and families talk about culture broadly.

Sociocultural Theoretical Framework

I came to this dissertation research with theoretical beliefs that allowed me to critically reflect on my learning. These beliefs are a part of a sociocultural framework that I believe address dialogue from a broad perspective (see figure 1.1). In accordance with Minami and Ovando (1995), this theoretical framework examines the literature that addresses "literacy and multiculturalism/bilingualism within a sociocultural framework" (p.427). Dialogue, including social interaction, is thus highly relevant to this study. This framework considers the work of the following five major theoretical, historical, and literacy perspectives that focus on social interaction theory: Vygotsky (1978); Halliday (1977); Wells (1994, 1999); Heath (1982, 1996), and Bakhtin (1981).

Vygotsky (1978), Halliday (1977, 1988) and Bakhtin (1981) speak to the broad theories of language. Wells (1995,1999) and Heath (1983, 1996) examine discourse

within schooling and the home. Heath's research (1982, 1996) on discourse supports Bakhtin's idea of heteroglossia and Halliday's notion of linguistic resources experiencing real tensions from outside sources. In addition, Wells draws from Vygotsky and Halliday's work. These five diverse and connected perspectives support my view of language learning that is reflected in this study.

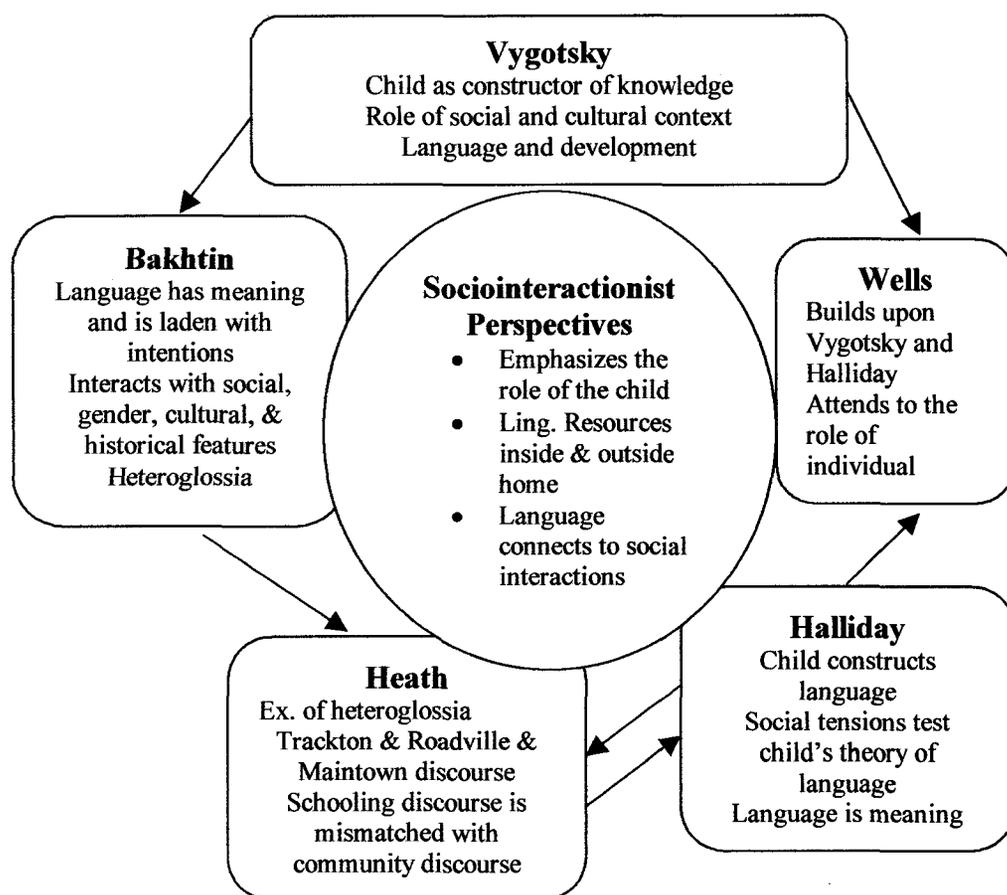


Figure 1.1. Sociocultural Framework

Vygotsky's theories (Vygotsky, 1978; Moll, 1990; Wells, 1994) enabled me to look at the interconnected social roles embedded within learning, teaching, and the

cultural aspects of human history. I considered the following three connections as being most relevant to this study: 1) the child as a constructor of mediated knowledge, 2) the role of social and cultural context, and 3) language as vital link to development. The first connection relates to Vygotsky's theory that children construct knowledge and this knowledge is socially mediated. The home and the school environment provide the child with literacy experiences such as literature discussions that assist the child in constructing his/her knowledge of language. Language and literacy are interrelated as the child actively pursues learning.

The second Vygotskian connection pertains to the role of social and cultural contexts. I see this connection as the strongest in terms of this study (Minami & Ovando, 1995). Bodrova & Leong (1996) view Vygotsky's theory in terms of three dynamic levels of social context including individual interactive level, social structural level, and general societal level. These levels represent a nonlinear mode of how social context and culture constantly permeates thoughts and influences how these thoughts are created. In this study, the issue of culture is integrated within the children's and their families' discourse.

I view the third connection as a foundation for the other two connections. The third Vygotskian connection views language as a mental tool that facilitates development (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky's work emphasizes the intellectual aspects of language. Thus, language frames one's thinking. That is, thinking is then carried out through the use of oral and written language. Children and families in this study use discourse orally

within the literature discussions and written language was used within the response journals.

In addition, Halliday (1977) examines construction of language from a detailed linguistic process perspective. He identifies three facets of language development that includes learning language, learning through language, and learning about language. In the first facet, learning language, Halliday (1988) states, "Mental construction is not and cannot be an individual process. A child has to construct language, but he does not do this alone-he does it in interaction with others; and the others are not simply providing a model-they are actively engaged in the construction process along with him" (p.3). Social interaction such as literature circles or literature discussions jointly constructs and fosters the development of language. A child's linguistic resources expand upon his or her encounters with new dynamics from outside sources beyond the child's home and expand upon demand.

The second facet, learning through language, addresses the language that one uses as a part of the constructed reality of the world. Halliday refers to the language that is in use as one makes sense of daily interactions within the world. Tensions affirm or disconfirm the child's use of language within his/her realities. The third facet, learning about language, relates to the conscious and unconscious understandings of language. To clarify this facet Halliday (1988) mentions, "From birth he has been building up a picture of what language is for; he knows that it is his lifeline to the others that interact with him and that, through such interaction, it is a means of doing and of learning" (p.25). Language is equated as a meaning making process within social interactions. These

social interactions are framed as dialogue within literature circles in this study as a way to facilitate a child's understanding of language as he or she interacts with another child.

Children's understandings of language are embedded within the context of dialogue.

I agree with Wells (1994) when he argues that Halliday and Vygotsky's theories are complementary and together form the beginning of a broader language based theory of learning that can be generalized to schooling. As Wells points to the similarities between these ideas, he situates his arguments within the distinct thought collectives (Fleck, 1935) of Halliday and Vygotsky. For example, Wells makes arguments for the strengths of Halliday's ideas for learning about language in terms of his linguistic background. In addition, Wells demonstrates how Vygotsky's ideas as a psychologist integrate a psychological approach to language theory that isn't apparent in Halliday's theories.

Wells (1994) states, "If we now combine the two perspectives, we might propose the following specification for a theory of learning: A comprehensive language-based theory of learning should not only explain how language is learned and how cultural knowledge is learned through language" (p.84). I think that Wells (1999) attends more to the role of the individual within the broader sociocultural frameworks of Vygotsky and Halliday's theories of language learning. In addition, Wells (1999) integrates his ideas on language with Dewey's (1934) thoughts of inquiry into schooling as he demonstrates how his ideas of language fit within the classroom. Wells situates his ideas connected to language into the schooling context. His ideas of inquiry are evident in the inquiry studies that are linked to the literature circles within the classroom context of this study.

Heath's (1982, 1996) landmark ethnographic case studies of Trackton and Roadville speaks to the significant sociocultural construction of language inside of the communities and the discontinuities that exist between the community and schools. Each community's theory of language became apparent and relevant throughout the discontinuities. In the case of Roadville, the community reinforced the actions of the child in a purposeful manner and a directed outcome was expected. In addition, the parent and child interacted but all of the actions were directed toward achieving a respectful individual. Social interactions were embedded within the Trackton community. Every child was viewed as a part of the community and, thus, the community's role was to socialize the child. Also, adults had specific roles to reinforce these interactions within the community. However, once children went to school, they had to accommodate to the school's implicit language theory or they risked failing. This situation also exists for urban and bilingual families. I think that their languages are not being positively accommodated within schooling.

Ultimately, Heath's research presents how children's talk from the Roadville and Trackton communities demonstrates theories of language that were not validated and supported in schooling. The linguistic resources of children were not supported. This study assisted me in thinking about how the classroom and home context could be connected in terms of discussions about literature. In the case of the school's transmission model of interaction, the teacher utilized one-dimensional interaction to and for the recipient, the student. These ideas of interaction were based on "idealized teacher-pupil dialogue" (Barnes 1992, p. 78).

The communities from Heath's work reflect Bakhtin's idea of heteroglossia.

According to Bakhtin (1981),

language of heteroglossia, like mirrors that face each other, each reflecting in its own way a piece, a tiny corner of the world, force us to guess at and grasp for a world behind their mutually reflecting aspects that is broader, more multileveled, containing more and varied horizons than would be available to a single language or single mirror (p.414, 415).

Language is unique to the community it is embedded in and yet it is firmly based in multiple layers of sociocultural history that are reflecting and refracting simultaneously.

Figure 1.2 illustrates Bakhtin's (1981) theory of the unity of language and its influence. The circle represents a unified and interconnected view of language.

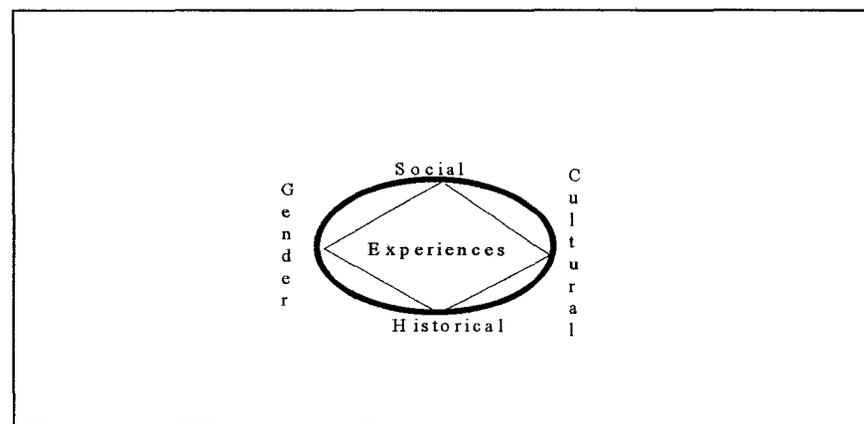


Figure 1.2. Bakhtin's unity of language theory

Language interacts with social, gender, cultural, and historical features. Each feature has prestige and experiences are located in the center of the illustration to depict their central role within these interactions. In addition, Bakhtin (1981) relates, "Language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker's intentions; it is populated-overpopulated-with the intentions of others" (p.294). Social interactions include intentions and language is interpreted to have meaning.

Social interactionist perspectives supported by the work of Vygotsky (1978), Halliday (1977, 1988), Wells (1995,1999), Heath (1983,1996), and Bakhtin (1981) can be used to explain the construction of language within a sociocultural framework. In particular, these researchers demonstrated for me the significance that talk is situated in a dynamic and social context. These perspectives provide the basis of this study and the research questions.

Overview of dissertation

This dissertation has six chapters. Chapter one introduces the reader to this dissertation study and includes a broad sociocultural framework including Vygotsky (1978), Halliday (1977, 1988), Wells (1995, 1999), Heath (1983, 1996), and Bakhtin (1981). Chapter two includes my theoretical understandings of the professional literature as related to this work. Major studies of dialogue from macro and micro perspectives are included. The professional literature is presented in two major sections: 1) Dialogue and Schooling and 2) Dialogue in the Home.

Chapter three describes the research methodology of this qualitative classroom based study. The first section includes a theoretical framework that consists of major studies connected with qualitative classroom research and includes my role as a researcher. The second section provides the reader with background information of the research context in terms of the school, classroom, teacher, and curriculum including key inquiry studies that influenced the research. Section three highlights book selection. Finally, section four discusses methods for data collection and analysis.

Chapter four examines the findings for the following key question: What issues of language diversity and culture do first and second grade students discuss in home and school contexts? Research question one is 1) What issues of language diversity and culture do first and second grade students discuss in literature circles? Findings emerged from the data in terms of issues related to language diversity and culture that children raise in small group literature circles within the context of school.

Chapter five examines the findings for the second question. Research question two is 2) What types of talk about language diversity and culture do first and second grade students and their families discuss about children's literature? Three sub questions frame this question: What are the characteristics of the talk?, What issues are discussed?, and What aspects of these discussions at home become part of the child's discussions at school? Findings emerged from the data in terms of the types of talk related to language diversity and culture that are discussed between parents and the first and second grade children in the home. These findings examine examples from three families: Raymond and his mom, Linda, Karen and her mom, Angela, and Diana and her mom, Angelica. An introduction to the participants, characteristics of the talk, issues brought forth within the talk, and the aspects of talk with parents that came up at school are central to these findings.

Chapter six is the final chapter and summarizes the findings as well as the significance of this dissertation study. The final chapter is where I as a researcher step back from the research and discuss the implications of the study from a broad perspective.

CHAPTER 2

DIALOGUE IN THE PROFESSIONAL LITERATURE

How talk is organized through dialogue within the classroom and home is the focus of this review of the professional literature. The purpose of this review is to situate this dissertation study within a broader context of scholarly work and research and to justify the need and significance of the study. The research included in this chapter was used to frame the design of this study. Other professional literature will be discussed in later chapters as related to the interpretation of the research findings. This literature review has two sections: Classroom Dialogue and Dialogue in the Home.

Classroom Dialogue

This first section of the literature review addresses dialogue within the professional literature from a macro and micro perspective as it relates to the classroom. I use their work to frame my research.

A Macro Perspective of Dialogue

Macro perspectives of classroom dialogue include broad features of talk such as power within discourse, speaker's motives, gaining access to the floor in terms of getting to talk and organizing talk within curricular engagements. The perspectives from the professional literature that conceptualize talk through dialogue include Freire (1970), Goffman (1959), Shultz, Florio, & Erikson (1982), Mehan (1982), Heath (1982, 1996), Philips (1972, 1983), Barnes (1992), Lipka (1998), and Short & Pierce (1998). I present and discuss the ways of each researcher.

Freire argues dialogue is a way of knowing and is situated within the broader social and political tensions within the world. Dialogue is transformational as power is shared within the talk and participants gain a “deepening knowledge of themselves.” Freire sees dialogue as requiring trust and “an intense faith in humankind, faith in their power to make and remake, to create and re-create, faith in their vocation to be more fully human (which is not the privilege of an elite, but the birthright of all)” (p.90). Critical thinking is deemed as essential within genuine dialogue. In contrast, dialogue is not facilitated when participants refuse to listen to various points of view, remain solely interested in gaining power, monopolize all turns of talk, and take on elitist views by treating others as lesser beings. In this study, children continually negotiate within their talk and issues of talk focus on power within society.

Goffman (1959) uses the metaphor of theatrical performance to speak about the speaker’s role within dialogue. Within these face-to-face interactions, the speaker as the performer shapes communication as he or she seeks to present a specific side of him or herself. For example, he states, “It has been suggested that when individuals come together for the purpose of interaction, each adheres to the part that has been cast for him within his team’s routine” (p.190). Dialogue also includes the construction of identity that is carefully crafted to influence the perceptions of others and encompasses the conscious speech and actions of individuals.

Goffman’s work (1959) influences me as a teacher and researcher to be wary of my perceptions and agendas. I needed to be conscious of my actions so that I could become part of the group and not take control of the talk. Moreover, I carefully

observed the children as they presented themselves as learners and I knew from this research to take notice of how children influenced each other when they raised issues within the dialogue.

Shultz, Florio, and Erikson (1982) look closely at the multiple-layers embedded within the social and cultural organization of the “floor” within home and school. These researchers examine in-depth the communicative competence needed to gain access to the floor. In addition, the researchers acknowledge that their lens of looking at the research incorporates face-to-face interaction with a focus on the patterns and changes that occur within dialogue. Mehan’s research (1982) seeks to answer what students need to know in order to participate effectively in the classroom community. His work examines the knowledge that the student must enter school with in order to gain access to the floor and status from the teacher. He looks at the organizational, interactional features, and physical elements of talk within classroom.

Shultz, Florio, and Erikson (1982) and Mehan (1982) influenced me to see that as children talk they are continually developing knowledge about how to create dialogue connected to children’s literature. Shultz, Florio, and Erikson (1982) made me aware of how the “floor” is constructed within home and school. These questions came to mind for me as I thought about the talk as related to the issues: How do children ultimately gain access to the floor?, How can I use prompts to assist children in feeling comfortable as they share their ideas about the issues from the children’s literature?, and How are families negotiating access to the turns of talk as they share? Mehan (1982) influenced Robin and I as we talked to the children about how we could frame our dialogue about

books. We talked about what literature circles look like and how hand raising is not needed to enter the discussion.

Philips' research (1972, 1983) demonstrates how the teacher arranges classroom interaction and reveals the teachers' explicit motives for these interactions as well. The teacher designed interactions that facilitated obedience and that left the child to negotiate the rules of communication drawing upon his or her prior knowledge of interaction. In this research, the Warm Spring Indian students were unaccustomed to the compliance of this participant structure (how interaction was constructed) and thus, minimal success was achieved in the negotiation of classroom interactions within schooling and the larger educational system.

Heath (1982, 1996) and Philips (1972, 1983) demonstrate the negative effect of the teacher's control of initiating and controlling turns of talk that commonly occur within the classroom. Teachers appoint turns of talk for evaluative tools and students concurrently succumb to their role as a passive hearer and learner.

In contrast, the interpretation model (Barnes, 1992) shifts the focus of the teacher's role in turn taking within the curriculum. Barnes (1992) states, "In school, the teacher's and the pupil's view of the world are face to face" (p.117). This interpretation model utilizes explicit design of interaction that fosters collaborative inquiry learning through dialogue. The teacher moves between the roles of the guide and participant within the community of learners (Freedman, 1993; Short & et.al, 1999). This view is based upon experiences children contribute to the classroom and, thus, interactions are

constructed around the joint and local knowledge shared between the child and the teacher (Lipka & et. al; 1998).

Lipka's & et. al's work (1998) utilizes personal narratives provided by insiders from the Yup'ik Eskimo community in an ethnographic study to determine how one Alaskan school includes minority cultures and languages while simultaneously integrating authentic and critical learning. Transcripts indicate that the teacher never overtly stated speaker and hearer roles. The teacher's role in classroom discourse does not include established rules that govern who is permitted or denied permission to speak. In addition, students gain access to the floor when they took initiative to speak on related themes of the classroom study.

The classroom teacher in Philips (1972, 1983) and Heath's studies (1983, 1996), failed to consider the individual needs of the children and the talk ultimately shut out the voices of the learners. The interpretation model (Barnes, 1992) informed me as I became aware that I wanted to see children freely using their voices within the literature circles. As a teacher, I wanted to purposely move between the roles of guide and participant (Freedman, 1993; Short & et.al, 1999). This research solidified for me that I didn't want to control the turns of talk and the issues that we talked about.

Dialogue embodies spatial or temporal communicative acts between two speakers or between one speaker and self (Bakhtin, 1981). As highlighted in Short & et. al (1999),

The discussion was free flowing with the conversation naturally moving back and forth among the different group members. There were no clear indications of turn-taking or major shifts in topics imposed on a particular student. No one person acted as facilitator or engaged in behaviors that signaled formal facilitation. Students flexibly moved in and out of participation and facilitation roles (p.382).

The interpretive model allows for students and teachers to actively dialogue with one another in collaborative learning environments. Students are in charge of their turn taking throughout the dialogue and the teacher moves to the position of a group member. The teacher becomes a hearer, observer, and speaker within the group instead of creating teacher-dominated discussions (Short & et. al, 1999; Freedman, 1993). Students assume the speaker and hearer roles within the literature discussions and informally structure the interactions around their connections and responses around the literature without *explicitly assigned participatory roles* (Short & et. al, 1999). Short & et. al, (1999) and Freedman (1993) provided me with a plan for how to collaborate with Robin and the first and second graders as we worked to establish literature circles that honored the views of all learners.

Freire (1970); Goffman (1959); Shultz, Florio, & Erikson (1982); Mehan (1982), Heath (1983, 1996); Philips (1972, 1983); Barnes (1992); Lipka (1998); and Short & Pierce (1998) heavily influenced my views of dialogue. Their research influenced me to see talk within the multiple social, political, cultural, and schooling contexts. In addition, I became more aware of how issues of power influence talk and how interaction is shaped by the identities of the participants.

A Micro Perspective of Dialogue

In an effort to look closely at the professional literature related to this dissertation study, I include a discussion of micro perspectives of dialogue including a focus on

literature circles and critical literacy. I consider these perspectives to be micro as this body of research speaks to talk framed in specific classroom contexts.

Literature Circles

According to Short & Pierce (1998),

Students also need dialogue about literature within a community of readers to see a purpose for reading and to realize that literature suggests new potentials for their lives. We want to create classrooms where students do not just learn literacy skills, they become members of a literature community who use reading to learn and think (viii).

Literature circles or literature discussions provide children with space to engage in critical dialogue with books through active participation (Clausen, 1995; Eeds & Wells, 1989; Egawa, 1998; Martinez-Roldan & Lopez-Robertson 1999; Noe & Johnson, 1999; Probst, 1990; Samway & Whang, 1996; Short, & et. al, 1999; Short & Pierce, 1998; Kong & Pearson, 2003; Whitmore & Crowell, 1994; Battle, 1995; White-Soltero, 1999). Short & Pierce (1998) and Schlick-Noe & Johnson (1999) discuss the logistics of implementing literature circles and creating experiences for talk within the curriculum across grade levels. Eeds & Wells (1989) in their seminal study of literature circles examine the evaluative features of talk within fifth and sixth grade literature discussions with preservice teachers.

Literature circles are an integral part of classroom inquiry that draw upon the strengths of linguistically diverse learners within the intermediate and middle school classrooms (Klassen, 1993; Cox and Boyd-Batstone, 1997; Samway & Whang, 1996; and Barbieri, 2002; Kong & Pearson, 2003). This research reveals the importance of using culturally relevant literature that connects to the lives of first and second language

learners. In addition, these studies address the linguistic needs of students when using children's literature in English and in the case of Cox and Boyd-Batstone (1997), Spanish was used as a means of supporting children's written responses in their first language.

Battle (1995) and White-Soltero's (1999) dissertation research explore collaborative talk in bilingual kindergarten classrooms. In Battle (1995) young children were supported in Spanish and English during story time as they made meaning across the literature. However, English was the dominant language of discussion during the talk. In contrast, White-Soltero's teacher-research study (1999) examines collaborative talk in Spanish across five literary engagements. Students' use of their native language as a resource (Ruiz, 1984) contributed to their understandings as they connected to their "cultural and social worlds." In Crowell's third grade whole language bilingual classroom (Whitmore & Crowell, 1994) children use their strengths as bilingual learners to address genre studies such as fairy tales and issues connected to war and peace in their literature discussions.

In addition, the research of Martinez-Roldan & Lopez-Robertson (1999), Lopez-Robertson (2003), Martinez-Roldan (2000, 2003) provides significant evidence that young bilingual children can think critically and simultaneously present passionately their thoughtfully constructed ideas and opinions as related to children's literature within literature circles. Framed in a schooling context, Martinez-Roldan (2000) extensively describes literature discussions over a two-year period within Lopez-Robertson's first grade bilingual classroom that involved following the same students into second grade the following year. Both researchers examine the significance of using bilingual texts

within literature discussions. In particular, this study demonstrates how bilingual texts used within small group literature discussions facilitate conscious and critical talk that purposely relates to the children's response about the literature (Martinez-Roldan; 2000, 2003). This research depicts the power of children's transactions in relation to the bilingual literature that is characterized through the construction of critical talk.

Crowell (1993) and Whitmore and Crowell (1994) and Martinez (2000, 2003), and Martinez-Roldan and Lopez-Robertson (1999) and Lopez-Robertson (2003) use literature circles as a vehicle within language rich classrooms to support and extend the biliteracy of all learners within these classrooms. Their work greatly influenced me and ultimately led me to this study as I sought to explore the implementation of literature circles within an inquiry and non-bilingual classroom. I became interested if and how non-bilingual classrooms could ultimately support and extend biliteracy.

Whitmore & Crowell (1994) was the first study that I read that gave the reader a glimpse of literature circles within a bilingual classroom and included a whole language philosophy carefully woven into the curriculum. Robin and I both embrace whole language philosophies and this study provides the reader with the dual views of researcher and teacher. I used the researcher view to assist me as I thought about my etic or outsider role within the research. And I considered the teacher view as the emic or insider perspective as I participated in this study as a teacher and researcher.

Martinez (2000, 2003), Martinez-Roldan and Lopez-Robertson (1999) and Lopez-Robertson (2003) serve as the primary examples for this dissertation study. Lopez-Robertson draws upon a whole language philosophy and the learners were first and

second graders. In addition, she uses children's literature that is in English and Spanish and is bilingual. In contrast to Brock (1997) and Kong & Pearson (2003), the goal of the conversations is to foster talk in more than one language (Schwarzer & et. al, 2003). All learners use their language of choice (Spanish and English) within the discussions. This dissertation study considers young learners who know Spanish and English. Robin and I worked to include children's voices in their language of choice within the dialogue. The above studies have inspired me to explore dialogue in terms of the issues that young bilingual children critically discuss connected to children's literature.

Critical Literacy

Critical literacy is a part of critical pedagogy that promotes children's talk about "fairness and justice" (Comber, 2001; Creighton, 1997; Jongsma, 1991; Leland & et.al, 1999) and comes from Freire's (1970) idea of reading the word and the world. I elected to include critical literacy as a part of the literature review as this study is representative of critical literacy. According to Creighton (1997), critical literacy helps "the students (and teachers) critically analyze texts and illustrations from an author's point of view, intended audience, and elements of inclusion or bias" (p.439). Literacy is not neutral and is filtered through someone's agenda or objectives (Creighton, 1997; Comber, 2001; Jongsma, 1991). Young bilingual children respond to these inequities and issues of power within children's literature (Martinez-Roldan, 2000; Lopez-Robertson, 2003). Children bring their life experiences to the discussions. Over time and with some scaffolding from teachers as needed, children confront issues of racism, power, social injustice, and discrimination (Cadiero-Kaplan, 2002; Crowell, 1993; Edwards & Foss,

2000, Foss, 2002; Lopez-Robertson, 2003; Vasquez, 1998, 2000). Children come to know how to make changes in the government, systems of learning, and injustices that need to be overcome (Cox and Boyd-Batstone, 1997; Tyson, 1999).

Critical literacy allows learners to step back and reflect and take action (Freire, 1970, Lopez-Robertson, 2003). Children learn to consider multiple points of views and settle into their perspectives after taking risks within the dialogue (Foss, 2002; Samway & Whang, 1996). According to Comber (2001), "Being critical doesn't mean that there's no fun or that children need be relentlessly negative or bleak" (p.3). For example, children constructively share their genuine thoughts and biases about issues (Foss, 2002). Teachers act as facilitators by encouraging the child to consider multiple historical perspectives and at the same time communicating to the child that his or her sharing within the dialogue is valued (Comber, 2001).

This professional research has influenced me to see that critical literacy and literature circles together create real ways for learners to find their voices and prevail within the space of the classroom curriculum. Similar to Cadiero-Kaplan, (2002); Crowell, (1993); Edwards & Foss, (2000), Foss, (2002); Lopez-Robertson, (2003); Vasquez, (1998, 2000), first and second graders in this study came to the literature circles ready and excited to talk about tough issues related to social justice. The children in this study wanted to talk about these issues and the conversations were not sad or bleak but provided children with a real opportunity to have their voices heard (Comber, 2001; Comber & et. al, 2001).

Dialogue in the Home

This section of the review looks at dialogue in the home. In terms of family literacy studies, I elected to look at studies that represented parents who are often denied a voice in schools, home literacy/biliteracy studies, and studies that demonstrate a school and family connection related to this dissertation study. I noticed similarities within these studies that I felt connected to this study. These sections of the literature review are parents without a voice, literacy and biliteracy in the home, and connecting with home and school.

Parents without a Voice

A common historical assumption in research studies is that parents are in need of guidance from the experts (Hatch, 1995), especially in the case of families that do not represent mainstream society (Heath, 1983; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988; Purcell-Gates, 1995; Valdes, 1996; 2001). For example, Trackton and Roadville communities (Heath, 1983) are depicted as to how their ideas and beliefs of language were not honored and valued within schooling. Inaccurate assumptions were made about parents and families that ultimately hurt the communities in terms of their lack of success within school (Heath, 1983; Purcell-Gates, 1995; Valdes, 1996). In addition, schooling sent messages to families that children's home literacies were not valued (Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988; Purcell-Gates, 1995).

According to Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines (1988), children used drawing, writing, and reading experiences to reflect interpretations of their worlds within the home context. Families demonstrated authentic use for print through messages, letters, notes, cards,

memory-aids writing, and negotiation of family responsibilities. Each child took charge of the literacy experiences and was supported in regards to his or her interests and development by his or her parents within the context of home (Taylor, 1983, 1988).

In contrast to Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines (1988), Purcell-Gates (1995), and Heath (1982), some studies (Edwards, 1995) were designed to come into the home setting and make value judgments about home literacy practices. I knew from the above referenced research that I didn't want this study to make deficit assumptions or value judgments about families. Instead I wanted to research family talk about issues from the transcripts and gain access into the families' perspectives about the issues that mattered most to them. I know that education is not neutral (Freire, 1970) and with that in mind I tried to minimize my influence as to how families decided to frame their discussions.

Literacy and Biliteracy in the Home

Research on children's responses to print in one or two languages was examined within the framework of early literacy and biliteracy in the home context. This body of research examines early literacy and biliteracy in various sociocultural contexts (Andersson, 1977, Baghban, 1984; Davidson & Snow, 1995; 1982; Goodman, Goodman, & Flores, 1979; Martens, 1996; Rowe, 1994; Schwarzer, 2001; Snow, 1983; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1983, 1988; Wan, 2000; Wolf & Heath, 1992).

Baghban (1984), Martens (1996), Wolf & Heath (1992), Wan (2000), and Schwarzer (2001) take on the role of parent and researcher as they continually observe their daughters as their literacies unfold over time. Baghban (1984) takes an insider view into the early literacy of her daughter Giti from birth to three years of age. Multiple

examples of Giti's oral and written language are featured in the case study and implications for the field of literacy are integrated within the book. In Martens (1996), her daughter's literacy from ages two to five leads her to reflect upon her own beliefs and teaching practices as an educator. Wolf & Heath (1992) learn from Wolf's two daughters, who continually draw upon literate experiences from children's literature, as they make sense of their daily interactions.

Wan (2000) explored a Chinese girl's read-alouds with her parents and grandparents over a two-year period. Read-alouds for this family focused on meaning making and served as an additive context for bilingualism in Chinese and English. Schwarzer (2001) describes the literacy experiences in Hebrew, Spanish, and predominantly English of his first grade daughter across school and home settings. Despite Noa's experiences with literacy in Spanish and English, the sociopolitical predominance of English created a situation for Noa that privileged English in her writing.

Since there were almost no studies that highlight bilingual families talking with young children about children's literature in their homes as connected to literature circles within schooling. Thus, I elected to examine studies that looked at early literacy and biliteracy in the home. Parent researchers conducted many of these studies. I came across these studies when I was exploring a case study with my child and his responses to bilingual texts. These studies led me to think about the issues bilingual parents discuss with their children in their homes.

Connecting with Home and School

Delgado-Gaitan's work (1990) speaks to the importance of bilingual parents using dialogue about common school issues and practices to ultimately shift power to families as advocates for their children (Phillips, 1997). Similarly, funds of knowledge research demonstrates the significance of building upon the household knowledge of working class parents and integrating this knowledge within schooling (Moll, 1992). For example, Wilson-Keenan, et.al (2001) examines how family visits connected to literacy learning encouraged families to share their lives in "low key conversations." Also, this study draws upon one visit of a Puerto Rican family that produces tensions within the classroom when the parent publicly condemned her son's behavior. After considerable reflection, researchers were able to broaden their views of cultural practices within the classroom. In addition, Bialostok's study (2002) examines fifteen white, middle class parents of kindergartners' cultural model of literacy. His work finds that families value book literacy over all other literacies and liken this literacy to the metaphor of morality.

According to Ada (2003), the purpose of her work with family literature programs is to facilitate families actively reading together. Parents attend meetings in school and after the reading of children's literature to the entire group in their native language, a discussion about the book ensues. In addition, Ada (2003) proposes that the facilitator has a guide with prompts to facilitate dialogue. Within the second part of the program, parents write and illustrate original stories. Parents are then encouraged to publish stories with their children. Ada (2003) stresses the importance of recognizing the needs of the communities and their linguistic needs within the family and schooling interactions.

Similarly to Ada (2003), Quintero and Huerta-Macias (1990) created Project Fiel. In Project Fiel, parents and children attend workshops together. The project has a five-step approach and draws its theoretical base from a “whole language approach to language learning.” Parents and children explore literacy themes and participate in concrete learning experiences. In addition, Klassen-Endrizi (2000) uses parent meetings as a vehicle to support parent’s dialogue about their beliefs about literacy. Facilitators used the meetings to learn about building “parent/child learning partnerships.”

Shockley, Michalove, & Allen (1995) used journal writing about children’s literature as children read at home to establish a two year collaborative partnership between school and parents. In this partnership,

we were not trying to impose our vision of literacy but to develop relationships with families where we would learn about what already existed in the families and connect that with the literature in the classroom community (p.91).

Families were encouraged to respond to the children’s literature on their own terms and Betty and Barbara as the first and second grade teachers responded to them in the journals. Similarly, Jennings and O’Keefe (2002) look at written conversations linked to issues of civil rights and human rights within O’Keefe’s second grade families.

These studies influenced me to see parents as collaborators. Delgado-Gaitan (1990) uses dialogue as a reflective tool in assisting parents to make changes within schooling. Her work demonstrates for me the significance of parents constructing dialogue that works for their purposes and ultimately benefits their children. Moll’s work with his colleagues (1992) shows me the potential of taking the time to find out what parents from all socioeconomic backgrounds know and building it authentically into the

curriculum. Shockley, et. al (1995) and Jennings and O'Keefe (2002) use writing as a tool for response to children's literature. Their work influenced me to work with Robin in having parents and children writing in response logs as they talked and responded to literature connected to the literature circles. In contrast to Ada (2003), Robin and I used an open-ended letter in getting parents to talk about books within their homes. Ada's work (2003) led me to see that parents need to have the power to create their own responses to children's literature and raise issues that are foremost to their families.

Summary

My broad perspective of dialogue has been influenced by the above research studies. Dialogue leads to critical talk that in turn leads to distributing power among all learners. Children have power when they have ownership in their learning such as talking critically about social justice issues. In terms of schooling, dialogue empowers learners as they share in their own language their thoughts and perspectives connected to children's literature. Conversational strategies are utilized as learners explore how to engage in talk about their ideas related to children's literature. Additionally, teachers step into a new role as they become facilitators and move toward membership within the talk and allow children to become independent learners as they jointly construct dialogue.

In terms of dialogue in the home, studies have looked at working class and poor parents within schooling from three perspectives. Urban parents are provided prompts and indepth guidelines. They are instructed how to implement standard literacy practices in the home with their children. In addition, parent researchers have followed their children in terms of their biliteracies and these practices are depicted in the home context.

Dialogue in the context of school and home needs to build upon the relevant needs, interests, and perspectives of the audience of parents, children, and teacher. The above studies have informed me as I designed and reflected upon this dissertation study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This dissertation study examined the multifaceted dialogue related to issues of language diversity and culture that first and second grade students raised within the contexts of small group literature circles in the classroom and in their homes. This study continued my examination of first and second grader's talk that I addressed in two previous exploratory and short-term studies (Spring 1999, Fall 2000). In addition, this study included three families of the first and second grade children who voluntarily contributed their views on the issues that the children raised and discussed in their homes. These family discussions connected directly to the children's literature that was being used within literature circles in school. I examined the characteristics of talk and issues in the families' conversations within the home context.

In this case study inquiry I was guided by the following main purpose: The following key purpose guided this study: **What issues of language diversity and culture do first and second grade students discuss in home and school contexts?** I answered two questions that related to my overall goal. Research question one was **1) What issues of language diversity and culture do first and second grade students discuss in literature circles?** In answering question one, Robin and I collected audiotapes, transcripts, and response journals as primary data sources from forty literature circles (nine rounds) from the first and second graders. Secondary data consisted of Robin's and my field notes. Five transcripts were analyzed in-depth. Data was collected throughout the 2001/2002 school year.

Research question two was **2) What types of talk about language diversity and culture do first and second grade students and their families discuss about children's literature?** Three subquestions frame this question:

- **What are the characteristics of the talk?**
- **What issues are discussed?**
- **What aspects of these discussions at home become part of the child's discussions at school?**

In answering question two, Robin and I collected audiotapes, transcripts, and response journals from parents and children (primary data source) throughout the 2001/2002 school year. Additionally, secondary data included follow-up interviews with parents collected throughout the 2001/2002 school year.

The first section of this methodology chapter discusses a theoretical framework that includes major studies connected with qualitative classroom research. The second section briefly introduces the research context in terms of the school, classroom, teacher, my role as a researcher, and curriculum including key inquiry studies. Section three features book selection. Section four includes methods for data collection and analysis.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework for the Methodology

The frame of this research was constructed as a qualitative study in the classroom and home contexts. Qualitative research emphasizes meaning as driven by the researcher's interpretation (Merriam, 1998). This study was developed to examine the unique complexities of dialogue within the classroom and the home context. This study was grounded within three key areas. First, this study was structured as qualitative

research (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Hubbard and Power, 1999; Merriam, 1998; Seidman, 1998). Qualitative research methodology provided me with the tools to describe the dialogue and investigate key features of the dialogue in the classroom and home context. Second, this study was informed by qualitative research by Barnes (1992), Eeds and Wells (1989), Freedman (1993), Noe and Johnson (1999), Peterson and Eeds (1990), Short and et. al (1999), Short and Pierce (1998), Martinez-Roldan and Lopez-Robertson (1999) that emphasized dialogue among children and the teacher about children's literature within the classroom. These studies assisted me in thinking through the logistics of how to explore talk within a classroom setting. Third, this study gained insight from qualitative studies on discourse and literacy within the home context by Heath (1982, 1996), Lipka (1998), Martens (1996), Philips (1972, 1983), Taylor (1983), Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines (1988), Wolf and Heath (1992), and Valdes (1996). In addition, I extensively discussed how the above referenced research informed my study in the literature review (chapter two).

Research Context: Constructing Dialogue

The description of the research context includes a brief history of the school, classroom, teacher, and curriculum.

School Context

Milton Elementary, a Title I year round and K-6 school, is located in a residential area within the East Valley of Phoenix, Arizona. Milton is comprised of 934 students and thirty-eight classroom teachers. Based on statistics collected the first day of the 2001/2002 school year, the school population was 84% Hispanic, 8 % Anglo, 5 %

African American, 1% Indian, and less than one percent Asian. Sixty-four percent of the children were on free and reduced lunch. Governmental project housing is located close to the school. In addition, many families live in trailer homes. Parents attend school functions such as performances and are involved in supporting children's learning within the home.

Milton's school theme for the 2001-02 was: "How do we work together as a learning community in order to create the best thinkers and problem solvers in the entire world?" and this theme was constructed by classified staff and certified teachers and approved by community members. School reform efforts were initiated in 1998 under the leadership of the principal, the school theme continued these efforts. In particular, teachers participated in extensive professional development training that included curriculum mapping, guided reading, six traits, and habits of the mind. Teachers read professionally and participated in book groups. Literacy and English Language Learner Support Staff worked with classroom teachers and students in a collaborative manner. For example, literacy coaches and English Language Learner Support Staff worked alongside teachers and demonstrated various constructivist teaching practices within the classroom.

Multi-age classrooms for first and second graders were established to foster collaborative learning across these two grades. That is, multi-age classrooms consisted of children in first and second grades learning together as a community of learners. Seven multi-age classrooms existed during the time of this study. Multi-age teachers planned

curriculum and learning experiences with each other for their classrooms on a regular basis.

Classroom Context

This multi-age classroom in which I conducted this research consisted of twenty-two first and second graders, which included nineteen Hispanic students, two Anglo students, and one Asian student. There were thirteen girls and nine boys. This class was not officially represented through “socially constructed labels” as a bilingual class and this fact is relevant to this research because many of the learners in this classroom were bilingual. Most children came to this classroom knowing how to effectively communicate orally in more than one language. Robin used Spanish in the classroom (although she was working toward her fluency) and some limited concepts in Chinese as she worked to validate and privilege the children’s first and second language.

Teacher, Mrs. Robin Horn

Mrs. Robin Horn, a teacher of twelve years at the time of this dissertation study, viewed and presented herself as a learner within the classroom community. Mrs. Horn has been a teacher educator colleague of mine for nine years and as such I will be using her first name. Robin moved to Arizona in 1985 and has a Master’s degree in Elementary Education from Northern Arizona University. She has taught at Milton Elementary for eleven years. Her first year of teaching was in preschool. Language as a resource (Ruiz, 1984) was a philosophy that Robin purposely weaved through her teaching practice into the learning community.

Robin continually emphasized the significance of learning more than one language and positioned herself as a learner as she tried to use Spanish and Chinese with children and parents. She spent considerable time translating parent newsletters and assessment information in Spanish and English. During the school year of this study she used Chinese as often as possible to support one of her students, who knew Chinese fluently as his first language and was learning English as his second language. She used children's literature that represented diverse languages. Privilege was established for children knowing multiple languages and she assisted in giving status to children who knew more than one language by having students act as translators or facilitators of learning in Spanish and English. Many of the children presented themselves as speakers of Spanish and English through oral and written language.

My Role as a Researcher

After six years of graduate school and seven and a half years teaching kindergarten and first grade, I see myself as a researcher and classroom teacher. Following my seven and a half years of classroom teaching experience, I have and will continually reflect upon my theoretical beliefs and teaching practice as I work with classroom and preservice teachers. For me, as a researcher and teacher, classroom research has informed my teaching practices. Subsequently, I see teaching practice as informing the research. I have worked with Robin as a practitioner researcher (Greco, 2003) for three years and I use the term, practitioner researcher (Greco, 2003), because I think that this term speaks to my experiences and intertwined roles as a researcher and classroom teacher.

I became actively involved within Robin's classroom as connected to dialogue and children's literature within the curriculum. (An extensive discussion of curriculum follows this paragraph.) I took on the role as co-teacher with Robin only in the area of dialogue connected to children's responses to children's literature. I assisted Robin with selecting and finding books, creating curriculum, writing grants for books, reading selected books in small and large groups of children, coordinating and facilitating pen pals with the multi-age class and preservice teachers. I read books to the first and second graders and talked with them about their lives. Children saw me as a teacher when it came to curricular issues connected to dialogue and children's literature. For example, children referred to me as the book lady and wrote me letters thanking me for talking with them about books.

I was a researcher who was learning from the teacher and children. I observed, took notes, and carefully watched the events that were continually unfolding connected to dialogue within literature circles. On several occasions, I shared my notes, audiotapes, and sections of my work with the children in an effort to provide the children with an overall sense of what I was learning from them. My hours of participation included Thursday mornings from 8:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. for the 2001/2002 school year and, occasionally, I visited the classroom to bring books prior to children's selection of books for the literature circles. My rationale for visiting the classroom on the Thursdays that we didn't have literature circles was to allow me to gain a real sense of the classroom on a weekly basis.

As a result of my ethnicity, social class, and my roles as a teacher and researcher, I brought several biases as well as strengths to this study. In terms of the descriptions of children and families, the labels such as Mexican American and Puerto Rican come directly from the children and their families. I purposely decided to use their labels as I wanted to honor the identities of the children and families in this study.

It was essential in maintaining the trustworthiness of this study that I continuously and reflexively examined my assumptions as I refined daily my processes of collecting and analyzing data. For example, I noticed that within the literature discussions I had to consciously manage my inclination to ask questions connected to this dissertation study. I took on a facilitating role within the dialogue. Moreover, Robin as the classroom teacher shared her thoughts and responses as a member of the literature discussion groups.

Curriculum

Journeys and reflections was the yearlong theme for the curriculum. Children explored children's literature, writing, literature discussions and their questions connected to this broad theme. This theme was based upon the interests of first graders from the previous school year who remained in this class. In addition, as children expressed ideas about what they wanted to learn about, space in the curriculum was created for this learning.

Robin's Schedule

8:15-9:25 Oral and Written Literacy Focus
(Journals, writer's workshop, sharing circle, lit. circles)
9:25-9:40 Recess
9:40-10:45 Math (Mathland)

10:45-11:25 Lunch
11:25 Independent Reading/Read Aloud
11:45 Guided Reading/Centers
1:00 Spelling/Projects/Science/Inquiry Study
1:30 Specials--Music, PE, Library
2:00 Daily Reader (Student who reads aloud)
Project Time

Children started the day by writing in dialogue journals and participated in writer's workshop. I observed children writing to Robin about their daily experiences as learners. Children chose their own topics for the dialogue and she wrote them back regularly. On a monthly basis, children published their writing of choice in writer's workshop as they worked through drafting, revising a piece of writing, and their rough drafts and published pieces were shared with peers in a sharing circle. Many of the books were placed in the class library. Literature circles occurred every three weeks and book selection connected to the overall theme of journeys and reflections.

In the mid-morning, Robin utilized *Mathland*, as the district's adopted math curriculum, as a tool for teaching math. *Every Day Counts*, a calendar math program, was also implemented on a regular basis. The scientific themes of the district-mandated science curriculum didn't always directly connect to the broader curriculum, thus Robin used her professional judgment to facilitate science learning from the curriculum that integrated authentically with the entire curriculum. On occasions scientific learning experiences didn't connect naturally within the ongoing classroom curriculum, and so she used the end of the week for science mini-lessons.

On a daily basis in the late morning and afternoon, Robin worked with three groups of three to five students in flexible, guided reading groups. Robin, using her

knowledge from guided reading training, regularly assessed the students' strengths and areas of need as readers. Based upon the children's needs as readers, children participated in specific reading strategy lessons. These flexible groups were changed on a regular basis in order to meet the needs of students as they developed as readers.

In addition, Robin provided children multiple experiences to interact with children's literature. Independent reading allowed children to choose books related to their interests and to read independently or read with a buddy on a daily basis. Following their reading, children shared their books and responded to the literature. Robin read aloud to her students on a daily basis. Every day children decided if they wanted to take on the role of the daily reader. In this experience, each child could choose to take a turn to read a story of choice to the entire class. Additionally, children participated in author studies on a monthly basis based upon negotiation with the children and teacher. Whole group graphic organizers and charts were used weekly in recording the children's responses to literature.

Robin worked toward building experiences based upon the children's questions as learners that were connected to a yearlong broad theme and were mainly student led. She purposely constructed time and space for children to contribute their voices to the direction of the inquiry experiences. Robin and I started the year off with a tentative plan of inquiry studies connected to the yearlong broad theme. The plan was used as a flexible guide. As children talked about issues and their interests for further class study, we incorporated their ideas and made changes in the direction of the studies. For example, Robin extended the empowerment study based upon the children's interests as

connected to Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks. Inquiry studies started off with Robin immersing the children in the reading of children's literature connected to the inquiry study. Inquiry studies included Sense of Place and Language Differences (November), Adversity & Social Action (December), Cultural Traditions (December), What is empowerment? (January and February), Immigration & Discrimination (February), Bilingualism & Family Relationships (March), Family Life Stories (April), Folk Stories (April), and Linguistic Diversity (May, June).

Graphic organizers such as semantic webs and charts were used in organizing the questions children had. In addition, children wrote their questions and ideas for study on post-it notes, which were placed on some of the charts. Projects and literature circles were connected to the themes of the inquiry study.

Highlighting Inquiry Studies

After reviewing all of the transcripts from the literature circles, two inquiry studies stood out in terms of how the curriculum influenced the children's talk. These inquiry studies were Adversity and Social Action (December) and what is Empowerment? (January and February). First, adversity and social action as an inquiry study focused on the exploration of hardships, life struggles, and taking action for those who struggle with difficult life situations. Children read children's literature connected to adversity and social action. Whole class discussions ensued about how children could collaboratively assist others in their home, class, community and world. Thus, the class decided to collect pennies for a Christmas present for a young child and children collected canned foods for "needy families." Although many of these children could

themselves be labeled as needy in terms of their socioeconomic level, children pursued the goal of helping others with steadfast persistence and enthusiasm.

The second inquiry study was, What is Empowerment? Following a dictionary definition of empowerment (the act of giving power and authority) in a class discussion of the word, students participated in dramatic responses that focused on several key historical perspectives within children's literature. Children acted out what it would be like to not get to drink out of a water fountain, and acted out the community experience of not being able to sit in the front of a bus. Children created and dramatically presented their own scenarios of what could happen if someone took their power away as a group or as individuals. For example, they discussed what to do when a peer called them a bad name or wouldn't allow them to play or took away their power to speak Spanish.

Robin and I shared personal examples of losing power in our lives and what we had to do in an effort to take our power back. Children shared examples from their lives and family member's experiences. A guest speaker came in and talked to the children about issues of power and strategies of using their words positively within challenging scenarios. In addition, a local drama group, Child's Play acted out real issues of power that related to the children. The lives and actions of Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, and Ruby Bridges were highlighted within the study. Also, Amy Littlesugar's books *Freedom School, Yes!* (2001), and *Shake Rag: From the life of Elvis* (1998) were read aloud in entirety.

Empowerment was explored as students examined historical, social, and political figures. In turn, children personalized empowerment as they thought about these issues in terms of their life experiences.

Selecting Linguistically Diverse and Culturally Relevant Literature

Robin and I thought about the children's literature that we wanted to use within the literature discussions. We wanted to connect the literature to the broad theme of journeys and reflections (see Table 3.1). I developed five selection criteria for children's literature that were utilized within literature circles with Robin's input. The criteria included the goals of facilitating talk about language as a resource (Ruiz, 1984), language as a linguistic strength, and cultural issues.

I strongly considered the audience of learners (first and second graders). The texts needed to connect culturally and socially to the lives of the students. I continually communicated with Robin on various occasions by phone, email, and visits to the school to gain a continued sense of what was most relevant to the children, given their life experiences.

It was important to Robin and me that the literature connect to the yearlong inquiry study of journeys and reflection in order to facilitate connections across the curriculum. We wanted the students to be able to make connections in all areas of the integrated curriculum.

Robin and I wanted several of the books to be either bilingual or in Spanish. Bilingual children's literature were considered essential in order to emphasize the importance of drawing upon and validating the use of two languages as available

resources. Also, based upon research from one of my previous studies, families indicated that the bilingual books allowed all family members, including parents and children, to participate and use language as funds of knowledge (Moll & Diaz, 1996). This finding was congruent with the multiple requests Robin had received in the 2001/2002 school year from many families to send books home in the parent's dominant language. Thus, parents could share their responses to the children's literature in their first and second languages with their children.

In the cases where books were translated from English to Spanish, Robin and I considered that the translations of texts needed to emphasize meaning (Freeman, 1998). This was highly important as texts that were translated often lose meaning in terms of a word-by-word translation. Thus, bilingual students often experienced a text that is not rich in meaning.

The books needed to be contextually rich in terms of multiple themes that related to linguistic diversity and culture. Multi-layered characters and events were essential in order to facilitate and support critically constructed dialogue.

This criterion was considered strongly as Robin and I selected books with input from her students. In an effort to provide the students with quality literature, Robin and I gained funds for this project from Milton's Elementary School principal, Wells Fargo grants, an Education Foundation grant, and personal funds. In an effort to guarantee that all books met the above criteria, Robin and I spent considerable time reading, analyzing, and selecting children's literature. Table 3.1 lists all of the books selected for literature

discussions during 2001/2002. The table includes the date of the literature circle, book titles, and inquiry studies.

Table 3.1

Literature circles: Journeys and Reflections 2001/2002

DATE OF LIT. CIRCLE	BOOK TITLES	INQUIRY STUDIES
Nov. 15, 2001	<i>La Mariposa, Grandfather Counts, My Name is Maria Isabel; Me Llamo Maria Isabel, Upside Down Boy; El niño de cabeza, Creativity</i>	Sense of Place Language Differences
Dec. 6, 2001	<i>The Lady in the Box; La Señora de la Caja de Cartón, Un Sillón Para Mi Mama, Pedro and Donkeeta</i>	Adversity & Social Action
Dec. 20, 2001	<i>Too Many Tamales; Que Montón de Tamales, The Farolitos of Christmas, Magda's Tortillas; Tortillas de Magda, Benito's Bizcochitos; Los bizcochitos de Benito</i>	Cultural Traditions
Jan. 31, 2002	<i>White Socks Only, Feliz Cumpleaños, Martin Luther King Jr., Power Text set (Cooper), The Day Gogo Went to Vote</i>	What is Empowerment?
February 21, 2002	<i>Sister Anne's Hands, The Other Side, The Cactus Wren and Cholla; El Reyzeuelo y La Cholla, Chicken Sunday; El Pollo de los Domingos, Pablo</i>	Immigration & Discrimination

	<i>& Pimienta; Pablo y Pimienta</i>	
March 7, 2002	<i>Los Ojos del Tejedor (bil.), Speak English for Us Marisol, Papa Diego; Tomás y la Señora de la Biblioteca; Tomás and the Library Lady</i>	Bilingualism & Family Relationships
April 11, 2002	<i>Family Pictures; Cuadros de Familia, Hairs; Pelitos, Pascual's Magic Pictures, Mamá Does the Mambo</i>	Family Life Stories
April 25, 2002	<i>Invisible Princess, Estrellita de Oro; Little Gold Star, Coyote & Los Pajaros de la cosecha; The Harvest Birds, Gullywasher</i>	Telling Folk Stories
May 9, 2002	<i>Home at Last New Barker in House, Angel's Kite; Estrella de Angel, Abuela</i>	Linguistic Diversity

Establishing Context

The broad theme of journeys and reflections guided the curriculum and provided a starting point for this study's context. Robin and I selected four to five books for each bi-monthly round of small group literature circles using the book selection criteria that was established earlier in this chapter.

Robin provided children with three experiences with the literature in various contexts prior to the discussion of the literature within the literature circle. Multiple experiences listening and interacting with the literature prior to the literature circle

allowed children to make informed choices about the books that they wanted to discuss. For example, all the children heard all books read aloud for each round of discussion in available languages during a two-week period by their teacher or another adult. Buddy readers from fifth grade were paired with first and second graders to read the book that the child had self-selected an additional time. The selected books were also sent home along with a parent letter and response log for a parent or family member to read and respond to the literature.

Robin had the children sit in a circle and all of the books for each round of discussion were placed in the middle. Children were given the opportunity to self-select books that they wanted to read and discuss. In most cases, Robin honored children's first choices. Book choice, not language or reading level, was the determining factor in creating the literature discussion groups. All learners experienced literature circles with other children who were interested in talking about the same literature and children were not required to take on specific roles such as recorder, leader, etc during the literature circles so that children could naturally discuss the literature.

Small group literature discussions were generally organized into two rounds of discussions with either Robin or me taking the role of facilitator for our discussion groups. While two groups of children were discussing books in separate areas of the room, another group of students worked on a literature response experience that was broadly connected to the books that we discussed within the circles. Following our two literature circles, the group that was working on the response experience moved into

meeting with the teachers (Robin or me) for discussion groups. In addition, the first discussion groups moved into the response experience (see Figure 3.1).

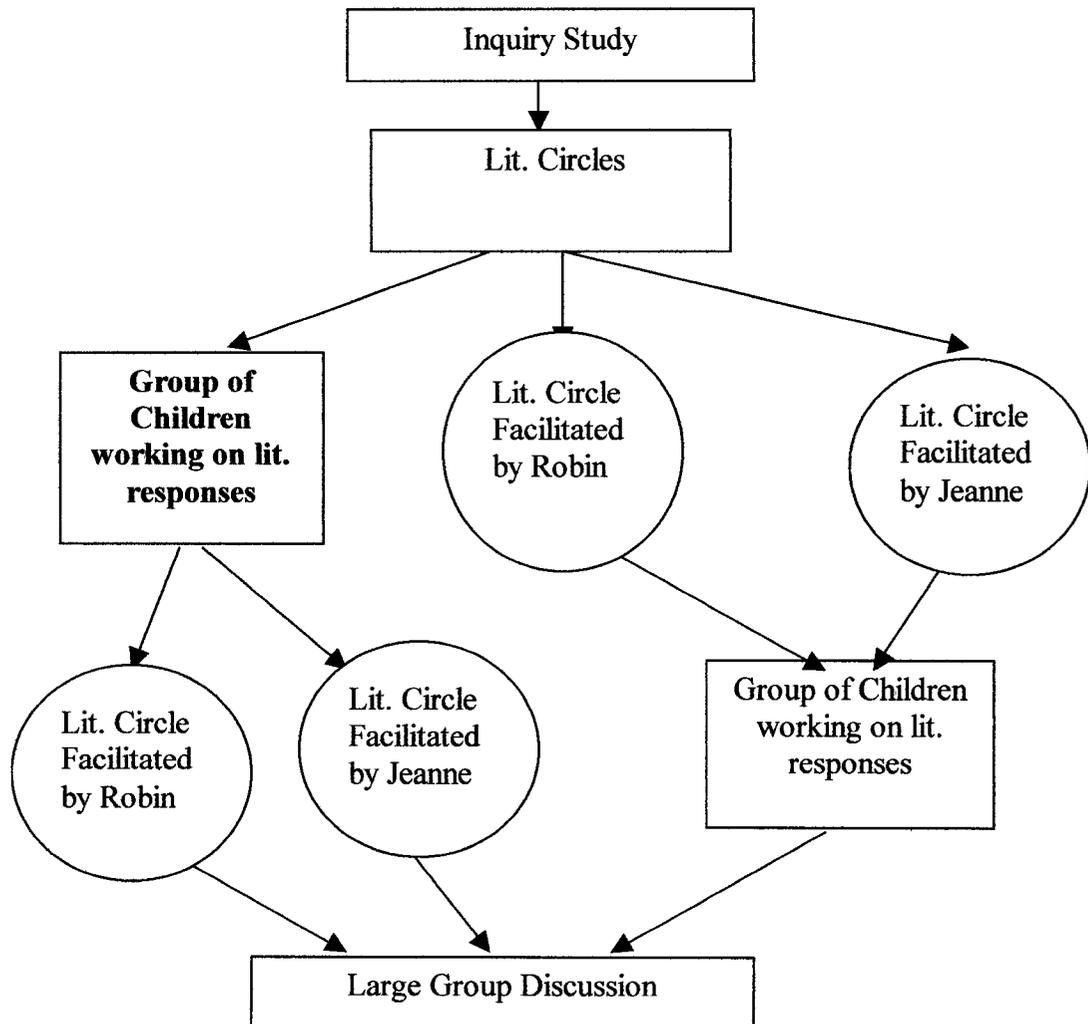


Figure 3.1. Layout for Literature Circles

Directly following the literature circles and working on literature responses, children shared intertextual connections within a whole class discussion. Dialogue from the literature circles was connected to other aspects of the curriculum. For example, on one occasion children moved toward reflecting upon their reading and discussion by

writing and using photography as they created their own stories related to their journeys. Within this classroom context, I designed this study to focus on children's talk.

Methods for Data Collection and Analysis

The analysis of data was closely tied to two research questions. I present the research design by describing the data collection and analysis in relation to the two research questions.

Research Question One

Research question one was **1) What issues of language diversity and culture do first and second grade students discuss in literature circles?** In answering question one, Robin (classroom teacher) and I collected audiotapes, transcripts, and response journals from the literature circles as the primary sources of data. Secondary data included Robin's and my field notes. Data was collected throughout the 2001/2002 school year.

Primary Data Source: Audiotapes, Transcripts of literature circles

During the literature circles, Robin and I audiotaped all of the literature circles for this dissertation study. I listened to forty literature circles that were recorded on audiotapes and using my field notes to guide my selection. Criteria I used to select the sixteen literature circles included: conversations between children and the teachers that discussed issues, in which children were actively involved in talk, and Robin and I were taking turns with the children and not dominating the talk. At the end of the study, I then selected five conversations that followed the above criteria and also included children's talk focused on issues of culture and/or language.

Tapes were transcribed promptly in order to allow me to analyze data verbatim on an ongoing basis. Table 3.2 includes eighteen titles used in discussions that were transcribed in entirety. The table consists of the title, author, language, summary, and major themes of the book. One asterisk in the title column of the table indicates that the literature discussion was fully transcribed and analyzed. Two asterisks in the title column indicate that the discussion was fully transcribed and partially analyzed. That is, if the transcript had one or two issues connected to issues of culture and/or language then the transcript was analyzed in terms of that issue.

Table 3.2
Children's Literature Selected for Literature Circles 2001/2002

TITLE	AUTHOR	LANG.	SUMMARY	THEMES
** <i>La Mariposa</i>	Jimenez (1998)	Spanish and English editions	Francisco enters school and experiences language discrimination.	Sense of Place Language Differences
** <i>Grandfather Counts</i>	Cheng (2000)	English and Chinese in parts of the text	Helen tries to communicate with her grandfather, who knows Chinese.	Sense of Place Language Differences
<i>Me llamo Maria Isabel; My Name is Maria Isabel</i>	Ada (1996; 1999)	Spanish and English editions	A teacher tries to alter the identity of a young girl.	Sense of Place Language Differences
** <i>Upside Down Boy; El niño de Cabeza</i>	Herrera (2000)	Bilingual book, Spanish and English	A boy tries to find a way to fit in within schooling as he	Sense of Place Language Differences

			learns English.	
<i>*La Señora de la Caja de Cartón; The Lady in the Box (2 groups)</i>	McGovern (1999)	Spanish and English editions	Two children defend and assist a homeless woman.	Adversity and Social Action
<i>Benito's Bizcochitos; Los bizcochitos de Benito</i>	Baca (1999)	Bilingual book: Spanish and English	Christina's grandmother tells a traditional story behind the making of bizcochitos.	Cultural Traditions
<i>*Feliz Cumpleaños, Martin Luther King; Happy Birthday Martin Luther King</i>	Marzollo (1994;1995)	Spanish and English editions	A story about Martin Luther King and how he assisted others overcome discrimination.	Empowerment
<i>*Picture Book of Rosa Parks (Part of Text Set)</i>	Adler (1995)	English	A straight forward biographical account about the life of Rosa Parks.	Empowerment
<i>*The Story of Ruby Bridges (Part of Text Set)</i>	Coles (1995)	English	A story of how Ruby Bridges triumphed over segregation.	Empowerment
<i>*More Than Anything Else (Part of Text Set)</i>	Bradby (1995)	English	A young boy desires to learn how to read.	Empowerment
<i>*Shake Rag: From the life of Elvis</i>	LittleSugar (1998)	English	A fictional account of Elvis's life as a	Empowerment

			young boy.	
**The Cactus Wren and the Cholla; El Reyzeuelo y La Cholla	Garcia (1997)	Bilingual book: Spanish and English	A tale about moving to a new place and starting over.	Immigration and Discrimination
<i>El Pollo de los Domingos; Chicken Sunday</i>	Polacco (1998) (1997)	Spanish and English editions	Three children sell eggs in an effort to thank a neighbor.	Immigration and Discrimination
<i>The Other Side</i>	Woodson (2001)	English	A young girl crosses ethnic prejudice to become friends with her neighbor.	Immigration And Discrimination
*Hairs; Pelitos	Cisneros (1997)	Bilingual: Spanish and English	A poetic story about a family's diversity and identity.	Family Life Stories
**Invisible Princess	Ringold (1998)	English	A slaveowner oppresses a princess and she teaches him a lesson.	Telling Folk Stories
<i>Los Pajaros de la Cosecha; The Harvest Birds</i>	Lopez de Mariscal (1995)	Bilingual: Spanish and English	A farmer tells an old tale about finding his place.	Telling Folk Stories

**Home at Last	Elya (2002)	English (some codeswitching)	A family adjusts to moving to the United States and experiences linguicism.	Linguistic Diversity
**New Barker in the House	De Paola (2002)	English (some codeswitching)	A family adopts a new member into the family, who is learning English.	Linguistic Diversity

I had an experienced transcriber transcribe the discussions. I carefully relistened to verify and edit all of the conversations and I filled in identifying information such as the name of the child speaking within the discussion. In addition, I translated all Spanish comments within the discussions and I had a biliterate colleague proofread the Spanish translations and transcriptions in Spanish in an effort to have as accurate as possible transcriptions and verify all of the data. Table 3.3 includes three conventions that were used in the transcriptions. The first convention indicates English translation. The second convention indicates an implied insertion. And the final convention indicated a noticeable pause within the turns of talk.

Table 3.3
Transcript Conventions

<i>Convention</i>	<i>Significance of Convention</i>
[]	<i>Indicates translation of Spanish to English</i>
{ }	<i>Indicates insertion where meaning is implied but not directly stated</i>
...	<i>Extended pause (Longer than 10 seconds)</i>

I did not number each turn of talk within the transcripts due to the nature of the analysis. Since I focused on issues rather than analyzing each line of talk, I identified each circle by date and book. Translations were included in the transcript as it made no sense to separate primarily Spanish words within an English text. Instead, immediate translations made more sense in the transcripts.

Response Journals

Each child wrote or drew a personal response to the literature as well as their parents' or a family member's responses were included on each page. These responses often included sketches or written responses to the literature. First and second graders shared entries from their response journals within the literature circles.

One copy of each child's entire response journal was made and copies were collected and organized by child in a notebook. My initial thoughts in regards to emerging themes of the responses as related to the research questions were written on post-it notes on the entries and placed in the response journals. I reviewed the response journals following the transcript selection.

Secondary Data: Field Notes

Robin and I took field notes during the literature circles. These field notes include concise comments about the children's talk within the group. In addition directly following the literature circle, we wrote short reflections about our thoughts about the children's discussion of the issues related to culture and language diversity. If a particular conversation seemed thoughtful, we wrote this down in our field notes. Thus, our field notes guided me in selectively analyzing the transcripts as I looked for emerging themes within the transcripts related to issues of culture and language diversity.

While I read through the sixteen transcripts, I looked for conversations that consisted of the following criteria: an in-depth conversation, focused on issues of culture and/or language, children taking a critical stance, and children dominating the turns of talk. I selected five transcripts to analyze fully.

Robin and I talked immediately following the literature circles at lunch about our impressions and I wrote down our impressions in my field notes. Robin and I also talked regularly about her notes. Her notes related to intertextual connections across literature circles that came up in the classroom on a daily basis. We informally talked minimally twice a week on the phone or in person regarding this study. I periodically debriefed with Robin in regards to my initial impressions of the emerging themes.

Data were organized chronologically by literature circle. In addition, data were organized by issues related to language diversity and culture within two large notebooks. In an effort to guarantee trustworthiness (Guba, 1980), data from transcripts of the

literature circles in the classroom and the secondary data source was compiled and analyzed over a seven-month period.

Data Analysis for Research Question One

The analysis of data was closely tied the research question. Research question one was **1) What issues of language diversity and culture do first and second grade students discuss in literature circles?** The issues come from the data and are organized into the following five sections: literacy, identity, positionality within society, oppression, and resistance to structural inequality. Table 3.4 briefly overviews each issue.

Table 3.4

Findings: Issues Children Discussed in Small Group Literature Circles

Literacy Sense of Print in society	Identity Perceptions of self in society	Positionality within Society Access & privilege	Oppression Treating people like objects	Resistance to Structural Inequality Standing up to inequity
<i>Learning to be literate</i> Learning to read	<i>Sense of Place</i> Cultural values connected to community	<i>Social Markers</i> Groups of people & differences	<i>Racism</i> Discrimination based upon privilege	Actively opposing & standing up to discrimination
<i>Placement of bilingual text</i> Reader has power in choosing language to read	<i>Race & Ethnicity</i> Features, definitions, group membership	<i>Agency</i> Change & Social Action Linguistic Agency	<i>Examining the Oppressor's Role</i> Motives & hurting others	Changing the rules
Social networks & decisions over languages	Fevers, local traditions, family & power	Power to assist others/family	Choosing not to be the oppressor	How rules impact power

In answering question one, Robin and I collected audiotapes and transcripts from the literature circles and response journals. I ultimately selected five transcripts to fully analyze and I discussed earlier how I selected these transcripts. I read through each transcript at least four times as I looked for chunks of talk that connected to issues of language and culture.

After marking each section with a highlighter, I cut and mounted these sections on index cards. I labeled each card with a number corresponding to the five transcripts. Index cards consisted of sections of dialogue and transitions assisting me in knowing where to separate the dialogue for each card. Three sets of data were mounted on cards and were prepared for the analysis. I selected three sets as I wanted to analyze the data several times and I considered trustworthiness (Guba, 1980) within this study.

I read through the cards and I looked for talk connected to issues of language diversity and culture. If no connection existed, I discarded the card. I placed all index cards (excluding the few discarded ones) out on the counter. I sorted the cards three times as I generated categories of the data. For the primary analysis I read through the cards as I closely examined each issue. The first sort reflected my knowledge base of the data. After sorting the cards into five categories, I created a graphic organizer that included the number of each card within the various categories (see appendix).

For the second analysis, I returned to reading the professional literature connected to language diversity and culture. I took notes on key concepts that I had noticed in the data on the cards and I cracked open surface level categories as I used another lens to form another set of tentative categories from the cards. I moved away from general

themes and I used different categories to sort the cards. In addition, I looked at other transcripts from the literature discussions that were not part of the five selected transcripts. I searched for transcripts that had examples that fit within the tentative categories. I added these examples to index cards. Following the arrangement of the index cards, I created a second graphic organizer that organized the categories of data and included the numbers of each card.

I generated the final set of categories from the first and second sets of index cards and graphic organizers. I selected categories from the two analyses of the index cards. I then searched for entries in response journals that coordinated with the talk and placed into the categories.

Research Question Two

Research question two was: **What types of talk about language diversity and culture do first and second grade students and their families discuss about children's literature?** Three subquestions frame this question:

What are the characteristics of the talk?

What issues are discussed?

What aspects of these discussions at home become part of the child's discussions at school?

In answering question two, Robin and I collected audiotapes, transcripts from parents, response journals, and interviews with parents (secondary data), throughout the 2001/2002 school year.

Primary Data Source: Audiotapes and Transcripts of family discussions

All of the children's families discussed children's literature in the home. Children brought home tape recorders and a parent letter along with the literature circle book and

response journal. The parent letter invited all parents to read and talk about the literature with their child. Nine bilingual families volunteered to audiotape the literature discussions. Three bilingual families participated consistently in this part of the study by recording their discussions with their child as connected to the literature circle book. The parents sent the tape recorders and audiotapes back to school following the discussion with his or her child. I listened to all of the audiotapes. I received two audiotapes for Karen, five for Raymond, and four for Diana. I transcribed all of the audiotapes for Karen's and Diana's family discussions. Three out of the five audiotapes for Raymond were fully transcribed. One of his tapes was misplaced and on another tape the discussion was very short and a full discussion of the book didn't exist. Robin transcribed two of Raymond's conversations that were in English.

Aspects of the conversations that were selected for transcription consisted of the following: a child or children taking a critical stance on an issue; personal connections to real life experiences, and intertextual connections that were thoughtfully constructed and spoke to issues of language and/or culture. Two parents spoke Spanish and one parent spoke English. I had the same colleague (as indicated earlier) proofread these transcripts in Spanish because Spanish is my second language and I wanted to be sure that I transcribed these discussions as accurately as possible.

Secondary Data Sources:

Robin and I interviewed parents at the end of the year to get their impressions of the issues that their children discussed which I used to answer the second research question. I took field notes during the interviews, audiotaped and transcribed the

interviews, debriefed with Robin following the interviews, and wrote down my personal thoughts following the interviews. The interviews allowed me to gain additional information that I was interested in knowing from the transcripts. These interviews confirmed my ideas about the emerging themes from the transcripts. Figure 3.2 lists the questions we asked. The first three questions relate to details related to decisions concerning how families organized talk prior to the literature discussion. The subsequent two questions relate to the details of the actual discussion. The final two questions relate to the parents' literacy histories.

What came before the discussion.....

- Tell me about how you decided to talk about the books.
- Tell me about the discussion before turning on the tape recorder.
- How did you and your child complete the response journals? Were they done before or after the discussion?

During the discussion.....Details of the Experience

- What are the issues that you discussed in connection with the books?
- Describe the issues that were significant to you.

Describe Literacy History (Life History) Past Experience in School

- Describe how did you become a reader. What was learning to read like for you?
- Schooling Experiences

Figure 3.2. Interview Questions

I made additional copies of three of the children's response journals. Since these responses were completed within the home, I included children's response journals as a primary data source related to research question two. Interviews were complementary data that clarified details that were brought forth in the transcripts and response journals.

Data Analysis for Research Question Two

Research question two was: **What types of talk about language diversity and culture do first and second grade students and their families discuss about**

children's literature? Three sub-questions frame this question and indicated in bold. In answering question two, Robin and I collected audiotapes and transcripts from parents, interviews with parents, and response logs throughout the 2001/2002 school year.

What are the characteristics of the talk? Characteristics of talk for each family included the following four major categories: conversational maintenance, personal response, retelling, and evaluation. These characteristics were moved into categories as I read several times through the transcripts of the literature discussions recorded within the homes of these three families. Two generative transcripts from the literature discussions were selected for each family. I carefully examined every utterance (complete comment or word) in each discussion per family. I numbered each utterance and added the total number of utterances together for each discussion. I then coded and categorized every utterance for specific characteristics of talk.

What issues are discussed? I used the same transcripts that were selected above for the first sub-question. I read through each transcript several times and I placed the chunks of talk that connected to issues of language diversity and culture on index cards. I made two sets of cards with the data from the three families. I sorted the cards twice as I looked for common categories. I created new categories that turned out to be the same as the categories from the first question that related to issues raised by the children in the schooling context. Following each card sort, I made a graphic organizer that had tentative categories and index card numbers. On the second sort, I read through additional transcripts from the families that were not selected and I added strong examples to the categories. In addition, I took notes from the professional literature and used these notes

to assist with new categories of data. In the third analysis, I utilized categories from both sets of cards for the final analysis.

What aspects of these discussions at home become part of the child's discussions at school? First, I looked at the two selected transcripts from each child/family and compared them with the same discussion in the schooling context. I generated notes on the transcripts. In addition, I used information from the follow-up interviews as complementary data. I looked at big chunks of talk that were in common and compared them across the home and school contexts. I wrote several theoretical memos for myself as I looked for patterns within the data.

Trustworthiness

In an effort to create a dissertation study that consisted of trustworthiness and demonstrates credible findings, I utilize four factors of trustworthiness (Guba, 1980). First, I used multiple methods of data collection such as audiotapes, transcripts, fieldnotes, response journals, and interviews. Second, I created an audit trail as a part of the analysis so that others can see exactly how I came to my understandings as a researcher. I've described these in detail in the chapter. Third, I debriefed with my mentor and dissertation director, Dr. Kathy G. Short, on a regular basis. Her perspectives and insights as an outsider to this study and her expertise have been most valuable to me. In addition, I member checked with Robin about my findings on a regular basis. I sent drafts of my findings via email and I had her respond to them. Her input as the classroom teacher was very helpful. Finally, I felt that I needed to collect this data over an entire school year to establish the focus of children's talk over time.

Summary

The topic of this dissertation study is the dialogue related to issues of language diversity and culture that first and second grade students raised within the contexts of small group literature circles in the classroom and in their homes. I analyzed the classroom talk and in addition three families voluntarily contributed their views on the issues children raised and discussed in their homes connected directly to the children's literature that was being used within literature circles in school. I studied the characteristics of talk and issues in the families' conversations within the home context.

CHAPTER 4

CHILDREN'S DISCUSSIONS OF LANGUAGE DIVERSITY AND CULTURE

Young learners are often not given credit for their capability to dialogue about critical issues connected to language and culture (Martinez-Roldan, 2000). We often fail to hear our children even though they desire real opportunities to have their voices heard as they explore issues that hold significance to them (Paley, 1981; White-Soltero, 1999; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines; 1988). In this yearlong study, I documented the issues young learners considered important in their talk as they discussed issues of language diversity and culture in the classroom context of literature circles.

In this case study inquiry, I was guided by the following main purpose: **What issues of language diversity and culture do first and second grade students discuss in home and school contexts?** I used two research questions to organize my analysis and to write up my findings. This chapter will focus on the findings related to the research question: **What issues of language diversity and culture do first and second grade students discuss in literature circles?** To examine this question, I analyzed the transcripts from five literature circles and response journals in-depth. Secondary data include Robin's and my field notes. Data was collected throughout the 2001/2002 school year. These issues came directly from the data and are organized into the following five sections: literacy, identity, positionality within society, oppression, and resistance to structural inequality.

Literacy

According to Solsken (1993), literacy speaks to a person's position as he or she makes sense of written language situated within the context of power and status. The issue of literacy as a category included how children's talk in literature groups about coming to terms with print and ultimately how they came to make sense of print within a complex society. In particular, children shared and reflected upon the issue of literacy through two categories: learning to be literate and the placement of bilingual text.

Learning to Be Literate

Learning to be literate, examined children's discussions of literacy in terms of how one becomes literate. I define literacy as the act of knowing how to make sense of print in one's surroundings (Freire, 1970). Children discussed ideas that reflected their knowledge of the reading process, how they believe people become literate, and ultimately how literacy empowers readers to make sense of their world. Power and status were considered part of the reading process as learners make meaning from print.

For example, children discussed the process of how they came to know how to read as they made personal connections to *More Than Anything Else* (Bradby, 1995) within a literature discussion. This fictionalized account of Booker T. Washington reveals his deep desire to gain the freedom of learning to read. Bianca and Edith discussed Booker's family and their knowledge of print:

(January 31, 2002):

Bianca: Um because at first his dad didn't see what he saw and so his mom didn't know how to read that but she knows it's something called the alphabet and that's it.

Edith: I noticed that when I was a little girl I wanted to know how to read so I sounded out the words but they didn't sound like good that's why um I sounded out more and then when I grow up my brother when my brother grow up he teached me how to read and now I know to read more. It's just like in the book that the little boy wanted to read.

Jeanne: That was, what book was that? That book?

Edith: Yeah. *More Than Anything Else*.

Jeanne: Okay.

For Edith, learning how to read meant trying to sound out words. She talks about how she feels that she continually struggled at sounding out the words and eventually her brother stepped in and helped her to become a literate learner. In addition, she connected to the character of Booker through her desire to enter the world of literacy. In addition, this first example demonstrates the issue of literacy within the complexities of power and status. Booker initially had no status within the story and similarly Edith spoke about how she viewed her brother as having status because he could read. In her eyes, it was ultimately her brother's influence that assisted her in becoming literate thus giving her status within her world.

The next example within this category reflects the process of becoming literate through Bianca's discussion of Booker's acquisition of literacy as a linear process

Example 2 (January 31, 2002):

Bianca: And his name was and his name was Booker.

Raymond: That was his name?

Jeanne: Oh okay. Um hm that was his name.

Bianca: And this right here he drew his name because he didn't know how to spell it.

Jeanne: Right.

Edith: Sometimes I draw when I don't know how to write when I was in kindergarten I just drew a picture and tell about the picture.

Jeanne: Did that help you with your ideas? You too, it helped you too?

Nicholas: I do that a little bit too.

Jeanne: You do that too?

In Bianca's opinion, Booker needed to know how to draw first and then he could move on to spelling the words within his writing. Nicholas and Edith both agreed that they started to draw pictures first and then moved onto writing. These children were able to distinguish the differences of reading and the various forms of writing (Vygotsky, 1978; Goodman, 1986).

This literature discussion revealed the children's knowledge of literacy through their differentiation between drawing and writing. Edith and Nicholas knew that drawing could be used as a tool for formulating ideas within the writing process. I think that it is interesting to note that although Edith and Nicholas see the value of drawing as an organizational tool for writing, they perceive drawing as a precursor to "real writing." Writing development was related to the functional experiences that they were having in and outside of the classroom.

The final example from the category of learning to be literate comes from a literature discussion around *Grandfather Counts* (Cheng, 2000). Gong Gong, the grandfather, travels from China to live with his daughter and her family. The granddaughter, Helen, struggles with language differences as she learns to communicate in a meaningful manner with her grandfather. Edith, Karen, and Renee connected with Helen as she wrote her name on the wall. Practice and perfection were a part of their ideas and knowledge about learning to write one's name. These insights led the children and Robin to discuss the differences between writing systems in the languages of Spanish, English, and Chinese. They compared the formation of the letters and examined the differences that they noticed between languages:

(November 15, 2001):

Karen: I like the part when the little girl and Gong Gong wrote her name in the wall.

Edith: Like when I was learning how to write my name, I had to practice in a paper thing then I had to write it perfect on another paper.

Robin: Yeah when you were learning how to write your name? Like how the grandfather made the mother learn to do it just right when she was a little girl?

Edith & David: I did too.

Renee: When I was three my mommy told me she was helping me to write because I didn't know which hand I was going to write with then I accidentally made an e and a e than a e.

Robin: Um hm. Three e's

Renee: Then my mom told me make the r then a e then a n and a e and a e and I did it.

Robin: That's kind of like in the story when they were remembering how the grandfather taught her to read. Okay.

Karen: I didn't know how to write my name when I was a little girl like maybe four years old and then my cousin, Vanessa, she was my age and she could write her name and then she taught me.

Robin: You know what I'm noticing is the difference between in Spanish and English, it's different words but the letters are the same but in Chinese and English the letters aren't the same. That's different. A little more difficult to learn.

Alexis: That's different because they, in Chinese they write more different like this, like this and...

Robin: um hm it's almost like a picture.

Alexis: Yeah and then in English they write like that.

The issue of learning to be literate influenced the children to discuss their thoughts and opinions as to how they have grown as readers and writers (Goodman, 2003). Their reflections of their literacy histories included a real awareness of how they developed and constructed their own understandings of literacy (Goodman, 1986). For Edith, David, Renee and Karen, family members played a significant role in how they learned to write their names.

Additionally, in the small group discussion, Robin talked about the writing systems in Spanish, Chinese and English languages. She discussed the word formations and the differences that existed in the languages. Robin is able to use this context to discuss and compare various languages and literacies. In addition, Alexis demonstrated her knowledge and awareness of the differences in the various systems of language.

Placement of Bilingual Text

The next category of literacy that was identified from the data was children's interest in the placement of bilingual text. Fourteen books used within the literature circles were bilingual texts in Spanish and English. The first and second graders had multiple opportunities to interact with print in more than one language. As a result of these opportunities, the children were knowledgeable about the features of a bilingual text and they held definite views about the construction of bilingual texts. Within this category, children discussed reasons for the placement of specific languages within various texts. They devised carefully crafted rationales for the placement of language. In addition, they talked about the complexities of codeswitching, the use of more than one language within a phrase or sentence.

In the following three examples of the data, the placement of bilingual text is raised as an issue and as a response to Sandra Cisneros's bilingual book, *Pelitos* [Hairs] (1997), a poetic story about diversity within one family. In the first example, Jairo, Edith, Bianca, and I discuss the placement of language within bilingual books. I begin by asking about the text placement within bilingual books. The children unanimously agree that the Spanish is placed at the bottom of most texts.

(April 11, 2002)

Jeanne: Jairo and Pedro? Here's my question. The English words are on the top and the Spanish words are on the bottom. Why is that? Can you help me with that?

Jairo: Like in all the books the English..

Jeanne: Wait, wait..the English is on top in the other book? So in most books the English is on the top is that what you're saying? And where is the Spanish?

Children: At the bottom.

The children came to quick consensus that Spanish belongs on the bottom of a text and English is positioned on the top of a text. They assumed that this is true and is undisputed. They didn't seem to question the power issues or what language is privileged within bilingual texts. I come to this conversation with strong thoughts on language. I see the text that privileges English over other languages as an example of what Ruiz (1984) addresses as language being viewed as a problem (Ruiz, 1984). I was floored with the children's matter of factness about where languages are placed. The next example continues our dialogue and speaks to additional insights into their perspectives on bilingual texts and the placement of language:

(April 11, 2002):

Jeanne: Okay. So so which do you read first? The bottom or the top?

Bianca & Jairo: The top.

Jeanne: You read the top? You read the top?

Edith: I read the bottom.

Jeanne: You read the bottom? Okay. Why do you read the bottom first?

Edith: Because I could know like sometimes I don't know the words.

Jeanne: um hm. So the bottom helps you with the top?

Edith: Yeah.

Jeanne: Why?

Edith: Because so they could know each one that's in Spanish and English.

Jeanne: So you know which one it is?

Edith: So they don't get mixed up so when they read it they'll know.

Bianca: Like maybe if they were together maybe they'll get confused.

Jeanne: Okay but why can't I have the Spanish on top? Why does the English have to be on top?

Edith: So when they read it then they could when so they could read it later in Spanish or they could read the bottom first and read the top second.

I was interested in hearing the children's perspectives on their views as to how bilingual print is positioned. For me, the placement of Spanish on the bottom of a text is an issue connected to privilege and status (Ruiz, 1984). I see English and its prestige as an "unmarked language" particularly in the United States. English is often characterized in the professional literature as having the power to intentionally kill other languages (Ruiz, 1999). We continued our discussion; I learned that the children had different reasons for the placement of languages in a bilingual text. They thought that both languages were placed in the text to assist the reader. Edith pointed out that readers did not have to read the top first and that both languages worked together to assist a reader. She implicitly understood Hornberger's (1989) model of biliteracy that there was potential for positive transfer across languages and literacies. Bianca thought that the separation of the languages within the text allowed the reader to differentiate between the languages by selectively attending to the print for his or her purpose as a reader (Bialystok, 1997).

This example speaks to how the children negotiated what language to read first in a bilingual text:

(April 11, 2002):

Jeanne: Okay, what about you?

Edith: I know more Spanish than English.

Jeanne: You know more Spanish than English so reading in Spanish helps you read in English?

Edith: Yeah.

Jeanne: Okay, Jairo? Your mom does your mom read the Spanish first? Great. And then does she read the English? No she just reads the Spanish? So she finds it. So it doesn't matter that it's at the bottom she just finds it and she reads it there. Good. Pedro? Well what do you mean shaking your head. You're just shaking your head. What do read first? The bottom or the top?

Pedro: The top.

Jeanne: You read the top first and does your mom read the bottom later? She does? What does she read first? She reads the top? And then does she read the bottom? She does? So she reads both of them? Okay. And Bianca you said you read the top first. Why do you that?

Bianca: Because um my because I know more English than Spanish.

For these children, the placement of the bilingual text connected to the language that was known rather than being a case of privileging English over Spanish. As Bianca stated, she read the English first because she was more knowledgeable about English as compared to Spanish. In contrast, Jairo's mom read the Spanish first and didn't attend to the English print because she was competent in Spanish. Pedro felt that his mom looked at the English first and then the Spanish. The children's dialogue regarding the placement of text revealed their knowledge about the features of a bilingual text and connected to their strategies for making meaning as readers. For these children, it was the reader's competency in language that dictated how the reader approached the bilingual text. In addition, they saw the reader as having the power to choose the language of the print that he/she would make meaning of as a reader.

The following examples connect to the placement of bilingual text and come from a literature discussion about *A New Barker in the House* (de Paola, 2002). This story tells about the struggles and triumphs of a dog family as they adopt a new member of the family who knows Spanish. Although this book has more English than Spanish in the text, the children connected to the placement of the Spanish within the English text.

This example examines Amanda and Lucero's insights into codeswitching. They defined codeswitching as changing languages:

(May 9, 2002):

Amanda: (reading response journal) I have a connection because I am learning Espanol like Morgie and Moffie. I think they have a más grande familia [very large family] like I do. I have 2 hermanas plus me which is three. There's children and a mamá [mom] and y papá [and dad] which is cinco familia [five family]. And in a *New Barker In the House* there is cinco familia tambien [five family also]. And I am codeswitching and tambien [also] the book. This is a más más [very, very] interesting book.

Jeanne: And what's, what's codeswitching?

Amanda: It's like when you um change...

Lucero: Like when you change a language.

Jeanne: Change your language? Oh you're codeswitching.

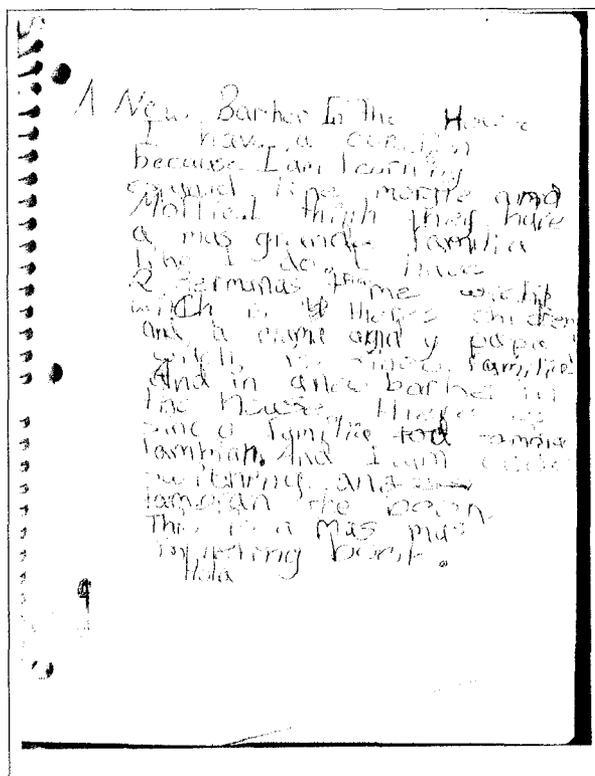


Figure 4.1. Codeswitching Excerpt from Amanda's response journal

Amanda's second language was Spanish and similarly to *A New Barker in the House* (de Paola, 2003) she used codeswitching in her journal response as she demonstrated her willingness to play with the text as she tried out codeswitching (see figure 4.1). Valdes (1988) defined codeswitching "as the alternating use of two languages at the word, phrase, clause, or sentence level" (p. 125). In Amanda's written response, she drew upon her linguistic resources in English and utilized her new knowledge of Spanish to move between Spanish and English.

In the subsequent example, the discussion of the codeswitching within the book led Amanda, Alexis, and me to examine codeswitching from a personal perspective. That is, Amanda recognized her classmates who were able to move back and forth between languages. For Amanda the children in her classroom who knew two languages had status. Additionally, she tried to use Spanish and English as the discourse norm (Corson, 2001) of her peers as she moved toward having more status within the classroom.

(May 9, 2002):

Amanda: It's like in this class like we are sort of codeswitching because some people know Spanish and some people know English.

Jeanne: Okay, so how do you do that then? Can you tell me more about that?

Amanda: Like some people in the class like Lucilla, Alexis, Lucero and Edith they know Spanish and I know English so they codeswitch sometimes and then I try to codeswitch too.

Jeanne: You try too?

Alexis: Um um, me and um me and Lucero help Amanda speak Spanish sometimes.

Amanda: Yeah because yesterday I wrote all Spanish in my journal.

Jeanne: You wrote all Spanish in your journal? Wow.

Alexis: I mostly helped her.

Jeanne: You mostly helped her? Isn't that nice that you both can share what it is that you know? That's very cool. Any other thoughts on the book? It's a brand new book so can you think of some things that you might want to tell people about it?

Amanda: That you should read this book because it is very interesting and you

could feel how several of the people feel when they know both languages and some don't know.

Amanda was in tune with what it felt like to be an outsider as she tried to step into the community of codeswitchers. Thus, she made strong connections to the characters in the book, who did not understand Spanish. In the final example of the children's talk about the placement of biliterate text, the children connected to the features of language represented within this book:

(May 9, 2002)

Jeanne: How about this book? How how did they have the languages? Usually we've talked about how sometimes they have the English on the top and the Spanish on the bottom. Or sometimes the Spanish is on the top or in the bottom. Like what was the layout? How did they show the different languages in this book?

Amanda: They were like this, like in the Spanish..

Edith: They codeswitched.

Amanda: Yeah they codeswitched.

Alexis: but just a little bit of Spanish just um the new brother Marcos.

Amanda : Spanish when it says hola it's like in big words and it's like that

Jeanne : Oh in all caps. So it's all in capital letters.

Amanda, Alexis, and Edith attended to the layout of the languages within the story and they focused on the presentation of the Spanish within the book. They noticed the shift in languages and how Spanish was often represented with different orthography. Codeswitching was the main issue related to placement of text that interested the children throughout this discussion.

The issue of literacy was continually raised throughout these discussions. The two literacy categories, learning to be literate and placement and awareness of bilingual text, were issues that mattered to the first and second graders. I thought that these issues held importance for them because making meaning from print in English and Spanish

was an integral part of their lives within the classroom. Literacy in more than one language was a topic of discussion that was continually raised by the children outside of literature discussions. For example, children talked about literacy and languages in the writing process. Books were published in both languages. Children heavily considered audience in terms of their peers, teacher, and family as they made decisions about which languages were represented in writing.

Identity

Identity was another major issue that the children discussed within the small group literature circles. For me, identity refers to the perceptions that we have of ourselves that have been shaped within a broader society (Nieto, 2002). Identity is personal, social, and cultural. Identity allows us membership or closes off access to certain social networks. Moreover, Corson (2001) states “people have images of themselves and of their roles that make them conform to different influences in their social environments” (p.18). Sense of place and race and ethnicity are two subcategories within the issue of identity.

Sense of Place

Sense of place refers to a person’s cultural values constructed by his/her social, cultural, and historical environment (Cadiero-Kaplan; 2002). Corson (2001) defines “cultural values as an attitude or an interest that people in a group cherish for its own sake; or perhaps they cherish it instrumentally, as something needed to maintain the group itself” (p.40). It is within this sense of place that identity is shaped and influenced. Thus, this category thus consists of children’s comments and responses that include

community, celebration, and community knowledge. Children discussed cultural values connected to community that were reflected within celebrations of life events such as dedication ceremonies and birthdays. Also, funds of knowledge (Moll & Greenberg, 1990) or local knowledge (Lipka, 1998; Valdes, 1996), such as treating fevers, was discussed and included in this category.

In the *Invisible Princess* (Ringold, 1998) literature discussion, Faith Ringold tells the story of an invisible princess who ultimately reveals the evil-doings and persecution of a slave owner. In this example, Jamilet responded to the book's ending celebration. In Jamilet's response journal (see figure 2), sense of place refers to the celebration of everyone getting together.

(April 25, 2002):

Jamilet: I liked the last part...

Amanda: Oh yeah.

Jamilet: We live in a peaceful village of freedom and love and harmony with our brothers and sisters by all the stars above. We live in a beautiful village full of happiness and joy dedicated to the freedom of every man and woman, even an Indian girl and every girl.

Robin: Which one was that?

Jamilet: Oh when they were celebrating they were putting something in the pot and for the loss of the invisible princess.

Robin: When they made up the shrines?

Amanda: Yeah. The beautiful princess.

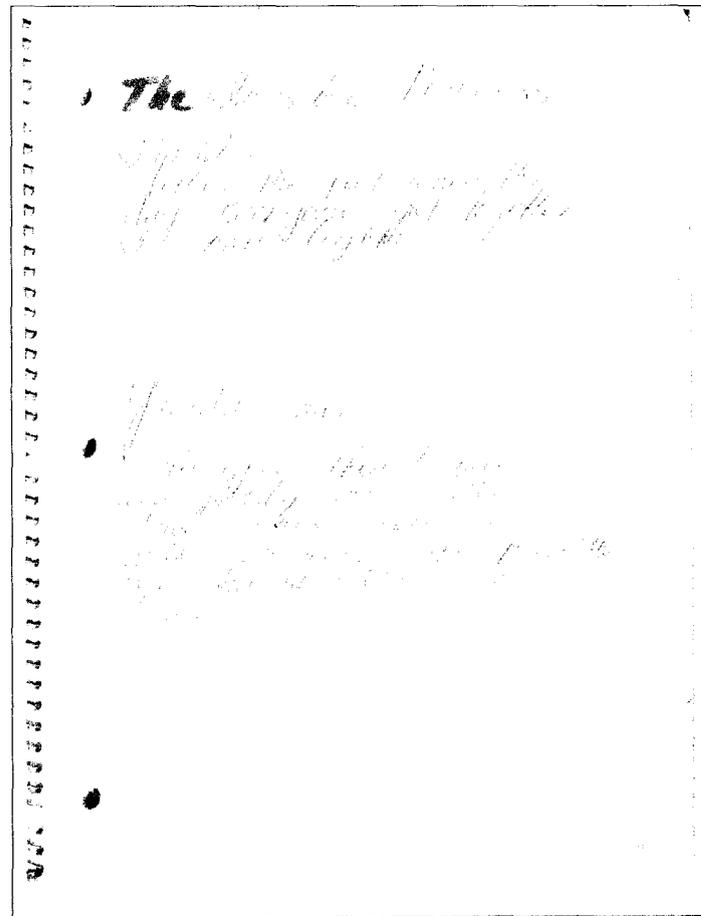


Figure 4.2. Jamilet's response journal entry (April 25, 2002)

Jamilet: likes the part when the day everyone got together. I had lights.

Jamilet's mom: Everyone should love everybody no matter color, race, poor or with money like parents we should teach out kids.

Jamilet and her mom referred to sense of place as they discussed community and getting along with others despite socially constructed concepts such as race, color, or social class.

For them, getting along and celebrating should occur equally for everyone.

The second example, from *Happy Birthday Martin Luther King* (Marzollo, 1995), also demonstrates the children's connections to coming together as a family and celebrating:

(January 31, 2002):

Lucero: I liked this part, too.

Jeanne: Okay. Es todo? [Is that all?]

Diana: My favorite part was this one because it was a special day for Martin Luther King and all of them got together.

Alexis: Me too. And I like the cake.

Lucero: It looks like all of them um have the same houses.

In this second example, Diana and Alexis connected to the celebration and sense of place within the community. For these girls, celebration is an integral part of the family experience and these relationships are a central part of their heritage and identities. Family is a major focus of their lives and celebrations serve as an outlet of recognizing the special heritage (Delpit, 1988) that they share in common.

The third example is from a discussion of *Home at Last* (Elya, 2002). This immigration story tells the struggle of a daughter, Ana, and her Mama to learn English and adjust to living within the United States. In this particular discussion, the children responded to Ana's baby brother getting a fever:

(May 9, 2002):

Bianca: Well, um next time we um my grandma did this to a girl..

Robin: Bathed her like that with a little sponge to get her fever down?

Bianca: And one time when I was a little girl um my mom gave my grandma gave me eggs when I was running a fever.

Edith: They like put um eggs around your face.

Bianca: And then um there is this way you go like that with the egg and then you crack it...

Edith: You put it in a little water then it cracks. Uh huh cracks.

Bianca: Then when it cracks you don't have any fevers anymore.

Nicholas: Sometimes when um I do that when I have a fever. I put a little towel over my head.

Edith: There's like those little leaves um like in the um (inaudible) that's what my grandma did to me but actually she just like and it kind of grew into (inaudible) and I had to put it in my mouth.

Bianca: My um grandma um since she's from Mexico she knows how to um she knows how to um there's this one flower that we have and it's um nievauna that's what it's called and um me and my grandpa say give me some of that and then she makes it and um my mommy my mom say I want eso [that].

Robin: It's kind of interesting hearing your stories about how your families do that.

In this final example of sense of place, Bianca, Edith, and Nicholas shared medicinal funds of knowledge (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, in press) with Robin as to how their families traditionally treat fevers. Bianca and Edith associated the treatment of fevers with their grandparents. The children all were enthusiastically in agreement that this treatment is common practice and they had strong personal connections. Children took control of the discussion as they shared their expertise on the treatment of fevers and provided Robin with more information and insight into their "every day lives" (Gonzalez, Moll & Amanti, in press).

Race and Ethnicity

The issue of race and ethnicity was another area of identity that the children raised in their literature discussions. Nieto (2002) described the significance of deconstructing race as follows:

Consequently, it is necessary to consider not racial differences *per se*, but rather how racial differences are socially constructed. Therefore, what is important to remember is that race itself is not what makes a difference in people's attitudes, behaviors, and values, but rather how particular racial groups are valued or devalued in society. (p.54)

According to Mukhopadhyay and Henze (2003), race is a concept:

a culturally and historically specific way of thinking about, categorizing, and treating human beings. It is about social divisions within society, about social categories and identities, about power and privilege. (p.4)

In this category, children's comments included thoughts on race and ethnicity as constructed by physical features that speak to social divisions, moving toward a definition of race and ethnicity, and exploring race and ethnicity as belonging to a group.

The following three examples came from a discussion based upon *Pelitos* (Cisneros, 1997). This discussion related traits to hair texture:

(April 11, 2002):

Bianca: In this book her family had different hair. Her dad has hair like a broom. Her mom has hair like a little rose and candy circles. Her brother has thick and straight hair. Her youngest brother has furry hair. The little girl has lazy hair.

Jeanne: Oh so you talked about all of their hair and what kind of hair it was Bianca.

Bianca: The little girl's hair was um lazy.

Jeanne: Lazy hair? Does somebody have a question they want to ask Bianca?

Edith: Um I used to have like hairs that slide like the one that I told in one little story.

Jeanne: Oh.

This discussion examined the hair texture of the characters. In this story, the characters' differences in their hair are pointed out in a poetic style. Bianca and Edith continually related to the characters and identified the features of their hair from the descriptions within the story. Bianca and Edith saw themselves within the story and identified with the interpretation of the characters. This mattered to them, as they were able to see themselves positively in the shared heritage of family members within *Pelitos* (Cisneros, 1997). This story was affirming to their identity.

In another example, I asked about the children's understanding of race because I wanted more insight into their thinking:

(April 11, 2002):

Jeanne: Um hm. Have you heard the word "race"? No?

Children: Yeah

Jeanne: You have? What is it? Anybody know what the word race means?

Edith: Be racing? No?

Jeanne: A group that you belong to. And sometimes it is based upon your skin color.

As our discussion moved from talking about racial features such as hair color, we moved to discussing the term, "race". All of the children in the small group literature circle had heard of the term, however, only Edith was quick to try to make sense of its definition. I provided a simplistic definition, as I wanted to learn more about their thoughts on race. And now only after serious reflection, I now know that I used the term, race as the term, ethnicity. Even though, I threw the term, race, out with all of its complexities and baggage (Levinson, Foley, & Holland, 1996; Nieto, 2000 & 2002; Sleeter, 1996) the children implicitly understood the term, ethnicity. We then continued our discussion in the following example.

The following example demonstrates the children's deconstructions of race and ethnicity, the requirements that they created for belonging to a certain racial or ethnic group. That is, our discussion moved into how groups can be identified and defined.

(April 11, 2002):

Bianca: Because I um I am Indian.

Jeanne: Okay so you so you belong to an Indian group? Do you want to tell me more about that?

Bianca: Um my sister my mom and I and my sister are Indians and um me and my sister um the Indians give us money to buy clothes.

Jeanne: Okay so that's a group you belong to? Okay.
Edith: I belong to a Mexican..
Jeanne: You belong to what? To Mexicans? Mexican group? Do you want..
Edith: I belong to Mexican and American.
Jeanne: Mexican and American? Do you want to tell me more about that? Well,
how do you know that you belong to those two groups?
Edith: Because I speak the languages.
Jeanne: Oh so if you speak those languages you belong to those groups?
Bianca: And your skin color.
Jeanne: Okay so if you speak the language you can be a part of that group? And
what if you don't speak the language, can you be a part of that group?
No?
Edith: Yeah.
Jeanne: You can? Why?
Bianca: Because it it um because it depends on your skin color too.
Jeanne: Oh it depends on your skin color?
Edith: Even if you don't know how to talk it.
Jeanne: Even if you don't know how to talk it?
Edith: Yeah.
Jeanne: So what about me? Where do I fit? Do you know?
Edith: Uh Mexican and American.
Jeanne: You think I could be Mexican-American? Okay?
Edith: Yeah.

In the previous example, Bianca and Edith explored their definitions of race and ethnicity and ultimately defined for themselves how race and ethnicity were socially constructed. For them, the concept of belonging to a racial or ethnic group is connected to the language that one speaks. For people who did not speak the language, skin color became a second factor in having access to a particular racial group. Bianca mentioned the third factor of having a group's financial support in the beginning of the discussion. As a European American, I was interested in how they would classify me according to their definition, as they know that I speak Spanish. Their classification of me was in line with their definition. Bianca and Edith classified me as Mexican-American based upon

my knowledge of Spanish as their criteria for membership in a particular racial or ethnic group.

The issue of identity demonstrated the children's thoughts and opinions related to sense of place and race and ethnicity. These first and second graders were interested in having a voice and providing insights into issues of identity. Their perceptions were shaped by their personal experiences, as they continually alluded to these experiences while they strived to make sense of them. In addition, social and cultural differences and experiences played a part in the children's vision of identity. Social events, physical appearance, language, and financial support played a significant role in how they chose to identify themselves and others.

Positionality within Society

The next issue raised within the small group literature circles was positionality within society. Positionality within society refers to a person's access to privilege within a sociocultural and sociopolitical world. The concept of positionality is embedded within a specific and bound context and situatedness (Nieto, 2002). In addition, I define positionality as the amount of power a person has or doesn't have within society. This issue consisted of two categories: social markers and agency.

Social Markers

Social markers refer to the differentiation between groups (Nieto, 2002). Positionality as an issue included how children examined specific groups of people in terms of their differences and their status within the literature. In general, children discussed and described the dynamics of characters in the literature. These discussions

led them to make generalizations about the characters, including their socioeconomic level and where they were positioned within society.

These first and second graders discussed the social marker of being poor. In the next example, Diana, Jonathan, Amanda, Alexis, and I talked about how we know if someone is poor in a discussion of *Lady in the Box* (McGovern, 1999) and *La Senora de la Caja en la Cartón* (McGovern, 1997).

(December 6, 2001):

Jeanne: How do you know when somebody's poor? Like in this story she is outside and they say she is poor. How do you know that?

Diana: Like they are sitting down and they sit there for a long time in the night.

Jeanne: Okay so they are just hanging out there and they have nowhere to go? That's how you know someone's poor, Diana? Okay.

Jonathan: And they are not walking and they can't um, they are not moving their heads or hands or anything.

Jeanne: Okay, so they are real still and they not moving, Jonathan? Okay.

Amanda: And they have ripped up clothes.

Jeanne: Okay, you can tell by their clothes? Alexis is thinking. What are you thinking? How do you know if someone's poor?

Alexis: Cause they are out in the street, they are sitting down.

Jeanne: Okay so they are out in the street, they are s..okay. Do poor people act differently than people who are not poor?

Diana: Yeah.

Jeanne: They do? How do they act?

Diana: Sitting down and laying down on the benches.

Jeanne: Okay so Diana they'd be sitting outside. That's how you think of a poor person.

Alexis: My dad read this part, um..

Jeanne: Uh huh and that talks about that doesn't it? That last part of the book. Exactly this is what Diana was saying.

Amanda: This part gave me a picture in my mind.

Jeanne: Okay. Of what a poor person might experience?

Amanda: It says, there was a couple of cans of soup from our kitchen cabinet, Cream of Celery and vegetable noodle soft and mushy soups. Just right for someone without teeth. Lizzie thought vegetable noodle was betto, better. I thought celery. We had a fight about it. Lizzie won.

Jeanne: Okay. Were you going to say something, Alexis, about the poor thing?

Do poor people know as much as people who are not poor?

Alexis: No.

Jeanne: They don't? Why?

Amanda: But actually they sort of do know more than the circle deli person because um he said he didn't let her stay because he didn't know why she was there.

Jeanne: So she probably knew more than him because, why did she know more than him?

Amanda: Because um she knew that she was there because she was there and poor and the other guy didn't.

Alexis, Diana, and Jonathan viewed poor people as a group of people who were motionless, sitting in the same location over a period of time, and without a place to live. Amanda mentioned the outer and worn appearance of poor people's clothes and she was quick to point out that the poor lady in the story knew why she needed to live by the deli because she was very aware of her circumstances. These children thought that the social marker of being poor referred to people who belonged in stories and that the only poor people they encountered were in books and not real life. Ultimately, they did not see themselves in these stories. Using free lunch as evidence others have asserted and classified the majority of the children in Robin's class as being poor and yet the children in this class didn't connect to this classification.

In this example Robin discussed with Edith her connections with this same book:

(December 6, 2001):

Edith: In Mexico lots of people live in trees.

Robin: That was something that you connected with the *Lady in the Box*?
Do you want to tell a little bit about that?

Edith: Like there is a tree and there's apples on the trees and then, um, they um, used to sleep like right on the on those things.

Robin: The branches, the limbs? Um hm.

Edith: Yeah and they, um, just ate apples instead of eating, they just ate apples instead of eating foods.

Robin: That was how they ate? They found some apples to eat? Okay. What,

um, can you tell a little bit about what Dad said just in case I didn't quite understand it? What was he talking about?

Edith: I've seen a lot of poor people at Mexico. They don't have nothing. Like just have shirts and they don't have any shoes anything like a lot of people doesn't have shoes and mostly food.

Robin: I've only been to Mexico last year when I went or in October when I went on my cruise. I haven't been there a lot but I saw some people that they were selling chicle [gum] and trying to make money for their families, the little kids, and they were selling lots of things.

Edith: That's what we do at Mexico but it's hard to sell.

Robin: Is it hard to sell? Why?

Edith: Um a lot of people do that.

Edith made multiple connections with this book and characterized poor people based upon her personal experiences in Mexico. She described how poor people lived in trees and ate its fruit, didn't own anything, and did not have shoes or food. Edith also discussed how the families sold gum in order to make money. She was conscious of the realities of poor people.

Both examples demonstrate the children's perspectives of the social markers of poverty. Their perspectives were detailed and informed. Children pulled from what they had experienced in their own lives and what they observed. Also, I thought that this picture book contributed to the children's responses and thinking about poor people not moving or trying to earn a living because the character is situated motionless in the box until the storeowner moves her. In contrast, Edith demonstrated another perspective about how hard people work to make money in order to meet their basic needs of shelter, clothing, and food. Moreover, based upon her life experiences, she was keenly aware of the strategies families needed to survive financially in Mexico.

Agency

Agency referred to the action of making changes in the positionality within social systems (Nieto, 2002). For me, agency is a purposeful social action that leads to change and ultimately corrects injustice. Children, along with their teachers, needed to collaboratively take action for social justice (Short, Schroeder, Kauffman, & Kaser, 2002). This category is comprised of children's talk about individuals taking social action in an effort to make changes in their circumstances within various contexts.

In the example, Alexis, Diana, Amanda, and I discussed and defined social action as we discussed *Lady in the Box* and *La Señora de la Caja de Cartón*:

(December 6, 2001):

Jeanne: What does this book make you think that you want to do? Like after you read it does it make you want to do something?

Alexis: Yeah like help people.

Jeanne: Really and how can you do that?

Diana: By um looking around...

Alexis: to find some of them..

Amanda: Once when I was walking to..

Jeanne: And to do what?

Diana: to um help people.

Jeanne: Okay and you, what did you say?

Amanda: Once when I was walking to Food City I saw these homeless people like in the story.

Jeanne: Okay. So you saw them. So it makes you want to help somebody?

Amanda: Um hm.

Jeanne: Do you know what social action is?

Alexis: No.

Jeanne: That's what that is. Social action is when you see something, just like in the story, you see something that is wrong and you want to do something about it.

Alexis: It gave me a connection when I went to Mexico and then I saw some persons that were poor and then me and my dad helped them. We gave them a ride on back of the truck. It was um day and um they just came in the back.

For Alexis, helping people that are poor represented her understanding of social action.

Helping someone who needed help was part of her understanding of agency.

Edith, Lucero and Robin also discussed agency in conjunction with this book.

Robin shared social action experiences that the class had participated in together, such as the class collecting pennies to collectively buy a Christmas present for a child and collecting canned foods for families.

(December 6, 2001):

Robin: Oh it might give you the idea to help some other people. Can you think of something we are doing in our class that's kind of like what the kids did?

Edith: Helping each other.

Lucero: Getting the money for the Christmas angel.

Robin: Yeah. So we are kind of like the kids in the story aren't we, how we are collecting our pennies to buy a toy for her? Yeah. And there's other things we could do too just like Edith said, you could help people in the neighborhood or if you see somebody that needs help you could give them a little help. Sometimes we bring food at school, we collect food.

Edith: Like when I used to live in Mexico we don't have we didn't have any house and they needed help like doing stuffs and like we had another neighbor that used to help us, they used to help each other.

Robin and Lucero viewed social action in the context of the school setting. Edith personalized social action based upon the help she and her family had received from others. She also looked at agency from an individual perspective.

In the final example, from a discussion of *Home at Last* (Elya, 2002), Bianca and Edith were agents of change as they took on the responsibility of teaching their family members English after they experienced discrimination in unwelcoming settings.

(May 9, 2002)

Edith: This book reminds me of um when my mom went to the store and she was sad because she she couldn't get um stuff to

- Bianca: And this book reminds me of me and my mama because I teach her.
This book ...
- Edith: I teach my dad.
- Robin: You teach your dad?
- Edith: Yeah. He is learning a lot of things this year. He could talk and understand English now.
- Bianca: It reminds me of my grandma because um she doesn't want to learn English but I'm teaching her.
- Robin: Really? Now how does she feel? Does she just think it's too hard? Is she shy?
- Bianca: Uh huh.
- Robin: So um how what strategies do you use to help her?
- Bianca: Um read a book to her. Sometimes my mom reads with her sometimes when I'm at school.
- Robin: When you have um books from the book text and you have books in Spanish and English does that help? How does she like that?
- Bianca: Good. My older brother reads her stories in English too.
- Robin: Yeah?
- Bianca: Yeah he doesn't understand all the words but um she said would learn English and she said yes.
- Robin: So how, what did you think about that? What do you think made that happen in her mind?
- Bianca: Because um when she went to the store she couldn't get the chicken.

For Bianca and Edith, agency meant stepping in where they were needed and helping family. I often think that social action is linked to doing things such as collecting money, cans, or helping people who are less fortunate than we see ourselves. In the above example, agency is linked to the linguistic needs of a family and both girls used their resources to assist their families to learn an additional language. Similarly to Lopez-Robertson (2003), the idea of helping others led to the idea of social action that ultimately led to agency.

Oppression

The following issue that the first and second graders raised in small group literature circles were oppression. According to Freire (1998),

Although the situation of oppression is a dehumanized and dehumanizing totality affecting both the oppressors and those whom they oppress, it is the latter who must, from their stifled humanity, wage for both the struggle for a fuller humanity; the oppressor who is himself dehumanized because he dehumanizes others, is unable to lead this struggle. (p.48)

For me, oppression is treating people like objects and exercising power over them in such a way that they feel powerless to make changes in their lives (Freire, 1970). This category of oppression was divided into two subcategories: racism and the examining the role of the oppressor.

Racism

The first category provided the children's insights into dehumanization as they talk about how they have connected in personal ways to racism. Varenne and McDermott (1999) define racism as a discourse that categorizes based upon "inherent" achievement. Children's insights included discrimination based upon privilege associated with race and language. Also, they discussed why they wouldn't participate in racism. The major difference of this category as compared to the category of race as discussed earlier is the issue of discrimination based upon human differences. That is, the children's comments in this category directly spoke to unjust treatment in conjunction with linguistic and racial differences.

This discussion reveals children's thoughts and responses to *Feliz Cumpleaños*, Martin Luther King (Marzollo, 1994). In addition, children also made connections to *White Socks Only* (Coleman, 1999) and *Sister Anne's Hands* (Lorbiecki, 2000).

(January 31, 2002)

Jeanne: Right. Isn't that the same? Is that what Martin Luther King was fighting for? Any other connections?

Lucero: *White socks only.*

Jeanne: Okay, tell me about it.

Lucero: Because the white people had the drinking fountain was only for the white people but that little girl thought it meant only white socks and um it didn't and it meant that it was only for black people not for white people and um (pause)

Alexis: It gives me a connection to Sister Anne.

Jeanne: Mr. What? Oh *Sister Anne's Hands*. Tell me about it. We are going to read that one.

Alexis: Because the little girl was going to school and then she met her new friend and then she called to the school and they sent her a note that she's like black and everything. And right here in the story it's like only black people could drink from the black from the drink like the black people's drinking fountain and the white's from the drinking fountain like this.

In this discussion, Alexis and Lucero pointed out the unjust treatment of the black people. At first, Lucero discussed how the little girl in the story was unaware of the explicit racism. Both girls recognized that white people exercised discriminatory power over black people and for them, discrimination resulted from a difference of race. In addition to racism, the girls talked about how racism resulted in a loss of the right to fair treatment within society.

The next example speaks to the issue of language discrimination, also called linguicism. Linguicism refers to unequal treatment of languages based upon power structures that privilege certain languages as having legitimacy (Skutnabb-Kangas; 1988).

(January 31, 2002):

Robin: You know, in our class we think it's pretty awesome that we all talk or not all of us talk two languages but a lot of us talk two languages. How would you feel if you went to a school where they said that you couldn't talk in two languages? You could only talk in one language?

Aaron: That would be like that would be like if like it reminds me of the book of...

Robin: Francisco? *La Mariposa*?

Aaron: Yeah, *La Mariposa* because Francisco wanted he wanted to talk in Spanish but the teacher said no Spanish so so they and then um Francisco

felt so sad too because like if I was talking in Spanish and like somebody came up and she said and somebody said you can't speak like Spanish and then um I would feel sad.

Robin: Um hm. That's what I was thinking but do you think that would be kind of like how they felt when they had to sit at the back of the bus and they weren't allowed to be included?

Aaron & Patrick: Yeah.

Robin: They felt kind of left out.

Delpit (2002) states, "Since language is one of the most intimate expressions of identity, indeed, 'the skin that we speak', then to reject a person's language can only feel as if we are rejecting him" (p.47). Aaron, Patrick and Robin discussed the lack of privilege and status that one experiences when unable to express him/herself in the language of choice. Aaron spoke to the rejection and lack of inclusion Francisco experienced in *La Mariposa* (Jimenez, 2000) and he empathized with Francisco. Also, Robin used the back of the bus example to connect to Aaron's idea of lack of inclusion within society.

This following example speaks to the responses of Amanda, Karen, and Jamilet to oppression as connected to race as they discussed the *Invisible Princess* (Ringold, 1998).

(April 25, 2002):

Amanda: How would you feel if um the like the white and Mexican people were slaves today?

Karen: Poor. How about you?

Amanda: Sad. Cause that's why I don't laugh at the black people because..

Jamilet: And white people...

Amanda: Yeah because that's not nice and what if it happened to us?

Amanda asked Karen and Jamilet about their feelings about oppression linked to slavery. She recognized that oppression could happen to everyone including herself and

it motivated her to seriously consider her actions and its possible effects. All three girls were quick to point out that racism could occur to white, mexican, and black people. This discussion led them to think about the oppressor's role, an issue represented in the next category.

Examining The Oppressor's Role

According to Freire (1998),

oppressors do not perceive their monopoly on having more as a privilege, which dehumanizes others and themselves. They cannot see that in the egoistic pursuit of having as a possessing class, they suffocate in their own possessions and no longer are; they merely have. (p.58)

Freire views the oppressor as someone who does not see his or her destruction of others. In this category, children discussed the motives of the oppressor. In particular, they talked about reasons oppressors caused pain for others and how oppressors hurt others without firsthand knowledge and consciousness of their hurtful actions.

In the discussion about oppression, the first and second graders related the role of white people as oppressors to ignorance and a lack of thinking about thinking or metacognition. This discussion was based upon a text set or collection of literature that focused upon power and oppression. The text set included: *The Story of Ruby Bridges* (Coles, 1995), *Picture book of Martin Luther King* (Marzollo, 1991), *Shake Rag: From the Life of Elvis Presley* (Littlesugar, 1998), *More Than Anything Else* (Bradby, 1995), and *Picture Book of Rosa Parks* (Adler, 1995). Prior to the following discussion, we had talked about in previous large group discussions how white people were called white trash in *Shake Rag: From the Life of Elvis Presley* (Littlesugar, 1998), and how white people were "mean" in *White Socks Only* (Coleman, 1999) and *Sister Anne's Hands*

(Lorbiecki, 1998). That's where I am coming from, when I start the discussion with a leading question related to the role of white people within the text set that the children are discussing.

(Jan. 31, 2002):

Jeanne: Can I ask you a question? Why do you think the white people were not nice? I mean you said in *Ruby Bridges*, who had *Ruby Bridges*? You said in *Ruby Bridges* the white people were not nice, right? And then you said in Martin Luther King black and white people. Okay and then in your book Bianca um who was it that helped him learn to read?

Bianca: Um the man.

Jeanne: The other man did? So what do you think that why do you think those white people did all of that? That wasn't very nice of them. What do you think their thinking was?

Edith: Um they weren't thinking about their thinking.

Jeanne: Oh, they weren't?

Edith: And they didn't do some of the habits of mind.

Jeanne: Tell me about it.

Edith: Um I don't know what to say.

Jeanne: That was perfect. Anybody else? Why were those white people so mean?

Edith: Cause they didn't know how to work together.

Jeanne: They didn't know how to work together. That's a great idea.

Bianca: Like Martin Luther King did.

Jeanne: Like Martin Luther King did? Okay.

Edith: Some of them didn't like what Martin Luther King said.

Jeanne: Uh hm.

Bianca: And they can hurt people's feelings.

Jeanne: Uh hm. Do you think they wanted to hurt people's feelings?

Edith: No.

Jeanne: You don't? Why?

Edith: They didn't mean to because they don't know.

Jeanne: They didn't know?

Edith: No. And on the last part I noticed that um let's see um she said I don't know the name of the book I took home.

Jeanne: *The Rosa Parks* book or *The Ruby Bridges*?

Edith: Ruby Bridges yeah and I noticed the last part she said that people didn't know how to work together and she told um God to forgive them.

Edith, Bianca, and I discussed the motives of the oppressor, the white people in all of these stories. Edith was convinced that they are not "thinking about their thinking"

and despite the oppression that they should be forgiven. Bianca and Edith felt that the white people did not understand the significance of working together as Martin Luther King did.

In the next example, from a discussion of *The Lady in the Box* (McGovern, 1999) and *La Senora de la Caja* (1997), Alexis, Diana, Amanda, and I discussed the oppressor in this story. In this case, the storeowner moved the poor lady from the front of his store because he doesn't want his customers to be distracted by her presence.

(December 6, 2002):

Alexis: Like the next day when he saw her he said, "Move, move, you cannot be in front of my store no more because all the people are complaining about you."

Jeanne: Right. What do you think about that? Like this person needs help and she's freezing cold and he says, "Get out, get out, I don't want you any more."

Alexis: It's sad and he

Jeanne: Did you want to say something? Go ahead. Diana?

Diana: She was sad and not warm anymore and that he made her move to the empty stuff with no cold air coming warm air coming out.

Jeanne: Right. So what do you think he was thinking? Do you think that he was ignorant?

Amanda: No. I think that he just didn't know.

Jeanne: He just didn't know?

Amanda: Yeah because that, oh yeah, that gave me a connection to *La Mariposa* (2000) because he wouldn't let her do right there and um the teacher wouldn't let the other boy talk in Spanish. She said, "No, no English, English."

Jeanne: Right and you thought in *La Mariposa* (2000) she did that? That's a great connection. You thought she did that because...

Amanda: She didn't know.

Jeanne: She didn't know and you don't think he knows either, right? So maybe he's just thinking about his... What do you think Jonathan? Is he just thinking about business?

Jonathan: Yeah.

Jeanne: Yeah and so he's ignorant and the teacher in *La Mariposa* that's what you are saying. She's ignorant too.

Alexis and Diana described the cruelty of the oppressor and the effects of his actions on the homeless lady. Amanda was convinced that the oppressor was unaware of his actions and she made the intertextual connection to *La Mariposa* (Jimenez, 2000). She felt strongly that the teacher in *La Mariposa* acted out of ignorance similar to the storeowner in *Lady in the Box*. In her eyes, both oppressors were acting without a true consciousness of their actions (Freire, 1998).

In examining oppression, the children discussed the issue of oppression and the oppressor. First and second graders reflected upon the racism that book characters often experienced and they felt empathy for the characters. Oppression was characterized as being mean and moving away from niceness. In addition, children tried to resolve the tensions of the oppressor. They worked at getting insight into the role of the oppressor and yet they often didn't have negative feelings for the oppressor, but saw oppressors as unaware of their actions (Freire, 1998).

Resistance to Structural Inequality

One issue that the first and second graders raised within literature circle was the resistance to structural inequality. Nieto (2002) states, "structural inequality is based on stratification due to race, social class, gender, ethnicity, and other differences" (p.56). According to Freire (1998), resistance requires massive change within an "infrastructure" and implies action. Within this issue, children shared and reflected upon how they would actively oppose and stand up to the discrimination and the group in power.

In this example, *Feliz Cumpleanos Martin Luther King* (Marzollo, 1994), Lucero, Alexis, and I discussed how Martin Luther King changed the rules within structural inequality.

(January 31, 2002):

Lucero: I thought this book was like...

Alexis: Did you like the book?

Lucero: Yes. I think um that this book like cause Martin changed the rules.

Jeanne: Oh, he changed the rules. Talk to me about that. What do you mean he changed the rules.

Lucero: He like when um somebody got in a fight he um said not to fight and they couldn't the white and the brown people, black people can't drink out of the same drinking fountain um. He fixed a rule so that everyone could drink out of the same drinking fountain.

Jeanne: What do you think of that? Any thoughts about that?

Alexis: I think that's just like us because when Mrs. Thompson came she like showed us how to work things out when we would have problems.

Lucero: It's just the same.

Jeanne: It's just the same. So you are doing things like Martin Luther King?

Lucero: Yeah because a teacher came and told us about that and when we got in a fight she said not to like kick or fight like that. She just told us to use our words.

For Lucero, Martin Luther King's resistance to the rules led to a movement toward equality. Alexis personalized resistance by thinking about how she related to her peers through solving her problems without physically fighting. Both girls described the use of words as an acceptable form of action as resistance to unfair treatment.

In another example, the children discussed the inequality of power experienced by the characters from the text set. Moreover, they discussed how resistance led to a shift in power.

(January 31, 2002):

Jeanne: We have been talking about power. Can you tell me, tell me, in all of these different books there is power in here. Can you tell me about that? Bianca?

Bianca: The man in my story, he had power.

Jeanne: Okay. Why did he have the power?

Bianca: Because the boy didn't know how to read and then he showed him how.

Edith: In my story the people had the power. (Pause).

Jeanne: Anybody else?

Edith: In all these stories the white people had the power and then the black people had the power because they used their words to tell them.

Jeanne: They used their words? Nicholas, do you have anything about power?

Nicholas: Kind of. The black people kind of had power then the whites.

Jeanne: And what did they do to get it?

Nicholas: The black..

Jeanne: How did they get that power?

Nicholas: Um by singing.

Jeanne: By singing?

Edith: No, by using their words.

Edith, Nicholas, Bianca, and I discussed who has the power and how resistance changed the structure of power. For Edith, the black people were able to take back their power by using words. Words in singing and the acquisition of literacy led to shifts in power that then led to resistance. The children saw resistance as taking time and as a possibility that could be achieved.

In this example, resistance was addressed within the discussion of *Feliz Cumpleaños, Martin Luther King* (Marzolo, 1994). Resistance was addressed in terms of standing up to language discrimination (Corson, 2001).

(January 31, 2002):

Jeanne: How about when someone says to you that you can't speak the language that you know?

Lucero: you..

Jeanne: You what?

Lucero: They tell you like what to do and

Jeanne: So someone can tell you what to do? They can tell you what language you can speak? Yeah? And what do you say back to them?

Lucero: No, I want to speak my own language.

Jeanne: Because..

Lucero: Because that's my language.

Jeanne: And what?

Alexis: And it's not their language.

Jeanne: Do you think that's why they don't want you to speak it? Because they only know one language? You don't know? Okay, just a thought. Diana, do you want to tell me some more about that? Has somebody ever said to you couldn't use your language? Just like the people couldn't sit on the bus or go use the water fountain.

Diana: If they say that to me I'll say no don't boss me around.

Jeanne: Don't boss me around? Okay.

Lucero: It gives me a connection to *La Mariposa* (2000) because the teacher didn't let Francisco speak Spanish.

Diana, Lucero, Alexis, and I discussed how they would stand up to someone who would not allow them to speak their language. All three girls were adamant they would stand up to any individual who tried to dictate their language choice. They felt that this resistance led them to have the privilege and status of speaking languages of their choice. Their resistance was matter of fact and very serious for them.

Discussion of the Findings

First and second graders raised issues related to language diversity and culture in small group literature circles within the context of school. These issues are organized into the following five categories: literacy, identity, positionality within society, oppression, and resistance to structural inequality.

The findings from the analysis of the issue of literacy indicate that children continually focused on a family member or relative who personally supported them as they made sense of print. Vygotsky's theory of the zone of proximal development (1978) suggests children's discussions about how someone, such as a family member or relative with experience, provided the learner with assistance as he/she gained competency and independence in his or her learning. Relationships and social interaction (Purcell Gates, 1995) serve as scaffolding as children moved toward independence as literate learners. Thus, children viewed themselves as having status when they achieved literacy (Freire, 1970). For them, becoming literate was embedded in the social network of family and there was great expectation by kids or family that they would achieve literacy (Taylor, 1998).

Children focused on the features of print as a part of the social and physical world, especially language that mattered to them as learners (Goodman, 1989). The findings related to children's discussions about placement of text demonstrated that children thought bilingual texts provided the reader with the power to selectively attend to language as connected to the reader's purpose. In cases where the reader made sense of print in Spanish then he/she purposely attended to the text in Spanish. The reader had power over their reading of text. It is the reader who consciously decided what language he/she attended to as he/she made sense of print. In addition, the reader chose which language to attend to and in some cases attended to both languages by drawing upon them additively as a resource (Ruiz, 1984).

I believe children's literature often privileges English by frequently placing English print in a more prominent place. I thought that the children's idea that readers override this placement with their decision-making was important. Their idea demonstrated how I had underestimated the reader's power to attend to various languages within literature. Within the category of literacy, children discussed how they had power as readers and were able to draw upon two languages additively as a resource (Ruiz, 1984) while reading a biliterate text.

Findings connected to the issue of identity within the category of sense of place highlighted local and funds of knowledge (Lipka, 1998; Gonzales, Moll, & Amanti, in press, &Valdes, 1996). Children discussed the treatment of fevers as an example of funds of knowledge. Within their community, treatment of fevers was tied to local traditions and everyday knowledge. Community knowledge from home was naturally brought forth within school as the children discussed how their families collectively treated fevers (Valdes, 1996). This knowledge provided the children with cohesiveness and a shared frame of experience that ultimately shaped their identities (Lipka, 1998). This shared frame of experience authentically used children's knowledge from home and they integrated this knowledge within schooling (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, in press).

Findings for the issue of race and ethnicity included children's perceptions that belonging to a group was based initially on physical appearance including skin color, extended to language, and finally, to financial support. Children chose to identify themselves and others based upon these criteria that they socially constructed. Their concept of race and ethnicity was based upon their personal and lived through

experiences with various cultural groups (Nieto, 2000). Race and ethnicity was broadly connected to identity in terms of finding the group that one could identify with and language was associated with discourse that shaped the identity of the person (Corson, 2001). Children interpreted language use of individuals to sociocultural identities of themselves and others. Despite my influence as a teacher and researcher, especially in terms of my definitions within the discussions, children largely remained adamant about their ideas connected to race and ethnicity.

Findings for the issue of positionality included the categories of social markers and agency. Children perceived poor people as being positioned without fluidity. Poor people were described by the children as “others” living in the story world without a sense of power and privilege in their lives. Poverty caused real problems, hardships, and social inequalities for “others.” Many of the children had experienced poverty in real ways and yet this was the only issue that for the most part, children removed themselves from and instead often referred to stereotypes as they portrayed the poor as other people. I thought that the books *The Lady in the Box* (1999) and *La Señora de la Caja en la Cartón* (1997) reinforced these stereotypes of poor people and the children couldn't connect personally to the images of the poor woman.

The issue of linguistic agency spoke to the children's willingness to support their families as they took on the roles of translators, interpreters, and teachers. Children took seriously that they needed to support their families by using their linguistic resources to assist their families with learning English. Children sought out opportunities to teach English to family members and to translate as needed in specific social contexts.

Linguistic agency provided legitimacy for knowing and using more than one language in an effort to support the family network.

Findings related to the issue of oppression were comprised of the categories of racism and the role of oppressor. Children considered oppression from multiple perspectives. In particular, children examined oppression in terms of racism that was experienced by others. Difference of race was a factor connected to oppression (Nieto, 2002). The children characterized “white people” as exercising superiority in race over “black people.” The oppressor chose to oppress others out of ignorance and unconsciousness as he or she took away freedoms from the oppressed (Freire, 1970). One child stated that oppression resulted from a lack of someone “not thinking about their thinking” and children agreed that oppressors were not vindictive villains.

Findings for the issue of resistance to structural inequality included different ways that resistance was characterized in various contexts. Resistance to structural inequality included knowledge of the rules prevalent in society. Children considered the rules and thought about how to effectively make change happen. According to Corson (2001),

In order to play in the game to optimum levels of proficiency, we need to learn the full spectrum of special rules that attach to each of the signs at work in the system, so that we can use them in productive ways. (p.11)

Children linked resistance with knowledge of the rules. Resistance occurred only after an initial awareness of the rules. Ultimately, resistance led to changes in power, status, and fairness. Children’s ideas about resistance and acquiring power are in align with Delpit’s fourth aspect of power (1995),

If you are not already a participant in the culture of power, being told explicitly the rules of that culture makes acquiring power easier (p.24).

Power was equated with knowledge of the rules that led to a shift in power, such as being able to speak the language of your choice.

An underlying theme that I found relevant throughout the five categories was power. The children continually looked at power in various contexts. Within the category of literacy, children discussed how they had power as readers and could make the conscious decision to read the language of their choice and were not influenced by outside forces such as the textbook companies. As children talked about identity, family had a powerful influence in their lives as they reflected upon their heritage. In the category oppression, children knew what actions they had to engage in not becoming an oppressor. Finally, resistance as a category led the children to discuss how changes in the rules could ultimately lead to shifts in power. These children were consciously aware of issues of power and surfaced within all five categories of the findings.

Conclusion

Children critically talked about issues related to language diversity and culture in small group literature circles within a schooling context. I organized the issues of talk as follows: literacy, identity, positionality within society, oppression, and resistance to structural inequality. Careful analysis of their talk provided evidence for the following themes: children focusing on family members who support them as literate learners, readers having power in selecting which language they will read, shared frame of local knowledge from the home, group membership as related to race and ethnicity, poor

people as being viewed without motion, children having linguistic agency, and difference of race associated with racism.

An underlying theme that I found relevant throughout the five categories was power. The children continually looked at power in various contexts. Within the category of literacy, children discussed how they had power as readers and could make the conscious decision to read the language of their choice and were not influenced by outside forces, such as the textbook companies. As children talked about identity, family had a powerful influence in their lives as they reflected upon their heritage. In the category oppression, children knew what actions they had to engage in not becoming an oppressor. Finally, resistance as a category led the children to discuss how changes in the rules could ultimately lead to shifts in power. Children were consciously aware of issues of power and it surfaced within all five categories of the findings. I think that the issue of power is significant because power is complex and abstract. Moreover, children had a lot to say about it, thus, refuting the notion that young bilingual children cannot talk about complex subjects and issues.

CHAPTER 5

TYPES OF TALK RELATED TO LANGUAGE DIVERSITY AND CULTURE DISCUSSED BY PARENTS AND CHILDREN AT HOME

Politically and historically there have been schools who have blamed parents for their children's failure within schooling (Heath, 1983; Jacob & Jordan; 1993; Philips, 1983; Purcell-Gates, 1995; Valdes, 1996; Varenne & McDermott; 1999). Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for some schools to dictate to parents how they should be raising their child. In these schools, parents are often deemed as bad parents if they are not meeting certain expectations, particularly in the area of literacy (Heath; 1996). Often we fail to realize that parents want to actively involve themselves as collaborators with the institution of schooling. We often shut them out or only occasionally invite them in to see what we are doing with their kids. We want parents to participate by supporting the schools' agenda. We want them to assist their child in reading but we often want it done on our own terms, without thinking about their culture, language, their goals or busy lives (Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988; Lipka, 1998). And when parents do not fulfill our agendas, we are often disappointed and believe that they are failing their children in their parental role.

In an effort to demonstrate that parents do have the resources to raise their children with rich literacy experiences (Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988; Delgado-Gaitan, 1996, Compton-Lilly, 2000), this study examined three families having critical conversations about literature within their homes. These discussions revealed important

aspects in their lives. The identities of these families, what mattered to them, and what they valued was embedded within the conversations. These conversations allow a window into the families' cultural responses to the literature circles. Parents and children felt comfortable in discussing important ideas in their own choice of language and they were continually pushing themselves to explore their responses as a family.

What types of conversations do parents and first and second graders have about language diversity and culture in their homes in response to school experiences? How do they talk about these issues? What structures are in place to facilitate meaningful conversations around literature and how have they created these structures? What are the key issues that they consider within these conversations? What strengths and literacy histories do the parents present to their children as they discuss these issues? These questions represent one of my major focuses in this inquiry.

In this inquiry, I was guided by the following research question 2): **What types of talk about language diversity and culture do first and second grade students and their families discuss about children's literature?** Three sub-questions frame this question: **What are the characteristics of the talk?, What issues are discussed?, and What aspects of these discussions at home become part of the child's discussions at school?** Findings emerged from the data in terms of the types of talk related to language diversity and culture that are discussed between parents and the first and second grade children in their homes. These findings are based on data from three families: Raymond and his mom, Linda, Karen and her mom, Angela, and Diana and her mom, Angelica. I first introduce the parents and children and then share findings related to characteristics

of the talk, issues brought forth within their talk, and the aspects of talk with parents that children also raised at school.

Parents and Children Creating Meaningful Dialogue

Every child's family discussed children's literature in his or her home as indicated by the response journals that were returned to school regularly. Nine bilingual families volunteered to audiotape the literature discussions. However, three bilingual families consistently taped the literature discussions in their home prior to the literature circles that occurred within the classroom at school. Three students from the multiage class, Raymond, Karen, and Diana, took tape recorders home along with their selected book. Open-ended directions were sent home in a letter asking parents to discuss the book with their child prior to the literature circle occurring at school. These directions were purposely created to be open-ended in order to invite parents to construct and facilitate the conversations from their insights and perspectives. I first describe each family and their decisions about how to purposefully discuss books within the context of the home based upon interviews with each family. Each parent and child within the three families created a different format for dialogue that promoted and maintained meaningful talk about children's literature within that family context.

Raymond and his mom, Linda

Raymond is a first grader, who has an older sister, Destiny, an older brother, Louie, and younger brother, Parker. He is a thoughtful child who chooses his words carefully. He prefers time to think prior to stating his thoughts or opinions. If he is not ready to share his thoughts, opinions, or ideas, he will provide concise responses to

questions. Raymond is described by the family as the quieter child in the family. He enjoys talking about anything but, according to his mom, “when it’s something that we are all discussing, he will be quiet. And when you think he’s not even paying attention, he doesn’t want nothing to do with it and [then] he’ll just come out with something like wow!” Raymond’s mom, Linda, enjoys talking and communicating with others.

Raymond’s sister, Destiny, is also very outgoing and talkative. On occasion, his older and younger brothers participate within the literature discussions.

Raymond is very connected with his dad, who lives out of the state. Raymond visits him and his paternal grandparents on holidays and vacations. Raymond’s mom works at a local bank in the collections department.

This family identifies strongly with their Puerto Rican heritage. Raymond’s first language is English and, according to his mom, Linda knows a minimal amount of Spanish. English is the language spoken most at home. Linda’s second language is Spanish and she speaks and reads in Spanish. Linda recalls, “My grandparents moved from New York to California with their five daughters. My grandfather told my grandmother that in California people don’t speak Spanish. Now we had to speak English. So they quit teaching all of their kids Spanish.” Linda has heard Spanish as an integral part of her childhood but she didn’t start speaking in Spanish until she was fourteen or fifteen years of age. Her two older children can speak Spanish but she feels that Raymond doesn’t know it. Spanish is the dominant language used during his visits with his grandparents.

Linda currently views herself as a reader. She refers to her schooling experiences by stating, "I didn't enjoy reading when I was in school. Even in high school, I had trouble not reading but pronouncing the words or just comprehending the book because I was too busy reading the words to be able to comprehend the book." A typical reading experience for Linda in high school included the required reading and analysis of a classic piece of literature. Following the reading of the book, Linda was required to write a book report retelling the significant parts of the book. Linda says, "It was so hard for me to comprehend a book when I was in school. I can read the book, that's not a problem, but don't ask me anything about it." It wasn't until she was a senior in a high school English class that she connected with reading. Her perspective changed toward reading when she was able to choose her own books. Now she frequently checks books out from the library and reads for her own purposes.

Raymond brought his selected book in English home from school and his brother or sister read the book to him. Raymond's sister enjoyed taking on the role of the teacher with Raymond within the literature discussions. She used question strategies that she had experienced as a learner from school with Raymond. According to Raymond's mom, "My daughter amazes me when she reads to him [Raymond]. She reminds me of a teacher because teachers always know how to read the books good, make them sound interesting, and she does all that. I'm amazed and I didn't learn how to do that I would say until I was in high school."

When his mom arrived home from work, she read the book with Raymond a second time. He read the book with his family two or three times prior to talking about it.

At first, his mom would just sit with Raymond and discuss the book. As time progressed, Raymond's mom made the decision to include his older sister and older brother, and his younger brother. She noticed, "Everybody [in her family] listens to books and everybody could talk about them."

When Linda started the process of discussing the books, she indicated, "I'm not a teacher, I have no clue what to do." Raymond's mom started discussing the books by writing out some broad questions connected to the book to check for his understanding and to "see if he was paying attention." In addition, she said, "I didn't want to quiz him. This is something that was supposed to be fun and he was supposed to think hard. So I just wanted his opinion on what he thought about the book. I just figured that I don't know how to have a discussion without [the questions], so I wrote out some questions before we started taping."

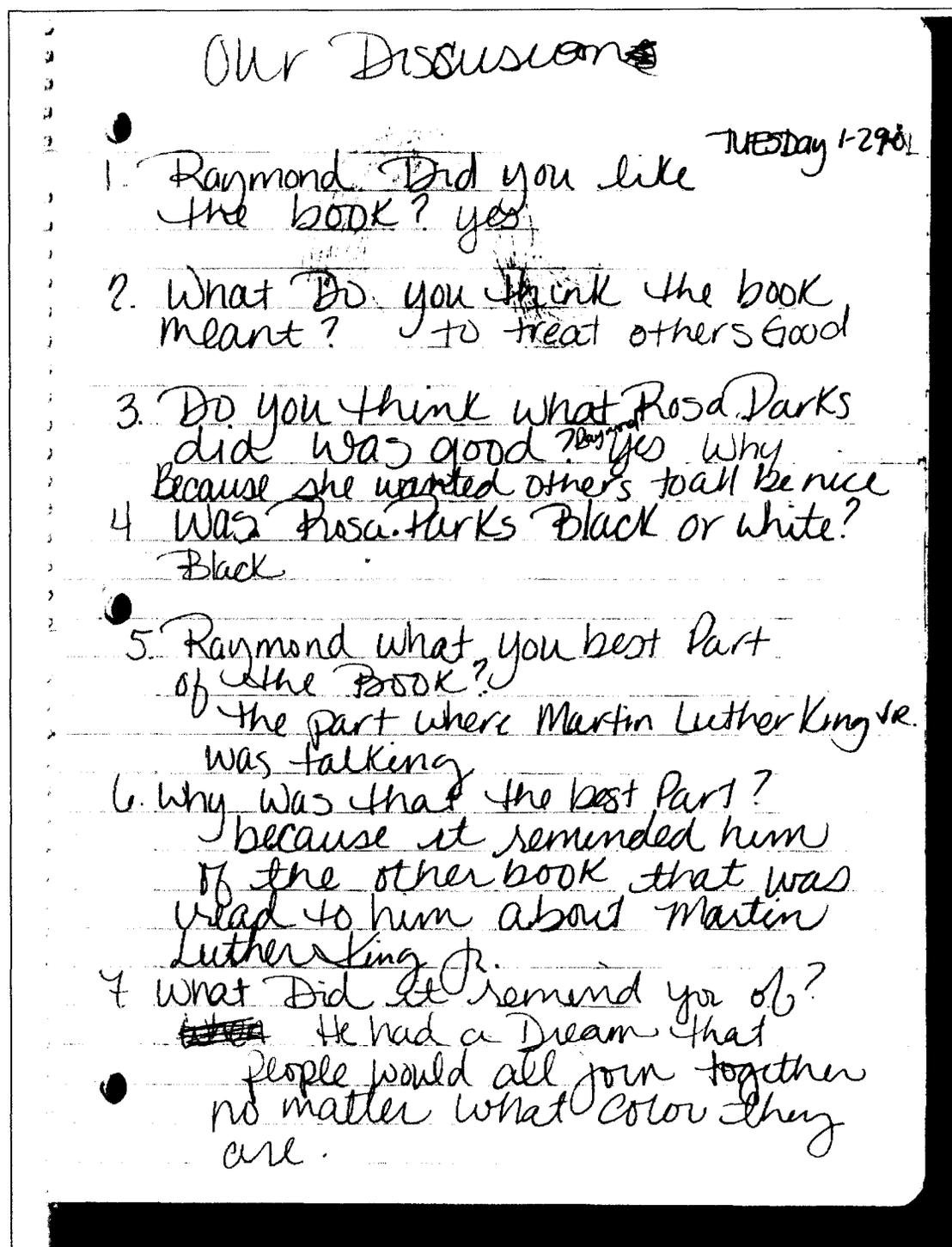


Figure 5.1. Raymond's Response journal and his mom's questions

Raymond's mom asked Raymond some of the questions she had prepared for the discussions and she also asked impromptu questions about his response to the literature (see figure 5.1). For example, a discussion of *Creativity* (Steptoe, 1997) provided Raymond's family with a real reason to investigate and explore their family roots as Puerto Ricans. Raymond's grandmother was pulled into the discussion as she provided additional information on their family's heritage.

Following the discussion, Raymond's mom encouraged Raymond to write what he thought about the book in his journal. According to his mom, "And normally it was a picture that he drew and then I would read to him what I wrote [about the book]."

Karen and her mom, Angela

Karen is a second grader and is personable. She is both reserved and yet can be highly vocal. She has a keen sense of humor and enjoys reading. Her family plays an important role in her life and she is very attached to her mom. Her dad resides outside of their home. She talks often about her extended family in Mexico and she finds that it is difficult to leave and return to the United States. Karen is proud of her heritage and she defines herself and her family as Mexican.

When Karen entered school, she was fully proficient in Spanish and learning English. Karen used both English and Spanish in her writing. Now Karen is proficient orally in Spanish and English. Angela has a real concern about the language loss that affects every generation. She feels that Karen is speaking a lot of English and less Spanish and she doesn't want Karen to lose her ability to communicate in Spanish. Angela's first language is Spanish and she is learning English. She understands English

and wants to speak it, however, she is more comfortable speaking Spanish. She has one brother within the United States and the rest of her family lives in Mexico. She is unable to visit Mexico very often because it is expensive. Instead, she speaks with her family by phone on a regular basis.

Angela supports her family by working nights in a factory. Sometimes she has to work so much that she is unable to accompany Karen to school. She strongly desires that Karen learn to play a musical instrument and take ballet lessons in the future. Angela learned to read and experience literature in Mexico. She was unable to bring books home but she has memories of reading interesting stories. She learned many important things from reading. Oral stories were a part of her heritage as a reader. Her dad often told stories and had an incredible memory as he told the stories. For example, Angela stated, “No comparto con Karen y mi papa contaba muchas historias y no tengo una memoria.” Se me olvidó.” [I do not share them (oral stories) with Karen and my dad used to tell many stories and I do not have the memory for it. I forgot them.]

Karen selected books in Spanish for her literature circle. Her mom and her sister would read the books with her. Her sister would discuss the books with her in Spanish and English. In contrast, her mom preferred to read the entire book aloud to Karen and then discuss the books in Spanish. If the book was in English, the discussion was shorter on the tape. In particular, Karen’s mom looked for parts of the book that Karen enjoyed and understood. She felt that it was important to use questions to check Karen’s understanding of the book. Karen’s mom stated, “Pues, yo explico lo que entiendo con preguntas.” [I explain what it is that I understand with questions]. In addition, her mom

used a wait time of 30 seconds to 60 seconds between questions as a way of allowing Karen time to formulate her responses.

According to Angela, “Si porque a veces yo le preguntó primero a ella que se trató el libro y ella me dice. Y le digo a leerlo.” [At times, I would ask her to discuss the book and she would talk to me. And I would tell her to read it.] The question strategy allowed Karen and her mom to make sense of the books in Spanish and English. Karen’s mom supported her daughter’s knowledge of Spanish by using questions and Karen would frequently assist her mom in English. Her mom stated, “Cosas que contando pues me como me avisa me das espero por que aveces es de cuando es en inglés es difícil, no entiendo mucho, yo quiero que ella pues seá o le digo que quiere decir esta palabra y dice no se como no saben en inglés pero no saben en Español. [Things that are telling like that inform me to give time to wait because that is when it is in English and it’s difficult, I don’t understand much, I want to know that she knows and can say to me what she wants to say about this word and she says that she doesn’t know it in English or in Spanish.]. Karen’s mom wanted to gain an understanding of what Karen comprehended from the book. Following their discussion, Karen wrote and responded to the literature in her response journal.

Diana and her mom, Angelica

Diana is a second grader who enjoys reading and writing. She has a few close friends and is outgoing within her circle of friends. Diana is close to her mom, dad, and her four-year-old sister. She loves animals and has a talkative pet bird that lives outside

of her home because of her asthma. Her mom describes Diana as an obedient and good-natured child.

Diana's family identifies with Mexican-American heritage. Diana is highly proficient orally in Spanish and English. Angelica's first language is Spanish and Diana often assists her mom in the store by reading in English. Angelica feels that it is important to know Spanish and English. She wants to take classes in English but she has difficulty finding the time between being a wife, working full-time, and caring for her two daughters.

Diana's mom, Angelica moved to the United States from Mexico when she was ten years old. She attended school until she was in the sixth grade in Mexico. When she arrived in the United States, she couldn't attend school because it wasn't a good time for her family. Angelica states, "Pues, me recuerda mucho cuando estaba allá. Todo lo que hacía. Hice muchas cosas que vienen de los libros que vivá allá. Mi esposo tambien Salió las cosas." [For me, I remember a lot (of experiences) when I was there. It was what we did. We made many things that come from the books (sent home with Diana) that live there. My husband (Diana's dad) also returns to these things.]. Diana's dad arrived in the United States where he thought that there was great opportunity for him.

Diana's mom, Angelica, has no extended family here. All of her family resides in Mexico. Angelica's mother and her five brothers live there. Angelica's husband has two brothers and several nieces that reside within the United States. They are not able to visit Mexico very often and Diana doesn't remember her last visit there because she was only

one year old. Diana's family is planning a summer trip to Mexico to reconnect with extended family.

Diana selected bilingual books or books in Spanish to read at home. According to Diana's mom, "Puedes leerlos juntos y envimos y agarremos las ideas con los libros." [We read the books together and we would tell each other our ideas and hold onto the ideas with the books.] In terms of coming up with ideas for the discussion, Angelica states, "Primero pensamos. Y despues, lo decimos allí y para se grabé [First, we thought about the ideas. And afterwards, we would talk about it, and then we would record.] Directly following the taping of the discussion Diana's mom remembers, " Y despues, ella se pone a escribir." [And afterwards, she places her ideas into writing]. Diana's mom wanted to help her daughter with the discussions. She states, " Yo le ayudo a ella a vez. Hay cosas que yo no entienden como son en inglés y casi no sé y yo le ayudo cuando puedo." [I do help her at times. There are things that I do not always understand in English and I don't know about and I do help her when I am able.] Diana's dad discussed one book with Diana. Diana's mom recalls, "Y yo le digo a la niña le gusta que su papa le ayuda pero si le gusta el libro con ella pero ya no eso. Pero casi no le gusta le da verguenza. No le gusta oír la voz." [And I told him that his daughter likes it when her dad helps her and she likes (reading) the books with him but that wasn't it (for him). But nearly every time, he doesn't like to experience shame. He doesn't like to hear his voice (on the tape).]

Diana's mom feels that the books that were sent home in Spanish allowed her to support her daughter's learning. For example, she says, "Ella dice en inglés, y ella ya

sabe en Español que dice manda ella y ella cuando hace las letras y escribió en Español y me dice las letras todo. Si le ayuda la niña enseña cosas no sabe ella.” [She speaks in English and she already knows in Spanish what she means, when to make and write in Spanish and she tells me all of the letters. I help her and teach things to her that she doesn’t know.]

According to Diana’s mom, “A veces no entiendo las palabras. Tiene un diccionario allí en Español. Y le dice ella. Hay muchas palabras casi no sabe. Yo lo quiero enseñe.” [At times, I do not understand the words. Diana has a Spanish dictionary. There are many words she doesn’t know. I want to teach her.] Diana and her mom used the literature conversations to facilitate learning in Spanish and English. Diana’s mom also thinks that she connected to the book discussions because the books reflected herself and her life. The books contain elements that are valued and hold importance for her. She does make tortillas, tamales, pan [bread], and tortas [cakes] and she can connect to the many issues that come from the books.

Characteristics of Talk: Parents and Children Creating Meaningful Dialogue

I answered research question two and its first subquestion: **What are the characteristics of the talk?** as I identified four major categories: conversational maintenance, personal response, retelling, and evaluation. These characteristics were determined as I read through the transcripts of the home setting literature discussions audiotaped in the homes of these three families and sent back to school that I translated and transcribed. Two transcripts from the literature discussions were selected for each family.

I carefully examined every utterance (complete comment or word) in each of the two selected discussions for each family. As I analyzed the transcripts for the categories, I then coded and categorized every utterance for the specific characteristics of talk. I numbered each utterance and added the total number of utterances together for each discussion. Moreover, I then divided the number of utterances from every category of characteristics of talk per discussion by the total number of utterances from each discussion. I converted these numbers to percentages that are shown in Table 5.1. Titles and summaries of literature used for these discussions are also noted in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1
Percentages of Utterances in 6 Parent/Child Literature Discussions

	Raymond		Raymond		Karen		Karen		Diana		Diana		Total Utt.	
Book	<i>Los Ojos del Tejedor; The Eyes of the Weaver</i> (Ortega; 1998)		<i>Picture Book of Rosa Parks</i> (Adler; 1995)		<i>Tomás and the Library Lady</i> (Mora; 1997)		<i>Grandfather Counts</i> (Cheng; 2000)		<i>La Señora de la Caja de Cartón [Lady in the Box]</i> (McGovern; 1999)		<i>The Cactus Wren and the Cholla; El Reyzeuelo y La Cholla</i> (Garcia; 1997)			
Book Summary	<i>Christina visits her grandfather. She learns to communicate with him through the art of weaving.</i>		A biographical account of Rosa Parks. Her life, challenges, and triumphs are highlighted.		Tomas, the child of a migrant worker, becomes friends with a librarian.		<i>Gong Gong and his granddaughter, Helen learn to communicate with each other in Chinese and English.</i>		Two children defend and assist a homeless woman.		A little bird, cactus wren, searches and builds his home for the first time in the Southwest.			
Discussants	Sister/Child		Parent/Child		Parent/Child		Parent/Child		Parent/Child		Parent/Child		Fam./Child	
Type of utterance: Conversational Maintenance														
No. of Questions	4	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	
No. of Comments	8	2	10	3	0	4	0	8	8	17	10	20	6	9
Total	12	2	13	3	3	4	0	8	8	17	10	20	8	9
Personal Response														
Questions	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Comments	5	9	0	0	0	2	17	25	0	0	40	0	10	6
Total	10	10	0	0	0	2	17	25	0	0	40	0	11	6
Retelling														
Questions	5	3	7	0	15	5	9	0	0	0	0	0	6	1
Comments	30	12	3	5	37	28	9	32	17	24	0	20	16	20
Total	35	15	10	5	52	33	18	32	17	24	0	20	22	21
Evaluation														
Questions	6	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
Comments	5	5	23	20	6	0	0	0	17	17	0	10	9	9
Total	11	5	49	20	6	0	0	0	17	17	0	10	14	9

Table 5.1 shows the family's characteristics of talk from the literature discussions. The table is followed by a definition of each category and examples of each family's characteristics of talk. In addition, I discuss the similarities and differences among the characteristics of talk among the families.

Conversational Maintenance

According to Eeds and Wells (1989), conversational maintenance refers to, "comments which began the conversations, kept them going, or in some cases stopped them" (p.8). This category, conversational maintenance, includes comments that ultimately facilitate and keep the conversation moving. In addition, this category includes responses that indicate active listening. For example, the parent might repeat the word that the child has stated as a way of demonstrating listening to the child. Praise and encouragement are also included in this category.

In the home literature discussions with Raymond, his sister, and his mom, conversational maintenance was the category that had the least amount of utterances. Raymond's sister and mom largely facilitated the discussions with comments and occasionally used questions to maintain the conversations. For example, his sister questioned Raymond about *Los Ojos del Tejedor; The Eyes of the Weaver* (Ortega; 1998), "What do you have to say Raymond?" and ended the same conversation with, "Are we done?" Raymond's mom stated, "And that's our discussion on *Rosa Parks*. Do you have anything else to say about the book?" In contrast, Raymond only used minimal remarks and was not the dominant person who kept the conversation moving. According to Kutz (1997), "the responsibility for structuring and maintaining the ongoing

discourse rests with the person in authority” (p.140). Raymond’s mom and sister shaped the discourse as the persons with authority within the conversations.

Unlike Raymond, Diana and Karen in their home literature discussion largely facilitated the literature discussions. Diana and Karen are both second graders and have previously participated in literature circles for a year with Robin within the multi-age classroom. Both girls used their year of experience with literature circles to control the conversations with comments in the context of the home. In addition, Karen and Diana were knowledgeable about the literature in Spanish and English and this knowledge of two languages allowed them to be an authority when English was present within the literature. The book’s language played a role in Karen’s mom facilitating the conversation. Karen’s mom assisted Karen in the maintenance of the conversations within the *Tomás and The Library Lady* (Mora, 1997) discussion and Karen controlled the conversation with the book, *Grandfather Counts* (Cheng, 2000).

Karen and Diana often started and ended the conversations. For example, Karen stated, “My name is Karen. The book we are reading today is *Tomás and the Library Lady* (Mora, 1997). I have something to share.” Karen’s mom used questions connected to the conversation with *Tomás and the Library Lady* (Mora; 1997) such as, “Que más?” [What more do you have to say?] and “Es todo?” [Is that everything?]. Diana ended one of the conversations with “Y eso es todo” [And that’s all]. Diana’s mom had half as many comments connected to conversational maintenance as compared with Diana.

All three children had power as speakers by effectively gaining access to the floor. Mehan (1982) refers to getting the floor as “having a turn to talk” and “students

cannot just talk any time.” There were “proper places” for students to introduce their talk (p.75). Although Mehan’s discussion of the floor referred to the classroom and there are differences between home and school, the floor also existed in the home. The rules for gaining access to the floor within the home depended upon who was viewed as having authority within the conversations. Raymond, Karen, and Diana, the children in each family, were never interrupted and maintained the floor within the conversations for as long as they had something to say. Raymond wasn’t as active in pursuing the floor unless he had something specific to say and wanted his response heard. His family immediately took an interest in controlling the floor. However, Karen and Diana actively pursued the maintenance or “holding of the floor” (Mehan, 1982).

Personal Response

Personal response refers to the connection that exists between the reader and the text. As the reader constructs meaning from the text, he or she responds by connecting the text to a life experience. According to Hancock (2000), “a reader becomes a part of the book and gains a vested interest in the reading process when he or she can connect to it in a personal way” (p.16). Eeds and Peterson (1990) emphasized that students connect to the literature on an emotional and intellectual level.

In all three families, the percentage of utterances within the category of personal response varied according to the book title. Each child and family member had one literature discussion where the percentages of the utterances in personal response were highly represented. High percentages of utterances in the category of personal response were indicated as follows: Raymond (10 %) and his sister (10 %) for *Los Ojos de*

Tejedor/The Eyes of the Weaver (Ortega, 1998), Karen (25 %) and her mom's (17 %) for *Grandfather Counts* (Cheng, 2000), and Diana (0 %) and her mom (40%) for *The Cactus Wren and the Cholla/ El Reyzeuelo y La Cholla* (Garcia, 1997).

Raymond and his sister's (RS) discussion of *Los Ojos Del Tejedor/ The Eyes of the Weaver* (Ortega, 1998) demonstrate personal response in the following example:

RS: When you go visit your grandparents in California, like on your rotations, spring breaks, intersession, are you happy to go?

R: Yes.

RS: Why?

R: Because I could see my cousins and visit my dad

RS: So now you see how Maria Cristina felt, right?

R: Yes.

RS: She was excited.

Raymond and his sister connected to the *Los Ojos Del Tejedor; The Eyes of the Weaver* (Ortega, 1998) and its true account of Maria Cristina's experience of visiting her grandpa.

Raymond and his sister discussed Raymond's feelings connected to leaving his family that he lived with on a daily basis in order to visit his dad and extended family. Raymond was able to make a personal connection with the book's central character. In his life, he experienced excitement when he was able to spend time visiting with his dad and extended family.

Personal response for Karen (K) and her mom (KM) is represented in the following example of a discussion from *Grandfather Counts* (Cheng, 2000):

KM: Y la otra cosa es que su papá habla sobre una nueva programación de computadora para aprender lenguajes. Y un amigo de trabajo le dio una copia de version chino y su papa le dijo que de verdad muy bonito. Y también que era un real ejemplo para papá que puedas explicar la voz que dice. [And the other thing is that your dad speaks about a new computer program for learning languages. And a friend from his work

gave him a Chinese version and your dad said that truthfully it was very lovely (to hear). And also it was a real example for your dad of how you can explain the pronunciation of the word (in the book)].

K: It reminds me of my grandpa and me because I talk in English and he talks in Mexican. And I teach him English and he teaches me in Mexican. In Mexican, I mean.

Karen's mom's personal response came from Karen's dad's experiences with Chinese. She connected to his experience with the Chinese language through the use of a computerized language program. Since Chinese was a language that was new to their family, the computer program allowed them to experience Chinese personally. In contrast, Karen's personal response focused on her relationship with her grandpa in Mexico. She connected to the grandpa (Gong Gong) within the book. In particular, Gong Gong was trying to connect to his granddaughter, Helen, as they sought ways to communicate their knowledge of their respective languages, Chinese and English. Karen ultimately related to this role as she and her grandpa worked to communicate and teach each other English and Mexican (Spanish).

The personal response of Diana's mom (DM) in *The Cactus Wren and the Cholla/El Reyzeuelo y La Cholla* (Garcia; 1997) is as follows:

DM: Yo sé. Para mí, es un simboló de valentía. De lo que podemos y tenemos fe en nosotros mismos. Es posible. Nosotros trabajamos duros para conseguirlo. Este lo que significa para mí, el Reyzeuelo de Cactus y por eso me recuerda a mis antepasados hispanicos. [I know. For me it is a symbol of courage that we become and we have faith and believe in ourselves. It is possible. We work very hard in an effort to obtain it. This is what it signifies for me, the cactus wren, for this it reminds me of my Hispanic ancestors.]

Diana's mom connected to the final page of the book. Her first two sentences and the final sentence came directly from the text. Her own words as a response were "Es posible. Nosotros trabajamos duros para conseguirlo." [It is possible. We work very hard in an effort to obtain it.] Diana mom's response was drawn from her experience as she immigrated to the United States as a ten year old. She visualized the possibilities and opportunities within the United States and equated these with the hard work that she had experienced.

The above examples highlight personal response within specific book discussions in each of the three families. On the other hand, Raymond and his mom's discussion of *A Picture Book of Rosa Parks* (Adler, 1995) and Diana and her mom's discussion of *La Señora de la Caja en el Cartón* [*Lady in the Box*] (McGovern, 1999) yielded no utterances connected to personal response. In addition, Karen and her mom's discussion of *Tomás y la Señora de la Biblioteca* [*Tomás and the Library Lady*] (Mora, 1997) only had two percent of utterances connected to personal response.

Moreover, Short (1993) maintains, "In life, reading is an open transactive process, not a process of reading one text in isolation from life. Readers make multiple connections across texts, ideas, and experiences. These connections continually change over time with each new experience and text" (p. 285). In addition, each family had one book within their discussions that strongly brought forth personal responses about the connections they had experienced within their lives. I think that certain books resonated with the parent's life experiences and influenced the parents and children to make a life connection with the book. In reality, there are times as readers where books do pull in

those life experiences for us as readers (Short, Kaufman, Kaser, Kahn, and Crawford, 1999). And there are times where we do not connect personally with the literature.

Retelling

Retelling was a characteristic of talk presented within each family's discussion of literature and retelling referred to a reader's response that demonstrated thoughtful understanding from the literature (Goodman, Watson, & Burke, 1987). According to Jennings & O'Keefe (2002), when sharing a text about difficult topics such as prejudice or discrimination, teachers or parents may find themselves asking children to focus upon the direct facts in the text, such as "What did the Supreme Court rule about this case in 1956 (p. 407)?" These types of questions and remarks connected to retelling are often used within a schooling context as a safe way of exploring tough issues (Jennings & O'Keefe; 2002, Mehan; 1979). This category of retelling includes inferences (Goodman, Watson, & Burke, 1996), literal retellings, questions and references to the facts of the text (Eeds and Wells, 1989).

Retelling was a dominant characteristic of talk within most of the discussions among all three families. Raymond's discussion of *Los Ojos del Tejedor; The Eyes of the Weaver* (Ortega, 1998) with his sister had the highest number of utterances in the retelling category. Raymond had 15% and his sister had 35 % of the utterances connected to retelling in their discussion. His sister utilized the question and answer format of discourse from her schooling experiences as she talked with Raymond. Raymond's discussion with his mom about *The Picture Book of Rosa Parks* (Adler, 1995), yielded 10% for his mom and 5 % of the utterances in the category of retelling.

Raymond's mom was genuinely concerned that Raymond understood the content of the book based upon her own experiences with schooling. She felt that she didn't excel in comprehending facts and struggled with understanding the meaning behind the text.

Retelling is evident in this example of Raymond and his mom's discussion of *The Picture Book of Rosa Parks*.

RM: Was Rosa Parks black or white?

R: White

RM: Okay, look again. Was Rosa Parks black or white?

R: Black!

RM: Black

In this example, Raymond's mom wanted to be sure Raymond distinguished Rosa Park's color. She instructed him to look again at the book's illustration and he told her "Black." She reiterated his answer so that he understood the concept from the text that Rosa Parks is black. However, Raymond's mom did move away from the retelling questions within the discussions and moved toward the fourth characteristic of talk, evaluation. The movement away from retelling occurred because his mom wanted the discussions to demonstrate Raymond's opinions concerning the books and she didn't want to be in the position of quizzing him about facts directly from the literature (as she indicated in an interview).

Retelling was the dominant characteristic of talk in both of Karen's discussions with her mom. In the discussion of *Tomás and the Library Lady* (Mora, 1997), retelling accounted for 52% of the utterances from Karen's mom and 33 % of the utterances for Karen. The *Grandfather Counts* (Cheng, 2000) discussion had 18 % of the utterances connected to retelling for Karen's mom and 32% for Karen. Karen's mom, as stated in

an interview, indicated the question strategy that she used was important to her and allowed her to gain a sense of Karen's understandings from the literature. Karen and her mom moved from a question and answer format to a conversation around the story by using the comments connected to the details of the story. Comments connected to retelling accounted for more than double of the utterances represented. Although retelling was very high for Karen and her mom, other characteristics of talk were represented within the discussions.

Retelling is used in the following discussion between Karen (K) and her mom (KM) as they discussed [*Tomás and the Library Lady*] (Mora, 1997):

- KM: Te voy a preguntar algo por que quiero hasta platicar de que se tratar con el libro (y) si te entendemos un poco. Más o menos? Tu que piensas que se trata el libro?
 [I am going to ask you something because I want to chat until the book is discussed and see if we understand a little bit (of the book). More or less? What did you think that the book talked about?]
- K: De Tomás? [About Tomás]
- KM: Que hace Tomás? [What did Tomás do?]
- K: Um iba la librería (biblioteca). Y lee libros. [He went to the (library). And read books.]
- KM: Hmm, con la Señora de la librería. [Hmm, with the (library) lady.]
- K: hmm
- KM: Y le enseñaba Español. Verdad? [And he taught her Spanish. Right?] Y [And]
- K: Y inglés [And English]
- KM: Inglés y que hacen los abuelitos? Levantaron este..basuras.
 [English and what did the grandparents do? They picked up this ..garbage.]
- K: hmm
- KM: Levantaron las basuras. Y que más? [They picked up garbage. And what else?]
- K: Papá Grande lea libros a Tomás. Y Papa Grande dijo que si puede ir allá a la librería (biblioteca). Agarrar libros para que nos enseñe nuevos libros (cuentos).
 [Granddad read books to Tomás. And Granddad said that he could go to the (library). He could get books in order to teach new books

(stories).]

Karen's mom used questions that were specific and open-ended to discuss key elements of the book. Karen often paused and responded to the questions with detailed answers. If details were missing from her answers, Karen's mom prompted Karen with a question such as *Y que más?* [And what else?] and *Y?* [And?]. Karen responded to her mom's questions with the reiterated facts from the text.

Diana and her mom had the highest number of utterances in the category of retelling for their discussion of *La Señora de la Caja de Cartón* [Lady in the Box] (McGovern, 1999). Diana's mom had 17% and Diana had 24% of the utterances connected to recall. In contrast, Diana had only 20 % and her mom had 0% of the utterances in the category of retelling in the discussion of *The Cactus Wren and the Cholla/ El Reyzeuelo y La Cholla* (Garcia, 1997). This discussion accounted for the third lowest number of utterances out of the four characteristics of talk.

Diana and her mom's discussion (DM) of *La Señora de la Caja de Cartón* [Lady in the Box] (McGovern, 1999) use retelling in the following example:

- D: *Y le dió una llave para que tenía su apartamento. Ella (era) solita.*
 [And he gave her a key so she would have an apartment. She (was) alone.]
- DM: *Para que tuviera..* [In order that she would have...]
- D: *Para que tenia su casa y anda, no viví una..*
 [In order that she would have a house and she would move, not have lived in a....]
- DM: *Para que es mas frío.* [In order that she becomes very cold]
- D: *Para que anda mas frio y va no vivir en la caja de cartón.*
 [In order that she would move away from the cold and was not going to live in a cardboard box.]

In this particular example, Diana and her mom paused and used open-ended phrases for each other to complete the phrase by filling in the facts from this book. Diana's mom facilitated the use of this format and Diana followed her lead. This format allowed Diana and her mom to use their knowledge together to make sense of the facts. In addition, this format flowed naturally as an informal conversation around a book. This example of retelling did not have only one person in a position of power asking questions. Additionally, the second person was not committed to demonstrating his or her knowledge of the book with answers to the questions.

All three families considered retelling to be highly significant in their dialogue. They really wanted their children to discuss and understand the story's meaning (as stated in interviews). That is, the facilitators of the discussions were influenced by their literacy histories and schooling experiences within the home context that strongly fostered retelling. Although retelling was highly prevalent within all discussions, it was not the only characteristic of talk that was emphasized.

Evaluation

Evaluation as the final characteristic of talk includes a range of comments and questions that connects to the discussants' thoughts and responses to the text as a whole (Eeds and Wells, 1989) and to other texts. For example, discussants take a critical stand, framed by their comments and questions, as to why they connected to a book or several books. Such evaluation discussions include participants providing a rationale behind their understandings of a particular book. Specific evaluative thoughts about the text(s) and illustrations are included within this category.

Evaluation was the highest characteristic of talk in Raymond and his mom's discussion of *The Picture Book of Rosa Parks* (Adler, 1995). Raymond's mom had 49% of the utterances connected to evaluation and Raymond had 20 % of the utterances. In contrast, Raymond's utterances were 5% and his sister had 11% of the utterances related to evaluation in their discussion of *Los Ojos del Tejedo; The Eyes of the Weaver* (Ortega, 1998).

The following excerpt is an example of evaluation from Raymond (R) and his mom's discussion (RM) of *The Picture Book of Rosa Parks* (Adler, 1995):

RM: What do you think the book meant [to you]?

R: About being nice to others.

RM: Being nice to others. And treating others equally-as well as being nice to them. Do you think we should treat people different because their skin color is different?

R: No.

RM: Do you think that what Rosa Parks did was good?

R: Yes.

RM: Why do you think it was good?

R: Because her is trying to be nice to others.

RM: She wants everybody to be nice to each other. Right, because we're all people, right?

In this first example of evaluation, Raymond's mom tried to understand a sense of Raymond's overall sense and thoughts related to the book. She wanted to know about his perspectives about the entire book and understand his own interpretation of the book. Raymond's mom moved to asking Raymond about his favorite connection to the book in the next evaluation example.

RM: Why did you like that part the best when he was in it? Why?

R: Because it reminds me of another book.

RM: It reminds you of the other book? Is the book about what Martin Luther King Junior did?

R: Yes.

RM: Okay, what did remind you about the other book?

R: When he was talking.

RM: What was he talking about?

R: About being nice..dreaming about being nice to others no matter what color they are.

RM: He was dreaming about being nice to others no matter what color they are. That's right, he was dreaming that we would all just come together no matter what color we are.

R: I have a book of that.

RM: And Rosa Parks did pretty much the same thing. She was stopping segregation. She didn't want us to be separated. She didn't think it was necessary for the white people to sit in the front and the black people to sit in the back of the bus. It didn't matter where you sat, right? Right, it didn't matter where you sat, right?

In this example, Raymond immediately connected his thoughts about Rosa Parks to his Martin Luther King book. He discussed his thoughts on Martin Luther King and his dreams. Raymond's mom ultimately related Raymond's thoughts about Martin Luther King to Rosa Parks. Evaluation allowed Raymond and his mom to thoughtfully connect their thoughts to their readings about issues of race and discrimination across two books.

Evaluation played a minor role in Karen and her mom's discussions. In their discussion of *Grandfather Counts* (Cheng, 2000), Karen and her mom had no utterances connected to evaluation. Additionally, the conversation of *Tomás and the Library Lady* (Mora, 1997) accounted for 6% of Karen's mom's utterances and 0% for Karen. Karen's mom stated the following connected to evaluation in the discussion of *Tomás and the Library Lady* (Mora, 1997):

KM: Esta muy larga la historia. Y yo no todo contar mucho por que hasta en inglés. [This is very long story. And I am not able to remember all of it because it is in English.]

KM: Es un poquito porque...Yo no entendía mucho y tu quieres aprenderme

mucho también. [It is a little because....I do not understand a lot of it and I want you to learn with me a lot of it also.]

For Karen's mom, evaluation represented her personal thoughts on the text in terms of her understandings of a long story that was in her second language, English. Although she articulated and conveyed her understandings of the story meaningfully in the retelling category, her evaluative comments reflected her uneasiness in evaluating the text as a whole. She viewed Karen and herself as co-learners who assisted each other in constructing critical understandings from the text.

Diana and her mom established the significance of evaluation in their discussion of *La Señora de la Caja de Cartón [Lady in the Box]* (McGovern, 1999). Diana and her mom each had 17% of the utterances in this category. In this discussion, evaluation existed as the second highest category out of the four categories. Additionally, Diana had 10% of the utterances connected to evaluation in the discussion of *The Cactus Wren and the Cholla; El Reyzeuelo y La Cholla* (Garcia; 1997). The following is an example of evaluation from the discussion of *La Señora de la Caja de Cartón [Lady in the Box]* (McGovern, 1999):

DM: Mi favorita..[My favorite..]

D: Esto es mi favorita historia. [This is my favorite story.]

DM: Hay me gusto cuando los niños le ayudan a la señora para que no tenía el fondo para que tuviera más feo (experiencia).

[The part that I liked happened when the children help the lady that didn't have money in order to assist her from having an ugly experience.]

Diana and her mom both agreed that this story was their favorite. In particular, Diana's mom connected to the motives of the children and their willingness to preserve

the dignity of the homeless lady. They made sense of this story together and made interpretations of its value as their favorite story.

Raymond and his mom, Karen's mom, and Diana and her mom used evaluative talk within their discussions. They engaged in authentic dialogue that consisted of their thoughts and overall opinions concerning the literature. Each family constructed meaning from the text based upon his or her lens as a reader through which he or she perceived the text. In particular, evaluation brought forth the discussants' voices, their perceptions, and original perspectives from the literature.

Discussion of the Findings

The data led me to see that parents and children had complex ways of talking about literature. Discourse took shape across these features of talk. Thus, parents and children relied on their experiences as effective communicators as they created and maintained powerful conversations. From their discussions, I categorized four characteristics of talk: conversational maintenance, personal response, retelling, and evaluation.

Retelling was a dominant characteristic of the talk that surfaced often within the dialogue from all three families. Retelling facilitated dialogue that largely consisted of "raw talk" directly derived from the text (Bakhtin, 1981). Bakhtin (1981) states,

We can go so far as to say that in real life people talk most of all about what others talk about—they transmit, recall, weigh and pass judgment on other people's words, opinions, assertions, information; people are upset by others' words, or agree with them, contest them, refer to them and so forth (p.338).

In this study, retelling as "raw talk" was based upon the usage of others' words directly from the written text as a way of framing dialogue. It made sense that retelling,

as a characteristic of talk, relied on the familiarity of words used by others within a text. Retelling was used often as a discourse style particularly connected to the oral stories that were often presented within the families' discourse. Retelling is often associated and perceived with less status as compared with evaluative talk (Jennings and O'Keefe; 2002). Retelling is often viewed as a major feature of school talk. Family members' school experiences (as stated in interviews) influenced them to use retelling as a way of demonstrating comprehension of a text within the dialogue.

These findings indicated that retelling was a significant feature of talk that enhanced dialogue. Miscue analysis (Goodman, Watson, & Burke, 1987) draws upon retelling as a reader's response that provides insight into the reader's thoughtful understanding of the text. I contend retelling, within this study, was a characteristic of talk that allowed families to carefully craft their responses and understandings while using the direct text as scaffolding (Goodman, Watson, & Burke, 1987). Dialogue taken directly from the text acted as support to the family members as they discussed the complexities related to issues of language diversity and culture.

Additionally, retelling was a way of recounting stories and experiences connected to relationships directly drawn from the literature. For example, Karen's mom had experiences with oral stories that her dad had shared with her. Although she couldn't remember these stories and had not been able to continue the tradition of oral storying, retelling as a feature of talk was a dominant discourse form that she used competently within the discussions. Thus, her experiences with retelling were pervasive within these discussions.

In addition to retelling, personal response and evaluation were significant characteristics of talk. Personal response included personal transactions with the text. Families continually connected to selected texts on a personal basis. In the examples of dialogue where families personally responded to the literature, families focused upon characters from the literature and made connections from their own lives. Multiple connections to selected literature facilitated dialogue as family members utilized their life experiences to construct dialogue (Short, 1993).

The specific piece of the literature being discussed had a major influence on the amount of personal response for each family. In most discussions, families transacted with the text and made connections with the literature. In several cases, parents were more likely to personally respond to the literature than the children. Because of their age, parents had many life experiences based upon their age that they used to connect and talk about the literature.

Findings related to the evaluation category demonstrated how families' discourse consisted of critical perspectives from the literature. Parent and children were able to dialogue critically on an equal basis. Parents didn't dominate the evaluation category and children were able to construct dialogue that tackled tough issues. Dialogue consisted of families taking a proactive stance on issues of racism, discrimination, and immigration. I think that the presence of these issues within the literature assisted the construction of evaluation as a characteristic of talk for these families.

In particular, Raymond and Diana's dialogue with their family members utilized evaluation consistently as a characteristic of talk. In these discussions, families were able

to step back from the events within the literature and view the literature globally. Karen's dialogue with her mom didn't demonstrate evaluation. I think that the literature (*Tomás and the Library Lady* and *Grandfather Counts*) she selected played a significant role in decreasing evaluation as a characteristic of their talk. The relationship themes in the above literature were not strong themes as compared to literature with a focus on power or social action issues. Thus, I think that it was difficult for Karen and her mom to take a critical perspective as related to evaluation resulting from the influences of the literature.

Issues of Talk within the Home

Research question two's next subquestion examined the key issues that parents and children discussed in the home context. These issues were organized into the following three sections: literacy, positionality within society, and resistance to structural inequality. These categories emerged from the data and the professional literature.

Literacy

The first issue discussed is the issue of literacy. According to Ken Goodman (1989), "literacy is neither something to be taught a piece at a time nor something hard and abstract, but simply another language form to use in the functional context of its use" (p.134). The issue of literacy included how readers came to terms with print and ultimately how they came to make sense of it. In the following three examples, Raymond and his sister grappled with the functional context of print and worked to find meaning for themselves within their discussions. In addition, they struggled to make sense of how print works within two languages.

Raymond and his sister discussed the book, *Los Ojos del Tejedor; The Eyes of the Weaver* (Ortega, 1998). In this story, the author retells her account of visiting her grandpa and learning the family tradition of weaving. In the first example, Raymond and his sister discussed Raymond's connection to the story. As they continued their discussion, Raymond and his sister collaboratively struggled to make sense of the grandpa's role as the eye of the weaver.

RS: What did you like about the book?

R: About lots of different things the grandpa made.

RS: So like the pictures?

R: No.

RS: Oh, like? Like what? Like what kind of things did he make? (moves pages)

R: Yes.

RS: Okay! I would agree. And if you say the eyes of the weaver in Spanish, how would you say it? So how would you say it in Spanish?

R: I don't know.

S: Los Ojos

R: Los Ojos

RS: Del

R: de

RS: Tejedor

R: Teje dor

RS: I ain't sure if that's how you say weaver in Spanish. Sorry. Um, I'm going to look that up in the Spanish dictionary.

R: What does it sound like in Spanish-weaver?

RS: I ain't really sure because I've never said it. Well, I've said it in English, but not Spanish.

R: Like one- uno.

RS: Mmm (in agreement)

R: Uno stands for one. I am lucky because I can count to six in Spanish.

In particular, they unraveled the meaning behind the eye of the weaver and its translation in Spanish. Raymond's sister used the dictionary to assist Raymond with the meaning and pronunciation of the term, "weaver." Raymond and his sister both utilized

illustrations as they discussed the meaning of weaver. Both children used their experiences and strategies as readers to negotiate the text in two languages.

In this next example of the issue of literacy, Raymond and his sister continued to consider the meaning behind weaving.

RS: How to weave? How to weave?

R: What does that mean?

RS: You know what? I ain't really sure how they are using it in the book? I ain't sure if it's the regular weave. Ohhh! Here we go. Look it, watch, right here in the book..

R: Ohhh! (looking through pages)

RS: Here we go. Look it. Watch, it's right here. See how they did this design right here.

R: The picture that I like?

RS: Not that one, this one. I think that's what it is. You know what? You should ask Mrs. Horn. I ain't really sure.

R: Mrs. Fain..

His sister alluded to the fact that she was not sure of the context of the word weave, so she reflected upon her knowledge of literacy and led Raymond back to the book. They searched for illustrations that fit the meaning of the word. Ultimately, his sister decided that he should ask Mrs. Horn and Raymond suggested that he should ask me.

In the third example, Raymond's sister provided Raymond with her views on the book.

RS: Yeah, it's really long, like 59 pages long. Myself, I think it would be much better if it was like a chapter book so that we don't have to read all of it at once. Now I'm going back to Raymond. What do you have to say Raymond?

R: That I like reading these books. And I get almost better now because I like to read.

RS: You like to read. So when you learn how to read. Like, let's see. So now when you learn how to read, look it, let's look for a big word.. you learn how to say Chimayo.

R: Chimayo.
 RS: Or you learn how to say this word, blanket.
 R: Blanket.
 RS: Grandpa's
 R: Grandpa's
 Both are reading glossary.
 RS: In Spanish, Grandpa is Abuelito or abuelo.
 In English, it's grandpa or papa.
 Which we call him Grandpa in English the one in California-abuelito.
 R: Our grandma in California, we call her abuelita.

Raymond stated that reading “these” books (books for literature circles) assisted him as a reader. Their discussion led them to think about their views of themselves as readers. In addition, they moved to reading the glossary in the back of the book. As they examined the words that they knew in Spanish and English, they made generalizations about how they used certain words in Spanish and English within the various contexts in their lives.

These three examples from Raymond and his sister, demonstrate how a sister and brother came to terms with the issue of literacy. For both children, literacy was a natural part of their talk. They were interested in the function of language as it had meaning for themselves as readers and they used their knowledge of two languages, Spanish and English, to construct meaning in both languages.

Karen and her mom's discussion of *Tomás and the Library Lady* (Mora, 1997) is another example of how the issue of literacy was relevant within their literature discussions. Karen and her mom were discussing literacy as they examined Tomás' relationships with the library lady and his family.

KM: Y le enseñaba Español. Verdad? [And he taught her Spanish.
 Right?] Y [And]

K: Y Inglés [And English]

KM: Ingl'es y que hacen los abuelitos? Levantaron este..basuras.

[English and what did the grandparents do? They picked up this ..garbage.]

K: hmm

KM: Levantaron las basuras. Y que más? [They picked up garbage. And what else?]

K: Papa Grande lea libros a Tomás. Y Papá Grande dijo que si puede ir alla a la librería (biblioteca). Agarrar libros para que nos enseñe nuevos libros (cuentos). [Granddad read books to Tomas. And Granddad said that he could go to the (library). He could get books in order to teach new books (stories)].

Karen's mom demonstrated interest in how Tomás taught the library lady Spanish and Karen mentioned that English was learned as well. Karen's mom was interested in knowing more about Karen's thoughts on Tomas's family. Karen and her mom valued family relationships and this value was evident throughout their discussions. Karen examined Papa Grande's role in facilitating Tomas' literacy as she talked about Papá Grande's role in reading books, encouraging Tomas to go to the library, and finding books that offered him more opportunities to interact with new stories. This book provided Karen and her mom with an opportunity to dialogue about the significance of knowing and teaching more than one language to others. In addition, Karen discussed with her mom the grandpa's role in encouraging Tomás to enter the world of story through oral stories and written language from literature. Similarly, these issues of literacy were evident within their discussion of *Grandfather Counts* (Cheng, 2000):

K: This book is called *Grandfather Counts*. The grandfather teaches the little girl how to count in Chinese. And the little girl teaches the grandfather how to count in English.

KM: Y que más? [What more can you tell me?]

K: uh mm

KM: La mama también le enseñamos China.
[The mom also taught them Chinese.]

K: (overlap) yeah

KM: Y la otra cosa es que su papá habla sobre una nueva programación de computadora para aprender lenguajes. Y un amigo de trabajo le dió una copia de version chino y su papá le dijo que de verdad muy bonito. Y también que era un real ejemplo para papá que puedas explicar la voz que dice. [And the other thing is that your dad speaks about a new computer program for learning languages. And a friend from his work gave him a Chinese version and your dad said that truthfully it was very pretty (to hear). And also it was a real example for your dad of how you can explain the pronunciation of the word (in the book)].

K: It reminds me of my grandpa and me because I talk in English and he talks in Mexican. And I teach him English and he teaches me in Mexican. In Mexican, I mean.

In this discussion, Karen and her mom discussed how the grandfather (Gong Gong) and the granddaughter (Helen) connect personally as they learn language and literacy from each other. Karen pointed out the grandfather's role in teaching Helen how to count in Chinese and Helen's role in reciprocally teaching the grandfather English. Karen's mom also discussed the mom's role in teaching Chinese. Karen and her mom discussed the learning of language and literacy within the context of family relationships. In addition, Karen's mom connected the book to Karen dad's experiences with a computerized version of the Chinese language. For Karen the book represented her fondness of her relationship with her grandfather and how they learned Spanish and English from each other.

Karen and her mom used the relationships from the literature to examine issues of literacy. Learning another language and how to make sense of the world of story or numbers were issues that they valued together. For them, family relationships served a natural context for the learning of literacy.

Positionality within Society

Positionality within society was the second issue that parents and children raised in the home. According to Nieto (2002), “Context is also about situatedness and positionality, reminding us that culture is not simply the rituals, foods, and holidays of specific groups of people, but also the social markers that differentiate that group from others. It is once again the recognition that questions of power are at the very heart of learning” (p.14). Positionality as an issue included how parents and children examined specific groups of people and their status within the literature. In general, parents and children talked about the characters from the literature and described them. These discussions led them to make generalizations about the characters and where they were positioned within society. The issue of positionality is divided into two categories: social markers and agency.

Social Markers

Social markers included language that referred to the status of an individual from the literature and his or her place of differentiation within the broader society (Nieto, 2002). The first example comes from Raymond’s family discussion of *Upside Down Boy/El niño de cabeza* (Herrera, 2000):

RM: What do you think about the book *Destiny*?

RS: Um, that it was interesting.

RM: It was interesting why?

RS: Because he talks Spanish, too.

RM: Because he spoke both languages. What do you think Raymond about his Spanish? Do you think it was hard for him going to a new school and not knowing English?

R: Yes.

RB: He was upside down.

RM: He was upside down.

RB: He is upside down.

RM: He is upside down. And he had one friend who helped him all of the time, Amanda.

R: That's one of my cat's names.

RM: Amanda, she always helped him, huh. He didn't know Spanish and if he was confused with a word he would ask her.

Raymond's family discussed how the main character in this story, Juanito, is characterized as being upside down. Raymond's mom brought up the issue of Juanito entering school and not knowing English in a new school. The upside down boy is in a position of low status because he does not know the mainstreamed and privileged discourse of school, English. He has to ask for assistance and he has one friend who helps him negotiate the newness of entering school. The concept that he is upside down was an issue that the family negotiated within the discussion. In the second example from their discussion, they continued looking at the upside down boy and his experiences within his new school:

R: Okay, alone at recess.

RM: He was eating all alone at recess. Cause it was recess and he thought it was lunchtime.

R: And

RM: And he thought he was upside down because nobody else was eating. Right?

R: Yes. And there's nobody to play with him.

RM: Cause he was playing by himself because he had nobody to play with. Cause the bell rang and then he went to go play and recess was over. Right?

R: Yes.

RM: It's not that anybody didn't want to play with him. It was that he was upside down.

RS: He got confused with everything.

RB: Mom, why didn't he have anyone to play with?

RM: Because he was upside down.

In this second example, Raymond and his mom discussed how being upside down signified loneliness for the upside down boy. He was unable to negotiate the schedule of his school day and ultimately he ended up eating alone. This character was socially marked and had little power of his situation. This family described the weaknesses of his situation and the consequences of the character being upside down.

Raymond and his family were profoundly struck with the issues of upside downness and Juanito's plight in adjusting to a new situation. Their discussions demonstrated a willingness to find out about Juanito and figured out why he was struggling in a new situation. The family explored the main character's experiences as being socially marked as he had little power and status within schooling.

Agency

The language categorized as agency refers to making conscious effort in making a change within the positionality of social systems. This issue consisted of examples where individuals take social action in an effort to make changes in individuals' circumstances. According to Sleeter (1996), social action includes taking action within seriously marginalized communities and acting as an advocate for these people within the broader civic life.

Diana and her mom examined the issue of agency as they discuss *La Señora de la Caja de Cartón* [Lady in the Box] (McGovern, 1999):

D: Mi favorita parte es cuando la señora y el niño hacían amigas y amigos.
Y le dio una llave para que tenía su apartamento ella solita. Y um..

[My favorite part is when the lady and the boy made friends. And he gave her a key to the apartment so that she wouldn't be alone. And um...]

DM: Para que tuviera.. [In order that she would have...]

D: Para que tenia su casa y anda, no viví una..

[In order that she would have a house and she would move, not have lived in a....]

DM: Para que es más frío. [In order that she becomes very cold]

D: Para que anda más frío y va no vivir en la caja de cartón.

[In order that she would move away from the cold and was not going to live in a cardboard box.]

DM: Mi favorita...[My favorite..]

D: Esto es mi favorita historia. [This is my favorite story.]

DM: Hay me gusto cuando los niños le ayudan a la señora para que no tenía el fondo para que tuviera más feo (experiencia).

[The part that I liked happened when the children help the lady that didn't have money in order to assist her from having an ugly experience.]

In this example, Diana and her mom discussed how the lady in the box was helped temporarily out of the cold. Diana talked with her mom about how she really connected to the friendship between the lady and the children. In addition, Diana and her mom discussed how the lady was provided temporary relief and assistance from the bitter cold conditions of her cardboard box. For them, agency was represented in assisting the lady in the box out of her difficult circumstances.

Resistance to Structural Inequality

The final issue parents and children raised in their discussions is resistance to structural inequality. Nieto (2002) maintains, “structural inequality is based on stratification due to race, social class, gender, ethnicity, and other differences” (p.56). Within this category, parents and children shared examples from the literature of people who opposed discrimination and the group in power. Raymond and his mom discussed *The Picture Book of Rosa Parks* (Adler, 1995).

RM: Why did you like that part the best when he was in it? Why?

R: Because it reminds me of another book.

RM: It reminds you of the other book? Is the book about what Martin Luther King Junior did?

- R: Yes.
- RM: Okay, what did remind you about the other book?
- R: When he was talking.
- RM: What was he talking about?
- R: About being nice..dreaming about being nice to others no matter what color them are.
- RM: He was dreaming about being nice to others no matter what color they are. That's right, he was dreaming that we would all just come together no matter what color we are.
- R: I have a book of that.
- RM: And Rosa Parks did pretty much the same thing. She was stopping segregation. She didn't want us to be separated. She didn't think it was necessary for the white people to sit in the front and the black people to sit in the back of the bus. It didn't matter where you sat, right? Right, it didn't matter where you sat, right?

Raymond connected his thoughts from Rosa Parks to Martin Luther King. He discussed Martin Luther King's dreams of equality despite race. Raymond understood that Martin Luther King was opposed to structural inequality and he thought that people should be nice to each other regardless of one's race. Raymond's mom expanded upon Raymond's ideas by discussing Rosa Park's opposition to segregation and the resistance that she actively pursued. She noticed Rosa Parks was resistant to the power structure in place and fought for a change.

Diana and her mom discussed resistance to structural inequality as they talked about the book, *Feliz Cumpleaños Martin Luther King* [*Happy Birthday, Martin Luther King*] (Marzollo, 1995):

- D: Parte era cuando Martin Luther King era su cumpleaños y había un pastel con una vela. Y había de personas que eran blancos y negros. Que ya se ponian juntos por que Martin Luther King lo ayudó para que lo hacen juntos. [The part that was when Martin Luther King had a birthday and there was a cake with candle. And there were people who were white and black. And they were able to unite because Martin Luther King helped them to unite themselves together.]

DM: No sé. [I don't know.]

D: Di lo. [Say it.]

DM: Pues, Martin Luther King podemos enseñar buenas y ayudaba todos las personas que las quedan malas y las quedan buenas. Y le ayudo no se pelear. No sé. Y los enfermos. No?

[Well, Martin Luther King was able to teach the good and helped all of the people that remain bad and remain good. And he helped them to not fight. I don't know. He helped the sick. No?]

Diana talked about Martin Luther King's birthday and his cake. She then moved into the description of the race of people presented in the story. Her final point presented how Martin Luther King united races of all people. She spoke to resistance through her idea Martin Luther King had the power to unite people despite their racial differences. Diana's mom viewed Martin Luther King's resistance in terms of how he resisted inequality through peacefully teaching people not to use physical violence to resolve their racial differences. She viewed Martin Luther King as an authority figure who had the power to teach and help others. He was in a position to assist others who needed it.

Diana and her mom continued to discuss resistance to inequality in their discussion of *The Cactus Wren and the Cholla/ El Reyzeuelo y La Cholla* (Garcia, 1997):

D: Mi parte, mi favorita parte es el ultimo por que el pajarito hace su nido de ramita y mejor se va cansar y batan en huevitos. Y luego pajaritos no van a tener miedo la cholla. Ella hizo hermanas. Y la cholla le dijo que se hacen su nido y sus manos. Y eso es todo.

[My part, my favorite part is the last part because the little bird makes his nest with twigs and it better that he is going to rest and protect the little eggs. And the cholla told him to make a nest in her arms. And that was all.]

DM: Yo sé. Para mí, es un símbolo de valentía. De lo que podemos y tenemos fe en nosotros mismos. Es posible. Nosotros trabajamos duros para conseguirlo. Este lo que significa para mí, el Reyzeuelo de Cactus y por eso me recuerda a mis antepasados hispanicos. [I know. For me it is a symbol of courage that we become and we have faith and believe in ourselves. It is possible. We work very hard in an effort to obtain it. This is what it signifies for me, the cactus wren, for this it reminds me of my

Hispanic ancestors.]

In this discussion, Diana talked about the difficulty that the cactus wren had making his nest in the arms of the cholla. She connected to the cactus wren and his desire to protect the little eggs in the nest. Diana mom's response came directly from the text except for the part where she stated, "Es posible. Nosotros trabajamos duros para conseguirlo." [It is possible. We work very hard in an effort to obtain it.] Based upon her mom's personal experience, she mentioned that resistance to structural inequality can be achieved through hard work and effort. She reflected upon her experiences with the hardships of starting over and resistance to tough circumstances that was ultimately achieved through hard work.

Resistance for structural inequality is highlighted in all three examples. Raymond and his mom discussed the examples of Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King as they worked to achieve change and resisted the powers that facilitated inequality. Diana and her mom also discussed Martin Luther King and his example of standing up to resistance and uniting people. In addition, Diana's mom personally connected to resistance as she discussed her thoughts on hard work and fitting in within a new country.

Discussion of the Findings

The families of Raymond, Karen, and Diana discussed the issues of literacy, positionality within society, and resistance to structural inequality within their literature discussions. They talked critically about these issues and raised insights that mattered to them. Parents and children constructed and facilitated authentic dialogue about significant issues connected to the literature. Freire's work (1970) refers to dialogue as a

means to know something. The children and families in this study used dialogue as a way of knowing as they responded to the literature. Dialogue is reflective and leads to changes in power. Children and families' dialogue consisted of issues related to changes in power.

Over the years, there have been educators as demonstrated in the research who had the idea that young culturally and linguistically diverse children could not talk about books and raise issues that were critical and thoughtfully constructed (Heath, 1982; Philips, 1983; Purcell-Gates, 1995; Valdes, 1996). These issues were viewed as not being developmentally appropriate for them to discuss. As a result of this view, children were not provided space within classroom to raise their carefully crafted ideas in response to literature. Dialogue about real issues was often nonexistent for children who are culturally and linguistically diverse (Nieto, 1998) as seen through the eyes of others. The research of Martinez-Roldan & Lopez-Robertson, 1999; Martinez-Roldan, 2000 demonstrated that children could use their cultural and linguistic resources as learners as they raised issues connected to social action, language and culture.

Unfortunately, these same false notions exist with some parents, especially parents who differ culturally and linguistically from the mainstream culture. Several colleagues of Robin's commented that it would be difficult for parents to manage the tape recorders and talk about these issues. However, this was not the case in this research. As evident in the data, parents used their resources across culture and language to powerfully discuss real issues with their children. The parents did not need specific guidelines in order to engage in productive discussions with their children. In this study, parents were

trusted to create a format for dialogue that would allow their voice and their child's voice to be heard as a response to the literature.

Each parent in this study used his or her background as a literate learner to create dialogue about issues that mattered to him or her. All three families addressed literacy broadly within their dialogue as they discussed making sense of print in more than one language. Since Raymond, Karen, and Diana live in language rich environments, it makes sense that literacy encompasses bilingualism and biliteracy. These issues were real to them.

Literacy was framed within the complex relationships drawn from the characters within the literature. These families saw themselves within these stories and situations as connected to literacy. Raymond, Karen, and Diana have all experienced a connection with a family member as he or she made sense of print in more than one language. For them, literacy is explored within the structure of family relationships.

Positionality within society was an issue that all three families explored as they thought and talked about their status and privilege as members of the broader society. Diana and Karen entered school not knowing mainstream schooling's primary language, English. Similarly, Raymond had struggled in communicating with clarity and confidence to adults and to his peers. These children had directly experienced making sense of their surroundings as they strove to fit in with their peers. The issue of power was real and concrete for them. In addition, their parents had experienced these issues of power as they supported their families financially and emotionally.

Finally, the issue of resistance was a daily realization for Raymond, Karen, and Diana. Raymond connected to resistance as he talked about the issue of race within his literacy experiences connected to Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King. Diana talked about this issue in terms of the cactus wren and the cholla. For Raymond and Diana, drawing upon the characters from the story made resistance come alive to them. Their connections to this issue were based upon the literal features from the story.

Three categories, including literacy, positionality within society, and resistance to structural inequality, emerged within the home discussions and small group literature circles in the classroom. Raymond, Karen, and Diana discussed literacy with an emphasis on relationships and making sense of print in Spanish and English within the home discussions. Placement of bilingual text, a sub-category in the previous chapter, was addressed only in the classroom. In the category of positionality within society, Raymond, Karen, and Diana connected to the literal characters within the literature. Similar connections existed in the classroom discussions. In the final category, resistance to structural inequality, the home discussions focused upon resistance related to racial and ethnic differences whereas the classroom conversations also included linguistic differences. Identity and race and ethnicity were two categories that were solely addressed within the classroom data.

Aspects of Parent and Child Talk Raised in School

This section of the findings examined research question two's final subquestion on the aspects of talk raised with parents in the home that became part of the child's literature discussions at school. Findings included detailed descriptions of Raymond,

Karen, and Diana's talk within the literature discussions at home and at school. This talk included issues that were raised simultaneously in the home and school and were highlighted for each child.

Raymond's Talk

Raymond generally answered responses directly to questions in the home and at school. He demonstrated his thoughts and opinions clearly with his mom. Raymond started sharing his perspectives in the small group literature circles during the middle of the school year. Up until that time, he often answered questions and did not respond with his ideas and opinions. When I asked him about this, he told me that he felt that he had already discussed the book with his mom and family. He felt that there was no real need for him to discuss the book an additional time. He started to participate more and offer his thoughts after I asked him about this. Raymond was proud to share the responses that he worked on with his mom in the small group literature circles in school.

In his discussion with mom about the book, *The Picture Book of Rosa Parks*

(Adler, 1995) Raymond discussed the meaning of the book for him:

RM: Our discussion is on the book of young Rosa Parks. Raymond, did you like the book?

R: Yes.

RM: What do you think the book meant?

R: About being nice to others.

RM: Being nice to others. And treating others equally-as well as being nice to them. Do you think we should treat people different because their skin color's different?

R: No.

RM: Do you think that Rosa Parks, what she did was good?

R: Yes.

RM: Why do you think it was good?

R: Because her is trying to be nice others.

RM: She wants everybody to be nice to each other. Right.

because we're all people right? It doesn't matter what color our skin is.

Raymond's discussion with his mom indicated his understanding of the issue of resistance to structural inequality. Nieto (2002) maintains, "structural inequality is based on stratification due to race, social class, gender, ethnicity, and other differences" (p.56). Within this issue, parents and children shared examples from the literature of people who opposed discrimination and the group in power.

As can be seen in the following example from school, Raymond also addressed this issue of resistance to structural inequality at school. This small group literature discussion from school focused upon a text set of literature that connected issues of power and oppression. The text set included the following: *The Story of Ruby Bridges* (Coles, 1995), *The Picture book of Martin Luther King* (Adler, 1991), *Shake Rag: From the Life of Elvis Presley* (Littlesugar, 1998), *More Than Anything Else* (Bradby, 1995), and *The Picture Book of Rosa Parks* (Adler, 1995). In this example, Raymond and his peers were making connections across *Picture Book of Martin Luther King* and *Picture Book of Rosa Parks*:

Nicholas: Ruby Bridges, I think it kind of relates to Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks.

Jeanne: How does it relate?

Nicholas: Because um it said Rosa Parks, there was only black people that sit in the front and the white people sit in the back.

Raymond: No

Jeanne: No? How did you see it? What do you think?

Raymond: In Martin Luther King?

Jeanne: Uh hm.

Raymond: Um that the black ones can sit anywhere they want.

Jeanne: They can now right? Good, any other thoughts?

In Raymond's discussion with his mom, he demonstrated an awareness of the issues of resistance to structural inequality. He thought that people should be nice to each other regardless of their skin color and they should be provided the privilege of being treated fairly. In the school discussion, he continued to explore this issue and how it should exist in the present. For Raymond, he thought black people should have the same privileges and status of everyone else.

In this second example from home, Raymond continued to explore the issue of resistance to structural inequality:

RM: Why did you like that part the best when he was in it? Why?

R: Because it reminds me of the other book.

RM: It reminds you of the other book? Is the book about what Martin Luther King Junior did?

R: Yes.

RM: Okay, what did it remind you about the other book?

R: When he was talking.

RM: What was he talking about?

R: About being nice-dreaming about being nice to others no matter what color they are.

RM: That's right he was dreaming that we would all just come together no matter what color we are.

R: I have a book of that.

RM: Right! And Rosa Parks did pretty much the same thing. She was stopping segregation. She didn't want us to be separated. She didn't think it was necessary for the white people to sit in the front and the black people to sit in the back of the bus. It didn't matter where you sat, right?

In this example from home, Raymond and his mom discussed intertextual connections and their thoughts on resistance to structural inequality. Raymond mom's knowledge about Raymond's book of Martin Luther King enabled her to ask Raymond direct questions about his thoughts on Martin Luther King and Raymond responded with

detailed answers. Raymond talked about Martin Luther King's vision of resistance that ultimately united people across all races.

In this example from school, Raymond raised his thoughts on Martin Luther King talking in the context of his literature discussion book on Rosa Parks and his book from home:

- Raymond: Martin Luther King Jr. was talking.
 Jeanne: Was that your book, Raymond? Tell us about it.
 Raymond: I like the part when Martin Luther King Jr. was talking.
 Jeanne: Wow. Did your mom write that?
 Raymond: I wrote some of it.
 Jeanne: Oh okay. Tell us about it.
 Raymond: I wrote this part at home and this part (at school).
 Jeanne: Okay. Do you want to tell us about it? All of it? Do you want me to read a part of it? No? Okay. Anybody have a connection?
 Pedro: I think his mom just wrote it.
 Jeanne: I think he wrote some things in there too. She wrote what he said, Right? Did she write down what you were saying?
 Raymond: Yes.
 Jeanne: Great. Because you guys talked about it right?
 Raymond: Yes.
 Jeanne: Did you have anything else you wanted to tell us about Martin Luther King?
 Bianca: Why did you like it?
 Jeanne: Oh, she just asked you a good question. He did, he died.
 Bianca: Why did you like it?
 Raymond: Because it reminds me of the other book...
 Edith: When Martin Luther King dies, that reminds me of Lucero's grandma died on Sunday.
 Raymond: A book that I have at my house.
 Bianca: What's it called?
 Raymond: I can't remember.

In contrast to Raymond's mom, Raymond's peers and I hadn't read the book that he had at his home and thus we were unable to build upon his thoughts from both of his readings. Although Raymond raised his personal connection to Martin Luther King, the issue of resistance to structural inequality was never raised within this example.

Raymond also brought his journal and his mom's responses into the talk within the school discussion and he responded confidently to Pedro's criticism that these thoughts belonged to him. There was definite overlap of the issues discussed at home and at school for Raymond. His discussion with his mom allowed him the opportunity to explore the issue of resistance to structural inequality in detail with his mom. This opportunity in the home provided him with experience in grappling with this issue as he explored this same issue and negotiated talk with his peers.

Karen's Talk

Karen took charge of the talk at times within the literature discussions in her home. She often took an authoritative role as she discussed the literature with her mom. In contrast within her behavior at school, she often joined in the talk only when she was ready to participate. For example, within the *Grandfather Counts* (Cheng, 2000) discussion Karen was reluctant to share her response journal and her response to the story within the literature circle despite a direct invitation from Robin to share her thoughts. However, when Karen felt strongly about an issue she didn't hesitate to share her point of view.

Karen and her mom talked about literacy in their home. The issue of literacy included how readers came to terms with print and ultimately how they made sense of it. This example of literacy comes from a literature discussion around *Grandfather Counts* (Cheng, 2000). Gong Gong, the grandfather traveled from China to live with his daughter and her family. The granddaughter, Helen, struggled with the language differences as she learned to communicate with her grandfather.

K: This book is called *Grandfather Counts*. The grandfather teaches the little girl how to count in Chinese. And the little girl teaches the grandfather how to count in English.

KM: Y que más? [What more can you tell me?]

K: uh mm

KM: La mama también le enseñamos China.

[The mom also taught them Chinese.]

K: (overlap) yeah

KM: Y la otra cosa es que su papa habla sobre una nueva programación de computadora para aprender lenguajes. Y un amigo de trabajo le dio una copia de versión chino y su papa le dijo que de verdad muy bonito. Y tambien que era un real ejemplo para papá que puedas explicar la voz que dice. [And the other thing is that your dad speaks about a new computer program for learning languages. And a friend from his work gave him a Chinese version and your dad said that truthfully it was very pretty (to hear). And also it was a real example for your dad of how you can explain the pronunciation of the word (in the book)].

K: It reminds me of my grandpa and me because I talk in English and he talks in Mexican. And I teach him English and he teaches me in Mexican. In Mexican, I mean.

Karen and her mom discussed the issue of literacy as they thought about how the family in the book taught Chinese and English to one another. Karen's mom connected to Chinese as a language that Karen's dad was learning about through a computer program. Karen personalized literacy as she thought about her grandfather's relationship to her as they taught each other Spanish and English.

Karen continued to explore this same issue of literacy within the school setting in the following two examples:

Karen: Um, the book reminds me, of me and my grandpa because I teach him English and he teaches me Mexican or something.

Robin: Spanish?

Karen: Yeah.

Robin: That's a really awesome connection.

Karen: I teach my little brother to read, too.

Robin: And..

David: I have a personal connection. Me and my grandpa, he died quite a long

time ago though, we were sitting on the fence and I was trying to teach English to him and he was teaching me Chinese.

The issue of literacy allowed Karen and her peers to discuss their ideas and perspectives as to how they have grown as they made sense of print as readers and writers. In addition, Karen shared the same issue of literacy with her peers and her mom. She also discussed her thoughts on teaching her little brother to read. For Karen, the issue of literacy was connected to family relationships:

- Karen: I like the part when the little girl and Gong Gong wrote her name in the wall.
- Edith: Like when I was learning how to write my name, I had to practice in a paper thing then I had to write it perfect on another paper.
- Robin: Yeah when you learning how to write your name? Like how the grandfather made the mother learn to do it just right when she was a little girl?
- Edith & David: I did too.
- Renee: When I was three, my mommy told me she was helping me to write because I didn't know which hand I was going to write with then I I accidentally made an e then an e then an e.
- Robin: Um hm. Three e's.
- Renee: Then my mom told me make the re then a e then a n and a e and a e and I did it.
- Robin: That's kind of like in the story when they were remembering how the grandfather taught her how to read. Okay.
- Karen: I didn't know how to write my name when I was a little girl like maybe four years old and then my cousin, Vanessa, she was my age and she could write her name and then she taught me.
- Robin: You know what I'm noticing is the difference between Spanish and English, it's different words but the letters are the same. But in Chinese and English the letters aren't the same. That's different. A little more difficult to learn.

In this second example from school, Karen continued to talk about the issue of literacy as she talked about how Helen and Gong Gong wrote their names on the wall. She then talked about her literacy journey as a writer and how her cousin taught her to

write her name. Although literacy was a key issue for Karen and her mom, how Karen learned to write her name was not mentioned in their discussion at home. Karen's mom was aware of what Karen knows and how she learned to write her name and thus this issue wasn't relevant for them as they discussed the book at home. The school setting allowed Karen to continue the conversation and add her perspectives to the discussion as she thought about how she came to know how to write her name.

Diana's Talk

The issue of resistance to structural inequality was a dominant theme in Diana's discussion of *Feliz Cumpleaños, Martin Luther King* (Marzollo, 1994) with her mom. Diana raised the issue of the race of the people in the book and continued to explore how Martin Luther King helped people to unite with each other. This uniting of people was how she saw Martin Luther King resisting the unfairness of treatment of both races. Diana's mom extended Diana's thoughts as she talked about how Martin Luther King resisted inequality by abstaining from violence and pursuing peaceful ways to make changes.

D: Parte era cuando Martin Luther King era su cumpleaños y había un pastel con una vela. Y habia de personas que eran blancos y negros. Que ya se ponian juntos por que Martin Luther King lo ayudó para que lo hacen juntos. [The part that was when Martin Luther King had a birthday and there was a cake with candle. And there were people who were white and black. And they were able to unite because Martin Luther King helped them to unite themselves together.]

DM: No sé. [I don't know.]

D: Di lo. [Say it.]

DM: Pues, Martin Luther King podemos enseñar buenas y ayudaba todos las personas que las quedan malas y las quedan buenas. Y le ayudó no se pelear. No se. Y los enfermos. No?

[Well, Martin Luther King was able to teach the good and helped all of the people that remain bad and remain good. And he helped them to not

fight. I don't know. He helped the sick. No?]

Diana and her peers discussed *Feliz Cumpleaños, Martin Luther King* (Marzollo, 1994) and the issue of resistance in terms of opposing and standing up for their linguistic rights in regards to language discrimination:

Lucero: They tell you like what to do and..

Jeanne: So someone can tell you what to do? They can tell you what language you can speak? Yeah? And what do you say back to them?

Lucero: No, I want to speak my own language.

Jeanne: Because..

Lucero: because that's my language.

Jeanne: And what?

Alexis: And it's not their language.

Jeanne: Do you think that's why they don't want you to speak it? Because they only know one language? You don't know? Okay, just a thought.

Diana, do you want to tell me some more about that? Has somebody ever said to you, you couldn't use your language? Just like the people couldn't sit on the bus or go use the water fountain.

Diana: If they say that to me, I'll say no don't boss me around.

Diana often sat back within the discussions and listened carefully to her peers. In this discussion, she continued in her role as a listener. She personalized this issue as she took a strong stand by indicating that she would verbally stand up to anyone who violated her linguistic rights.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings indicate that children discussed important issues at home and at school. In this study, all three children raised issues at home that were important to them. These three students were not students who typically dominated the talk within the literature circles at school. They often listened and during key times offered their perspectives and opinions.

For example, Karen and Diana raised issues that were different at home than at school. These findings indicated that Karen and Diana were having discussions with their families about issues that were different than the issues that were being raised at school. And often they spoke more about these issues regularly at home than at school. At home, their families supported them in their first and second languages and many times the discussions occurred in their first language, Spanish. Karen and Diana placed themselves in the position of listener at school and at home they changed their position within the discussions to facilitator. Discussions at home as well as school allowed both girls to connect and relate to various issues in two different contexts within the literature discussions.

In contrast, Raymond, used the home discussions as a practice floor for school. He brought up the same comments at school from his discussion with his family. In fact, he didn't even feel that he needed to participate in the discussions at school until I encouraged him to participate more as I was asking him about his reluctance to discuss the books. For Raymond, these issues were addressed on a regular basis at home and at school. For Raymond as a first grader, this was the first year that he participated in literature circles. The literature discussions at home served as a zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978) for Raymond. His mom and siblings supported his talk by creating a zone of proximal development that ultimately facilitated and supported his talk at school.

The discussions at home affirmed all three children as they gained conversational skills, confidence, language support, multiple opinions, and ideas from their families.

These home conversations changed the outlook of the conversations within the classroom. Karen and Diana entered school ready to explore ideas that were not explored at home. In contrast, Raymond was able to rehearse issues already discussed at home and fit these ideas within the literature discussions in the distinct context of schooling.

Summary

This study examined the families of Raymond, Karen and Diana having critical conversations about literature within their homes. Each family constructed the format that was meaningful and purposeful in his or her family's context. These families had meaningful conversations connected to literature in their homes. They moved from conversations that were influenced by school discourse such as Initiation-Response-Evaluation (Corson, 2001; Kutz, 1997; Lipka, 1998; Philips, 1983) and moved toward natural dialogue around the literature. Although the three families used questioning strategies to facilitate the discussions, questioning didn't consume the talk. That is, conversations progressed naturally and questioning didn't become a part of IRE pattern of discussion (Corson, 2001; Kutz, 1997; Lipka, 1998; Philips, 1983).

I think that this research strongly indicated that these families had thoughtful conversations about complex issues. These family discussions were more than conversations about superficial issues but discussions that unveiled details connected to the daily features of the families' lives. The families of Raymond, Karen, and Diana insightfully talked about issues of language diversity and culture. They brought to the surface of the conversations their ideas and opinions connected to literacy, positionality within society, and resistance to structural inequality. Family members were involved

and literature came alive within these conversations. The talk was not contrived nor was it focused upon trite issues.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

Children's talk in the contexts of school and home about issues related to language diversity and culture was the focus of this yearlong dissertation study. In this chapter, I summarize the findings from this study and discuss the implications. Following the summaries, I framed the implications through three themes that I identified throughout this study: Perceptions, Expectations and Voice, Extending Biliteracy in Non-Bilingual Settings, and Power and Policy.

Ultimately, it was my interest in understanding what children and parents talk about in relation to children's literature within the literacy event of a literature circle that led me to this study. I wanted to be aware of how children and families construct this dialogue as they move in and out of speaker and listener roles (Bakhtin, 1981). Professional literature (Martinez-Roldan & Lopez-Robertson, 1999; Martinez-Roldan, 2000) and my research (Spring 1999, Fall 2000) indicate that children need to have space within the curriculum to share their voices about critical issues. The first part of this chapter reviews and summarizes the purpose, methodology, analysis, and findings of this study.

Purpose of Study

Children in a multi-age class of first and second graders at Milton Elementary School talked about children's literature in forty small group literature circles throughout the 2001/2002 school year. Four to five children participated in every literature circle and included a facilitator, Robin Horn (classroom teacher) or me (researcher).

Facilitators carefully selected children's literature that connected to numerous aspects of language diversity and culture. The books were either bilingual or Spanish and English editions.

Literature circles consisted of each child's oral dialogue, written comments from response journals, and intertextual connections to the children's literature. Prior to the literature discussion at school, each child self-selected his/her book and read and talked about these books with their families in their homes. Small group literature discussions in school usually continued for twenty-five minutes.

All of the children's families discussed the books in the home as indicated by the response journals that were sent back to school on a regular basis. Parents were invited by an open-ended letter to talk about the book with their child prior to the school literature circle. Robin and I intended for the invitation to discuss books to be open-ended in order to provide parents with the freedom to construct and facilitate the conversations from their perspectives and insights. Nine bilingual families volunteered to audiotape the literature discussions in their home prior to the school literature circles. Raymond, Diana, and Karen were the bilingual students who consistently took tape recorders home along with their selected book and audio taped literature discussions with their families.

The following key purpose guided this study: **What issues of language diversity and culture do first and second grade students discuss in home and school contexts?** Two sub-questions framed this purpose. Research question one was 1) **What issues of language diversity and culture do first and second grade students discuss in**

literature circles? In answering question one, Robin and I collected audiotapes, transcripts, and response journals as primary data sources from forty literature circles (nine rounds) from the first and second graders. Secondary data consisted of Robin's and my field notes.

I selected five transcripts to analyze in-depth in three different analyses. The data from the transcripts drove each analysis and category. During the primary analysis, I reflected upon my knowledge base as I read through the data and I carefully looked at each issue. In terms of the second analysis, I connected my understandings of the data to my readings from the professional literature that related to language diversity and culture. In my third analysis, I created a final set of categories from the first and second analysis of the data.

Research question two was **2) What types of talk about language diversity and culture do first and second grade students and their families discuss about children's literature?** Three sub questions frame this question:

- **What are the characteristics of the talk?**
- **What issues are discussed?**
- **What aspects of these discussions at home become part of the child's discussions at school?**

Robin and I collected audiotapes, transcripts, and response journals as primary data sources from parents and children. Secondary data consisted of follow-up interviews with parents.

The first sub question is: **What are the characteristics of the talk?** Each family's characteristics of talk included the following four major categories:

conversational maintenance, personal response, retelling, and evaluation. These characteristics were derived from the data and categories emerged from the transcripts of the literature discussions recorded within each family's home. Two transcripts with generative discussions were selected for each family. I carefully analyzed every utterance (complete comment or word) in each family's discussion and I then coded and categorized each utterance for specific characteristics of talk.

The second sub question is: **What issues were raised within this talk?** The same transcripts that were selected for the first sub-question were used for this question. In the first analysis, I read through each transcript and looked for common issues related to language diversity and culture. During the second analysis, I read through other transcripts from the same families that were not selected for indepth analysis and added strong examples from these transcripts to the categories. Additionally, I used the professional literature to assist my thinking about the data as I created new categories of data for the third and final analysis.

The final sub question is: **What aspects of these discussions at home become part of the child's discussions at school?** Initially, I read and reflected upon the two selected transcripts from each child/family and compared them with the transcripts of the literature discussion of the same book in the schooling context. Follow-up interviews of the three families were also used as primary data. Related sections of talk from home and school contexts were compared as I wrote several theoretical memos to look for patterns within the data.

Significance of Study

This study demonstrates that young urban bilingual children can critically talk about issues related to language diversity and culture. Few studies look at families critically discussing children's literature in relation to literature circles in the school context. I contend that the home context ultimately scaffolds the child's native language by acting as a linguistically rich resource for the child. The child draws upon his or her linguistic resources from the home and has linguistic support as he/she enters the primarily English dialogue within small group literature circles in the schooling context. Thus, this study demonstrates the significance of using the home to support children in their native languages. Additionally, this study examines how one classroom uses children's native languages as a resource in the language as problem political context of school (Ruiz, 1984).

Children's issues in the Schooling Context

Findings emerged from the data in terms of issues related to language diversity and culture that children raised in small group literature circles within the context of school. Issues included literacy, identity, positionality within society, resistance to oppression, and structural inequality.

The issue of literacy had two categories: learning to be literate and placement of bilingual text. Learning to be literate included children's perceptions as to how they developed as literate learners and made sense of print within their world (Freire, 1970). Children raised ideas that reflected their knowledge of how family networks supported them throughout the reading and writing process. Placement of bilingual text as a second

category included children's views about the features and constructions of a bilingual text. Children explained their reasoning for the positioning of Spanish and English within various texts. They believed that the book's positioning of language did not influence them as readers and that readers had the power to decide which language was attended to as they interacted and responded to the texts. Also, children thought that the reader's language competence influenced the reader's choice of language from the text.

Identity was the next major issue that children discussed within the small group literature circles. Within this issue, children explored the social, personal, and cultural aspects of identity. Additionally, identity was linked to membership and access or lack thereof to certain social networks. Sense of place and race and ethnicity are two categories within the issue of identity. Sense of place examined children's comments and responses that emphasized overall community, celebration, and funds of knowledge (Moll, 1992). In addition, race and ethnicity as a category included thoughts connected to people's physical features, moving toward a definition of ethnicity, and exploring group membership. Social networks and group membership were directly linked to physical features, financial backing from various cultural groups, and the languages spoken by various groups.

Positionality within society was another issue that children discussed and referred to a person's access to privilege within a sociocultural and sociopolitical world (Nieto, 2002) in terms of the amount of power a person has within society. This issue consisted of two categories: social markers and agency. Social markers referred to variation among socioeconomic groups (Nieto, 2002). Children examined social, cultural, and

politically diverse people and their status within the literature. In general, children described and discussed the dynamics of characters from the literature. Agency consisted of children's talk about individuals who exercised social action in an effort to make changes in their circumstances within various contexts. Linguistic agency was highlighted as children discussed how they used their linguistic resources to support their family networks.

The next issue, oppression, included how children dealt with the complexities and destructive nature of racism. Children discussed their personal insights into the dehumanization of racism. Their insights included discrimination based upon race, language, and the oppressor's motives. They talked about reasons that oppressors were "mean" and caused pain for others. Also, children discussed how oppressors hurt others without an awareness of their hurtful actions.

The final issue discussed by first and second graders was resistance to structural inequality. Within this issue, children shared and reflected upon how they would oppose and stand up to discrimination and to oppressive people in power. They saw changes in power occurring from knowledge of the rules in a given system (Corson, 2001; Delpit, 1986).

Parents and Children's Types of Talk in the Home

Findings emerged from the data in terms of the types of talk about language diversity and culture that were discussed between parents and the first and second grade children in the home. These findings examined examples from Raymond's, Karen's, and

Diana's families. These findings include characteristics of the talk, issues brought forth within the talk, and the aspects of talk with parents that came up at school.

Characteristics of talk included conversational maintenance, personal response, retelling, and evaluation, and were represented within Raymond's, Karen's, and Diana's discussions with their families. These families utilized these characteristics of talk as they were relevant and in conjunction with the various books. Conversational maintenance included comments that ultimately regulated, facilitated, and kept the conversation moving. Personal response referred to the complex relationship that existed between the reader and the text. As the reader constructed meaning from the text, he or she responded by connecting the text to a life experience. Retelling was a characteristic of talk that allowed families to present their understandings and respond to the text as they derived meaning directly from the text. Family members' school experiences influenced them to use retelling as a way of demonstrating understanding of a text within the dialogue. Evaluation as the final characteristic of talk included a range of comments and questions that connected to the discussants' thoughts and responses by taking a stand to the text as a whole.

Retelling was a major feature of the characteristics of the parents and children's talk. Families relied on the direct text as scaffolding as they discussed tough issues of language diversity and culture that existed within the children's literature (Goodman, Watson, & Burke, 1987). Dialogue taken directly from the text acted as support to the family members as they discussed the complexities of language diversity and culture.

Personal response and evaluation were significant characteristics of talk. Personal response incorporated families' individual responses with the text. Families based their personal responses on their own life experiences as they connected to selected texts. In addition, characters from the text influenced families to make these connections from their own lives. Findings related to evaluation demonstrated how families took a critical stance as they talked about the literature. Children kept up with their parents as they constructed dialogue together that tackled tough issues. Family dialogue considered proactive stances on issues of racism, discrimination, and immigration. These families utilized these characteristics of talk as they were relevant and in conjunction with the various book titles.

Parents and children discussed the following major issues in home context: literacy, positionality within society, and resistance to structural inequality. The first issue, literacy, included how readers came to terms with print and ultimately how they came to make sense of it. Raymond, Karen, and Diana discussed the function of print and worked to find meaning for themselves within their discussions. In addition, they negotiated and explored how print works within two languages. The second issue that parents and children discussed was positionality within society. This issue included descriptions of talk about the characters from the literature. In particular, the discussions focused upon how the book characters fit within society in terms of their status and privilege. The final issue parents talked about with their children was resistance to structural inequality. In this issue, families looked at how people stood up to the complexities of racism and discrimination.

These findings examined the aspects of talk raised with parents in the home that ultimately moved into the child's literature circles at school. Findings included detailed descriptions of Raymond's, Karen's, and Diana's aspects of talk within the literature discussions at home and at school. Additionally, these aspects focused upon key issues that were raised simultaneously in the home and school and are highlighted for each child. Raymond and Diana both raised the issue of resistance to structural inequality within the literature discussions at home and at school. In addition, Karen raised the issue of literacy with her mom and her peers at school.

The families of Raymond, Karen, and Diana insightfully talked about issues of language diversity and culture. They brought to the surface their ideas and opinions connected to literacy, positionality within society, and resistance to structural inequality.

Home discussions affirmed and supported all three children as they expanded their discussion, self-confidence, language support, and perspectives from their families. Home discussions changed the outcome of the conversations within the classroom. Karen and Diana explored ideas at school that were not explored at home. In contrast, Raymond rehearsed issues at home and looked for ways to add these perspectives within the literature discussions in the context of school. Family members were involved and literature came alive within these conversations.

Implications from this Research

In the following discussion, implications based on the findings of this study are framed through three themes: Perceptions, Expectations and Voice, Extending Bilingual Literacy in Non-Bilingual Settings, and Power and Policy. The implications speak to parents,

educators including classroom teachers and teacher educators, and policy makers. These implications speak to current classroom teaching practice and policy that informs practice, especially related to bilingual learners and their bilingual families.

Perceptions, Expectations and Voice

As evident in the findings of this research, bilingual children and parents do have thoughtful and critical discussions about children's literature related to complex issues of language diversity and culture in the contexts of school and home. I noticed the themes of perceptions, expectations and voice throughout the findings of this study. Children and parents perceived that talking about books critically was important and they expected their children to participate fully. And as children and parents participated in these discussions, they found their own ways to articulate their voices related to critical issues within the conversations.

Ultimately, the perceptions and expectations often evidenced in mainstream press reports are largely different than what I noted from this study. For example, I sadly watched a report on television about a child drowning. Besides feeling extremely sad for the parents, I was incredulous at what I heard from a police officer. He indicated that he was able to determine negligence in the case of drowning by entering and looking around the house. He believed that he could tell if parents cared for their families by just looking at the surroundings of the home.

This scenario occurs on a regular basis for children who are not deemed as a part of mainstream society and are identified as English Language Learners. Parents, teachers, educators, and policy makers are quick to take a look around at the students and

their home and community settings, and stamp negligent on the “foreheads” of “these” families (Heath, 1996; Purcell-Gates, 1997; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988). Parents are judged as neglecting their children’s education based upon a quick look around inside the home. Value judgments are made based on their “limited” resources in terms of language, culture and socioeconomic level.

And what about the parents who are raising “these” children? Some educators offer ideas as to how they can make changes and conform to mainstream standards based on the belief that parents need our guidelines and directions in order to be better qualified as parents (Heath, 1996). Unfortunately, some educators think that materials from school should not be sent into these homes or they would be lost.

Students are categorized with labels, including linguistically diverse even when diversity does not exist, English language learners when they know more than one language, limited English Proficient as a way of placing more limitations on the student, and second language learners as we choose to dismiss fully the children’s first language (Nieto, 2002; Valdes, 2001). Teachers become worried that books cannot be sent home or surely they will be lost. Educators and the public look for a quick, inexpensive, and easy fix for “those” kids.

Based upon our limited perceptions, we form expectations that are constructed on the linear idea of readiness (Philips, 1993; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988). We know that “these” kids are not ready to learn (Varenne & McDermott, 1999). We adapt curriculum that emphasizes learning skills outside of relevant contexts, expect that these skills must be mastered first, and then administer tests that result in failing labels for

children and schools (Heath, 1982, 1996; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988; Valdes, 2001). Instead, children need to experience learning experiences connected to dialogue and literature that relate to their language and culture (Delpit and Dowdy, 2002; Nieto, 2002).

For example, when I started working with Robin and researching how children talked about books, I wanted children to discuss books in small groups based upon their book selection, not reading level. Robin was concerned about the struggling readers and how they would participate fully in the discussions. Despite her reservations, she was willing to construct space for all learners to dialogue about books regardless of their reading proficiency. We learned from this study that all children need to be perceived as being able to discuss literature competently and they need the space to voice their ideas about these issues. And in some cases, it was the struggling readers who initially surprised us with their strengths as they strongly conveyed their ideas.

Now we look back and are surprised that it was even an issue for us, but it is still a concern for some educators. We have learned to believe in children as being able to powerfully communicate their ideas and responses related to children's literature regardless of their reading proficiency. Robin and I supported the children as we explicitly talked about how to talk about books. We wanted the conversations to be naturally constructed by the children and we believed in the children's ability to communicate with each other. The children's talk was thoughtful and we didn't need to impose constraints within the discourse by implementing artificial communication roles on the children.

We learned to trust children as readers. We acknowledge that children can competently select complex books they want to discuss based upon their interests. We understand that complex texts critically challenge children as readers, speakers, and listeners. We realize children do not need to discuss leveled books by a publisher unaware of the children's needs and interests as readers.

We have faith that children will develop as proficient readers with a wide range of reading experiences (Pierce, 1999). Children need to participate in various meaningful reading experiences as they make sense of print through critical dialogue about children's literature and through reading strategy lessons. Both reading experiences are necessary as we prepare students to become lifelong readers.

As teachers and teacher educators, we need to step away and build safe spaces within our curriculum for the voices of all students. In addition, we need to provide students with real opportunities to speak about issues that matter to them in their language of choice. Children talked about their realities connected to literacy, identity, positionality in society, oppression, and resistance to structural inequality. We need to take the time to look for children's literature that reflects the language, culture, and largely the identity of the learners within the classroom (Ada, 2003; Freeman, 1995, Schwarzer & et. al, 2003).

As educators, we need to move to sharing our lives and listening empathetically to the children's lives (Short & et. al, 1999). We need to know when to ask the right questions at the right time and when to remain quiet. Honesty is needed as we reflect and learn along with our families (Shockley, Michalove, & Allen: 1995).

For example, Raymond as a first grader at the time of this study, surprised me. As I examined the transcripts in the middle of the year, I noticed that Raymond was not participating in the literature circles in the school setting and I was puzzled by his actions. I asked him about his participation in literature circles at school. He indicated to me that there was no real reason for him to participate at school because he had already discussed the books at home with his mom. I was truly astonished. He perceived that there was no real reason for him to discuss the book a second time regardless of the context.

Following our conversation, Raymond started to bring in his perspectives almost word for word from the home discussions. He focused on talking about the same issues at school that he had discussed at home. He gained more experiences with literature circles, confidence as a learner, and he learned how to negotiate the discussions with his peers. Raymond's family supported him as he took risks at home and at school as he critically talked about books.

I could have mistakenly determined that Raymond didn't know how to talk about books or that he was not capable of taking a critical stance toward children's literature in a school setting. I think it is important that we are continually reflective and look closely at our expectations and perceptions. We need to be wary of creating false perceptions and expectations. According to Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines (1988), "We must sift and weigh the evidence, ...discern the true from the false, the real from the unreal, and the facts from the fiction" (p.203). We must also remember to ask children about their perceptions directly with them.

We need to distinguish the real voices of parents and children. Instead of getting rid of their language and culture, we need to consider what parents and children have to offer as biliterate learners and move toward building an inclusive community of learners. We need parents to have power in the learning of their children (Delgado-Gaitan, 1996). We must learn from parents and children as they construct thoughtful and powerful dialogue about issues that matter to them. They do need our support without our specific direction. They need access to children's literature and the opportunity to discuss books. This study speaks to establishing a voice for this community of bilingual learners. We need not underestimate parents and their rights as the child's first teacher to create these critical discussions.

Extending Biliteracy into Non-Bilingual Classrooms

Biliteracy draws upon two language systems and cultural resources from two cultures (Moll, 1992; Perez & Torres-Guzman, 2002). Extending biliteracy into non-bilingual classrooms applies to building upon the cultural and linguistic resources of bilingual learners. How can we extend biliteracy into settings that are labeled as non-bilingual or Sheltered English Immersion given the current political climate that does not embrace native language instruction?

As educators, we need to consider how curriculum is constructed as we think about bilingual learners. Curriculum needs to reflect the interests and lives of students. Children's literature needs to be integrated into the curriculum as a central part of an inquiry curriculum and reflect the lives of the specific children within the classroom. Children's languages should be represented in the literature and illustrations from the

literature should reflect the children's identities as learners. Translations of books should be based on meaning (Freeman, 1995). I think all children need multiple experiences with bilingual children's literature in the classroom and home contexts.

For example, Amanda as a dominant English speaker found herself in a classroom context that privileged two languages and was motivated to use codeswitching within her response journal. She was continually trying to make sense of print in more than one language. In addition, children often demonstrated their knowledge of the linguistic features of children's literature in Spanish and English. The children were aware of and had created theories for the placement of English and Spanish print within books. Children could differentiate between the Spanish and English languages. Additionally, children saw themselves as biliterate learners.

Given the current political context, we cannot underestimate the importance of school and home partnerships (Perez & Torres-Guzman, 2002). In this case, funds of knowledge not only relate to household knowledge, but include knowledge of language as a vital resource (Moll, 1992; Ruiz, 1984). Parents in this study supported their child's biliteracy within the home. In the home setting, families spoke, read, and discussed books in the language of their choice. Children entered the classroom with crucial knowledge from the literature, were supported in their native languages, and discussed books in both English and Spanish. Parents used various questioning strategies, wait time, and written responses to the text. Parents scaffolded the dialogue by using the child's dominant language in the home. Thus, when the child entered the classroom, he/she had

knowledge in his or her first language and was ready to discuss the literature in his or her second language. Parents had the freedom to co-construct the dialogue with their child.

For example, Diana and Karen's moms supported their daughters in Spanish within the home context and, based upon this support, both girls could effectively communicate their ideas and responses in English within the school setting. In addition, Raymond and his sister explored English and Spanish written language collaboratively.

The time has come for educators to work with urban and bilingual parents (Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988; Heath, 1983). Many educators feel as if they no longer have the linguistic resources available to assist the linguistic strengths of all learners in the classroom (Valdes, 2001). Some educators in states where English Only is legislated are no longer free to utilize more than one language without restrictions (Freeman & Freeman, 1999). This study represents one type of opportunity for parents to collaborate as partners with school. We need to continually step back, take a reflective stance, and see what we can learn from parents and their families.

Power and Policy

In these political times, some educators and policy makers have shifted blame for the "failure" of English Language Learners in school (Valdes, 2001). Children have been blamed in regards to their lack of readiness for school (Heath, 1983; Philips, 1983). Blame has been placed on parents and their lack of literacy (Purcell-Gates, 1995). Structures of schooling (McDermott & Varenne, 1999) and laws influence policy that ultimately hinders educators and bilingual children in the classroom (Freeman & Freeman, 1999; Valdes, 2001). Political power that influences the structures of schooling

in terms of English only laws are definitely detrimental to bilingual children (Valdes, 1996; 2001).

Moreover, as educators we need to balance the curriculum for all learners as we consider state standards and our desire for children to depart from school as readers who want to read for their own reasons and enjoyment. Especially in early childhood instruction, we want to introduce children to children's literature in lieu of "watered down" texts in the form of basals. We need to trust that engagements such as literature circles will critically enhance the lives of urban and bilingual children. In particular, children in this study exceeded the state average on the state standardized tests.

Based upon Arizona's Proposition 203, it is easy to think that policy makers, educators, and parents have no options left but to accept minimal English language instruction that ultimately will result in failing children. Instead we should truly reflect on what is happening to bilingual children and their families and make changes accordingly. In essence, Proposition 203 and laws that do not support bilingual learners use "dehumanizing tactics" and "see people as objects not as human beings" (Freire, 1970). The supporters of these laws see the "oppressed" English Language Learners and their families as "lazy and incompetent" (Freire, 1970). Policy has led to binding educators and bilingual families as they are caught within this cycle. In addition, educators and families often see themselves as being powerless in enacting change in these negative language policies. Ultimately, we need action as framed in changes in the law, teaching practice, and resources that leads to resistance of these policies (Freire, 1970).

For example, we need to consider how educators can work with families to continue to support children's first and second languages. We need to work at changing perceptions and expectations of bilingual children and their families. As evident in this study, families need to continue discussing the implicit rules in our society as related to culture and language (Corson, 2002, Delpit, 1988, Goodman, 2003, and Perez & Torres-Guzman, 2002).

Recommendations for Teachers and Teacher Educators

These recommendations come from this study and are intended to assist teachers and teacher educators as they explore teaching practices that support bilingual learners in the classroom.

- **Know students and their families.** Talk to them, take the time to listen, and build real relationships. Consciously think about students' and parents' strengths. Be wary of false perceptions. Discover the children's and family's linguistic knowledge. Build upon this knowledge in the classroom. Use children's literature, environmental print, oral stories, and family response journals to integrate these languages into authentic learning experiences.
- **Believe in parents.** Parents need to know that they are valued and we want to learn from them. We need to find out about their knowledge and find ways to connect their knowledge authentically to the classroom.
- **Collaborate with parents and include invitations to discuss books in the home context.** Consider parents' language choice for book selection

Use open-ended letters as invitations to encourage family discussions.

Invite parents to write in response journals with their child.

- **Curriculum needs to include inquiry.** Children need the opportunity to pursue questions of their own. They need to have a real voice in the curriculum. Teachers need to move in and out of facilitating roles as they assist children in exploring their learning agendas.
- **Facilitate dialogue about critical issues.** Build safe space and time into the curriculum for dialogue. Be willing to step aside, be quiet, and let children talk in the languages of their choice. Honor children who codeswitch within the talk. Introduce strategies to talk about critical issues. Facilitate a conversation about talk and what keeps a discussion going. Discuss how to talk about issues without raising one's hand. Note that this takes time for children to unlearn. Allow the children to start the conversation. Wait for them to lead. Encourage them to share their perspectives and insights, wait for pauses in the talk to discuss their insights, ask questions, add to the discussion, and notice peers' participation within the conversations. Let the children determine the length of the conversation. Avoid using specific conversational roles so that the children can learn how to independently and naturally facilitate a conversation.

- **Do use wait time within the literature circles.** Children often need to time to organize their ideas and responses. We need to give them time to critically think and try out their ideas in a safe space.
- **Select high quality children's literature.** Read widely. Search for quality books that represent the children's languages. Include books with languages that are new to the children and include bilingual editions of literature. Use suggestions from parents, bilingual book lists from teaching journals, local bookstores, and libraries. Include books that are relevant to children, speak to issues of social justice and include thoughtful characters and plots. Select books to generate critical talk. Avoid using stereotypical books and poor quality translations of books unless related to issues children are going to critically discuss.
- **Connect inquiry studies and literature circles.** Inquiry studies focus on children's questions about what they want to learn. Start with the inquiry question or broad theme (e.g. What is empowerment?) and select children's literature that relates. Children could be included in this decision-making process. Be sure that the book choices are varied and include children's languages. Literature circles that accompany thoughtful inquiry studies generate critical talk.
- **Organize literature circles by honoring children's book choices.** Children need the opportunity to evaluate book choices and select books that they want to talk about. They need to know what books are available,

including what editions are available in the languages of their choice.

Small group literature circles should be organized around children's selection of children's literature, not reading proficiency level or language.

- **Build upon the child's native language by using bilingual and Spanish editions within the classroom.** Validate the identities of all learners by continually making book choices that represent the identities and languages of your students. If you don't know the child's language, find someone to assist you in choosing books with various languages.
- **Use the home as a positive context to support the child's first and second languages.** Communicate to parents how important it is to support the child's development in his or her native language. Send books home that support the child's first language and simultaneously allow parents to support the child's first language in a natural context.

Future Directions for research

This research has led me to want to explore how bilingual and monolingual speakers examine bilingual texts in terms of positionality and power. In this study, children thought that the reader had power over the text and the reader's competency in language mattered as connected to the language of the text that was ultimately read. I am interested in examining children's views on placement of text and their ideas about the power of readers in relation to bilingual texts. Also, I want to further my understanding of family dialogue connected to issues of language diversity and culture by expanding this study to examine additional families.

Moreover, I could examine my existing data in terms of language use within turns of talk in the home and schooling context. I could examine in-depth my data as related to how literature circles support children and families in becoming biliterate. I think additional studies are needed to examine school and home partnerships that support bilingual learners and to address critical bilingual conversations connected to children's literature in the home. Discourse and issues of the talk could be examined.

Concluding Thoughts

Power has been woven into all aspects of this study. Power comes into play when children are labeled as English Language Learners and their native language as a resource (Ruiz, 1984) is dismissed. We are instructed and bound by Arizona law (Proposition 203) to minimally address the identities of these children. Young bilingual learners and their families should be given credit for taking critical stances and talking about complex issues connected to language diversity and culture.

Despite the obvious restrictions of the law, we owe it to our bilingual learners to find real ways to listen to families' voices who want their children to be successful in schooling. We need to continue to seek ways to encourage children and parents to empower themselves in the learning process. I think that that we must invest in children and parents by creating space for dialogue that tackles relevant and critical issues of interest to parents and children. This dialogue could lead us to be more inclusive of families, shift schooling to hold high expectations for all bilingual families, and create curriculum that authentically challenges all learners.

REFERENCES

- Ada, A.F. (2003). *A magical encounter: Latino children's literature in the classroom*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Andersson, T. (1977). *A Guide to Family Reading in Two Languages: The Preschool Years*. Rosslyn, Virginia: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.
- Baghban, M. (1984). *Our Daughter Learns to Read and Write: A case study from birth to three*. Newark, Delaware: IRA.
- Baker, C. & Jones, S.P. (Eds.) (1998). *Encyclopedia of bilingualism and bilingual education*. Philadelphia, PA: Multilingual Matters.
- Bakhtin, M.M. (1981). *The Dialogic Imagination*. Austin, Texas: University Texas Press. (259-422).
- Barbieri, M. (2002). *Change My Life Forever: Giving Voice to English Language Learners*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Barnes, D. (1992). *From communication to curriculum*. 2nd ed. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.
- Battle, J. (1995). Collaborative story talk in a bilingual kindergarten. In N. L. Roser & M. Martinez (Eds.), *Book talk and beyond: Children and teachers respond to literature* (pp. 157-167). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Bialystok, E. (1997). Effects of Bilingualism and Biliteracy on children's Emerging Concepts of Print. *Developmental Psychology*. 33, (3), 429-440.
- Bialostok, S. (2002). Metaphors for Literacy: A Cultural Model of White, Middle-Class

- Parents. *Linguistics and Education*. 13, (3), 347-371.
- Bodrova, E. & Leong, D.J. (1996). *The Vygotskian Approach to Early Childhood Education*. Englewood Cliff, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc.
- Brock, C. (1997). Exploring the Use of Book Club with Second-Language Learners in Mainstream Classrooms. In S.I. McMahon & T. Raphael (Eds.) *The Book Club Connection: Literacy learning and Classroom talk*. (pp. 141-158). New York: Teachers College.
- Cadeiro-Kaplan. (2002). Literacy Ideologies: Critically Engaging the Language Arts Curriculum. *Language Arts*. 79, (5), 372-381.
- Calkins, L. (1994). *The Art of Teaching Writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Clausen, C. (1995). A Delightful Journey: Literature Circles in First Grade. In *Literature Circles and Response*. Eds. In B. Campbell Hill, N.J. Johnson, and K.L. Schlick Noe (Eds.) Literature circles and response (pp.13-25). Norwood, MA: Christopher Gordon Publishers (pp.13-25).
- Coffey, A. & Atkinson, P. (1996). *Making Sense of Qualitative Data: Complementary Research Strategies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Comber, B. (2001). Negotiating Critical Literacy. *School Talk*. 6, (3), 1-2.
- Compton-Lilly. (2000). "Staying on Children": Challenging Stereotypes about Urban Parents. *Language Arts*. 77, (5), 420-427.
- Corson, D. (2001). *Language Diversity and Education*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Cox, C., & Boyd-Batstone, P. (1997). *Crossroads: Literature and language in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms*. Upper Saddle River, NJ. Prentice-Hall.

- Crawford, K. & Hoopingarner, T. (1993). A Kaleidoscope of Conversation: A Case Study of First-Grade Literature Group. In K.M. Pierce & C. Gilles (Eds.), *Cycles of Meaning*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Creighton, D.C. (1997). Critical Literacy in the Elementary Classroom. *Language Arts* 74, (6), 438-445.
- Crowell, C.G. (1993). Living through War Vicariously with Literature. In L. Patterson, C. Santa, K. Smith, & K. Short (Eds.). *Teachers as Researchers: A Yearbook of Reflection and Action*. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association.
- Davidson, R. and Snow, C. (1995). The linguistic environment of early readers. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*. 10, (1), 5-21.
- Day, F. (1997). *Latina and Latino Voices in Literature*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Delgado-Gaitan, Concha. *Protean Literacy: Extending the Discourse on Empowerment*. Bristol, PA: Falmer Press.
- Delpit, L. (1988, 1995). *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom*. New York, New York: The New Press.
- Delpit, L. & Dowdy, J.K. (2002). *The Skin That We Speak: Thoughts on Language and Culture in the Classroom*. New York, New York: The New Press.
- Dewey, J. (1934). *Experience and Education*. New York, New York: Touchstone Edition.
- Duckworth, E. (1996). "The Having of Wonderful Ideas" *Other Essays on Teaching and Learning*. New York, New York: Teachers College Press.
- Edwards, P.A. (1995). Empowering low-income mothers and fathers to share books with young children. *The Reading Teacher*. 48, (6), 558-564.

- Edwards, S. & Foss, A. (2000). Using Picture Books to Turn a Critical Lens on Injustice. *New Advocate*. 13, (4), 391-393.
- Eeds, M. and D. Wells (1989). Grand Conversations: An Exploration of Meaning Construction in Literature Study Groups. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 23, (1), 4-29.
- Egawa, K. (1998). Eliciting Quality Responses to Literature in Spite of Limited Resources. *The New Advocate*. 11, (2), 153-164.
- Fecho, B. (2003). Yeki Bood/Yeki Na Bood: Writing and Publishing as a Teacher Researcher. *Research in the Teaching of English*. 37, 281-294.
- Ferreiro, E. & Teberosky, A. (1982). *Literacy Before Schooling*. Exeter, NH: Heinemann.
- Fleck, L. (1979). *Genesis and Development of Scientific Fact*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Foss, A. (2002). Peeling the Onion: Teaching Critical Literacy with Students of Privilege. *Language Arts*. 79, (5), 393-403.
- Freedman, L. (1993) "Teacher Talk: The Role of the Teacher in Literature Discussion Groups". In *Cycles of Meaning*, edited by K.M. Pierce and C. Gilles. New Hampshire: Heinemann.
- Freeman, D. & Freeman, Y. (1999). The California Reading Initiative: A Formula for Failure for Bilingual Students? *Language Arts*. 76, (3), 241-248.
- Freeman, D. & Freeman, Y. (2000). *Teaching Reading in Multilingual Classrooms*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.
- Freeman, Y. & Freeman, D. (1996). *Teaching Reading and Writing in Spanish in the*

Bilingual Classroom. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.

Freeman, Y. (1998). Providing quality children's literature in Spanish. *The New Advocate*, 11, 23-28.

Freire, A.M.A. & Macedo, D. (Eds.) (1998). *The Paulo Freire Reader*. New York, NY: The Continuum Publishing Company.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Seabury.

Goffman, E. (1959). *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Doubleday.

Gonzalez, N., Moll, L., & Amanti, C. (in press). *Theorizing Practices: Funds of Knowledge in Households and Classroom*. Hampton Press.

Goodman, K.S. (1989). Language Development: Issues, Insights, and Implementation. In Pinnell, G.S. & Matlin, M. L. (Eds.) *Teachers and Research*. Newark DE: International Reading Association.

Goodman, K.S., Goodman, Y.M. & Flores, B. (1979). *Reading in the Bilingual Classroom: Literacy and Biliteracy*. Rosslyn, VA.: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.

Goodman, Y. (1986). Children coming to know literacy. In W.H. Teale and E. Sulzby (Eds.). *Emergent Literacy: Writing and Reading*. Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex.

Goodman, Y. (2003). *Valuing Language Study: Inquiry into language for Elementary And Middle Schools*. Urbana, Illinois: NCTE.

Goodman, Y.M., Watson, D.J., & C. Burke. (1996). *Reading Strategies: Focus on Comprehension*. Katonah, New York: Richard C. Owen Publishers, Inc.

- Graue, M.E. & Walsh, D.J., (1995). *Children in Context: Interpreting the Here and Now of Children's Lives*. In Hatch, J.A. (Ed.), *Qualitative Research in Early Childhood Settings*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- Guba, E. G. (1980). Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries (ERIC/ECTJ Annual Review Paper). ERIC Document Reproduction Service No: EJ 247 523).
- Halliday, M.A.K. (1977). *Learning How to Mean: Explorations in the Development of Language*. New York, New York: Elsevier North-Holland, Inc.
- Halliday, M.A.K. (1988). *Three Aspects of Children's Language Development: Learning Language, Learning Through Language, Learning About Language. Presented at Conference*.
- Hancock, M.R. (2000). *A Celebration of Literature and Response: Children, Books, and Teachers in K-8 Classrooms*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Hatch, A. (1995). Studying childhood as a cultural invention: A rationale and a framework. In A. Hatch, *Qualitative research in early childhood settings*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- Heath, Shirley Brice (1982) "What no bedtime story means: Narrative skills at home and school" *Journal of Sociology* 11. 49-76.
- Heath, Shirley Brice (1996). *Ways with Words*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Heath, Shirley Brice. (1996). A Lot of Talk About Nothing. In Power, B.M. & Hubbard, R.S. (eds.). *Language Development: A Reader for Teachers*.
- Hornberger, N.H. (1989). Continua of Bilinguality. *Review of Educational Research*, 59, (3), 271-296.
- Huck, C., & et.al. (2001). *Children's Literature in the Elementary School*. New York,

NY: McGraw-Hill.

Jacob, E. & Jordan, C. (1993). *Minority Education: Anthropological Perspectives*. Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Corp.

Jefferson, Gail (1972) "Side Sequences". In D. Sudnow (ed.) *Studies in Social Interaction*. New York: The Free Press, 294-338.

Jennings, L.B. (2002). Parents and Children Inquiring Together: Written Conversations about Social Justice. *Language Arts*. 79, (5), 404-414.

Jongsman, K.S. (1991). Critical Literacy. *Reading Teacher*. 44, (7), 518-519.

Klassen, C.R. (1993). Exploring "The Color of Peace" Content-Area Literature Discussions. In K.M., Pierce & C. Gilles (Eds.), *Cycles of Meaning*. (pp. 237-259). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Klassen-Endrizzi, C. (2000). Exploring Our literacy Beliefs with Families. *Language Arts*. 78, (1), 62-70.

Kong, A. & Pearson, P.D. (2003). The Road to Participation: The Construction of Literacy Practice in a Learning Community of Linguistically Diverse Learners. *Research in the Teaching of English*. 38, (1), 85-118.

Kutz, E. (1997). *Language and Literacy: Studying Discourse in Communities and Classrooms*. Portsmouth, NH: Boyton/Cook Publishers.

Leland, C., Harste, J., Ociepka, A., Lewison, M., & Vasquez, V. (1999). Talking about Books: Exploring Critical Literacy: You Can Hear a Pin Drop. *Language Arts*. 77 (1), 70-77.

Levinson, B.A., Foley, D. E., & Holland, D.C. (Eds.) *The Cultural Production of the Educated Person*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

- Lindfors, J. (1980). *Children's Language and Learning*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Lipka & et. al (1998) *Transforming the Culture of Schools*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Lopez-Robertson, J. (2003). Tomás and the Library Lady: A Call to Social Action. *Arizona Reading Journal*. Vol. XXXIX, (2), 10-17.
- Malave, L.M. (1997). Parent Characteristics: Influence in the Development of Bilingualism in Young Children. *NYSABE Journal*. 15-42.
- Martens, P. (1996). *I already know how to read: A Child's View of Literacy*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Martinez-Roldan, C. & Lopez-Robertson, J. (1999). Initiating literature circles in a first-grade bilingual classroom. *The Reading Teacher*. 53, 4, 270-281.
- Martinez-Roldan, C. (2000). Bilingual students' responses to multicultural children's literature on discrimination. *The Dragon Lode*. 18, 2, 17-23.
- Martinez-Roldan, C. (2000). *The Power of Children's Dialogue: The Discourse of Latino Students in Small Group Literature Circles*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Arizona, Tucson.
- Martinez-Roldan, C. (2003). Building Worlds and Identities: Case Study of the Role of Narratives in Bilingual Literature Discussions. *Research in the Teaching of English*. 37, (4), 491-526.
- Maykut and Morehouse. (1994). *Beginning Qualitative Research: A Philosophic and Practical Guide*. London: The Falmer Press.
- Mehan, H. (1982). Structure of classroom events. In Gilmore, P. and Glatthorn, A. (eds.), *Children in and out of school*. Center for Applied Linguistics, pp. 56-87.

- Merriam, S. (1998). *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Minami, M., & Ovando, C.J. (1995). Language Issues in Multicultural Contexts. In Banks, J.A. & McGee, C.A. (Eds), *Handbook of Research on multicultural education*. (429-444). New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing.
- Moll, L.C. (1992). *Vygotsky and Education: Instructional Implications and Application of Sociohistorical Psychology*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge.
- Moll, L., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory Into Practice*. 3, 1 (2), 132-141.
- Moll, L. and Diaz, E. (1996). Change as a Goal of the Educational Research. In Jacob and Jordan, *Minority Education: Anthropological Perspectives (1996)*. New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Corporation.
- Moll, L.C. & Greenberg, J. B. (1990). Creating zones of possibilities: Combining social contexts for instruction. In L.C. Moll (Ed.), *Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology*. (pp.319-348). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Moll, L.C. & Gonzalez, N. (1994). Lessons from Research with Language-Minority Children. *Journal of Reading Behavior*, 26 (4), 439-456.
- Moraes, M. (1996). *Bilingual Education: A Dialogue with the Bakhtin Circle*. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press.
- Morrow, L.M. (1995). *Family Literacy: Connections in Schools and Communities*. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association.
- Mukhopadhyay, C. & Henze, R.C. (2003). Using Anthropology to Make Sense of

- Human Diversity. *Phi Delta Kappan*. 84, (9), 669-678.
- Nieto, S. (1996). *Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education* (2nd edition). New York: Longman.
- Nieto, S. (2002). *Language, Culture, and Teaching: Critical Perspectives for a New Century*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Noe, K.L.S. & Johnson, N.J. (1999). *Getting Started with Literature Circles*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers.
- Paley, V. (1981). *Wally's Stories*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Paratore, J.R. (2001). *Opening Doors, Opening Opportunities: Family Literacy An Urban Community*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Perez, B. & Torres-Guzman, M.E. (2002). *Learning in Two Worlds: An Integrated Spanish/English Bilingual Approach*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Peterson, R. & Eeds, M. (1990). *Grand conversations: Literature groups in action*. New York: Scholastic.
- Philips, S.U. (1972) "Participant Structures and Communicative Competence: Warm Springs Children in Community and Classroom". In *Functions of Language in the Classroom*, edited by Cazden, John, and Hymes. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Philips, S.U. (1983). *The Invisible Culture*. Illinois, Waveland Press.
- Phillips, Lafon L. (1996). Reader Response: Constructing Meaning through Multiple Ways of Knowing. *Arizona English Bulletin*. Fall '96. 5-13.
- Piaget, J. (1967). *The Language and Thought of the Child*. Cleveland: The World

Publishing Company.

Pierce, K. M. (1995). A Plan for Learning: Creating A Place For Exploratory Talk. *Primary Voices K-6*. 3, (1), 16-24.

Piper, T. (1998). *Language and Learning: the home and school years*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Power, B.M. & Hubbard, R.S. (1996). *Language Development: A Reader for Teachers*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc.

Purcell-Gates, V. (1997). *Other People's Words: The Cycle of Low Literacy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Quintero, E. & Huerta-Macias, A. (1990). All in the family: Bilingualism and biliteracy. *The Reading Teacher*. 44, (4), 306-312.

Ravetta, M.K. (1997). Biliteracy: An Annotated Bibliography. *Occasional Papers*: n.25: University of Arizona.

Rosenblatt, L. (1938). *Literature as Exploration*. New York: Modern Language Association.

Rossmann, G. & Rallis, S. (1998). *Learning in the Field: An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Rowe, D.W. (1998). Examining Teacher Talk: Revealing Hidden Boundaries for Curricular Change. *Language Arts*, 75 (2), 103-107.

Ruiz, R. (1984). Orientations in language planning. *Nabe Journal*. 8 (2). 15-34.

Ruiz, Richard. (1988). Bilingualism and Bilingual Education in the United States. In Paulston, C.B., *International Handbook of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education*.

New York, Greenwood Press.

- Sachs, Harvey, Emanuel A. Schegloff, and Gail Jefferson (1974) "A Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn-Taking in Conversation", *Language* 696-735.
- Samway, K. & Whang, G. (1996). *Literature Studies in a Multicultural Classroom*. York, ME: Stenhouse.
- Schecter, S.R. (1996). Bilingual by Choice: Latino Parents' Rationales and Strategies For Raising Children with Two Languages. *Bilingual Research Journal*. 20, 2, pp.261- 281.
- Schwarzer, D. (2001). *Noa's Ark: One Child's Voyage into Multiliteracy*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Schwarzer, D., Haywood, A., & Lorenzen, C. (2003). Fostering Multiliteracy in a Linguistically Diverse Classroom. *Language Arts*. 80, (6), 453-460.
- Seidman, I. (1998). *Interviewing as Qualitative Research*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Shockley, B., Michalove, & Allen, J.B. (1995). *Engaging Families: Connecting Home and School Literacy Communities*. Portsmouth, MA: Heinemann.
- Short, K. G. (1993). Making connections across literature and life. In K. Holland, R. Hungerford, & S. Ernst (ED.), *Journeying: Children responding to literature* (pp. 284-301). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Short, K.G. & Burke, C. (1996). Examining Our Beliefs and Practices Through Inquiry. *Language Arts*. v. 73.
- Short, K.G., Harste, J.C., & Burke, C. (1996). *Creating classrooms for authors and inquirers*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

- Short, K.G. & Pierce, M.K. (1998). *Talking about books: Creating literate communities* (2nd edition). New Hampshire: Heinemann.
- Short, K.G., Kaufman, G., Kaser, S., Kahn, L., and Crawford, K.M., (1999). "Teacher-Watching": Examining Teacher Talk in Literature Circles." *Language Arts*. 377-385.
- Shultz, J., Florio, S., and Erickson, F. (1982). *Where's the floor? Aspects of the cultural organization of social relationships in communication at home and in school*. In Gilmore, P. and Glatthorn, A. (eds.), *Children in and out of school*. Center for Applied Linguistics, pp. 88-123.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, Tove. (1981). *Bilingualism or not*. Clevedon, Avon: Multilingual Matters, Ltd.
- Sleeter, C. (1996). *Multicultural Education as Social Activism*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Smith, Gilmore, Goldman, and McDermott, R. (1996). "Failure's Failure". In *Minority Education: Anthropological Perspectives*, edited by Jacob, E. and Jordan, C. New Jersey: Ablex Publishing.
- Snow, C. (1983). Literacy and language: relationships during the preschool years. *Harvard Educational Review*. v.53, n.2, 165-189.
- Soltero, S. W. (1999). *Collaborative talk in a bilingual kindergarten: A practitioner researcher's co-construction of knowledge*. An unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Arizona, Tucson.
- Solsken, J.W. (1993). *Literacy, gender, and work in families and in school*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Taylor, D. (1983). *Family Literacy: Young Children Learning to Read and Write*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Taylor, D. & Dorsey-Gaines, C. (1988). *Growing up literate: learning from inner-city families*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann.

- Tyson, C.A. (1999). "Shut My Mouth Wide Open" Realistic Fiction and Social Action. *Theory Into Practice*. 38, (3), 155-159.
- Valdes, G. (1996). *Con Respeto Bridging the Distances Between Culturally Diverse Families and Schools: An Ethnographic Portrait*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Valdes, G. (2001). *Learning and Not Learning English: Latino Students in America Schools*. New York, NY: Teacher's College Press.
- Varenne, H. & McDermott, R. (1999). *Successful Failure: The School America Builds*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Vasquez, V. (1998). Building Equitable Communities: Taking Social Action in a Kindergarten Classroom. *Talking Points*, 9, (2), 3-5.
- Vasquez, V. (2000). Language Stories and Critical Literacy Lessons. *Talking Points* 11, (2), 5-7.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind in Society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wan, Guofang. (2000). A Chinese Girl's Storybook Experience at Home. *Language Arts*. 77, (5), 398-405.
- Wells, G. (1994). The Complementary Contributions of Halliday and Vygotsky to a "Language-Based Theory of Learning". *Linguistics and Education*. (6), 41-90.
- Wells, G. (1999). *Dialogic Inquiry: Toward a Sociocultural Practice and Theory In Education*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. (xi-167).
- Whitmore, K.F. & Crowell, C.G. (1994). *Inventing a Classroom: Life in a Bilingual, Whole Language Learning Community*. York, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers.

Whitmore, K.F. & Norton-Meier, L.A. (2000). Welcome to PKTI. *Primary Voices*. 8 (3), 3-11.

Wilson-Keenan, J., Solsken, J., & Willett, J. (2001). Troubling Stories: Valuing Productive Tensions in Collaborating with Families. *Language Arts*. 78, 6, 520-528.

Wolf, S.A. & Heath, S.B. (1992). *The Braid of Literature: Children's Worlds of Reading*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE REFERENCES

Ada, A. F. (1995). *My Name is Maria Isabel*. Ill. K. Dyble Thompson. New York: Simon & Schuster Publishers.

Ada, A.F. (1999). *Me llamo Maria Isabel*. Ill. K. Dyble Thompson. New York: Simon & Schuster Publishers.

Adler, D. (1989). *A picture book of Martin Luther King, Jr.* Ill. Robert Casilla. New York: Holiday House.

- Adler, D. (1995). *A picture book of Rosa Parks*. Ill. Robert Casilla. New York: Holiday House.
- Anaya, R.A. (1995). *Farolitos of Christmas/Farolitos de Navidad*. Ill. Edward Gonzales. New York: Hyperion Books.
- Baca, A. (1999). *Benito's Bizcochitos/Los bizcochitos de Benito*. Ill. Anthony Accardo. Houston, Texas: Pinata Books
- Batezat, E. (1999). *The Day GoGo Went to Vote*. Ill. Sharon Wilson. Little, Brown and Corp.
- Blanco, A.. (1994). *Angel's Kite/La Estrella de Angel*. Ill. Rodolfo Morales. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.
- Bradby, Marie. (1995). *More than anything else*. Ill. Chris Soentpiet. Orchard Books.
- Chavarria-Chairez, B. & Vega, A. (2000). *Las Tortillas de Magda/Magda's Tortillas*. Ill. Julia Mercedes Castilla. Arte Publico Press.
- Cheng, A. *Grandfather Counts*. Ill. Ange Zhang. New York: Lee & Low Books.
- Cisneros, S. *Hairs/Pelitos*. Ill. Terry Ybáñez. New York: Knopf Books.
- Coleman, E. (1999). *White Socks Only*. Ill. Tyrone Geeter. Whitman.
- Coles, R. (1995). *The Story of Ruby Bridges*. Ill. George Ford. New York: Scholastic.
- Covault, R.M. (1993). *Pablo and pimienta/Pablo y Pimienta*. Ill. Francisco Mora. Flagstaff, Arizona: Northland Publishing.

- DePaola, T. (2002). *A New Barker in the House*. New York: Penguin Putnam Books For Young Readers.
- Dorros, A. (1991). *Abuela*. Ill. Elisa Kleven. New York: Dutton.
- Dorros, A. (1995). *Abuela*. Ill. Elisa Kleven. New York: Puffin Books.
- Elya, S.M. (2002). *Home at Last*. Ill. Felipe Davalos. New York, New York: Lee & Low Books.
- English, K. (2000). *Speak English for us, Marisol*. Ill. Enrique O. Sánchez. Morton Grove, Illinois: Albert Whitman & Company.
- Gage, A.G. (1996). *Pascual's Magic Pictures*. Ill. Karen Dugan. Minneapolis MN: Carolrhoda Books.
- Garcia, V.C. (1997). *The cactus wren and the cholla/El reyezuelo y la cholla*. Ill. Fred Barraza. Tucson, AZ: Hispanic Books Distributors.
- Garza, C.L. (1993). *Family Pictures/Cuadros de familia*. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.
- Hayes, J. (2000). *Estrellita de Oro/Little Gold Star: A Cinderella Cuento*. Ill. Gloria Osuna Perez and Lucia Perez. Hong Kong: Cinco Puntos Press.
- Herrera, J. F. (2000). *Upside down boy/El niño de cabeza*. Ill. Elizabeth Gómez. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.
- Herrera, J.F. (1995). *Calling the Doves: Canta las Palomas*. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.
- Jiménez, F. (1998). *La Mariposa*. Ill. Simon Silva. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

- Jiménez, F. (2000). *La Mariposa*. Ill. Simon Silva. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Leiner, K. (2001). *Mama Does the Mambo*. Ill. Edel Rodriguez. New York: Hyperion Press.
- Littlesugar, A. (2001). *Freedom School, Yes!* Ill. Floyd Cooper. New York: Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers.
- Littlesugar, A. (1998). *Shake Rag: From the Life of Elvis Presley*. Ill. Floyd Cooper. New York: Philomel Books.
- Lorbiecki, M. (2000). *Sister Anne's Hands*. New York: Penguin Putnam Books.
- López De Mariscal, B.. (1995). *The Harvest Birds: los pájaros de la cosecha*. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.
- Marzollo, J.. (1994). *Feliz Cumpleanos Martin Luther King*. Ill. Brian Pinkney. New York: Scholastic en Español.
- Marzollo, J. (1995). *Happy Birthday Martin Luther King*. Ill. Brian Pinkney. New York: Scholastic.
- McGovern, A. (1997). *La Señora de la Caja en la Cartón*. Ill. Marni Backer. Turtle Books.
- McGovern, Ann. (1999). *Lady in the Box*. Ill. Marni Backer. Turtle Books.
- Mora, P. (1997). *Tomás y la señora de la biblioteca*. New York: Knopf.
- Mora, P. (1997). *Tomás and the library lady*. New York: Knopf.
- Ortega, C. (1996). *Los Ojos Del Tejedor: The Eyes of the Weaver*. Ill. Patricia

- Garcia. Clear Light Publishers.
- Patricia P. (1997). *El Pollo de los Domingos*. Ill. Edward Miller. Putnam, Berkley, Inc.
- Polacco, P. (1998). *Chicken Sunday*. Ill. Edward Miller. Putnam, Berkely, Inc.
- Ramos, V. (2001). *Pedro and Donkeeta*. Ill. Gail Wilkinson. Scottsdale, Arizona: VR Publications.
- Ringold, F. (1998). *Invisible Princess*. New York: Random House.
- Rossi, J. (1996). *The Gullywasher/El chaparrón torrencial*. Flagstaff, AZ: Northland Publishing.
- Sáenz, B.A. (1988). *A gift from Papá Diego/Un regalo de Papá Diego*. Ill. Gerónimo García. El Paso, TX: Cinco Puntos Press.
- Soto, G. (1993). *Too many tamales*. Ill. Ed Martínez. New York: Putnam.
- Soto, G. (1996). *¡Qué montón de tamales!* Ill. Ed Martínez. New York: the Putnam and Grosset Group.
- Stephoe, J. (1997). *Creativity*. Ill. E.B. Lewis. New York: Houghton Mifflin.
- Williams, V.B. (1982). *A chair for my mother*. New York: Mulberry.
- Williams, V.B. (1993). *Un sillón para mi mamá*. New York: Scholastic.
- Woodson, J. (2001). *The Other Side*. Ill. E.B. Lewis. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons.