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Learning English as an L2 in PreK:
A Practice Perspective on Identity and Acquisition

By

Katherine Bernstein

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requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Education

in

the Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Claire Kramsch, Chair
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Professor William Hanks

Fall 2014

Learning English as an L2 in PreK: A Practice Perspective on Identity and Acquisition

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Abstract

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Katherine Bernstein

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Claire Kramsch, Chair

“Little kids are like sponges,” goes the saying. While young children are commonly believed to be naturally good language learners—and have often been used in second language research as a homogeneous comparison group for older learners—this dissertation paints a more complex picture. It examines the process of learning English as a second language for young children in their first year of preschool and takes a practice perspective (Bourdieu, 1977, 1992) to understand how language learning relates both to the social context and to the classroom identities that students developed in their classrooms.

This ethnography takes place in a mostly English-speaking, former Rust Belt city, where a new and growing population of resettled refugees has made many teachers into *de facto* ESL teachers. After briefly investigating this changing landscape, including the historical and economic factors that led to the present demographics, the study zeros in on one Head Start classroom that reflects these city-level changes. It follows parents, teachers, and the class of children—including 11 Nepali speakers and one Turkish speaker—across the school year.

Data were collected one full day per week for 27 weeks, through field notes, video recordings, and interviews. Data were coded thematically to understand parents’ and teachers’ histories and perspectives on language and learning; then, through a combination of coding and discourse analysis, I used the data to explore how four focal students were positioned as more or less competent and authoritative within the classroom. Finally, video data were analyzed to construct a linguistic corpus for each focal student in order to analyze their English language growth.

Findings show that students in the classroom who were seen as socially and academically competent were also seen as linguistically competent—by teachers, by peers, and even by me—regardless of their actual level of English. This was because what mattered in day-to-day interaction was what students could *do* with language. Competence meant the ability to assemble linguistic resources in real-time in order to accomplish social tasks, to be listened to, and to be taken seriously. Within the classroom, language was understood and assessed as a social practice. When at the end of the year, I compiled corpora of student talk and analyzed them for growth in vocabulary and syntax,

a different picture emerged: The most socially successful student had learned much less language than her teachers (or I) had thought, and one of the most peripheral students had in fact learned much more.

By accounting for language both as social practice and as a system of vocabulary/syntax, this study shows that the two versions of success do not always align and it raises questions about what should count as successful language learning in schools, as well as what kinds of interactions support this learning. One implication of this work is that teachers must understand that how one *defines* language changes how one measures success. Cultivating teachers' ability to see language more than one way may provide a much-needed balance to the tendency of schools to measure success as the individual accumulation of words and structures. Additionally, since the same social conditions that made some students successful in language-as-social-practice were those that kept them from having the comparable success in acquiring language-as-a system, it is equally important to help teachers to understand how different conditions can lead to different kinds of growth.

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Transcription Conventions

(.)	Brief pause
(1.0)	Pause of 1 second
(5.0)	Pause of 5 seconds
-	Speaker self-repairs or restarts
:::	Elongated sound in middle or end of word
=	Turns before and after are latched together (no pause between)
()	Items within describe nonverbal behavior
[]	Items within are clarifications added by the researcher
“ ”	Items within are quoted speech
// //	Items within overlap with another speaker's speech
I'm NOT going	Capitalized words said loudly, with emphasis
<i>saati</i>	Italics words are in a language other than English

All other punctuation marks (periods, commas, question marks, exclamation points) are used as in standard writing.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

On a bright winter morning, in a former Rust Belt city that prides itself on the word “former,” 4-year-old Padma walks to school with her grandmother. Her grandmother wears traditional Nepali clothing over her snow boots and Padma’s breath forms a cloud as she talks excitedly in Nepali about the police officer and his helper dog that came to visit her class yesterday. Padma and her grandmother walk from their apartment complex to the school in an early morning parade of other parents and children, many of whom were in the same refugee camps before moving to the US.

Padma is a student in Head Start, a federally funded program that allows low-income students to go to preschool for free from age three until kindergarten. The students’ parents, whether newly arrived refugees or graduate students, all meet the income criterion for their children to attend the 6-hour daily program, where students eat two meals, brush their teeth, nap, and learn the routines of school that are intended to help them enter kindergarten just as “ready” as their higher income peers. Later, I will follow Padma into her classroom and introduce her teachers, parents, and classmates, but Padma begins this dissertation for another reason. The things that have brought her family to the city mirror those that have put the “former” in the city’s Rust Belt status. Since the collapse of its heavy industry, the city has slowly transformed into a center of both medicine and education, with hospital and university buildings filling the skyline in several city neighborhoods. Many international students have come to the city to earn degrees, to do research, or to train in the hospitals. These changes have meant steady growth of lower wage jobs in the city as well, but decades after heavy industry left and prices plummeted, it is still an affordable place to live. This combination of jobs, affordability, and infrastructure has also made it a particular good place to resettle refugees. In fact, many refugee families who have been placed in other American cities choose to *re-relocate* to this one.

Padma’s family was one of these families. Having initially been resettled in Boise, Idaho, they made their way to the city after hearing of jobs and a low cost of living and are now part of the largest Bhutanese community in the US. While local media continues to describe the city as twenty years behind the rest of the country in terms of immigration, the population is changing. And whether their parents have come on J-1 student visas, as doctors, as refugees, or by other paths, many students in the city, like Padma, now come to their first year of school speaking languages other than English.

This is a study of children learning English, along with everything else there is to learn, in preschool. Through an ethnographic study of Padma’s classroom, I seek to understand how students like Padma, who come to school speaking languages different from those of their teachers and schools, begin to make their way in the complex social worlds of their classrooms. In particular, I want to understand how, across a school year, these children come to occupy certain places in the social fabric of the classroom and how these social places intertwine and interact with learning English.

Why this here now? Hanks (2006) posed this question in order to understand the function of an utterance in context, but it is just as good a question to ask of any research project. Padma’s story highlights why I chose her city and school as the right “here” for this project. In Chapter

Two, I will introduce her school and city in more depth. In this first chapter, I answer “Why now?” and “Why this?” through a review of the prior research and the theory that frame this study.

Review of the Literature

Preschool as Prevention

Preschool has recently enjoyed a renewed place in the limelight, with Obama calling for “Preschool for All” and Andrew Cuomo and Bill de Blasio fighting, not over whether or not to fund statewide prekindergarten (preK) in New York, but over whether to do it through tax cuts or tax hikes. From an economic standpoint, universal PreK has come to be seen as an investment in the future (e.g. Barnett & Frede, 2010; Barnett & Larny, 2013; but c.f. Moss, 2013 for pushback to this neoliberal discourse). From an educational justice standpoint, preK is a way to give low-income students a chance at getting the kinds of experiences, in particular with language and literacy, that their higher income peers get at home and that correlate to later academic success (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). From all angles, the call for universal preK follows the “ounce of prevention” rationale that it is easier to catch children early than to remediate later. For English language learners (ELLs), numbering 4.4 million in the U.S. in 2012 (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.), this also means early exposure to English, the language of most schools. The idea of exposing ELLs to English, as well as school practices, before they begin kindergarten has found the support, if cautiously, of not just politicians but researchers. In a recent meta-analysis of the effects of early education for English learners, Buysse, Peisner-Feinberg, Páez, Hammer, and Knowles (2014) concede:

On the basis of a few large-scale, scientifically sound studies, there is at least some evidence to suggest that DLLs [Dual Language Learners] may benefit from widely available early educational programs (i.e., Head Start or public preK) in areas such as English language development, and literacy and math skills. (p. 782)

Age and Second Language Learning

The idea that children should start learning English when they are young reflects a common belief that young children are naturally better language learners and that learning will therefore be easier than if they wait until later. This idea is a pervasive one, from policy materials (e.g. European Commission statement on early language teaching) to materials for teachers (e.g., the March 2013 issue of *Young Children*, the magazine of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)). At conferences like TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) and AAAL (The American Association of Applied Linguistics), which each had exactly one session on research with preschoolers in 2013, the underrepresentation of studies with prekindergarten language learners suggests that those who study language teaching and learning may still see young students’ second language (L2) acquisition as more natural and less problematic than learning by older children and adults. This idea that “younger is better” is supported anecdotally, by adults who describe language learning woes in foreign language classes or who move abroad and struggle while marveling at how easily their children adapt, yet it has roots in language research itself.

Scovel (2000) speculated as to the “younger is better” origin: “Perhaps no topic in applied linguistics so directly affects the popular consciousness and public policy than the CPH

[Critical Period Hypothesis]” (p.214). The Critical Period describes a window of time in childhood inside of which first language learning can take place, and outside of which, it becomes very difficult if not impossible to acquire language. The origins of the idea are in accounts of children, who, for reasons of abuse or isolation passed into adolescence without learning to speak and were never able to fully learn a language (e.g. Curtiss, 1977). The CPH was later extended into second language research in what Bialystok and Hakuta (1999) argue was a case of mistaking correlation for causation: Do younger learners have better eventual outcomes? Perhaps. Does this mean that age *causes* better outcomes? Not necessarily.

As early as 1979, Krashen, Long, and Scarcella concluded that while younger learners in natural settings had better eventual success, older learners were faster to learn grammar and morphology. Many scholars agree with Krashen et al.’s original assessments that both younger and older are better for some things (see Ellis, 2008), yet others argue that age only matters as a proxy for other social, educational, and environmental factors, for instance, that young children are spoken to in different ways and are expected to speak and act in different ways from adults (Marinova-Todd, Marshall & Snow, 2000). Yet, despite the nuances debated among CPH researchers, by taking age as the criterion for comparison in the first place, they obscure important inter-age-group differences.

Not All Sponges: A More Nuanced Picture of Young Second Language Learners

Research with young L2 learners has shown that there can indeed be significant differences in how young children learn a second language. Wong Fillmore (1976, 1979), who did second language research in the field of education, examined the interactions of five Spanish speakers who had recently arrived in the U.S. and who had just begun kindergarten, first, or second grade. She found that students varied in the kinds of cognitive and social strategies that they used for handling English interactions. Some students, for example, joined interactions and pretended they understood, using context to help them guess meaning; others used key words and phrases in a “fake it til you make it” approach. Others still jumped in with what little English they had, worrying less about getting it right than just communicating and then relying on friends for help. Wong Fillmore observed that these strategies, combined with students’ personal characteristics, resulted in widely varied progress in students’ English over a year, so much so that one student, Nora, made more progress in the first three months of school than others made at all. Wong Fillmore concluded that Nora’s success stemmed from her identification with and desire to be like the English speakers in the class as well as her willingness to try new words and to speak, even when she knew it would not be perfect.

Wong Fillmore (1991a) later synthesized a decade and a half of her work and, moving from looking at individual strategies and traits to looking at the whole learning context, presented a model to describe all of the “ingredients” for second language learning. The main ingredients were simple: learners who want to learn, speakers to provide input, and social settings that allow enough interaction between the two. The possible ways that these ingredients can combine, however, was more complex. Wong Fillmore’s model showed that there was not one kind of ideal learner or situation for learning, but that individual traits, like sociability or communicative need, can combine with factors in the classroom environment, like activity structures, to produce different outcomes for students in the same classroom. For example, a student who prefers to listen rather than jump into interactions may thrive in a highly structured classroom with lots of teacher talk, while a student who initiates and engages in peer interaction may do better in less structured spaces like playgrounds or play-based classrooms.

From a developmental perspective, Tabors and Snow (1994) outlined a sequence of L2 learning in young children, from a silent period to telegraphic speech to productive language use. They found that moving through this sequence depended at least in part on opportunities for peer interaction that provided comprehensible English input. They described an intervention in one preschool classroom where English-speaking peers were taught how to initiate interactions, speak slowly, provide recasts, repeat themselves, and to ask for clarification with ELL peers. They found that interactions between trained students and ELL students increased markedly and that ELLs' turns in these interactions also increased. They illustrated that social context is not fixed, but can be changed with adult help. In later work (2003), Tabors and Snow added motivation, exposure, and personality as additional factors found to cause variability in how quickly young children move through the L2 developmental sequence.

Taking a sociocultural perspective, Genishi's ethnographic work (with Dyson; 2009) studied six preK and kindergarten ELLs and set out to describe the paths these focal children took to learning English in school. Genishi illustrated that some students, like Tommy, a Cantonese speaker, immediately put to use any English words they learned, jumping into play and giving answers before they could even string together multi-word phrases. She contrasted this with accounts of students like Miguel and Luisa, Mixteco speakers who spent a lot of time watching on the sidelines (Luisa) or participating with actions (Miguel) before gradually becoming speakers in the classroom. Genishi found that language learning depended primarily upon students' desire to communicate and their recognition that they needed to use the new language to do so. Yet, their learning also depended on context, since need and desire to communicate shifted with activities and settings, and learning contexts supported students in different ways. Genishi attributed all of the students' eventual success to teachers' and peers' recognition of students' "inner clocks"—whether to begin speaking in English right away or to wait and listen—and their accommodation of these different ways of participating.

Clarke (1996, 1999) followed four Vietnamese-speaking preschoolers and also found that students took different amounts of time to begin speaking English. She showed how the social dynamics of the classroom readily supported the interactional preferences and forays into English of some of the students, while for others, the teacher had to experiment with ways to adapt to their preferences, allowing them to stay silent longer. For all of the students, Clarke found quality interaction to be the key element in students' eventual English growth. She concluded, therefore, that having teachers who were responsive to the interactional needs of the students was crucial. Other work has focused on how the languages that the teachers speak can mediate classroom relationships for ELLs. Chang et al. (2007) found that when teachers spoke students' L1s, teacher-student relationships were more positive. Gillanders (2003) discovered that even if a teacher could not speak her students' L1 (Spanish), when she made attempts to learn Spanish and to use it in the classroom, the status of Spanish and Spanish expertise was elevated, resulting in positive effects on peer relationships and interactions.

Several studies with young learners focus on play as a particularly significant type of interaction for language learning. In early work on this topic, Peck (1980) illustrated how participation in language play provided affectively positive chances to practice as well as opportunities to focus on form and phonology. Ervin-Tripp's (1981, 1986, 1991) work showed that by drawing on prior knowledge of games and play, children could enter into peer play interactions even when they were new to a language, and that play thereby scaffolded acquisition of the second language. She found that the most supportive games featured repetition and words that were redundant to action, making it easy to infer their referents, yet that all games—even

when they resulted in dispute—provided a joint activity and a motivation for children to come to a mutual understanding, which Ervin-Tripp found to boost language learning. Peck and Ervin-Tripp’s findings are echoed by more recent work by Piker (2013), who examined how play facilitated interactional moves in English for four Spanish-speaking children in a bilingual Head Start classroom. She found that play served the dual function of providing the motivation for English use as well as input for building students’ linguistic repertoires. Yet, she also found that not all students were sought out, or permitted into, interactions with English speakers and that this influenced how much students participated in English. Similarly, Bongartz and Schneider (2003) showed how different kinds of interactional and play preferences resulted in different kinds of language use and learning for two young English-speaking boys learning German in a German school. The authors argued, therefore, that the boys’ linguistic outcomes must also be understood as social outcomes.

Beginning with Hatch’s foundational work (Wagner-Gough & Hatch, 1975; Hatch, 1978), interaction has been seen in second language research not just as a place for learners to perform what they have already acquired, but as the locus for learning itself. As Hatch wrote, “One learns how to do conversation, one learns how to interact verbally, and out of the interaction syntactic structures develop” (1978, p. 404). From their varied perspectives, all of the studies in this section highlight the importance of interaction for young children learning a new language in school. Yet, they also show that getting into interactions with speakers of a new language is not always straightforward. Tabors (1987, p.175; 2008) described this as the “double bind” of beginning school in a new language: Children must gain access to the interactions that will facilitate their language learning, without yet having the language to facilitate those interactions. As the studies in this section show, getting into interactions depends on a complex ecology of factors—from student preferences and strategies to classroom structure, teacher supports, and peer accommodation—and that these can result in varying amounts and kinds of interactions, and thereby, learning.

Identity as a Factor in Language and Learning

In the 1990’s, Bonny Norton Peirce proposed social identity as the missing factor that could mediate individual variables (like motivation, aptitude, learner strategies) and social ones (like participation in interactions) in SLA. She thought that social identity might explain why a highly motivated learner might still be denied access to an interaction, or why a learner might seem to be a competent speaker in one interaction, but not another. Norton Peirce wrote:

It is through language that a person negotiates a sense of self across sites at different points in time and it is through language that a person gains access to, or is denied access to, powerful social networks that give learners the opportunity to speak. (1995, p. 13)

In Norton Peirce’s work with adult women learning English in Canada, she found that their immigrant identities restricted their participation in interactions at work, but when their identities shifted and coworkers began to see them as a mother or a multicultural European, they were accorded greater respect and greater access to language-providing conversations. Many other SLA researchers have since taken up Norton’s call to examine the role of social identity in language learning (for some notable examples, see Kinginger, 2004; Kramsch, 2000, 2009; McKay & Wong, 1996; Pavlenko & Blackledge 2003). This work has illustrated the influence of

identity on why, when, and how language learning is undertaken or resisted and conversely, the transformative potential of language learning for one's identity.

In parallel work over the last two decades, researchers in the field of education have linked classrooms, learning, and student identity (e.g., Bomer & Laman, 2004; Brown, 2004; Eckert, 1989; Ivanić, 1998; Leander, 2002). Across grade levels and subjects, this work has shown that classrooms are not only spaces for the production of knowledge, but for the production of selves, and that who a student becomes in a classroom is inextricably intertwined with how she participates and what she learns. For instance, Wortham (2006) showed how changes in curriculum contributed to shifting frames of interpretation for the behavior of high school students. In one student's case, although her actions varied little on its own over the school year, when understood through the lens of the changing curriculum, they were first seen as participation, then disruption, then isolation, then finally standing her ground and speaking her mind. And while this student continued to participate in similar ways throughout this shifting positioning, Wortham found that other students, after gradually being identified in a model of non-participation, no longer attempted to participate after a few months of school. Work like Wortham's has underlined that identity and learning are not separate, but that each jointly produces the other.

Early childhood education settings have also been studied as places of identity construction. Davies (1989), for examples, examined gender positioning through preK students' conversations about storybooks. She found that students used stories to support stereotypical versions of male and female behavior and that they had strong objections to a feminist fairytale in which these roles were reversed. In a study of toddlers who were not yet speaking, Månsson (2011) found that teachers introduced them to school for the first time through clearly gendered discourse, contributing to very early gendered school subjectivities. Other studies focused on the negotiation of positions that takes place during pretend play (Kyratzis, 1999) or during group use of classroom computers (Ljung-Djärf, 2008). While work in preschool classrooms has not focused, as studies with older learners have, on connecting identity to learning trajectories, these studies share the perspective that classroom interaction is also always identity negotiation.

Classroom Identity and Young L2 Learners

A handful of studies have focused on how social identity mediates interaction and second language learning for young L2 learners in early elementary school. Willet (1995) showed how classroom identity formed over a year for four ESL students in first grade classroom at a university school. She found that student identity was bound up with the classroom structure and rules and that it had profound effects on students' learning opportunities as well as teachers' placement decisions for students. In this classroom, while the teacher normally alternated "boy-girl-boy-girl" student seating in the classroom to prevent socializing during desk work, she allowed all four ESL students to sit together in order to facilitate Willett's research. This meant that the three female students were able to work together extensively and undetected, while the fourth student—the only male ESL student—Xavier, worked alone like everyone else. The girls were thus able to take turns asking for help and then sharing answers, so none of them looked like they needed too much assistance, while Xavier was left to ask all of his questions himself. This arrangement, which allowed the three female students to pool resources and appear competent, left Xavier looking needy and incompetent by comparison. The teacher, who was unconvinced that his father, a stable hand in the university stables, could help him at home, decided to have Xavier do special pull-out ESL sessions. Yet, when Xavier came back to class he

was often lost and would become frustrated to the point of tears. In the end, while all four students scored within the same range on a placement test, Xavier's negative student identity led the teacher to recommend that only he remain in ESL for second grade.

In a study that followed six ESL students in kindergarten, Toohey (2000) found that becoming a proficient speaker of English involved negotiating identities that would allow "enough access to experienced members of the community of practice and to their mediating means to be able to appropriate those means" (p.71). Amy, a petite girl who had gone through kindergarten in Hong Kong before joining the class, came to school with no English, but with a tidy appearance and an impressive array of school skills, like sitting still, using scissors, and raising her hand. She quickly earned the identity of being academically competent "for such a little girl" and other students saw her as pleasant and quiet and welcomed her into play. Yet, her size and quietness also led other students to position her as "baby" or "pet" in games and to treat her as such. Meanwhile, another student, Harvey, who came from a Chinese family and was constantly disheveled, with a runny nose and unclear speech, was often excluded from play. Yet, he discovered that by taking on a peripheral "helper" role, he was allowed to join. Toohey argued that participating in different kinds of conversations meant practicing very different kinds of English and she wondered about the long-term learning effects of always being made to be the baby or the helper. Toohey also found that being identified as competent was not only based on language, but on physical appearance and skill, academic ability, and social and behavioral competence. The teacher's decisions of who to keep in ESL (Harvey) and who to mainstream (Amy) were less about their current linguistic competence and more about who was seen as having the social skills to *become* more competent without help.

Day (2002) followed Hari, a Punjabi-speaking kindergartner, across a school year and across various classroom activities and found that he appeared most competent in activities in which he had an ally. At circle time, for example, the teacher took on this role, asking him if he wanted to say anything and recasting his speech, thus positioning him as a ratified speaker with valuable contributions to make. Mid-way through the year, a new student joined the class and Hari took him under his wing. The new student, Casey, positioned Hari as an expert on classroom matters, but also as a desirable playmate and interlocutor, thereby elevating his status in the classroom. Additionally, when Hari's comments to peers were ignored or not heard, Casey repeated them, and in this way functioned as an amplifier for Hari's voice. Day's work shows that neither his identity nor linguistic competence could be seen as static facts or individual traits, but that both were interpersonal achievements. Like McDermott's (1993) finding that combinations of events made a student with a learning disability look more or less able, Day illustrated that activities and participants combine in different ways to make students seem more or less linguistically competent.

Focusing specifically on the acquisition of academic language, Hawkins (2005) used the contrastive cases of two kindergartners—Anton from Peru and William from China—to show how the boys' differing classroom identities allowed access to different discourses. Anton, who came to school with many academic skills from his older sister came to be seen as a valuable work partner, though not a preferred playmate, while William, who was skilled socially, was likely to be chosen by peers as a fun playmate, but not a good school work collaborator. These different positions thus led them to diverge in the kinds of language they were exposed to over the year. This work differs slightly from the other three studies of young ESL students as Hawkins made sure to point out that the boys *chose* to participate in conversations that would make them look successful and thus did not often attempt to gain access to other conversations.

Hawkins' work highlights the importance of paying attention to the histories and resources that students, even young ones, bring to the classroom with them.

While these four studies vary in how much agency they give students in claiming classroom positions, all of these studies show identity to be negotiated in interaction with others and to be connected to the varying practices and activities in which students participate. These studies also underline how students' classroom identities have real consequences for students, both in terms of access to activities and interactions and in terms of institutional decisions, such as being passed out of ESL. Yet, while this work demonstrates that learner identity shapes opportunities for interaction and that it is a key part of whether or not students are *perceived* as proficient, the studies stop short of examining whether or not these differences in participation actually resulted in differences in language learning.

This study thus seeks to understand how preK ELLs' social identity in the classroom is constructed over a school year and how it connects to the kinds of things the students learn to say and do in English. This work goes beyond studying access to interactions and instead examines the affordances of differential ways of interacting, by studying students' language outcomes. With the current emphasis on preK as a potentially important place for ELLs to get a "head start" on learning academic English, the question of identity and its relationship to language learning for preK students is particularly relevant.

Theoretical Framework: Language, Learners, and Learning in Context

This study addresses children's language learning as a process that occurs through interaction in social context. This begs the question: What do I mean by context?

Defining Context

Immediately, when one sets out to define context, words "around" or "surround" are sure to appear, as are attempts to differentiate between things like "immediate context" and "broad context." If asked to illustrate such a scheme, one might end up with an image that looks like this:

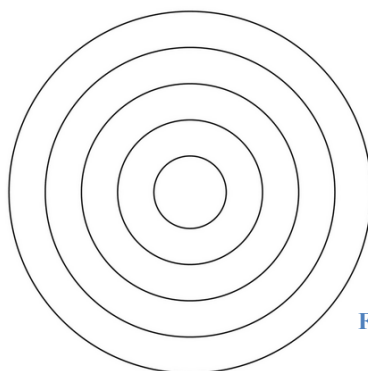


Figure 1.1

One would not be alone in that design. The concentric circles model for context, as I call it, is perhaps best known from Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory of Development (1979, see Figure 1.2 below). Bronfenbrenner situated the child—the star of the developmental show—

at the center, immediately surrounded by the microsystems in which he participates: home, school, the playground. The next ring shows the mesosystems, or how all of the child's microsystems interconnect. For example, his mother might take him from their home to the playground for a playdate with his friend from school and when they get in a fight, his friend might remind him of the sharing rules from school, which he does not have to follow at home, since his only sister is already in college. The exosystem represents contexts in which the child is not a participant, but that can effect changes in the systems in which he *does* participate. For instance, when his mother's boss is cranky and his mother has to stay late, she is less patient when she gets home. The macrosystem is less concrete contexts, like beliefs and ideologies, but which pervade all of the other systems. For example, perhaps the child's mother lives in the U.S. and even though she has read *Lean In* she feels guilty for not spending more time with her son, but she only has two weeks of paid vacation time, and even though she co-slept with him so that he would be securely attached, this stressed her out too, because they live on Long Island, not in Berkeley, and she was the only one in her moms' group that did it, so she felt judged. In Bronfenbrenner's models, each system interacts with the others that are both "inside" and "outside" of it. While this model was revolutionary in developmental science and continues to be influential, it lends itself to the temptation of unwrapping, of removing ring after ring to reach the true object of study: the kid in the middle.

Van Lier (2004), who has been instrumental in developing an ecological theory of language learning, also used a concentric circles model to discuss context. His model of language moves outward, from sounds to words to clauses to intonation to kinesics to background information. Yet even as he presented the model in his work, Van Lier cautioned:

An ecological theory holds that if you take away the context, there's no language left to be studied. It's like an onion. You can't peel away the layers and hope to get at the real onion underneath; it's layers all the way down. (2004, p. 20)

Michal Cole, a cultural psychologist, also cautioned about allure of "peeling away" in the concentric circles model. In his chapter, "Putting Culture in the Middle" (1998), Cole wrote that the concentric circles model presents a view of context as "that which surrounds" and prompts one to see an individual or a certain task as "in the middle," shaped by context. Cole used the example of language to show why this makes little sense: phonemes only exist as part of words, but words only exist by being made up of phonemes. Similarly, words only have meaning in discourse, but they *make up* discourse. There is no linearity, no causality; "that which surrounds"

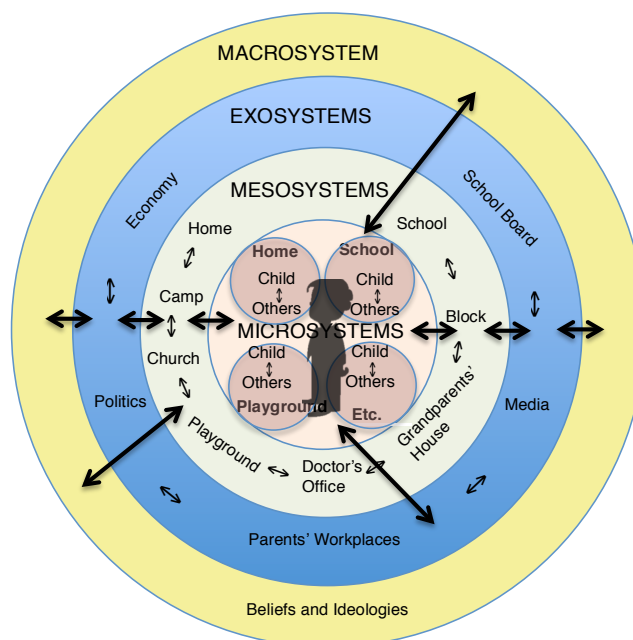


Figure 1.2 – Ecological Model of Development
(adapted from Bronfenbrenner, 1979)

is not prior to that which it surrounds. Cole proposed instead that we take the Oxford English Dictionary's definition of context, "the connected whole that gives coherence to its parts," which comes closer to the etymology of context, the Latin *contexere*, meaning "to weave together."

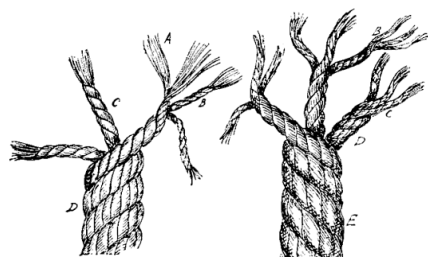


FIG. 1.—Construction of rope.

Figure 1.3 - Rope (Verrill, A. H., n.d.)

This definition evokes a rope, in which small fibers combine to make small strands, which are then combined into larger and larger strands, and then into a rope. The rope's strands are given meaning by their place in the rope, at the same time that the rope only exists if these strands are in place. In this sense, to think of a class of children, the class is both composed of students and at the same time, being in the class *makes* them students. In this dissertation, it is impossible for me to show the whole "rope" at once. Even if I could show the story of these children as an image, with

all elements simultaneously present, I could not zoom out far enough to see the classroom over a year while getting close enough to see one student's one-moment interaction with another student. This dissertation, therefore, will necessarily first look at the whole rope before looking at larger and then smaller strands, while attempting to keep the whole rope in mind and coming back to it at the end.

In this view of context, what holds the threads together? Cole suggests both practice theory and activity theory as approaches to studying human interaction that are compatible with this view of context. While both theories would provide explanatory power in my research, practice theory specifically addresses both social positioning and the role of language as not only a tool for communication, but as a marker of social class and gender and a powerful means of domination, persuasion, and cohesion.

Practice

Pierre Bourdieu developed practice theory as a way to overcome what he saw as three related and false dichotomies in sociological and anthropological research: objectivity and subjectivity, positivism and phenomenology, and structure and agency. The first in each set come together in the researcher striving to view human activity as an outsider, looking down from above in order to create a stable account of patterns and routines, by, for example, mapping the daily schedule in a prekindergarten classroom. The latter in each pair convene in attempts to understand the "native perspective," or personal experience of, say, being the new kid in school or the parent of a learning-disabled child. For Bourdieu, the former approach reduces human activity to acting out predetermined roles on stage or to executing prewritten plans, while the latter ignores everything outside of individual experience, including the conditions that made said experience possible. With practice theory, Bourdieu sought to bridge the two and to understand how structure sets the conditions for human activity without determining it and how activity (re)produces those structures. He accomplished this through the idea of habitus.

Habitus

A person's habitus is the cumulative, embodied product of her past experiences, which gives her an unconscious sense of how to interpret the present and how to *act* in it. It is both a product of the social structures in which she has participated, as well as a producer of present (and future) participation and structure. To imagine a high school classroom on the first day of school, the students know (though perhaps without being able to articulate it) how to come in, sit,

raise their hands, and what might happen if they do not do these things. The new teacher might give class rules, but no one has to tell students which way to face their chairs, when to talk, or how to ask questions. These “rules” have long ago been internalized and are now part of students’ habitus. Now, imagine a preschool classroom. At circle time, students are told to “sit criss-cross applesauce, snowball hands in your lap,” to “keep your hands to yourself,” and to “raise a quiet hand and wait to be called on BEFORE you talk.” Throughout the day, they are reminded that, “we walk in school, not run,” “we wait our turn,” and “we tell a teacher when we have to go to the bathroom.” While children start preschool, they have not yet incorporated (literally in the sense of *corpus*, body) schooled ways of moving, speaking, and being. Yet, by the time they get to high school, they will participate in recreating those ways of being in each classroom that they enter, because they will see those as the natural things to do. If they become preschool teachers some day, they will also participate in recreating those ways of being in their students, likely without ever wondering how they know that raising a hand is the “correct” way to ask a question. According to Bourdieu, habitus (the same word in singular and plural) are:

systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to obtain them. Objectively regulated and regular without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of the conductor. (1980, p. 53)

To tease apart this quotation is to tease apart Bourdieu’s theory of the habitus:

Systems... Habitus are “systems” in that they are not singular like a habit (generating one kind of behavior) but are constellations of possibilities for action. While a student’s habitus makes it probable that she will sit a certain way, other elements like her clothing or the teacher’s gaze may incline her to draw on another way of sitting. Yet, there are certainly ways of sitting (squatting, kneeling on her seat) that her habitus makes her unable to think of as even possible.

...of durable... Habitus are not temporary or quickly shed and rebuilt, but formed over years of social experience. They give disproportionate weight to early experiences, so that later experiences, rather than serving to revise or recalibrate the habitus, are instead understood *through* the habitus. In this manner, later experiences cannot but help to reinforce the habitus, as it is impossible to step outside of one’s habitus and experience things in another way.

...transposable... Habitus endure across space and time, even in contexts other than those in which they were formed. Thus, not only do American high school students raise their hands in class, American adults raise their hands in work meetings, in restaurants (“Who had the fish?”), and at the DMV (“Who’s next?”). While Europeans raise a finger or a pen, Americans raise hands. And that Europeans and Americans think to raise anything shows that their fields of school are more similar than different.

...dispositions... Habitus are tendencies to think or act in certain ways. Note that being disposed to do something does NOT mean determined or destined. Despite my inclination, I may

intentionally *not* raise my hand in a meeting when I am the youngest person in the room for fear of seeming student-y.

...structured structures... Habitus have been built both by implicit past experiences, such as watching adults in social encounters, and explicit ones, like being told not to run in school.

...predisposed to function as structuring structures... Habitus in turn frame how we understand and act throughout our lives. Through our own understandings and actions, we recreate the social contexts that formed us and create contexts that will form the habitus of our children. In other words, these structures are “*principles which generate and organize practices and representations.*”

...objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to obtain them. When the conditions in which a person finds himself closely resemble the conditions in which his habitus was formed, he is at ease. It might look to an observer as if his ability to maneuver successfully or his social graces are the result of explicit strategizing or gaming the system on his part, but for Bourdieu this “feel for the game” is instead a result of a match between habitus and social context, or in other words, of “having dispositions compatible with the conditions and in a sense pre-adapted to their demands” (p. 54)

...Objectively regulated and regular without being in any way the product of obedience to rules... A person’s habitus predisposes certain actions while making others less likely and others still unthinkable. Thus while an “objective observer” might conclude that a person is carefully following particular social rules, his actions are patterned but not conscious, like water running down a groove worn in rock.

...they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of the conductor. Habitus is both an individual and collective concept (Bourdieu writes often about “class habitus”), so the idea of habitus matching field applies to groups of people as well. When several people’s habitus were formed in similar conditions, it might appear that they are coordinating their behavior or following the same rules, but it is simply that they have been set on a path which disposes them to act in similar ways when facing similar contexts, or fields. Bourdieu borrows Leibniz’s analogy of two watches that are perfectly in sync, not through mutual influence or outside correction, but that were crafted with “such art and precision that one can be assured of their subsequent agreement” (1990, p. 59). This does not mean that two individuals must have been raised in the same house. It may be enough to have been raised in the field of “American classroom” to have habitus that align in particular conditions.

Just as people whose habitus were formed in similar conditions may feel “in sync” when a person’s current social conditions closely resemble those under which her habitus was formed, her resulting practices are perfectly adapted, a priori, to those conditions.

Native membership in a field implies a feel for the game in the sense of a capacity for practical anticipation of the ‘upcoming’ future contained in the present, everything that takes place in it seems *sensible*: full of sense and objectively directed in a judicious direction. (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 66)

Thus, beliefs—a practical sense for what is right, just, beautiful—are just as much part of the body and the habitus as ways of talking and sitting. It is through the unconscious of the habitus that this becomes seen not as belief or as social contract but as *natural*, as common sense. It is through this mechanism of misrecognition—of taking what is social and historical, and thus arbitrary, to be *natural*—that divisions of gender, class, and position come to be seen as self-evident and the social order is reproduced (1967, p. 164). The self-evidence of the social order is reinforced both through other individuals whose habitus were formed under similar conditions and through institutions, such as work, family, or art, which become embodied in individuals who will then recognize and comply with their demands. To return to the example of a classroom, but to focus on the teacher, her own experiences as a student shape her teaching, and if her coworkers' habitus were formed in similar times and places, each of them will see the others ideas and practices as logical and “the way things are done”. This might also be supported by movies and TV shows involving classrooms and other cultural imagery.

The habitus is the lynchpin of understanding human activity as practice, as habitus are what *generate* practices. Practices emerge out of the interaction between a habitus and social context, or field, since neither of these alone is enough to account for human activity: Our social actions are neither determined by our past nor are they a result of simple stimulus-response in the present. Viewing social activity as practice solves elegantly the problem of whether an interaction is a product of social context, what Hanks (2006) calls “embedding,” or whether social context is produced through interaction, or “emergence.” Taken to the extreme the first might be a strong version of Foucault's idea that we only speak and think in the discourses of our time, or a world in which Bahktin's authoritative discourses were also the internally persuasive ones, while the other extreme could be represented by pure conversation analysis, in which only things that were topicalized in conversation could be considered part of the context. Hanks (2006) asks how, in either extreme, we might then explain a place like a preschool classroom, where the institution precedes any student interaction, but without determining it, and shapes interactions without ever becoming “thematized” by students in conversation. He posed practice as one solution, arguing that the habitus dissolves the problem by incorporating the social world into participants. In every interaction, participants bring an immense history of sedimented knowledge. The meeting of these embodied histories ensures, as Bourdieu wrote, “that ‘interpersonal’ relations are never, except in appearance, *individual-to-individual* relationships and that the truth of the interaction is never entirely contained in the interaction” (1977, p.81, emphasis in original). In this study, the notion of habitus will illuminate the ways that the teachers and parents come to shape the students' present school and language experience, as well as how that field comes to shape the students.

Fields

Practice theory also provides an escape from viewing context as concentric circles radiating in increasing special-temporal scale from around an individual or an interaction. It does this through the idea of *field*. For Hanks (2006), field differs from other definitions of context in several important ways: First, a field's scope is not tied to a single location and its organization is non-radial. Thus a field's boundaries are not spatial ones, but instead marked by social cut-offs and credentials. For example, the field of Head Start has multiple centers spread across the U.S. and has boundaries marked by regulations, income caps, and age requirements. Similarly, a family might be spread across the world with clusters in various locations, but membership remains clearly marked by blood relations and marriage, and boundaries are reinforced through

traditions, inside knowledge, jokes, and turns of phrase. An additional characteristic of fields is that the roles or positions available within a field outlast any individual that temporarily occupies them and are not available to just anyone to begin with. In a classroom, the positions of teacher and student remain stable year after year, despite being filled by different people, yet they are not freely available to all and are enforced through degrees, titles, abilities like literacy, and age. I will come back to positions within a field when I discuss identity below.

Finally, fields are spaces in which discourses and values circulate, endowing particular individuals with capital and power on the basis of their practices, as the same practice can be valued practice in one field and not another. For instance, a three-year-old Nepali speaker who reminds her parents of the rules and tells her siblings what to do at home may be quickly put in her place, while at school, she might be viewed as an obedient student and helper. Yet other practices might be valued in both places, like speaking English. Bourdieu sometimes called fields “markets” to emphasize how a trait or action could bring “profit” in certain fields, particularly through scarcity. Thus, at the start of the school year, when only one ELL, Dinesh, spoke any English, he secured a profit from it, in the form of special tasks from teachers and friendships with English speakers. As the year went on and other ELLs began to speak English, his profits diminished and he had to work harder for the positive attention of teachers and peers.

Identity

In every field or market, positions are taken up and vacated by people participating in that field. If we simply think of these positions as job titles—cashier, stocker, manager; student, teacher, parent—the taking up and vacating of positions is hardly worth studying. But in real classrooms, there are good students, jokers, slow learners, squirmers, talkers, quiet kids, and mean kids. While these students may not all exist in a particular classroom, they are all recognizable kinds of students within the field of schools. Understanding how a new student might come to be seen as a particular *kind* of student is not something that Bourdieu addressed in his work, but is something that is very relevant in a classroom, where just seeing participants as “student” or “teacher” is not enough to understand classroom practices. To this end, I draw on poststructuralist notions of identity, particularly Chris Weedon’s (1987, 2004) writing on subjectivity and Davies and Harré’s (1990) positioning theory.

Identity as subject positioning. A poststructuralist view of identity takes identity as something that forms over time through repeatedly being positioned by others (or oneself) as a certain kind of person. This perspective moves away from an understanding of identity either as solely situated in a person’s view of him or herself or as a stable constellation of individual characteristics (like race, gender, age, class). Instead, it is a shared social achievement, negotiated, or perhaps battled over, through language and interaction. Weedon (1987), a feminist poststructuralist, instead uses the term *subjectivity*, in contrast to the singular, fixed “identity,” in order to open up who a person is at any moment to struggle and to change. To explain subjectivities as sites of struggle, Davies and Harré (1990) use the term *positioning*, highlighting that our identities/subjectivities are not always under our control. Like Weedon, they take as their departure point the idea that individuals are constituted socially in discourse, and they argue that our positions depend not only on our own intentions and desires, but on which discursive positions are made available by others and by the larger context:

An individual emerges through the processes of social interaction, not as a relatively fixed end product, but as one who is constituted and reconstituted through the various discursive practices in which they participate. Accordingly, who one *is* is always an open question with a shifting answer depending upon the positions made available within one's own and others' discursive practices and within those practices, the stories through which we make sense of our own and others' lives. (1990, p. 46)

These fragmentary positions can, over time and repetition, become more stable identities. This process has been described through the metaphors of “sedimentation” (Kramsch, 2012; Holland & Lave, 2001), “lamination” (Leander, 2002), and “thickening” (Wortham, 2006).

How does positioning occur in the first place though? To illuminate how selves are jointly produced in social interaction, the creators of positioning theory (Davies & Harré, 1999; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999) propose a tripartite configuration of speech acts, storylines, and positions. According to positioning theory, speech becomes recognizable as a kind of speech act only within a storyline—a shared understanding of “what we are doing, here and now.” Each storyline provides possible positions that can be taken up and assigned to others. To give a brief example (borrowed from Tannen, 1991), imagine two colleagues walking outside on a windy day. One asks the other, “Don't you have a coat?” to which the other, offended by what he sees as condescension, responds, “Thanks, mom,” much to the first colleague's surprise. Positioning theory can help explain what happened here, in terms of competing storylines. Colleague A was operating in the storyline of “Friendly Concern” and believed herself to be taking the position of concerned colleague, while Colleague B, feeling that he is participating in the storyline of “Family,” believes that he has been positioned as unprepared child. We can see then how the same phrase, “Don't you have a coat?” can constitute two different speech acts within the two storylines and how the two storylines allow that act to position participants in two different ways.

In this example, however, it is hard to imagine the female colleague getting mad at the male colleague over the same remark. Positioning theory stops just short of being able to explain why that is. This is where Weedon's work, or Bourdieu's, comes to Davies and Harré's rescue. Our ability to position ourselves as we choose or to resist undesirable positioning depends greatly on relations of power. Poststructuralists view power not as something a person always ‘has’ or ‘does not have,’ but as a relationship between subjects constituted in discourse, or the larger systems of power/knowledge that make certain subject positions available to be taken up in the first place. In the discourses of gender circulating in the US, the position of overly concerned parent is generally reserved for women. So not only would the male colleague not be positioned in the same way by that comment, Bourdieu might say that his habitus would make it unlikely that he would make that comment in the first place. Thus, positioning is not a wild free-for-all in which anyone can be anything. Discourses circulate within fields, and shape the possibilities for the kinds of positions that are available to be taken up or vacated at all, and power relations influence how successful one might be in positioning both selves and others.

Bourdieu's work further tempers positioning theory. In institutional fields—like workplaces, courtrooms, and schools—where it is in the interest of the institution to ensure continuity of practices and of buy-in by participants, there is also a continuity of positions. Positions themselves are therefore somewhat stable, and they are often marked by institutional boundaries and procedures. Students can vie for positions as *kinds* of students, but they cannot be teacher. Even not all kinds-of-student positions are open to everyone. At my research site, for example, the position of getting-ready-for-kindergarten was generally a high-status one, meaning

that next year one would no longer be a preschooler, and on occasion, a low-status one, when it meant, “I can’t believe you don’t know the rules yet, when next year you are going to kindergarten.” While sometimes days might go by without anyone taking up this position, there were children during the year I visited who could never take it up, because they were born after August 30 and would not turn 5 until the following year. This arbitrary cut-off set by the school district meant that a child born on August 29 and one born on September 1 would be a grade apart in elementary school, but it also meant different possibilities for positions in preschool.

Identity as location in a social network. In addition to positioning theory, which draws on qualitative and discursive data, I also use social network theory or social network analysis (SNA; Borgatti, Everett, & Johnson, 2013; Friedkin & Thomas, 1997), a theoretical framework for thinking about how members of social networks can influence each other in various ways, like providing support, information, or perhaps, linguistic input. SNA uses quantitative data to map relationships among groups of people and to understand how those relationships affect the spread of resources. Because of this study’s presumption that peer interaction, particularly with English speakers, is important for ELLs’ English learning, social network mapping will provide a visual and numeric representation of how well-connected students are within the classroom peer network. As Borgatti et al. (2013) state, “A generic hypothesis of network theory is that an actor’s position in a network determines in part the constraints and opportunities that he or she will encounter, and therefore identifying that position is important for predicting actor outcomes such as performance, behavior or beliefs” (p. 1). In this case, the networks are PreK classes and the outcome in question is English learning.

Language as Practice

In a theory of practice, ways of speaking are just as much a part of the habitus as ways of walking or believing. A person’s primary linguistic habitus develops by hearing language in the field of the family as well as by experiencing praise and sanctions for particular ways of speaking. Just as a match between habitus and field produces practices perfectly adapted to that field, a match between linguistic habitus and field produces language practices to the same effect and gives speakers a feeling of ease and fluency. This phenomenon was shown in the work of Shirley Brice Heath (1980) and Sara Michaels (1981), who contrasted the easy experiences of White, middle class children starting school, having language that “matched” that of the classroom (and teacher), with the confusing and frustrating experience of starting school as a Black, working class student, whose language practices were mismatched with what Bourdieu called the “legitimate language” of the market. According to Bourdieu, a speaker finding himself with language unsuited for the market must exert immense effort to either control his language or simply be silenced, like some of the Black children that Michaels (1981) studied at circle time.

Viewing language as practice has two important implications in this work. First, it means that language use is part of a repertoire of embodied communicative actions. To study it as a stand-alone verbal phenomenon is to ignore that “language is a body technique” (1991, p. 86), like gesturing, laughing, sitting, and moving, and that it is just one of the ways that people create meaning. This means that an account of language and positioning in this Head Start classroom will also be an account of action and movement. Second, viewing language as practice means that it is both stable and emergent. It is stable because of the work of institutions, like schools, in whose interest it is to maintain a codified, legitimate language in order to secure their own survival (Bourdieu, 1991). Yet, any instance of language use is also emergent, as a person’s

habitus interacts with a field, under the pressures of real-time, to meet the demands of a particular situation, and as part of social action. The iconic image of Saussure's talking heads, where ideas are "put into words," sent across sound waves, and understood by a listener, is a just an ideal. In a theory of practice, "the all-purpose word of the dictionary, a product of the neutralization of the practical relations within which it functions, has no social existence" (Bourdieu, 1991, p.34). Speakers and listeners bring with them the whole social structure in which they participate, so that while anyone can technically say anything—a student can command his teacher to sit down, a teacher can say, "We only speak English here!"—whether those words are obeyed or laughed at or even heard is another question. Thus, in this work, I am interested in both what students learn of the stable, codified system of English, as well as what they can do with it, in real time.

Linguistic practice as social action. To study language as social practice, in terms of what ELLs learn to *do* with English, I draw on the work of John Austin. In his famous book, *How to do Things With Words* (1967), Austin wondered about utterances like, "I pronounce you man and wife" or "I apologize," which create change in the world, rather than simply conveying information about it. Austin called these utterances performatives, because they perform an action, and he broke them into three parts: the locutionary, the illocutionary, and the perlocutionary¹. The locutionary form consists of the words themselves (for example, a preschool student says, "More milk"). The illocutionary force is what is being carried out *in* saying the words (i.e., a request). The perlocutionary effect is the result, or what happens *by* saying the words (ideally, that the teacher brings milk to the student). Austin argued that these performative utterances—commands, pronouncements, requests, promises—cannot be true or false, but are instead felicitous (they work) or infelicitous (they fail). He outlined several conditions for the felicity of a performative: a procedure has to exist (e.g. marriage); it has to be done with the right words ("I do"); it has to be done completely (Not just "I.."); it has to be done in the right circumstances (at an altar perhaps), by and to the right persons (a priest maybe, and two unmarried adults), and with the right intentions (no fingers crossed behind the back).

Bourdieu, however, felt that Austin fell into a trap of misrecognition: Austin placed the power of performatives in the words themselves, when really, argued Bourdieu, the force behind a great many performatives comes from the social position of a speaker. The speaker's social position is what gives him institutional backing, as well as the access to the legitimate language of the institution, needed to execute a performative. "Conditions of felicity," wrote Bourdieu, "are social conditions" (1991, p.73). While the locutionary form of a performative might be perfectly correct, "Only a hopeless soldier (or a 'pure' linguist) could imagine that it was possible to give his captain an order" (p. 75). Thus, in the milk example, Bourdieu might say that, "More milk!" in and of itself has no more or less potential to bring the teacher with milk than, "Could I have some more milk, please?" It only makes a difference in the context of who says it and when. "More milk!" might be met with a reprimand as rude coming from an older English speaker or met with praise coming from an ELL. Rather than invalidating Austin's work, however, Bourdieu's critique brings Austin's work into the realm of social practice. In this dissertation, Austin's work provides a heuristic for measuring the relative success of a student's linguistic practices in accomplishing what he aims to do with them and thereby allows me to

¹ Austin called all three of these "acts." His student, John Searle, who extended Austin's work, made the useful distinction between them by calling them "form," "force," and "effect," respectively, a terminology I will take up.

compare, across students, not just whether students can produce grammatical utterances, but whether they can produce utterances that are listened to and obeyed. Separating students' speech into locutionary form, illocutionary force, and perlocutionary effect will allow me to tease apart a student's capacity for correctness from her ability to convey intent from his success at achieving the desired effects. As Bourdieu pointed out, it is perfectly possible to have correct form and force, but to have no effect; and as we will see in Chapter Five, it is also possible to have the desired effect without correct form.

Participant frameworks in linguistic practice. Single speech acts, however, do not occur in isolation, but are part of larger speech events, in which participants are not only positioned as kinds of people, but also as kinds of participants. In traditional view of language, these participants are a dyad: one speaker and one hearer. Goffman (1981) deconstructed these roles, arguing that they do not address all of the ways of being a speaker and hearer, particularly in multi-party interactions. He introduced the idea of footing, or ways of aligning oneself with the ongoing interaction. Rather than hearers, he proposed to distinguish between the official audience (addressee(s), unaddressed intended hearers, intended hearers who are not listening, etc.) and unofficial hearers (such as overhearers, eavesdroppers, bystanders). He also dissected the role of speaker, arguing that speakers can say things they do not mean, give speeches they did not write, or argue for positions they do not really support. He proposed to distinguish between these production formats by dividing the speaker into: animator (the mouthpiece), author (the creator of the words being spoken), and principal (the believer of the words being spoken). All three can be found in one person (as when a preschool student declares, "I don't like carrots"), or different people (as when she scolds a classmate, "We share with our friends," citing the classroom rule written by the teacher). These ways of being speaker and hearer are participant statuses that when configured in various ways, form different participation frameworks.

Levinson (1988) found Goffman's categories to be a good, but incomplete start to understanding what he called participation structure. He attempted to improve on Goffman's categories by creating a set of more finely distinguished potential roles through Boolean operations on the basic categories of source, target, speaker, addressee, recipient, plus other distinctions like transmission, motivation, etc. While Levinson himself acknowledged that what would be "really interesting" would be to explore how these roles are taken up and assigned, he saw creating categories as necessarily prior to studying the "how" (1988, p. 192). It was Goodwin and Goodwin's work over the last several decades (C. Goodwin 1981; C. and M.H. Goodwin, 2004; Goodwin 2006) that attempted to answer the "how." The Goodwins argued that speaker and hearer roles are not as distinct as Goffman's work would have them seem, but that speakers and hearers are mutually engaged in creating and sustaining participation frameworks and actively negotiating and managing participant roles through gaze, body language, and gesture. For instance, speakers will cease to speak if no one is looking at them, and will restart their speech, often with a recast, once a listener's status is reinstated by returning her gaze to the speaker. The Goodwin's work also illustrated that within an interaction, more than one person can inhabit a role, and that one person can inhabit more than one role. For instance, in his recent work, Goodwin showed that a man who had severe aphasia after a stroke could successfully participate in interaction by distributing the role of speaker over multiple people and turns. Thus, the Goodwins' work shifted the focus from typologies to understanding the social practice of collaboratively constituting kinds of speech events:

Participants demonstrate their understanding of what each other is doing and the events they are engaged in together by building both vocal and nonvocal actions that help to further constitute those very same events. One consequence of this is a multi-party, interactively sustained, embodied field within which utterances are collaboratively shaped as meaningful, locally relevant action. (C. Goodwin, 2007, p. 38)

Hanks' work (1990) also moved away from the "what" of participant frameworks and to the "how." Responding directly to Goffman and Levinson, he cut short what might have been endless typology creation, suggesting that through embedding, simple participant frameworks might be combined to produce more complex ones, without having to create special categories. Hanks also argued that any set of *a priori* etic categorizations could never be sufficient to discuss practices. Moving toward understanding participant frameworks in practice, then, Hanks also made the useful distinction between participant frame and participant framework. Within a field, participant frames are all the possible constellations of participation, while frameworks are the actual instantiations that happen in interaction. Recall that in positioning theory there are many possible storylines operating in a given field, each available to be drawn on, each giving possibilities for which positions (kinds of people) are available within it. Similarly, within each field, there are also participant frames available to be drawn on, each making participant roles (kinds of speakers and hearers) available within it. Thus, the question of which participant frames are available at any one time is a question of the dynamics of the larger field. Hanks also showed that social actors possess schemata of speech events and the kinds of participant frames available within them. If I say "circle time" to anyone with experience in the field of preschool, they will have a good idea of what participant frames are typical within that event. These schematic representations are not just mental ones, but bodily ones, part of habitual practice. The process of preschoolers' linguistic habitus formation is thus also a process of schemata formation, for speech events and participant frames within them.

Language as a Stable System

Viewing language as social practice contrasts sharply, however, with the way that schools and standardized tests, as well as many studies of language development, see language. Language growth tends to be measured as quantitative growth: number of words, number of words put together, number of *ways* a student can put words together, number of words correctly defined, number of grammatical sentences correctly identified. According to commercial assessments, counting up words and sentences is how we know that children are learning. This view of language seems, on the surface, to be not a "perspective" at all, but an a-theoretical, objective account of language, in which: (a) Language is an object (e.g. of study) unto itself, (b) language represents ideas and things via denotational, dictionary meaning that is stable across contexts, and (c) language is decomposable into ever smaller parts—clauses, phrases, lexemes, morphemes, phonemes. Yet, these three ideas are relatively new ones that would have been unthinkable even a few centuries ago (Foucault, 1971; Bauman & Briggs, 2003). From Locke's one-man crusade to free language from nature and render it suitable for scientific thinking to Saussure's emphasis on how signs come to exist through social convention to Chomsky's infinite generativity, much work has gone toward establishing this view. Bourdieu might say that our collective misrecognition of this perspective as neutral and natural means that the institutions that seek to perpetuate this view have had success. I recognize, however, that measuring "how

much” will allow this study to answer to more people, such as the school system that allowed me to spend a year in it. For this reason, in addition to examining students’ development of language as a social practice, I will also examine students’ language growth across the year in terms of acquisition of vocabulary and utterance complexity.

Research Questions

From these perspectives on social practice, identity, and language, this study follows a class of Nepali-, Turkish-, and English-speaking preschool students across a school year, and seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are parents’ and teachers’ beliefs about language, language learning, and the purpose of preschool? How do parents’ and teachers’ sociohistorical contexts shape their beliefs? How do these beliefs shape classroom practices?
2. Through positioning within classroom practice, how do the identities of four focal students take shape across the year?
3. What are the differences in how these four students learn English over the year? How do these differences relate to the students’ different social identities in the classroom?

Organization of the Dissertation

To return to the metaphor of context as rope, this first chapter has provided a glimpse of the rope and introduced the ways that others before me have approached understanding it (literature review) as well as how I will try to understand the rope’s parts in the rest of the dissertation (through my theoretical framework). The second chapter will discuss some of the biggest strands: the city where I carried out the project, how the families and teachers arrived there, the Head Start program, the schools, the classrooms, and, briefly, the focal children. It will also describe how the perspectives I have outlined in this first chapter are operationalized in my study, in terms of data collection and analysis, or in other words, how I went about studying these strands and then teasing them apart. The third chapter introduces teachers’ and parents’ beliefs about language, learning, and the purpose of preschool. It connects these to parents’ and teachers’ histories as well as to the practices that they create in the field of the classroom. In Chapter Four, I look closely at how four focal students are positioned over the year within classroom practices and the classroom social network. I also explore how these positionings stabilize (or not) into more durable social identities. Chapter Five examines the focal students’ English learning over the same period and relates this back to their developing identities. Chapter Six presents conclusions and implications of the study.

CHAPTER 2 METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

Research Setting

The City

In order to answer my research questions, I looked to River City, Pennsylvania, a city whose changing demographics meant that many monolingual teachers suddenly found that they had become de facto ESL teachers, a phenomenon faced in many cities across the US. These changes also meant that the city looked very different from when I grew up there, piquing my interest on a personal level as well.

River City's last great wave of immigration took place in the 1880's and 1900's, bringing Italian, Polish, Croatian, Hungarian, Greek, and German speakers to the city. While several neighborhoods are still identified by the groups that built them, it is no longer common to hear these languages in the streets, nor has recent immigration kept pace with the rest of the United States. Demographics researchers at the Brookings Institute have characterized River City as "Mostly White-Slow Growing" (Frey, 2000) and "a former immigration gateway" (Hall, Singer, Jong & Graefe, 2011). In 2010, it ranked 98 out of 100 major metropolitan areas in recent immigration, at just 1% of its total population (Singer, 2010). Yet, River City also had the highest ratio (4:1) of highly skilled immigrants to unskilled immigrants in the nation (Hall et al., 2011).

To explain these two patterns, one must look back to the collapse of heavy industry in the city. River City's steel industry, built at the turn of the 20th century, attracted the last wave of immigration to the city, and sustained the city's economy for nearly a century. In the late 1970's and early 1980's, the steel industry began a rapid decline, and the city lost 130,000 manufacturing jobs in two decades (Giarratani, Singh, & Briem, 2003). For Christopher Biel, a demographer at a local university, this explains the lack of low-skilled immigration to the city in the past 30 years: When the steel industry collapsed, many of the workers that would have been in heavy industry were forced to find other work that did not require a college degree. They became the low-wage, low-skilled workforce in the city, taking any jobs that might have drawn low-skilled immigrants (cited in Roth, 2014). Biel put it anecdotally:

I was standing in front of a bus stop in [the River City neighborhood of] Oakland the other day and I watched 20 buses go by. If you were anywhere else in the country, a decent chunk of those drivers would probably be immigrants or minorities, and I swear to God, every one of them was a 55-year-old white guy, that barring historical events would have been working in a mill. (Roth, 2014, n.p.)

The same events explain River City's high-skilled immigration. After steel's disappearance, the city focused on developing its tech, education, and medicine industries (Isaacson, 2014), often recruiting from overseas.

Yet in the last decade, there has been another shift in River City. Several refugee resettlement organizations have been active in relocating families there, facilitated by the

combination of affordability, plentiful housing, and growth in job sectors like hospitality, wholesale trade, mining, and construction (Grant, 2013; “In Pictures: America’s Most Affordable Cities,” n.d.). Beginning with a large Bantu Somali population, and more recently, a large Nepali Bhutanese population, the number of refugee families that are officially resettled in River City grows each year (180 in 2004; 409 in 2014; “Demographics and Arrival Statistics,” refugeesinpa.org, n.d). Additionally, many refugees who are resettled in other cities choose to come to River City as a secondary resettlement location after hearing of low costs and plentiful jobs, and in order to be with larger communities from the same background (Director of Community Assistance and Refugee Resettlement, personal communication, October 10, 2012). Several of the families in my study arrived in River City this way. With secondary relocation, the population of Bhutanese residents in River City is estimated to be between 4000 and 5000, (Weis, n.d.), the largest in the U.S.

The languages of ELLs in the River City Public Schools reflect this: Of the 34 languages spoken, the top three are Nepali, Spanish, and Swahili (ESL Director at PPS, personal communication, July 10, 2012, July 29, 2014). The overall number of ESL students has also increased from approximately 300 in 2004 to 825 in 2014.

The School

I sought a school that both reflected the changes happening in the city and could help me to make comparisons across students within one class. Thus, I looked for a school with a large population of English language learners who were at the same beginning level of learning English, ideally all in their first year of care or school in a group setting. I also wanted students who spoke either the same first language or languages ranked by the Defense Language Institute as being equally difficult for English speakers to learn, meaning that the amount of transfer from students’ first languages to English would not be much greater for one student than another. Finally, I hoped to find teachers who also reflected what was typical for the city and who were thus dedicated, caring, and excited to work with this new population, but who were still figuring out how to do so. With guidance and facilitation from the director of Head Start programs for the county, who had insider knowledge about both student demographics and teachers, I began by selecting two schools, each with at least one classroom that met all of these criteria. One school/class was in an urban location and had students who spoke a wide variety of languages, while the other school and classes were in suburban neighborhood outside of the city, where the majority of children spoke Nepali.

I began by visiting both classrooms, but during the year, it became clear that the students in the urban classroom could not provide the kinds of comparisons that I was hoping to make. Of the same-language peers that I selected to follow in that classroom, one moved, one was diagnosed with general language delays, and another was later diagnosed with other developmental delays. Other students in the class either spoke languages that were very different or spoke English at very different levels. Therefore, while I continued to visit both classrooms, this dissertation focuses on the suburban classroom and the children there.

The suburban school’s neighborhood was made up of asphalt roads flanked by orange brick houses with green lawns, American flags, and aluminum awnings over front porches. On a hill at the edge of the neighborhood sat the large apartment complex where most of the refugee families lived. The complex, with its three- and four-story brick buildings, white shutters and green lawns, looked more like a tired college campus than the urban housing developments these families might have inhabited in larger cities. When I came to the school, a local outreach

program had been working to identify eligible children who lived in the area and was helping their parents with the Head Start² application process. As a result, significant numbers of English learners had applied to the local Head Start program, increasing demand and leading to the opening of two new classrooms in the school.

The school—a one-story, pale yellow brick building surrounded by parking lots and green lawns—had once been an elementary school. It now housed several Head Start classrooms, an Easter Seals classroom for severely disabled children, a DART early intervention classroom for children with moderate developmental delays, a public library, a tax office, and a district magistrate’s office. In the center courtyard of the building was a playground, which all of the classes shared. The library meant stories and songs with the children’s librarian each Thursday. The magistrate’s office meant that on the day that the magistrate heard cases in the afternoon, parents and children leaving the school wended their way through police, lawyers, and clients waiting to see the judge. Thus, the school was more like a community center than a school in many ways. There was no cafeteria, so food was delivered each morning and teachers heated and served it at breakfast, lunch, and snack. There also was not a principal or supervisor on location. Instead, a supervisor came every few weeks to observe the three classes, and teachers had to call or email if they needed help or advice.

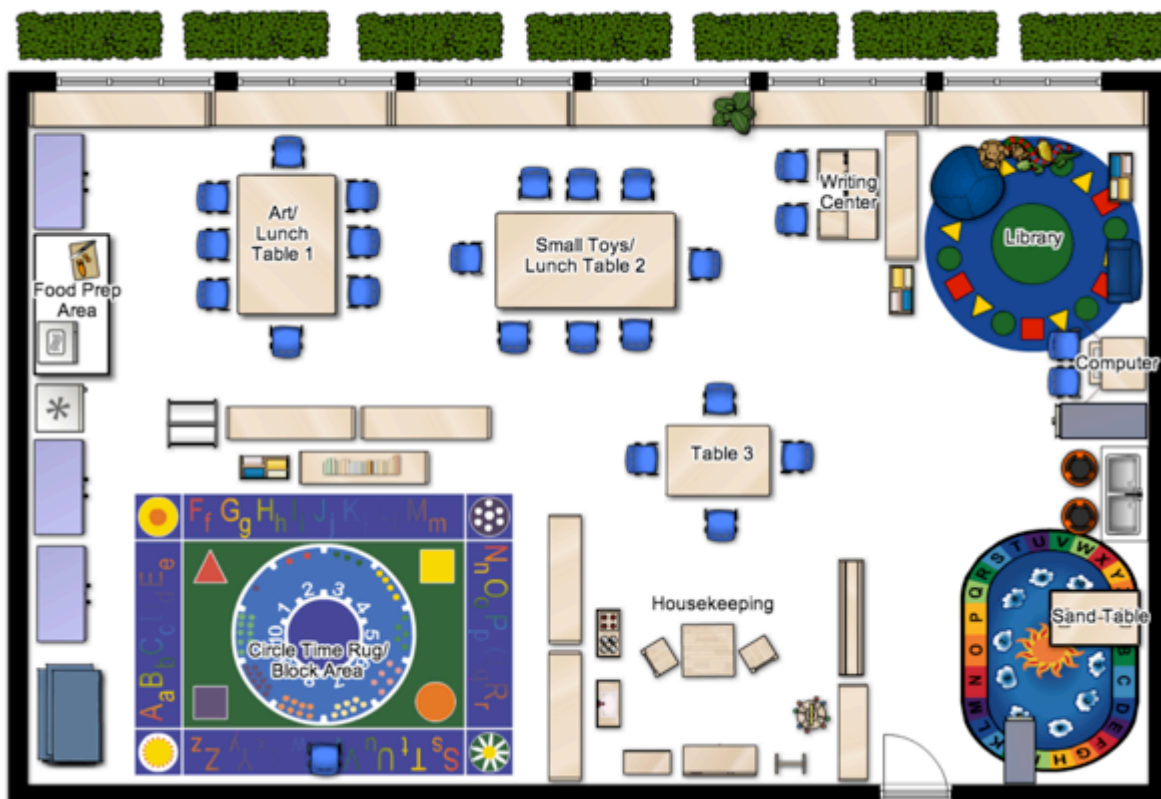
One of the Head Start classrooms had been in operation for several years, while the other two had just opened. Each of the new rooms had a high number of English learners and both sets of teachers invited me to join their classes. Yet, as a former preschool teacher, I quickly recognized that the teachers in Classroom 2 needed a third pair of hands more than they needed a researcher. The dynamics between the teachers and within the particular group of students were difficult that year and I could not in good conscience add a camera to the room. Instead, I chose Classroom 3 across the hall, which was busy and noisy in more typical ways, and as an experienced pair of hands, I spent another full day per week volunteering in Classroom 2.

The Classroom

Classroom 3, where I spent the year, sat at the end of a long hall, past the gym, the bathrooms, and many unused lockers. On the lockers closest to the classroom, the bright new labels with children’s names on them contrasted with the old green paint. In the classroom, too, the new birthday chart on the wall and alphabet border stood out against the well-worn carpet and furniture. Even the toys came from other now-closed classrooms in areas with population decline. But to the 18 students, everything was new.


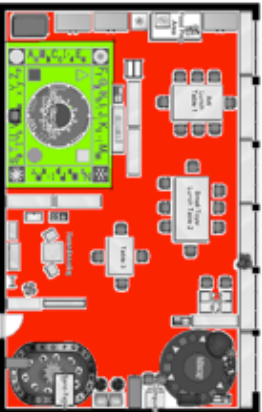
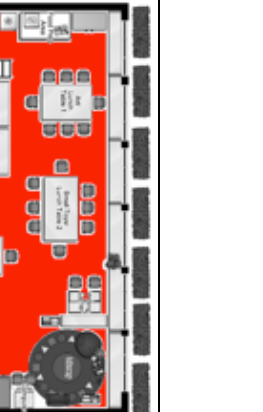
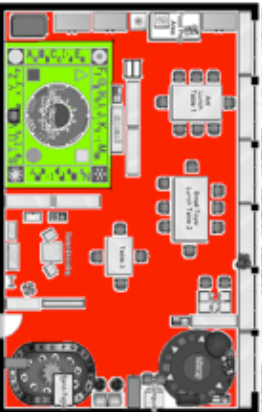
This is the layout of the classroom:


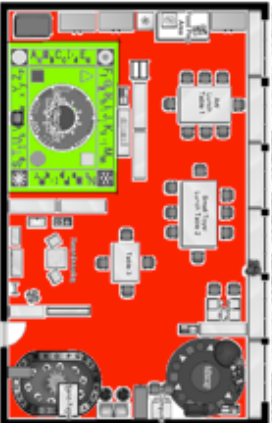
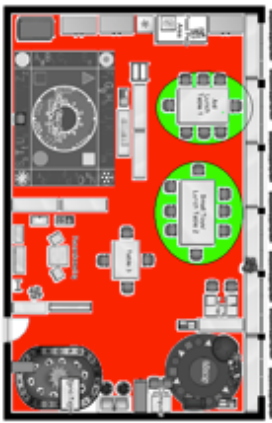
² Head Start is a federally- and state-funded preschool program targeted at serving low-income families. Gaining admission to the program is based on a point system, with children who have the most points getting priority. Homelessness and falling below 130% of the federal poverty line are worth the most points, with ELL or refugee status, participation in the WIC (“food stamps”) program, joblessness, or abuse all increasing a child’s eligibility (application form, “Head Start Program,” n.d.).

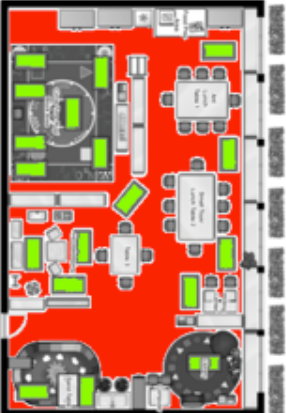
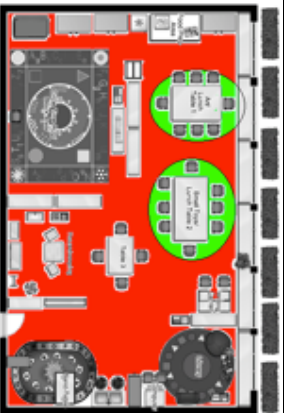
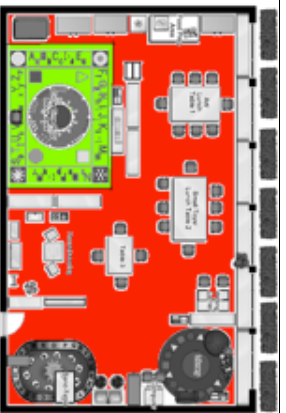


On the right, near the door, was the sand table, referred to by the students simply as “Sand.” The table was covered in the morning, but open during playtime. Beyond the sand table was the sink for hand washing and tooth brushing, and just beyond that was the computer and then the “Library,” where the books were kept, along with a beanbag chair and small armchair. Next to the library was the “Writing Center,” a desk with two chairs and supplies of lined paper, fat #2 pencils, and a basket of colored pencils in varying states of sharpened-to-dull-ness. To the left of the classroom door was “Housekeeping,” the area of the room where the dress up clothes, baby dolls and carriages, pretend kitchen and food, little table and chairs, and child-sized brooms were kept. Beyond that was the rug area, where students had “Circle Time,” heard stories, and sang songs. This was also where, during play time, children could play with building blocks and pretend cars. In the center of the room were the tables. The two large tables were where students ate meals. During playtime, one of these tables was for “Small Toys” like puzzles or Lego and the other was for “Art.” Nearby shelves were stocked with paper, scissors, markers, and glue, and an easel stood next to these. At the far corner of the room was the refrigerator and food preparation table, as well as teacher storage cabinets. The food table was differentiated from other tables in the room by its height, meant for adults not children, and its material, made of plastic not wood. Other spaces in the room were also marked as adult or child space in the same way. Everything on the long window ledge was in adult space, while the shelves below were kid space. Similarly, the tall filing cabinet with the printer on top was adult space. Yet, many of the classroom areas varied considerably throughout the day, in terms of function and of kid versus adult space. Table 2.1 below shows the schedule according to clock time and classroom time, as well as what teachers, students, and parents typically did during those times, and what space belonged to whom.

Table 2.1

Clock Time	Classroom Time	Students do	Teachers do	Parents do	Teachers space (red) and kid space (green)
8:30-8:50	Sign-In and Breakfast	Students write or trace their names with the help of parents at table 3 or the writing center. Students eat breakfast at tables 1 and 2.	Teachers welcome, chat with parents, help students with writing, help with breakfast. As students finish, Teacher 1 helps them brush their teeth.	Help with writing and breakfast. Sit with children or stand and watch. Talk with one another or teachers.	
8:50-9:00	Good Morning Circle	Students come to carpet. Sing good morning song. Figure out who is missing. Hear what will happen that day. Line up along rope to go outside.	Teacher 1 leads circle. Teacher 2 cleans up breakfast. Teacher 1 calls students by name to go to the rope.	Have left.	
9:00-9:30	Outside Time	Free play outside or in gym. Run, climb, kick balls. At end, line up for return to class.	Supervise, chat. Teacher 1 takes children to bathroom in small groups, Teacher 2 stays with students.		
9:30-9:40	Choice time	Students decide which area they want to play in. Take name tag to chosen area.	Teacher 1 facilitates. Teacher 1 sets up for play time. Opens shelves, puts items out on tables.		

Clock Time	Classroom Time	Students do	Teachers do	Parents do	Teachers space (red) and kid space (green)
9:40-11	Free Play Time	Play in chosen area. Children can move between areas if they take their tag and there is room in new area.	Teacher 1 sits at Table 2, works one-on-one on assessments or projects with students, with one eye on Housekeeping, Small Toys, Sand, Library. Teacher 2 prepares lunch with one eye on Art and the Rug.		
11-11:20	Story/ Music	Clean up and return to carpet to hear a book or sing songs. One or two children help set the table	Teacher 2 leads on carpet. Teacher 1 sets up lunch.		
11:20-12:00	Lunch	Students eat and talk.	Teachers sit with children while they eat, then get up to set up nap mats. Loosely supervise, field requests for "more."		

Clock Time	Classroom Time	Students do	Teachers do	Parents do	Teachers space (red) and kid space (green)
12:00-1:30	Nap	Students lay on mats and are supposed to sleep. No talking, no getting up.	Teacher 2 cleans up lunch. Teacher 1 does paperwork and watches students. Teacher 2 sets up snack.		
1:30-2	Snack	Wake up, come to snack table. Children are taken to bathroom in small groups as needed.	Pick up nap mats, assist with opening/serving snack, take children to bathroom.	Start to arrive, are buzzed in to room. Some wait while children finish snack.	
2:00-2:30	Play/pick up time	Children can do puzzles or read on rug.	Clean up snack, greet parents, call children to door.	Chat with each other, teachers, wait by door.	

Participants

The teachers. Ellen and Lucia (all names are pseudonyms) were both White women from lower-middle-class or working-class backgrounds who had come to Head Start teaching later in life and had each had a somewhat winding path to Classroom 3. Ellen, the lead teacher, grew up in New York and had always wanted to be a teacher: “I had a friend who had a chalkboard in her basement, like this big chalkboard and I just loved writing on it and I just always wanted to be a teacher. I never wanted to be anything else” (Interview, November 16, 2012). In college, Ellen had studied elementary education, but could not get a job right away, so she worked in a bank for several years. She then had three daughters and stayed home with them. When the youngest started school, Ellen began substitute teaching in a nearby Catholic school and was offered a full-time job there. She taught first grade at the school for nearly ten years before her family moved to River City. In River City, she had several part-time jobs before finding a job in a day care center, where she worked for two and half years. Her youngest daughter, who had been working for Head Start, then told her that she should try to get a job there instead. Ellen got an Early Childhood certificate easily based on her degree and teaching work and got a job as a traveling substitute teacher in April of 2012. In summer 2012, she entered the teaching lottery and was offered her own classroom (Classroom 3), which would be opening in Fall 2012.

Lucia, the assistant teacher, had grown up in River City. She described herself as a jack-of-all trades, having worked as a secretary in an engineering company, then for a foot doctor, then as a medical assistant. When her son, now 14, was a baby, she took a job in a daycare, where she could put him in the infant classroom for free while she worked. What started as a convenient arrangement turned out to be a calling:

I did some other professions before this, but once I did start working in day cares, I was very comfortable working with the kids and doing what needed to be done in this environment. I knew I had the patience, I knew I had things that I can contribute: You know ideas, suggestions, love, understanding, patience. (Interview, November 16, 2012)

When her son got older, Lucia left to work as an aid for a family center. While her job involved working with and supporting families, there was a Head Start classroom across the hall where she would occasionally fill in. There, she experienced the same realization that she had in the day care, that this was the work she should be doing. “I always liked it. I really wasn't supposed to work with them. I was supposed to stay more with the family center, but it was okay. And it all clicked, like having the puzzle that all came together” (Interview, November 16, 2012). In 2003, she got her first position as an assistant teacher in a Head Start classroom. When that classroom downsized to two teachers, she worked as a traveling assistant teacher, where she experienced many classrooms and met many kinds of staff. Finally, hoping to settle into one classroom close to her home, she applied and was accepted to work in the new Classroom 3. She and Ellen met each other a few weeks before school started to prepare their new classroom.

Language experience. Ellen and Lucia both reported that they only spoke English, although each had some experiences with other languages. Ellen had studied French for seven years in school, but had not been able to make much progress. She recounted her father's disbelief when on a family trip to Montreal in high school, she had barely been able to help with French. “I remember there was a sign there: *Chien Chaud*. It was “hot dog” and I remember that

to this day. [I said,] ‘Ok, I can order you a hot dog’ (laughing) But that was it. I can't do it” (Ellen, Interview, November 16, 2012). Ellen also mentioned her grandparents: “Growing up my grandparents spoke Italian and you'd think for all those years of listening to it, I would have known...No. I just- no.” Thus, Ellen had not had personal success in learning a second language. Before her arrival in Classroom 3, she had also never worked with language learners, nor had she had any training to prepare. In our fall interview, she expressed that some training would have been helpful:

It would have been nice to have a little workshop on it (laughing) [...] I mean it's just. It's just, "Here you are!" They gave me an iPad with some translating thing- pssht (throws hand up). You know, it's just like, you have to figure it out on your own, how to do it, and I think Lucia and I are trying our best, you know? (Ellen, Interview, November 16, 2012)

While the district had indeed given the teachers an iPad with a translation app, the app was limited to one word at a time. Google translate did not offer Nepali as a language option at the time, so the iPad was not very useful in helping parents. Ellen also chose not to use it with the children, for reasons that will be discussed in Chapter Three. Lucia, when asked about whether she had any experience with English learners said:

I've NEVER had- I mean I had a situation where I had more Spanish kids (.) than normal one particular year and I had children who were from like Puerto Rico and Mexico and it was great. But I mean I mighta had FIVE kids [not 11]! And I know that it's not easy for the children and we look at visuals and we use our hands and we um try to talk slower and we try to go with the basics. (Lucia, Interview, November 16, 2012)

I asked her if she had just figured these things out on her own or if she had any training, either then or recently.

Lucia: No, I've never had a special training on it. (.) U:::m I'm lucky enough to come from Oakland [a River City neighborhood], full of different kind of people. I used to call it an international (.) place. So I have that background. I grew up with a father who was born in another country.

Katie: You said he's Italian, right?

Lucia: YES. Who had a deep accent. Who I never had trouble of course understanding- that's your parent. Other people would say, “What did your dad say?” (.) and I'd look at them like they're cra:::zy: “CAN'T YOU UNDERSTAND ENGLISH?” And it was interesting cause I'd grow up where my father would have certain friends or relatives come over and then they would just speak Italian. I couldn't understand them and that was OKAY.

Katie: Do you speak any Italian?=
=

Lucia: =Very little. *Poco*. Means little (laughing)

Both Ellen and Lucia, therefore, while by their report were monolingual, had personal experiences with language and language learning (or lack thereof).

The parents. Each day, twice a day, the parents of children in Classroom 3 also become part of the classroom scene. For several students in the study, parents also included grandmothers, who were primarily responsible for bringing them to school and caring for them after school while their parents finished work. Both the parents of the “American kids” and the “Special Friends,” as Lucia affectionately referred to her ELLs, worked jobs like construction or hospitality, and in both groups, some mothers stayed home with children and some worked. The parents and grandparents were friendly toward one another, but generally stuck with others who were similar to them when they were in the classroom: Nepali-speaking moms chatted with Nepali-speaking moms and Nepali-speaking dads stuck together, too. The two White grandmothers became friends and other parents, who did not see parents like them in the room—a Turkish speaker, an South African woman, a White dad, a White mom, a Nepali grandmother—busied themselves with their children or with helping other children get breakfast. I wondered from the start what these parents made of the social world of their preschoolers’ classroom, whether and what they thought their children were learning, and why they had decided to send them there. I wondered too, whether their ideas about these things aligned with what the teachers thought. I also wondered how much the teachers knew, with no interpreters available except for other parents, about what the parents thought.

From Nepal to the US: a (very) brief history. Many of the families in Classroom 3 who had arrived in the U.S. as refugees were originally from Bhutan, a tiny South Asian country that lies between India and China, near Nepal. They were part of an ethnic Nepali population that had been in the country since the 1890’s. In the 1890’s, the government of Bhutan began inviting settlers from Nepal to come live in the largely unpopulated southern, sub-tropical region, in order to begin farming there (“Bhutanese Community Association: Who We are?” n.d.). This population grew, both through further immigration from Nepal and through local births. Meanwhile, the Northern and Southern areas of Bhutan remained relatively separated, with little interaction between them. In the north, the population was Buddhist, Bhutanese, and spoke the national language, Dzongkha. In the South, the population—known as Lhotshampa, or “Southerners”—was Hindu, ethnic Nepali, and spoke Nepali.

Through porous borders, the Lhotshampa population continued to grow. In the 1950’s, in an effort toward modernization and unification, the king declared a two-pronged plan: infrastructure development, to connect the north and south, and closing the borders to new immigration. At the same time, the Citizenship Act of 1958 granted citizenship to any Nepalese who could show that they had been in Bhutan for 10 years or more, while excluding recent arrivals (Hutt, n.d.; “Bhutanese Community Association: Who We are?,” n.d.) Yet, in order to build infrastructure, particularly in the South, more laborers were needed and thus the immigration regulations were not enforced. The Nepali-speaking Lhotshampa population continued to grow, showing almost no signs of assimilation into larger Bhutanese society, maintaining their own language and cultural practices, despite cash payments offered for intermarriage (“Bhutanese Community Association - Who We are?,” n.d.).

In the 1980’s, as the Lhotshampa population threatened to surpass the ethnic Bhutanese population, the government began to see the population as a risk to national order. A 1985 Citizenship Act attempted to enforce the 1958 rules (“Bhutan Citizenship Act, 1985,” n.d.). In a

1988 census, residents who could not prove that they had been in Bhutan prior to 1958 were labeled “non-nationals.” The same year, the government’s “One Nation, One People” policy banned the Nepali language in schools and legalized fines for wearing Nepali dress in public, even for citizens (Mishra, 2013; Hutt, n.d.; “Bhutanese Community Association: Who We are?,” n.d.). Protests against this discrimination broke out among Southerners and 20,000 people marched in anti-government protests. Between 2,000 and 12,000 southerners fled Bhutan during this time in the late 80’s. Ethnic clashes continued into the early 90’s, with violent encounters between organizations supporting Nepalese rights in Bhutan and the Bhutanese government. Schools and government offices were closed in the South, and violent raids were carried out on Southern villages in which people were arrested, injured, kidnapped, and killed. Many southerners fled Bhutan throughout the early 1990’s and many more were forced to sign Voluntary Migration Documents before being expelled (Mishra, 2013).

In total, this produced 108,897 refugees, according to the UN High Commission on Refugees (“UNHCR Statistical Yearbook Country Data Sheet - Bhutan,” 2005). Some settled in India, but most were forced to continue on to Nepal (Mishra, 2013). After settling along the Mai River, where hunger, lack of clean water, and sickness were rampant, the UN stepped in and built several refugee camps, where the Bhutanese Nepalis lived in limbo for nearly two decades, establishing villages, schools, stores, and lives (“Bhutanese Refugees: The story of a forgotten people,” n.d.). In 2007, when it finally became clear that repatriation was not a viable option, the U.S. and several other countries agreed to take in refugees. While many Lhotshampa initially resisted, worrying that they would miss out on a chance to return to Bhutan, more than 80,000 refugees had been resettled in third (not Bhutan and not Nepal) countries at the time of writing this dissertation (“Refugee resettlement referral from Nepal reaches six-figure mark,” n.d.). This is how the families in my study ended up in River City.

From the parents’ perspective. Four of the Bhutanese parents participated in interviews. All were young when they left Bhutan, from 5 to 14 years old. While the youngest could hardly remember the conflict, the oldest recalled:

I studied Nepali up to Class 5 in Bhutan and after that the government banned the language and the language was no more in practice in the academic field, in the schools, or in the education institutions. I used to study in Standard [grade] 7 in Bhutan. I went to one of the schools in northern part once the schools in the south were closed. (Monal’s Father, Interview, January 30, 2013)

Another mother recounted, “We were forced to wear Bhutanese dress, we were forced to cut our hairs, and then we were forced to leave Nepali culture, so that’s why we left Bhutan” (Anita’s Mother, Interview, January 30, 2013). The Nepali grandmother who participated in an interview was thirty when her family left, so she remembered more about life before. She recalled:

When I lived there, everything was fine, everything was normal, but then we had to leave and we had to leave like everything, our belongings. I had orange farms and spices farm. I had all my properties, land, and animals and house and I had to leave all the properties. So I’m feeling not good. (Padma’s Grandmother, Interview, January 30, 2013)

Once in Nepal, all of the parents/grandparents lived in refugee camps for between 18 and 19 years (Interviews, January 28 and January 30, 2013.) When they were finally relocated to the U.S. in 2007 and 2008, two parents were relocated to River City, which they had requested in order to join family. The others were relocated to Boise, Idaho and St. Louis, Missouri and later chose to move to River City, primarily for jobs. “I heard that we get lot of job opportunities here. That's why we moved here,” said Prakesh’s father (Interview, January 28, 2013). Other parents echoed his sentiment: “In Idaho there was no work; here we have work. There were lots of problem [in Bhutan], but here you can work as you wish” (Pooja’s Mother, Interview, January 30, 2013). “It's convenient for kids. There is school bus nearby our home and also there is job. Everybody's working” (Anita’s Mother, Interview, January 30, 2013). “My children, they can work here, they can pay bills. My husband also works” (Padma’s Grandmother, Interview, January 28, 2013). Several parents also mentioned having family and community in River City. One father, when asked what was good about River City, said, “Mmmmm a big community. I'm in similar community,” and mentioned the shared history, language, and culture in the neighborhood (Monal’s Father, Interview, January 28, 2013.) Thus, all of the Nepali preschool students in the study were born into a vibrant Nepali-speaking community.

The parents whom I interviewed spoke English at varying levels. Two fathers chose to be interviewed in English, while the grandmother and mothers chose Nepali, although one mother switched to English sometimes. They told me that while schools in Bhutan all had English as a compulsory language when they were young, some camp schools were in English while others were in Nepali (Interviews, January 28 and January 30, 2013), thus their English depended on how long they attended school in Bhutan and when, as well as which schools they attended in the camps. They found out about the Head Start program through friends or neighbors (n=3) or via the family center in their neighborhood (n=2), which had adult ESL classes. Some parents used friends to help them enroll.

From Uzbekistan to River City. One student, Hande, spoke Turkish at home. Her family, however, was not from Turkey, as the teachers originally thought, but were part of an ethnically Turkish population referred to as Meskhetian or Ahiska Turks. The Meskhetian Turks are a group of people who originated in Georgia, who speak a dialect of Turkish, and who are Muslim. In the 1950’s, Stalin evicted the Meskhetian population, along with several other ethnic minorities, from Georgia, officially for collaborating with Hitler, but for actual reasons that remain unknown (Aydingün, Harding, Hoover, Kuznetsov, & Swerdlow, 2006). They settled in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan. In 1989, however, during rising nationalism and tensions around modernization in Uzbekistan, interethnic violence directed toward the Meskhetian Turks broke out there, with mobs throwing stones and burning houses. Over 100 people were killed. As a result, the Soviet army helped to evacuate 17,000 people, and many more fled on their own (Aydingün et al., 2006). They settled in surrounding countries, including Russia. While most regions of Russia granted the Meskhetian Turks citizenship, the Krasnodar region, where Hande’s parents’ families had settled, did not. The region refused to give them *propiska*, a document that registered their residences and let them move around the country. This refusal made them stateless in the eyes of Soviet (then Russian) law and effectively prevented them from getting birth certificates, enrolling in school, working, receiving medical care, and marrying (Swerdlow, 2006; Koriouchkina, 2010). Keeping them from work amounted to what Aydingün et al. call a “soft ethnic cleansing,” as it worked to starve Meskhetian Turks out of the region (2006, p. 9). This was combined with official raids for proper “guest registration”

documents, as well as unofficial and more violent raids by vigilante neo-Cossack groups dedicated to maintaining local ethnic purity. A 2002 law prevented Meskhetian Turks from cultivating land, leaving them with no way to produce food or make money (Swerdlow, 2006). After hunger strikes by local Meskhetian Turks, world human rights organization took notice and began to try to broker repatriation to Georgia. In 2006, with still no durable solution in sight, the United States opened its doors for Meskhetian Turks to come as refugees. Hande's mother and father were among those chosen to resettle in River City.

From Hande's Mother's perspective. Hande's mother participated in our interview through a Russian interpreter. She told me that she was born in Uzbekistan and left for Russia in 1989, when she was 8. She lived in Russia until 2006, when she and her family came to the U.S. as refugees because they could not go to their first choice, Turkey (Hande's mother, Interview, February 19, 2013). Hande's mother described the situation in Russia:

A lot of us couldn't get citizenship, Russian citizenship. They worked them in the fields, couldn't get a real job. They were making crafts and trying to make a living, by farming and- it started in 1989 and up to the year when we moved, it was like that for us. We couldn't work. So the children who were born there, they couldn't get the family name from their father because their father was nobody in the country. And they couldn't get *propiska* - that means like place where they are registered to live. (Hande's mother, Interview, February 19, 2013)

Hande's mother and father, both born in Uzbekistan, lived near one another in Russia, but did not meet until they were in River City. Like many of the other parents, Hande's mother was happy with the job opportunities there. Her husband had worked in a factory for several years and had saved enough money to have just purchased a pizza shop with his brothers. They lived in an apartment with her sister, her husband's brothers, and their families, so Hande and her younger sister were immersed in Turkish. Hande's parents both spoke Russian and used it as a secret language together, so they were not yet teaching it to their children. Hande's mother tried to enroll Hande in a community school for refugees, but it was full, so they suggested Head Start and Hande's parents signed her up.

The students. All of the students in Ellen and Lucia's class were three or four years old and met the income requirements for Head Start. There were 17 students in the class during the year, although the some of the students changed across the year. Because Head Start is a free program, there is a minimum attendance policy, and several students were asked to leave the program in the first few months after missing too many days of school. One student's parents withdrew her after deciding that she was not ready for preschool and that they would wait until she was four. Table 2.2 shows the make up of the class at the beginning and end of the year, by student's, gender, language, race—(European American (EA), African American (AA), or South Asian American (SAA)—and approximate age at the start of school (3, 3 1/2, or 4 [going to K]). The next table (Table 2.3) shows the shifts in class make-up.

Table 2.2

Start of Year						End of Year				
<i>Student</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Lang.</i>	<i>Race</i>	<i>Age</i>		<i>Student</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Lang.</i>	<i>Race</i>	<i>Age</i>
Kelsey	F	English	EA	4 (to K)		Kelsey	F	English	EA	4 (to K)
Luke	M	English	EA	4 (to K)		Luke	M	English	EA	4 (to K)
Joey	M	English	EA	4 (to K)		Joey	M	English	EA	4 (to K)
Alyssa	F	English	AA	4 (to K)	→	Pooja	F	Nepali	SA	4 (to K)
Hande	F	Turkish	EA	4 (to K)		Hande	F	Turkish	EA	4 (to K)
Brady	M	English	EA	4 (to K)	→	Sreya	F	Nepali	SAA	3
Joy	F	English	AA	3.5		Joy	F	English	AA	3.5
Tommy	M	English	EA	3		Tommy	M	English	EA	3
Elise	F	English	EA	3	→	Anita	F	Nepali	SAA	3
Emanuela	F	English	AA	3.5	→	Caleb	M	English	EA	3
Padma	F	Nepali	SAA	3.5		Padma	F	Nepali	SAA	3.5
Kritika	F	Nepali	SA	3.5		Kritika	F	Nepali	SAA	3.5
Rashmi	F	Nepali	SAA	3.5		Rashmi	F	Nepali	SAA	3.5
Dinesh	M	Nepali	SAA	3.5		Dinesh	M	Nepali	SAA	3.5
Prakesh	M	Nepali	SAA	3.5		Prakesh	M	Nepali	SAA	3.5
Monal	M	Nepali	SAA	3		Monal	M	Nepali	SAA	3
Kabita	F	Nepali	SAA	3	→	Maiya	F	Nepali	SAA	3

Table 2.3

	Start of Year		End of Year	
Language	English	9	English	6
	Nepali	7	Nepali	11
	Turkish	1	Turkish	1
Race	European American	6	European American	5
	African American	3	African American	1
	S. Asian American	7	S. Asian American	9
Gender	Female	10	Female	10
	Male	7	Male	7
Age	4 going to K	6	4 going to K	5
	Turning 4	7	Turning 4	6
	Just 3	4	Just 3	6

Because the class had mostly stabilized by early December, unless otherwise specified, when I refer to the class, I mean the class as it looked for the remainder of the year.

The focal students. By the second month of school, it had become clear to me that students were being positioned and were positioning themselves in very different ways in the classroom. I therefore selected three Nepali-speaking focal students who ranged from very central to middle-of-the-road to peripheral in the class. Additionally, because I was curious about her experience, I also selected Hande—the Turkish speaker and the only non-English, non-Nepali speaker in the class—to be a focal student. I took care to select focal students who were similar enough in gender, age, newcomer status, and initial language ability that social and linguistic differences could not be attributed solely to these things. The four students were the same gender (female) and were close in age, having all turned four in the same six-month period around the start of the school year. They were also all part of the class for the entire school year.

Based on my observations and recordings in the first few weeks of school, the four focal students had similar (very beginning) levels of English. Additionally, on the Foreign Service Institute's scale of languages' similarity to English (rated I-IV, where Spanish is Level I and Japanese is level IV), Turkish and Nepali are both Level III languages ("DLIFLC.edu - Languages at DLI," n.d.).

These are the focal students:

Padma. Padma was a tiny-framed Nepali speaker who lived with her parents, seven-year-old sister, and grandmother. As in the opening scene of this dissertation, Padma's grandmother brought her to school each day. Her grandmother was her primary caregiver, as both of her parents worked. Padma's favorite place to play was in Housekeeping, with the baby dolls ("babies"), and she was often heard narrating the preparation of elaborate meals in the pretend kitchen. She was quick to laugh as she wiggled across her day, but also to whine about an injustice. Many of her conversations were about her *didi*, or older sister, whose wardrobe of once-fancy dresses she had inherited. Padma often wore one of these now-paint-spotted dresses over a long sleeved shirt and pants, always accompanied by socks and sparkly sandals, except when it snowed and she switched to pink cowboy boots. Padma turned four in the beginning of October.

Rashmi. Tall and wiry, Rashmi, another Nepali speaker, seemed like she had grown too fast for herself. Her jeans and hoodies were just a tad small and her arms and legs sometimes appeared to be slightly out of her control. Her energy was boundless and she buzzed around the room. Her favorite place to play was the sand table and she sometimes spent all of play time running over to check if she could have a turn. Her cousin, Prakesh, was also in the class and he was her favorite playmate at the sand table or outside. Rashmi also liked to be in housekeeping, cooking and playing with the babies, but rarely joined the other girls in games of family, playing in the midst of their game, but in her own world. Rashmi lived with her father, her mother, and a new baby. Rashmi turned four in early November.

Kritika. Kritika, tall and serious, also spoke Nepali. She lived alone with her mother. I only met her mother once, since she worked all day and Kritika came to school and went home with a different friend or neighbor each day. Kritika loved to draw, to play with sand, and to build with the small toys, but no matter where she played, a group of girls went with her. Kritika wore dresses to school over pants, generally with socks and sandals, but her outfits were never as colorful, flouncy, or as brightly mismatched as Padma's. Kritika's hair was always combed and she repositioned her headband throughout the day to make sure her hair was neat. She was less likely than the other children to talk about her family and was stoic in the first weeks of school when other children cried for their parents. Kritika turned four about a week before Padma did, in late September.

Hande. Hande was the only Turkish speaker in the class. She loved Mickey and Minnie Mouse and often wore T-shirts with their picture, along with sweatpants or jeans. She had a huge grin when she smiled and usually had her short, curly hair in two pigtails on top of her head. When I think of Hande, my mind flips quickly back and forth between two images: At one moment, I see her quiet and serious, drawing intently, or sing softly to herself. The next I see her

shaking her head back and forth, making silly noises, rolling her eyes, and then collapsing into giggles. Hande loved the art area and spent long periods of time drawing alone, but was a friendly and attentive playmate when invited. She lived with her mother, father, and very boisterous younger sister, along with thirteen other relatives in an apartment near the school. Hande was the oldest of the focal students having turned 4 in August, and would be the only one going to kindergarten the following year, according to the district's September 1 birthday cut-off.

Role of the Researcher, or Confessions

In this study, I was very much a participant as well as an observer, both within the classroom and the community. During my time in River City, I also volunteered with one of the refugee resettlement organizations as a home educator, teaching newly arrived families how to use stoves, pay rent, call 9-1-1, etc. This often brought me to the apartment complex near the school, where I occasionally saw children from the class, and it helped me better understand the process of resettlement, from an institutional and a phenomenological perspective.

Within the classroom, on my researcher days, I was part of ongoing classroom activity, even as I took notes and video recorded from a stationary camera. To now add an extra column to the classroom schedule presented above, my activities were as follows:

Table 2.4

Clock Time	Classroom Time	What I did
8:30-8:50	Sign-In and Breakfast	Sit at a breakfast table, help children open cereal. Chat with kids and parents.
8:50-9:00	Good Morning Circle	Set up camera, clean tables, sometimes sit in circle, sometimes just outside, participate in songs.
9:00-9:30	Outside Time	Chase students, ride on bouncy trucks, draw with chalk, play ball. Sometimes talk with teachers.
9:30-9:40	Choice time	Hang up jackets, set up camera somewhere, join kids on rug.
9:40-11	Free Play Time	Watch, take notes, be drawn into play at times.
11-11:20	Story/Music	Participate in singing/dancing. Help teacher set up lunch. Set up camera for lunch.
11:20-12:00	Lunch	Sit at one table. Eat with kids. Help to serve. Get more water and milk. Talk. observe. Take notes.
12:00-1:30	Nap	Clean tables, set up snack. Chop apples or oranges. Talk with teacher Ellen as she did paperwork or ate her lunch. (Lucia doing dishes down the hall.)
1:30-2	Snack	Sit with kids. Eat snack. Watch, talk, take notes.
2:00-2:30	Play	Play with kids. Read books on request. Wait with kids for parents.

Some of these activities positioned me like a teacher; others aligned me with students. In a study of positioning, I was acutely aware of this over the course of data collection. In general, my first aim was to be a friend. I knew that I did not want to be the kind of researcher who surgically extracts data and then disappears, but I also knew that I would have to stop my community work and leave River City after a year or two. I wanted, if nothing else, to have offered the teachers,

parents, and students a listening ear and a helping hand. I wanted them to be left with a feeling that I had seen their world and their views as important and that I had learned much from them. I think, overall, I succeeded. I cut oranges for snack, tied shoes, brought coffee, commiserated over assessments, offered rides, gave out books, and on more than one occasion was hugged by a student, a teacher, or a parent. Parents smiled broadly when they saw me around their apartment complex, in my capacity as a volunteer, the students cheered when I returned for visits after completing my data collection, and the teachers, when we had lunch most recently, still expressed surprise that I had taken such an active role in the classroom (“I don’t know, we thought you would just sit there and watch or something.”) To this extent, through much conscious maneuvering I succeeded in my aims. This is the approach I took:

Katie, Friend to Teachers

With the teachers, I tried hard to highlight my former teacher self. I empathized about paperwork and policies and low pay. I shared songs that I had learned that were relevant to current themes. I cut oranges to the perfect size and shared knowing smiles across the rug when a student said something amusing. I started a lot of stories with, “When I had a student who...” or “I once had a parent that...” I tried not to make the teachers feel watched. My role as expert helper across the hall, in a classroom that both teachers in Classroom 3 considered a mess, helped significantly with my position.

Katie, Friend to Parents

Day to day, I used different strategies to align with parents. With the longtime River Cityers (White, English-speaking), I played up my own longtime River Cityer status. I talked about growing up there and missing it during all my years in California, how nice it was to be back in Steeler country, how I thought quarterback Ben Roethlisberger was a real jerk when he was off the football field, but how it isn’t his fault he gets sacked so much. I talked about it being nice to see my grandmother more and how my grandfather had worked the steel mills for 30 years. I also talked about my waitressing job in a restaurant and how it was helping my husband and me through school and that I couldn’t wait until we were done, but wasn’t looking forward to paying off loans. In the end, they still had a hard time figuring out what my role was (I think most settled on some kind of student teacher who had to do a project in her placement), but they were happy to see me as a nice local girl who would probably make a good teacher some day.

With the refugee parents, there was not a lot of talk, as just one mother and two fathers spoke much English. I hoped that their children’s reports of me being a good friend to them made their way home, and that when they saw me helping their children at school or helping new families in their apartment complex, this let them see my good intentions. It was not until January, when I conducted parent interviews that my relationship with the parents deepened. The longtime River Cityers were much more interested than I had anticipated in talking about language and classroom dynamics. They were excited to have me listen to their thoughts and were grateful that, as a thank you for the interview, I had specifically chosen a children’s book based on what I knew each child liked.

Not all parents chose to do interviews and there was a noticeable difference from January onward in my relationship with parents whom I had interviewed and those I had not. This difference was even more pronounced with the refugee families, as I brought interpreters with me to these meetings so that we could finally talk. When the female interpreter and I spoke with the mothers and grandmothers in particular (as opposed to fathers), the conversation took on the

feeling of women sitting around gossiping, rather than an interview. The mothers and interpreter and I were all around the same age, which added to this feeling. Afterwards, even before I told them I had books for them, they thanked us again and again, hugging both me and my interpreter, much to my surprise. When I gave them copies of the English-Nepali bilingual book, “The Story of Pumpkin” (Tiwari and Rai, 2013), a folktale written down and illustrated by a group of Bhutanese refugees in New England, one began to cry. After the interviews, we went back to not talking much, but we did a lot more smiling and waving. One mother, who spoke some English, would sit down with her daughter and me when she came to pick her up during snack and we would make small talk.

Katie, Friend to Students

Like Corsaro (1985), who studied peer culture in preschools, I wanted the students to view me as different from the teachers. Corsaro successfully used two approaches to accomplish this. First, he was intentionally reactive, rather than active. Unlike the teachers, who actively initiated and directed activity, Corsaro placed himself in areas of activity and let students decide how and when, if at all, to interact with him. Secondly, he maintained peripheral participation, never trying to direct or coordinate play, repair interactions, settle disputes, or intervene. For me, these techniques proved quite useful. I sat quietly on the edge of action, but was friendly and responsive to requests for help or invitations to play. I never acted as arbiter of disputes and I always pleaded ignorance of the rules, telling the students they would have to ask a teacher. I intentionally referred to “the teachers” as others, carefully positioning myself as separate from them. Joining in play helped with this, as Ellen and Lucia were sometimes watchers of and commenters on but never participants *in* the children’s play. I also let students see me *see them* breaking rules, especially ones that I thought were a bit silly, like “No taking toys from one area to another”). One day, for example, as some of the Nepali speakers were playing “Wedding,” the girls drew all over their hands with markers, breaking the rule, “No drawing on yourself with markers.” “Mehndi!” they showed me proudly. I knew from Indian friends’ weddings that brides’ hands and feet are decorated with henna and that this is called *mehndi* in Hindi (and apparently also Nepali, a closely related language.) I agreed that it was very, very beautiful and their play continued. While I started out as a reactive participant, by the end of the year, I had become a lap to sit on, a regular babysitter of dolls, and a valued customer in both “Restaurant” and “Hair Salon.”

One final and significant way that I was different from the teachers was the nature of my interest in the children’s languages. While Hande never spoke Turkish at school, realizing right away that no one understood, the Nepali speakers in the class frequently spoke Nepali amongst themselves. While the teachers were curious about what they might be saying, I had the luxury of spending large amounts of time listening and taking notes. I also had the luxury of having studied Hindi briefly. So when there were potatoes for lunch, I could identify the word *aloo* and when they were fighting over a toy or baby doll, I recognized *mero* (my/mine), *timro* (your/yours), and *usko* (his/her/s), all the same as in Hindi. Over the year, I made sure that they saw me listening in on their Nepali and laughing when they laughed. Sometimes, I had hunches about what a word might mean and I either asked a parent after school or looked it up later. For example, one day, the teacher asked children at circle time to identify a picture of a butterfly and Kritika yelled “putali!” When I got home I looked it up and sure enough, it was Nepali for butterfly. Once I knew some words, I also made sure that students saw me responding to requests made to other children in Nepali, passing the milk when I heard *dudh* and pointing in the right

place when someone asking where her doll (*mero nanni*) had gone. Here are some of the kinds of things I learned over the year:

Table 2.5

English	Nepali
milk	<i>dudh</i>
cold (milk, water)	<i>cheeso</i>
bride and groom	<i>billa/billi</i>
who/what is that?	<i>yu ke ho?</i>
older/younger sister	<i>didi/bhahini</i>
older young brother	<i>dhai/bhai</i>
water	<i>paani</i>
monster/bad guy	<i>gunda</i>
what's your name?	<i>timro naam ke ho?</i>
baby doll	<i>nanni</i>
good	<i>ramro</i>
bad	<i>kahrab</i>

Katie, Caught-in-the-Middle

In these ways, I became a friend to teachers, parents, and students as I gathered videos and notes. Yet, whether my participants remember or not, in some day-to-day matters, being a friend to all proved challenging. This was mostly because being a friend to teachers, students, parents, and my own beliefs almost never meant the same thing. I wanted to be a chameleon, aligning at one moment with the students, another with the teachers. Yet, in moments where I was interacting with more than person, this was tricky. The following two vignettes written from field notes highlight some of these situations.

January 14, 2013: One day, I was sitting in circle time when Kritika, one of my focal students, took my hand. The teacher glanced over and told her to keep her hands to herself. After the teacher looked away, Kritika tried to take my hand again. Without thinking, I pulled back and whispered to her that I would hold it later. She crossed her arms across her body and said, "I sad. I SAD." I immediately felt awful. I had the power to align with her and to represent her act as a welcome gesture of friendship or to align with the teacher and represent Kritika's action as deviant. I chose the teacher and her act became a deviant one.

April 2, 2013: Ellen was working one-by-one with children as they created self-portraits on paper plates. The first step was to use a variety of skin-toned paints to paint the plates. Ellen helped the children mix paints until it matched their hands. Joy, the only African American child in the class, was the sixth student to have a turn. While she was the only "Black" student in the class, her skin was lighter than two or three of the Nepali students. Ellen asked her which color she should start with and Joy pointed to the bright white paint. Ellen laughed and looked at me across the table, "White, she says!." Ellen (laughing) and Joy (serious and confused) both look at me and in that split second, I thought of what both of them were thinking as well as about language and race and America. I couldn't laugh back. Ellen seemed annoyed.

My in-the-middle positioning sometimes meant that I was a battleground for alignment and I sometimes felt powerless, as all choices seemed wrong. Yet, I also recognized the power of my position in shaping context: I made Kritika deviant and I made Ellen's comment a racial (perhaps racist) one. The power difference between an adult researcher and her 3- and 4-year-old participants comes from so many obvious things—size and strength, free comings and goings, print literacy, money, ability to opt out of naps—yet, perhaps the most important one is this the power to (re)present (Green & Stewart, 2012). The recognition of this power sometimes served to paralyze me. After the Kritika incident, I have no idea what happened that day in Circle Time as I took no further notes.

In writing this dissertation, I am in a very powerful position as well. My readers only know what I tell them. The children have no control over how their actions and voices will be portrayed to the world. Last spring, I gave a talk about this research. When I finished, a member of the audience came up to me and said, “Poor Hande.” And I knew I had failed somehow. Although, as I show in Chapter Four, Hande was on the periphery of the classroom social scene and often had a tenuous place in play, she was a happy spunky kid who mostly did not seem to care. I forget that my audience does not know these children like I have come to know them and that all they have to go on is what I tell them. My words were what made Hande into “poor Hande,” a construction that I hope not to recreate in this dissertation. Nowhere is my power to represent more apparent to me than when I transcribe students' talk, since this is where their voices are portrayed most directly. The decisions are endless: Do I use “kid” words like *scabetti* and ‘*copter* or write *spaghetti* and *helicopter*? Do I write *dese* and *it's-gusting* when my ELLs pronounce *these* and *disgusting* like that? And are their words even enough? Ochs (1979) thought not when she wrote “Transcription as Theory” more than 30 years ago. Using video and screen capture, I sometimes create frame-by-frame visual transcripts so that readers can also see students' gaze, body position, and expression, which are so key especially for new English users. But then I wonder, when is this too much? To take this thinking to its logical conclusion, would it not be better to just give the video, so that the watcher can have as much information as possible? I do not think anyone would say yes. The best I can do is to acknowledge and reflect critically on my power to choose how I represent my participants and their interactions. I have tried to do them justice.

Procedures for Data Collection

When I arrived in River City in June of 2012, I began to gather information about the city's history and population. Through news stories, I learned about the resettlement of refugees in the city. I then spoke with several local organizations that assist families with their relocation and became a volunteer through one of these agencies. During this time, I also was in contact with the director of K-12 ESL in the public schools as well as the county director for Head Start. The ESL director gave me background information about languages in the district, while the Head Start director agreed to help me locate classrooms that met my criteria once classes were finalized. Once a class was identified, I spent nearly the whole school year with Classroom 3, from late September to June.³ The Head Start director wanted students and teachers to have two weeks to establish a relationship and routines before I joined the class. Thus, I officially entered the classroom halfway through September. In the first two weeks, as I worked to secure

³ I also visited the second site for the year, even after it was no longer a viable site for this study.

permission from parents for their children to participate in the study, I did not do any formal research activities. Rather, I did what Dyson and Genishi (2005) called “casing the joint,” attending to configurations of spaces, people, and activity. It was during this time that I mapped the classroom arrangement, studied my copy of the classroom schedule, and noticed how activities shifted across these times and spaces. Once I had secured permission of all but one of the students, I began collecting classroom interaction data. I then spent one full day per week in the room for a total of 27 visits or 162 classroom hours. Across the year, my activities shifted very little, outside of the first two weeks. I took field notes throughout the day, video recorded during four blocks of time, and collected artifacts. Although I talked informally with teachers every day, I interviewed each one formally twice during the year. I also interviewed parents once and students once at the end of the year. During the next year, I continued to visit the school and community, though classroom data collection had ended, and to follow news about language and demographics in the city. I left the city in June 2014. Table 2.6 below shows my timeline.

Table 2.6

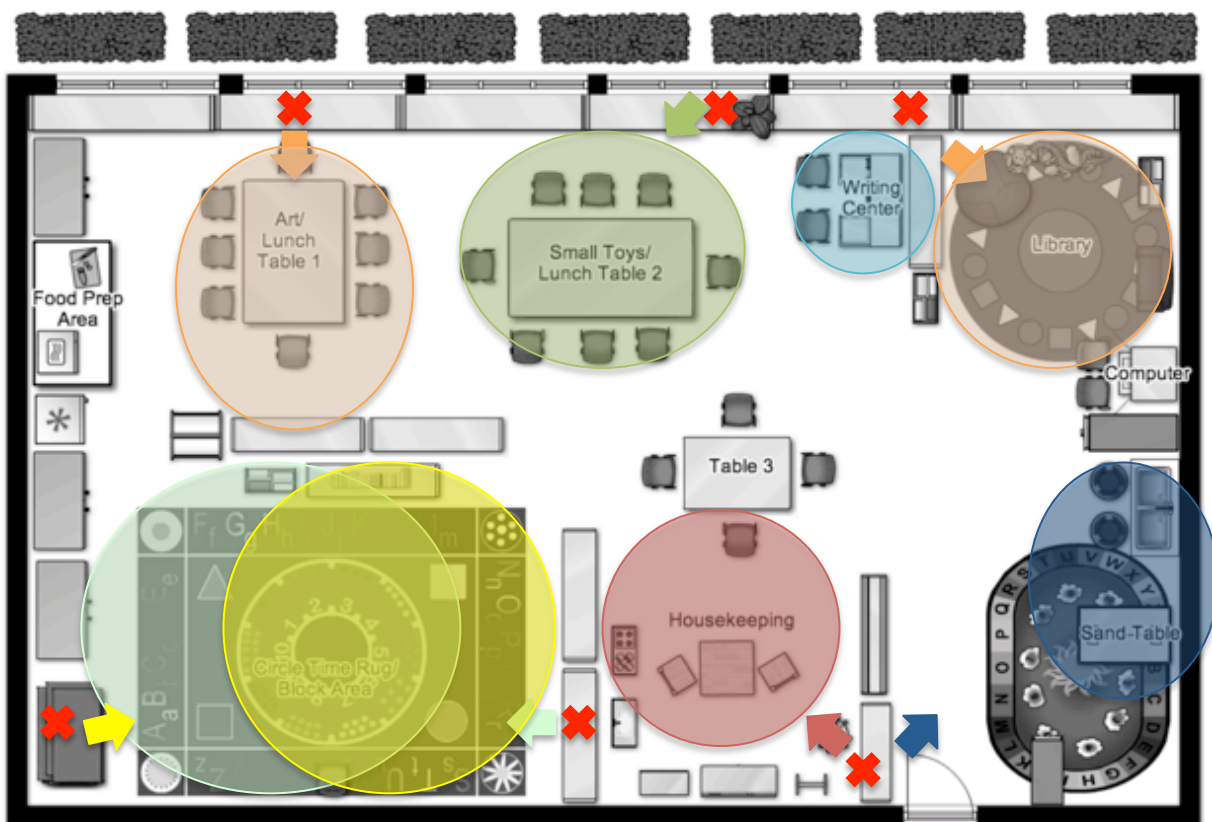
Time	Main Activities	Other Activities
June 2012– September 2012	Gathering city-level data	Communicating with the county director for Head Start about classroom selection
Early September 2012	Selecting classroom	
September 15- October 1, 2012	Two visit per week for a few hours for casing the joint, securing permission	
October 2012	One full day per week of Participant Observation, Field Notes, Video Recording	
November 2012		Teacher Interviews #1
December 2012		
January 2013		Parent Interviews
Feb - April 2013		
May 2013		Student Interviews
June 2013	End of classroom data collection	Teacher Interviews #2
2013-2014 school year	Visiting classroom and community as volunteer	
2014	Following news about city, Nepali and refugee population	

Procedures for Collecting Each Type of Data

Field notes (57 typed pages). I carried a notebook and pen with me at all times during the year. It was small enough to slip into my back pocket during a fire drill when I needed to hold two hands and small enough to slide under a leg when I was invited into interaction and did not want to call attention to it. Despite this, these notebooks became items of interest. My early notes are interspersed with children’s writing and drawing, before I wised up and brought extras. Field notes were both descriptive and reflective (Bogden and Bicklen, 2006): a combination of direct transcription of conversations, descriptions of activity and interactions, reminders to go back to

specific times in video or audio recordings for more detail, and my own thoughts and reactions. Had I used a laptop or larger paper, I might have had separate columns for these, but instead I organized the notes each day when I got home. Once home, I typed all my notes and fleshed them out with other things that I recalled. I separated big ideas or new hypotheses that I had jotted down during the day into a section at the top of my field notes document so that I revisited them each time I added more notes. I kept track of emerging themes and connections across days with easily searchable hash tags (thank you, twitter), like #race, #letters, #Kritikaincharge, #translation.

Video recordings (approx. 40 hours). Rather than carry a video camera, I chose to participate in classroom life and use a stationary camera paired with a handheld audio recorder. I used a small “flip” style camera (Kodak Zi8) with a magnetic wide-angle lens and used a tiny, flexible tripod (Gorilla Pod) to place the camera on a shelf or counter, where it remained pointed at a particular area of the room. I covered the recording light with a small piece of electrical tape and the screen on the back with a piece of paper I could flip up and down. These helped to cut down on the camera’s intrusiveness. I also noticed that when I placed it in a teacher area (which as the schedule shows, shifted throughout the day), it went more or less unnoticed by the students, while if it was placed in a kid area, they noticed it and wanted to watch their classmates from the back. Thus, the camera positions eventually stabilized as I found the least noticeable places with the best views of ongoing action. Because preschool classrooms are noisy places and cheap video cameras now record in full HD, but with terrible sound, I supplemented the video by placing a small audio recorder at the center of action (e.g., the middle of a table) and locking the buttons, so that it continued recording when played with. Since it did not do much when handled—it emitted no sounds, lights, or images—it was usually soon left alone or, on occasion, treated as a pretend cell phone. To facilitate in synching image and sound, I used the old filmmaking clapperboard technique and snapped my fingers once into the audio recorder, in view of the camera, at the start of each recording. Later, at home, I used iMovie to remove the video’s audio track and overlay the video with the much louder and clearer audio track from the handheld recorder. This later facilitated detailed transcriptions, by me in English and by a Nepali speaker in Nepali, then translated to English. Typical camera locations are marked below with red X’s. Colored arrows show the direction that it pointed and the circles show the area that was filmed.



Each day, I recorded during three time periods: circle time, lunch or snack, and free play time. Circle time captured the whole class, with a lot of teacher talk and teacher-directed activity. Mealtime recording captured large group interactions. Seating arrangements changed from week to week, so I simply alternated tables at first, trying to capture a variety of students. Once focal students were selected, I recorded the table where they were seated (if all together) or continued alternating tables. On days when beef or pork was served, all of the Nepali speakers sat together to eat cheese sandwiches, facilitating this process. During free play time, I made two recordings, switching camera locations halfway through. At the beginning of the year, I rotated these locations on a schedule: Week 1 – blocks, then art; Week 2 – housekeeping, then sand; Week 3 – library, then small toys. After I selected focal students, I instead chose areas where they were playing, rotating by student: Week 1- Kritika, then Rashmi; Week 2 – Padma, then Hande. In total, this resulted in approximately 50 hours of video. Sometimes I sat in the same area where I was filming and other times I went to observe in a different area, depending on where my focal students were. When I left each week, I saved the video files to a hard drive, labeled by date and location within the room. I also added them to a running log that listed participants and a summary of activities that took place (Erickson, 2006).

These videos were the core of the project and came to serve multiple roles: They provided interactional data to support my analysis of teachers' beliefs about language and teaching; interactional data that showed students' positioning in the classroom; and linguistic data to show students' growth over the year. While rotating between focal students provided more data on these students than the initial method of rotating between areas, an unintended consequence was that I ended up with much more video of Kritika than of the other students and

much less of Rashmi. Kritika's wealth of video stemmed from the fact that she was often at the center of action and thus, filming one Nepali-speaking student meant filming Kritika. Rashmi's dearth of video came from her tendency to only play with these students on occasion and to rarely stay in one place for very long. At first, during Rashmi's turns to be recorded, I tried to reposition the camera, but I found that she usually came into each area again and that I got just as much (or little) of her on camera by leaving it in one place.

Semi-structured teacher interviews (n=4). Although we had informal conversations throughout the year, I interviewed each teacher formally and individually twice during the year, once in November and once in June. In the fall interview (Appendix A), I spoke with teachers about five general topics: their background and their path to becoming a teacher in this classroom, their experiences with language and language learning, how they think about language and language learning in their classroom, their views on the class as a whole and on each student in particular, and their goals for the year. Rather than setting the interview protocol in a question-response format, I listed a variety of possible questions to elicit these kinds of information and used the ones that seemed most natural in conversation. If the teachers spoke on a topic in a different order or without my asking a question, I let them direct the conversation. In the spring interview (Appendix B), I revisited the same topics, but from a retrospective approach: the story of class as a whole, how each student fit into that story, how teachers' histories shaped their classroom decisions, how students changed and grew, how language learning went (what helped or not), and what advice they would give new teachers in their position next year. These interviews were audio recorded. Each interview lasted between 40 minutes and an hour.

Parent interviews (n=9). In January, I invited parents to participate in an interview, either right after student drop-off or just before pick-up. In total, parents of nine children chose to participate. Of these nine, three spoke English at home, five spoke Nepali, and one spoke Turkish (although she was bilingual in Russian and carried out the interview in Russian). These percentages are roughly proportionate to the class as a whole. Table 2.7 summarizes which parents participated.

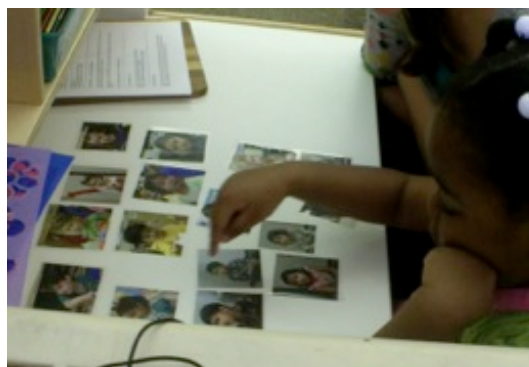
Table 2.7

Student	Home Language	Parent who participated	Interview Language
Luke	English	Mother	English
Joey	English	Mother	English
Tommy	English	Mother	English
Hande	Turkish	Mother	Russian
Monal	Nepali	Father	English/Nepali
Anita	Nepali	Mother	Nepali
Padma	Nepali	Grandmother	Nepali
Prakesh	Nepali	Father	Nepali
Pooja	Nepali	Mother	Nepali

In parent interviews, I used the same approach as in teacher interviews, plotting topics that I wanted to address and then possible questions, and choosing the questions and order that fit naturally into the conversation (see Appendix C). These interviews addressed: family history, feelings about River City/the area, parent education, motives/goals for sending student to school, and feelings about the school. I also posed a series of hypothetical situations—bilingual teachers,

bilingual classroom, more languages, different balances of students—to find out what parents would think about them. These interviews were audio recorded. Interviews in English lasted between 12 and 20 minutes. Interviews in Nepali and Russian lasted 20-40 minutes. At the end of the interview, I gave parents a picture book that I had picked for their child.

Student interviews (n=17). At the end of the year, I interviewed students using a procedure (Appendix D) in which I laid out pictures of their classmates in random order and asked them to pick out who they liked to play with (see image at right). After noting their choices, I replaced those photos and, to make sure they were not picking at random, asked whom they did not like to play with. Using the same procedure, I also asked who was smart and who got into trouble. I had my Nepali interpreter with me and planned to ask students in both languages, but all of them began to make their choices before she had a chance to ask in Nepali and we decided to stop using Nepali and just let me ask in English. She used Nepali to clarify the last question for one student. Out of curiosity, I also asked students what they thought I was doing there the whole year, what I was writing in my notebook, and what they wanted their pretend name to be when I wrote about what I learned in their class. These responses can also be found in Appendix D (and indicate why I decided to choose pseudonyms for students myself!)



Artifacts (n=184). Across the year, I also collected announcements to parents from Head Start, photographs of classroom signs and displays, and writing/art produced by students.

Alignment Between Data and Research Questions

These multiple kinds of data provided converging evidence in my analyses. Table 2.8 summarizes the data in relation to my research questions.

Table 2.8

Research Question	Data Used in Analysis
1. What are parents' and teachers' beliefs about language, language learning, and the purpose of preschool? How do parents' and teachers' sociohistorical contexts shape their beliefs? How do these beliefs shape classroom practices?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcribed teacher interviews • Transcribed parent interviews • Field notes involving teachers • Video transcriptions involving teachers • Classroom, school, Head Start artifacts
2. Through positioning within classroom practice, how do the identities of four focal students take shape across the year?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcribed teacher interviews • Field notes • Video transcriptions • Student interview data • Student artifacts
3. What are the differences in how these four students learn English over the year? How do these differences relate to the students' different social identities in the classroom?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field notes • Video transcriptions • Corpora of talk built from video transcripts • Student artifacts

Procedures for Analysis

Constructing the Database

The first phase of analysis took place from the moment I walked into the classroom, in my choices of what to focus on and how to record it. In this sense, data collection might be called data construction, as I was not simply gathering data, but creating it (Erickson, 2004). This phase also involved organization of field notes and logging of videos, as discussed above. After data collection ended, construction of the database continued as I moved on to transcription. My transcription choices reflect the ways that I would be using the transcripts. In parent and teacher interviews, which I would analyze using thematic coding rather than for interactional mechanics, I did not use conversation analysis levels of detail (pause length, exhales, pronunciation, etc.), but simply wrote what the speakers said, using standard orthography. I also ignored much of the backchanneling (uh-huh, yeah) that I did as participants spoke. When transcribing the children's interactions from video, like Ochs, I wrote not just what children said, but also what they did. I also paid much closer attention to *how* they said what they said, including exact wording and intonation, since I would be analyzing these conversations both for social positioning and for language development. Transcripts that relied heavily on action and that became significant in my analysis were further transcribed visually, which capture action, gesture, and expression in frame-by-frame images (Norris, 2004, 2011).

Analyzing Data in the Database

Just as multiple data sources help to create rigor, multiple methods of analysis complemented one another in this study as well. Atkinson, Okada, and Talmy (2011) discuss the ways that ethnography, with its focus on the broad, the long-term, and the patterned meanings of a group, can complement discourse analysis, with its focus on particulars, the moment, and the construction of those meanings. Similarly, the qualitative methods of coding and thematic analysis, which focuses on understanding what participants themselves understand, can be complemented by critical discourse analysis, which focuses on “how particular ways of acting, thinking, valuing, feeling, structuring and organizing social relationships are produced and are taken to be ‘natural’ and ‘common sense’” (Bloome et al., 2008) and moves beyond what participants might consciously report.

Question 1. Thus, to answer my first research question—*What are parents’ and teachers’ beliefs about language, language learning, and the purpose of preschool? How do parents’ and teachers’ sociohistorical contexts shape their beliefs? How do these beliefs shape classroom practices?*—I used both thematic coding of interview data as well as ethnographic analysis of classroom talk. The former highlights what teachers and parents say about language and learning, while the latter allows me to analyze what teachers *do*. I began by coding broadly for talk about “Language” and “School.” I realized that I needed to divide these into *history/experiences* and *beliefs regarding children’s experiences*. Within each of these categories, I then drew on methods from grounded theory (Saldaña, 2012), beginning with open coding from language that participants used: “cope up with friends,” “easier now,” “more chances for the future.” I then further refined these into themes such as *earlier is easier*, *cognitive benefits*, *social isolation*, *literacy skills*. Finally, I compared themes that parents used with those of teachers. I also compared themes across individual’s *own experiences* and *beliefs regarding children’s experiences* to make claims about these adult’s habitus formation and the role of the habitus in

current belief. To supplement the analysis of teacher beliefs, I drew on field notes and transcripts of classroom interaction, looking for implicit and explicit talk about “Language” and “School.” To answer the second part of the question, I again drew on field notes and transcripts, to look for place of uptake: Where these beliefs manifest in the physical space, the rules of the classroom, or in the reactions and actions of the children themselves.

Question 2. To answer my second research question—*Through positioning within classroom practice, how do the identities of four focal students take shape across the year?*—I used three methods. The primary method was a back and forth between microanalysis of student interaction and coding (Erikson, 1992). By teasing apart through how students were positioned in interactions, I was able to create codes for these types of positions. I was then able to recognize these in other interactions and to confirm with microanalysis. I started with general, descriptive codes, like “sloppy,” “wild,” “quiet,” “good friend,” and through multiple rounds of coding, I found that most of the positioning happening in the classroom boiled down to students being competent (or not) and authoritative (or not) within four domains: social/play, classroom rules/procedures, academic, and linguistic. Through this spiral of discourse analysis and coding, I found that being positioned as competent within a domain was a necessary but not sufficient condition for being positioned as authoritative. I also saw that competence/authority from one domain sometimes “bootstrapped” other domains. Using these codes, I was able to trace students positioning as more and less competent/authoritative across the year and to tell each focal student’s story. I supplemented this analysis with data from teacher interviews, in which teachers talked about individual students, as well as with data from classroom interactions between teachers and students.

Finally, in addition to positioning theory, I also employed social network analysis (SNA; Borgatti, Everett, & Johnson, 2013; Friedkin & Thomas, 1997) to understand students’ identity as a statistical location in the network of the class. Interview data were entered into a matrix of 1s and 0s (1=friends with, 0=not friends with), which was processed by UCINET software (Borgatti et al, 2002) to create a social map of the class, where distances were proportionate to social distances. I used UCINET to calculate measures of in-degree centrality (how many times a student is cited as a friend) and betweenness centrality in the network (a measure of how many connections would disappear if an individual were not present in the network.) Finally, UCINET was used to determine and map “cliques,” or groupings where people within the group are socially closer than people outside. These maps and values supported the qualitative analysis described above. Since social network analysts have found that reported data is not always reliable (Bernard & Killworth, 1977), I also used UCINET to create maps from counts of actual interactions between student dyads in videos from the last three months of school. Because there is no way for me to normalize these counts (I would have to know the number of interactions between each pair that *could have taken place* but did not), the measures from this mapping were not valid representations of relationship strength, but the close resemblance of this map to the map of reported friendship did confirm that students’ reports of who they like to play with were accurate representations of who they actually played with.

Question 3. To answer question three—*What are the differences in how these four students learn English over the year? How do these differences relate to the students’ different social identities in the classroom?*—I first created corpora for the four focal students of all of their recorded English utterances from the first and last three months of school. I then analyzed

these using two methods, each driven by one of the theoretical stances toward language outlined in Chapter One: language as a system and language as social practice. From the first perspective, I used vocabulary and syntactic complexity as measures of students' growth. To measure vocabulary, I counted all of the unique words that each student used, using a web-based lexical complexity analyzer (Ai, 2014; see also Ai and Lu, 2010; Lu, 2012). I also counted the number of utterances containing verbs (Dubasik & Wilcox, 2013). To measure syntactic complexity, I calculated average words per utterance, or Mean Length of Utterance⁴ (MLU), a standard, if basic, measure of complexity (Bulté & Housen, 2012; Dubasik & Wilcox, 2013; Norris & Ortega, 2009). While other measures have been proposed, such as amount of coordination or subordination or even systems that specifically measure the developmental level of child speech (d-level scale, Lu, 2009), none of these measures were sensitive enough for my students' levels of language use. For example, even according to the d-level scale, which is meant for children, all of the focal students would be at level 0.

The same corpora were the basis for an analysis of language as social practice, in which Austin's speech act theory (1975) provided a framework for measuring the relative success of a student's linguistic practices in accomplishing what he aimed to do. It thereby allowed me to compare, across students, not just whether students could produce grammatical utterances, but whether they could produce utterances that were *listened* to. Using Austin's three elements of speech acts—locutionary form, illocutionary force, and perlocutionary effect—as a heuristic, I re-examined each item in the corpus for whether it had a conventionally recognizable form, whether it was actually recognized as the act students intended, and whether an utterance “worked” or had the desired social effect.

The first step in this analysis was to de-identify all of the students' spring utterances and to compile them into one corpus. Then, based on the words alone, I tagged each for my best guess(es) as to what act a student was trying to accomplish. Sometimes, when the grammar was very unconventional, I could not imagine what the student might mean, as in phrases, like “I'm oven” or “Dragon's work.” At other times, the acts could instead have more than one possible option. For instance, “Where's my pencil?” could be a true question or an indirect request and either would be acceptable in the class. To have the best chance of understanding whether a speech act was grammatically correct enough and conventional enough to be easily interpreted in the classroom, it was important that I, rather than an independent rater, assessed the utterances. There were some forms that might be unconventional in the larger world, but which had become conventional in the classroom, like the use of the word “I'm” to mean “I'd like” or “I'd like to” (e.g. “I'm water” or “I'm not go there”!) While not grammatically correct, teachers had come to understand and respond to this form as if it were correct. By the spring, other acts also had

⁴ Actually, mean length of AS-unit, or Analysis of Speech Unit (Foster, Tonkin, & Wigglesworth, 2001). An AS-unit, or Analysis of Speech Unit is “a single speaker's utterance, consisting of an independent clause or a sub clausal unit, together with any subordinate clause(s) associated with either” (365). For example, Padma had a turn at talk, “This is hot and this is hot and this is hot and this is hot and this is hot.” The longest AS-unit in this turn would be 4 words long (“and this is hot”), because clauses coordinated by “and” count as separate AS-units. If Padma had said, “This is hot, but this is cold,” the whole turn would be one AS-unit (7 words), because clauses subordinated by “but” are part of the AS-unit. AS-units are alternative to a T-unit, but more suited for spoken language as it counts sub-clausal units, not just independent clauses. Intonation and pauses help to define boundary markers. Thus, “train,” “I?,” and “this no” all qualify as AS-units, although they would not qualify as T-units.

conventional meanings. For instance, “I done!” and “I’m done!” were almost always used for permission-asking in order to get up from the table, rather than a pure declaration.

The next step was to reexamine each act back in its original context (transcript and video) to analyze what children aimed to do. In every case but one, this was clear from the video, where objects, gaze, and gesture supported my understanding of ongoing activity. If student intent matched any of my guesses, I coded it as having conventional form (=1). If not, I coded it as not having conventional form (0).

Next, I determined whether others recognized the act accordingly. First, did anyone attend to the speaker? Second, did their response indicate that they were able to correctly interpret the act’s intent? For instance, if a student said, “I’m water!,” did anyone look up or respond? Did they respond in a way that indicated having recognized this as a request, such as bringing water, pointing out that the student had yet to finish her milk, or saying, “You’ve had enough.”? If so, I coded the act as (1) for force; if not, as (0).

Finally, if someone responded, was it with the desired response? For instance, while all three of the responses—bringing water, pointing out that the student had yet to finish her milk first, or saying, “You’ve had enough.”—show correctly recognized force, only the first one is the desired effect. If yes it was coded (1), if no (0).

By coding each item in the corpora for form, force, and effect, I was able to ascertain how effective students were at using language to get things done and to understand whether or not this was related to having correct or conventional locutionary form. I then connected these measures, as well as vocabulary and syntax measures, back to my findings on student identity, using examples from discourse analysis to illustrate the students’ varying linguistic power in the classroom.

CHAPTER 3 PARENT AND TEACHER BELIEFS ABOUT LANGUAGE AND LEARNING

Belief in the Body

In a theory of practice, beliefs are not cognitive phenomena or mental states, but a part of the body. Enacted belief, or what Bourdieu also calls “practical belief” or “practical sense,” is built into bodies through social participation, “instilled by the childhood learning that treats the body as a living memory pad...and as a repository for the most precious values” (1990, p. 68). It is practical belief, part of the habitus and formed through experience—both in childhood and later—that gives practices their sense and makes them seem *common sense*. In this chapter, I examine parents’ and teachers’ beliefs about language and language learning, as well as their goals for the students’ year in preschool. I explore how parents’ and teachers’ views are shaped by their histories, and how they now contribute to classroom practice for Ellen and Lucia. I ask: *What are parents’ and teachers’ beliefs about language, language learning, and the purpose of preschool? How do parents’ and teachers’ sociohistorical contexts shape their beliefs? How do these views shape classroom practices?*

Language at the Fore

In interviews with parents from all language backgrounds—English, Turkish, and Nepali—I asked what parents hoped that students would get out of the school year. The results were mostly unsurprising: All parents listed academic goals like learning to write, learning shapes and colors, learning letters, and learning to remember what is taught. They also all listed social and emotional goals like patience, cooperation, listening to teachers, and learning to follow rules and routines. Both groups of parents, of ELLs and not, showed a fairly even balance between these kinds of goals (see Appendix E for table detailing counts). Yet, where the parents of ELLs—the focus of this study—differed from other parents was that they also listed another kind of goal: language. Four of the six parents told me that learning English was the single most important reason for sending their children to preschool and that this was their biggest goal for the year. For the teachers, the ELLs’ language was also always at the front of their thinking. In the fall, when I asked Ellen to tell me about her class, it was the first thing that she mentioned:

This is the first time I have EVER dealt with the language. You know the second language. Having children that absolutely do not speak any English, parents that do not speak any English. It's been a real challenge for me. Like trying to get them- parents to understand things, having the children understand our routines. (Ellen, Interview, November 9, 2012)

Lucia, too, repeatedly referred to their “language barrier.” She cited as a recent example the difficulty of informing parents about a snow day and commented on how this barrier could compound other challenges, like informing parents about behavior issues (Lucia, Interview, November 9, 2012.) Lucia recognized, however, that the barrier was difficult for parents as well.

“We had to have interpreters come,” she explained, “because [the parents] could not speak English. There were no *ands*, *ifs* or *buts*; I thought it was more difficult for [the parents] than it was for me” (Lucia, Interview, June 11, 2013).

Beliefs about Language: Who Should Speak English and Where

Because Lucia recognized that the language barrier was difficult for parents and teachers, she felt that both groups should bear the burden of facilitating communication. When I asked her in the spring what she would change for the next year, she said that the district should translate the parent handbook into Nepali—“Just like in today’s world, you can call anybody, like Verizon, you’ll see everything in English and Spanish. We should provide that too.”—but she also said that parents should have to help to translate for other parents who know less (Lucia, Interview, June 11, 2013). Yet, she also expressed admiration for a few parents who requested my permission forms in English rather than Nepali or Turkish:

We have a couple families who, if I can give an example of your paperwork, who came to say, “We’d like to see it in English.” That said a lot! I took that as, “You know what, we really want to adapt to your environment. Thank you, but let me see it in English so I can learn how to get along better here.” (Lucia, Interview, November 9, 2012)

Thus, while Lucia wanted to support families in their first language, her vision was that they would use the support to transition to English. Her ideal model was not one of functional bilingualism, but one in which the parents’ first language served as training wheels that would eventually be shed on the way to monolingual English use. She saw no possibility of an outcome in which parents or the school developed an intentionally bilingual *modus operandi*. Lucia’s comment also implied that the parents in question, who had asked for paperwork in English, were the exception, not the norm, and that, while the school could do more to facilitate communication, the other parents could do more to learn English.

Parents, too, felt that the newcomers should learn the language of their new country. One of the longtime River Cityer mothers told me,

One thing is, you know, like this is a English-speaking country and um some of [the parents] don't speak English when they come into the classroom and I think that as soon as you walk in the door you should try to speak English. (Interview, February 19, 2013)

Not surprisingly, even parents who themselves relied on translation expressed a similar sentiment. Hande’s mother, through the interpreter, said of her daughter, “Well, I’m really glad that’s she’s learning English, because we live in this country and she needs it” (Interview, February 19, 2013). Padma’s grandmother expressed dismay at not speaking English. When I tried to reassure her by saying, “No, it’s okay- it’s really hard to learn a new language. I mean I can’t speak Nepali (laughing) and I hear the children speak it all day long,” she countered, “It’s okay for you to not know Nepali but I have to know English because everybody talks in English here” (Padma’s Grandmother, Interview, January 30, 2013).

In all of these comments, parents expressed the belief that when you live in a place, you should learn to speak the language, even if in practice, they had not yet done so themselves. Many of these parents were hopeful that by sending their children to Head Start, their children would learn English in ways that they had not. Ellen said that during her home visits before

school started, she asked parents about their goals, and she told me: “Of course the Nepali children's parents said for them to learn English. That's their main goal and it's true, I mean how are they gonna do anything in this school if they don't know English?” (Ellen, Interview, November 16, 2012). Yet, while the parents saw school as the children’s ticket to English, Ellen felt strongly that helping the children learn English should be a job for parents, too. She marveled that even the parents who spoke English well did not help their children at all:

No matter what you would say to the parents, even if you could just have an hour at home where you just used English, I don't think it was happening. Little Monal, you know Dad would come in—he speaks great English!—but he would come in and he'd speak in (1.0) his native tongue. (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013)

Like Lucia, Ellen did not see bilingualism as the aim. For her, time in Nepali meant time taken away from English, so she could not understand why the parents, who claimed English as a priority, would continue speaking Nepali, even at school. Lucia also wondered about this apparent contradiction between parents’ desire for their children to learn English in school and their use of their home languages with their children in the classroom.

Some of the parents have asked us, “Are they speaking English?” But [the parents] have told us and they've showed us even when they're here in the classroom that they speak their own language. I understand that's what they know, but... (Lucia, Interview, November 16, 2012)

These comments reflect a disconnect between parents’ and teachers’ ideas about where language learning should take place and with whom, and they raise the question of what, in general, each adult believed would help or hinder students in their English learning.

Beliefs about Language Learning

The question of what would help the children learn English is one that came up many times in interviews with parents and teachers, both directly—in responses to my questions about this—and implicitly—embedded in responses to other questions. For example, when I asked parents how this school compared to the camp school that children would have gone to in Nepal, one mother answered, “She would learn in Nepali [there] and then it would be difficult later to learn English” (Pooja’s mother, Interview, January 30, 2013), which implied the theory that learning English is easier if you start when you are young. When I collected and coded parents’ and teachers’ explicit and implicit theories, I found that teachers’ ideas in the fall diverged sharply from parents’ ideas.

Parents’ Ideas about Language Learning

For parents, social context, particularly as it related to language, was most important. They thought that students would learn best in an immersive setting where they would get lots of exposure and where they would *have* to use English. And while they said it was important to have a setting that afforded lots of chances to practice, they also saw the child as important to the equation, in terms of his willingness to learn and to work at English. As Monal’s father put it:

If the child wishes to speak in English or wishes to learn [...] he can. So it's HIM. His willingness to learn, it's his interest. But when he becomes in compulsant [in a situation where it is compulsory to use English to communicate], he got to learn, and when he is in such situation that he must speak in English, so voluntarily he's gonna learn that and he's gonna speak. (Monal's Father, Interview, January 30, 2013)

Parents, like Pooja's mother above, also thought that being young would help students learn: "English will be difficult if she were to learn later when she's grown up, but if she starts now then it will be easy" (Anita's Mother, Interview, January 28, 2013). Thus, parents saw contextual factors like immersion and exposure as most important (73% of responses), with individual factors like age and willingness to communicate as also influential (27%).

Teachers' Ideas in the Fall

While teachers agreed in their November interview that context was important and that children needed to have both exposure and chances to practice, these only made up 23% of their responses. They saw willingness to learn as a small part of language growth as well, accounting for 6% of the factors they mentioned. The majority of their ideas about language learning fell into two categories that parents did not discuss at all. The first, accounting for 53% of their ideas, was teacher language use, or strategies for helping the students understand them. Lucia explained, "We look at visuals and we use our hands and we um try to talk slower and we try to go with the basics" (Lucia, Interview, November 16, 2012). Ellen echoed these ideas:

I mean it's really difficult. But definitely visual. And repetition. Visual and repetition. [...] And when you do give them directions, if you're too vague they just don't know what you're doing, so we try very hard to just do the same- say the same thing, say what we mean and say the same thing to them. If we're going to the bathroom, "Let's line up," or, "It's snack time." Just use the same phrases and the same things over and over. (Ellen, Interview, November 16, 2012)

The ideas in this category, therefore, were things that Ellen and Lucia had discovered as survival techniques in the first weeks of school and that they had found to be helpful. Ellen said, for example:

I've been doing that Good Morning song since probably the second week in September. So it's November now and I still have children who don't know it, but then I have those who are picking it up and singing it with me.

That the teachers would focus on classroom language, while parents would not, made sense. The second factor, however (alluded to above in Beliefs About Language) was directly related to parents: Eighteen percent of teachers' comments were about the idea that a family's language practices could help or hinder a child's progress. Lucia, for example, said of one Nepali speaker, "I think that she had trouble understanding us because they probably don't speak English at home" (Lucia, Interview, November 16, 2012). Ellen explained:

There is usually one person in the family that speaks some English and they apparently don't want [the children] to uh get any kind of an accent from them so they don't speak English to them, which I think that- you know you gotta reinforce. If they're only here, what, 5-6 hours four days a week—and an hour of that they're napping!—we're not really talking [much time]. I-I you know I wish that they would (1.0)...and then they're going home and they're speaking Nepali for the whole rest of the weekend! I think that it would be nice if the parents would speak some English to them but you know, that's how it is. That's what I'm told that's how it is so. I think that would help a lot. (Ellen, Interview, November 16, 2012)

And while the teachers clearly felt that parents should speak English with their children, they also felt that it would be helpful for the parents learn speak English in general, whether they spoke to the children or not. Ellen elaborated that if the child heard the parent speaking English to teachers or in stores, s/he might be more interested in speaking it, too. This is akin to a sort of linguistic social referencing—the idea that babies and young children look to their parents to know how to respond to a situation: whether they should cry at an injury, be scared of a dog, or stop at a corner. In the teachers' thinking, children would also look to their parents for cues about language use, so that if parents came into the classroom speaking English, the children would, too.

Understanding The Divergence: A Monolingual Versus Multilingual Habitus

The teachers' beliefs about using English at home are not very surprising. Despite mounting research that shows that fluent and complex use of a first language bootstraps children's learning of a second language, both orally and in literacy development (Bialystok, 2012; Cárdenas-Hagan, Carlson, & Pollard-Durodola, 2007; Cummins, 1979, 2000; Goodrich, Lonigan, & Farver, 2013), the advice to parents to switch to English at home has a long history in the U.S., both from well-meaning teachers and other professionals, like pediatricians, who have not had training in working with multilingual children (Rodriguez, 1983; Tabors, 2008; King and Mackey, 2009). Aside from losing the transferred benefits of a strong first language base, Wong Fillmore (1991b, 1996, 2000) and others have documented serious consequences when children stop developing their first language and replace it with English, like breakdowns in family communication and intergenerational conflict. So what makes teachers like Ellen and Lucia push for parents to use English? And what are the reasons that parents resist, despite their strong desire to have their children speak English?

Teachers reasoning through the habitus. Ellen started learning French in middle school and, as she recounted in Chapter Two, could barely order a hot dog in French by senior her year. Ellen thought that maybe she had just not had enough exposure. She hoped that because her current students were starting early and in an immersion setting, they would not have the same failure that she had had. This was a source of the concern for her:

I know they're gonna pick it up once they start making other friends. It does seem like where they live though, it's- they're just surrounded with their own (2.0) you know, language, and that's IT. So I think it is gonna be a little more difficult for them to learn it. But you know I think they will. I think they will. I hope before they go to kindergarten they'll be speaking. (Ellen, Interview, November 16, 2012)

Thus, while she was happy that her students were starting early, she worried that they would not reach some critical mass of exposure that they needed to really learn English. This tension in her thinking can be seen in this quotation through her frequently shifting epistemic stance—from the certain, “I know,” to uncertain, “it seems like,” to more certain, “I think,” to less certain, “I hope.” Her uncertainty reflects another contradictory experience in her own past—that she herself was exposed from a young age to her grandparents’ Italian and never learned that either. “Growing up, my grandparents spoke Italian and you’d think for all those years of listening to it I would have known...No. I just no.” (Ellen, Interview, November 16, 2012). This statement was echoed—in meaning, structure, and word choice—seven months later in her advice to hypothetical new teachers: “And don’t think they’re gonna learn just because you’re speaking it, that they’re gonna pick it up (snaps) like that. I thought they would. I really thought the kids would” (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013) The parallels between her own counterintuitive experience and that of her students is reflected in the structural parallels of these two comments.

Table 3.1

November (about self)	June (about students)	Summary of Structure
You'd think	And don't (you) think they're gonna learn	Expectation...
for all those years of listening to it	just because you're speaking it	...That input...
I <i>would</i> have known	that they're gonna pick it up (snaps) like that	... <i>Would</i> mean learning...
No. I just, no.	I thought they would. I really thought the kids would.	... But contradictory, actual outcome. Repetition with expansion, for emphasis.

While Ellen was not sure what she needed that she had not gotten, she knew that something in her experience was not enough for her to have really learned French or Italian. She worried that her students were getting a similar “not enough” of something. The solution for her was immersion in as much English as possible. In our spring interview, as we sat in the room across the hall where teachers had placed labels in Nepali around the room, she looked around.

Here! They put up Nepal signs or something. (looks around, then points) [The kids] can't read it anyway, so what's the difference? I can't read it, they can't read it, so why don't we just teach them the American one?! That's what the parents want them to learn anyway. To me labeling things in Nepal makes no sense and I didn't do it. I'm doing English. I mean when I went to every house [and asked], "What do you want them to get out of this year?" [The parents said,] "Learn English." Every single one. So I'm speaking English. I'm putting things in English. Everything is English. (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013)

Ellen’s task, in her eyes, was to make sure students got as much English as possible under her watch, and for her, this logically included pushing for parents to speak English at home.

Objectively, Lucia had a strikingly similar language experience with her father to Ellen’s experience with her grandparents. Lucia’s father was Italian, he spoke Italian better than English, she was sometimes in immersive situations where only Italian was spoken around her, but she never really learned Italian other than a few phrases. Yet, Lucia’s stance toward these facts was

quite different from Ellen's. The way that her father spoke ("a DEEP accent") was okay with her, she never minded putting in the work to understand him, she was not bothered by being surrounded by a language she did not understand, she was not ashamed at only having learned some phrases in Italian, and saw the Italian language as closely tied to its culture. These phenomenological experiences were part of Lucia's view that communication with parents was a two-way street, not just the burden of the person with "broken language," and that language was tied to history and beliefs ("I don't want to infringe on your beliefs. My language is important to me, yours is important to you, and I want to tell you, I respect that" (Interview, November 16, 2012)). Yet she had seen her father work hard to speak English with his family, just as he worked hard to make a better life for them. This contributed to Lucia's view that hard work and practice were the keys to learning language, or anything else for that matter:

I see their process of learning English um a work in progress. You know like anything like playing an instrument like riding a bike and you practice you get better and better. You wanna learn how to swim go swimming, you wanna learn how to dance go dancing. You know. You wanna get better at something- if I wanted to learn their language I better practice it, I better start speaking it, I better talk to somebody that speaks it. You know. I gotta talk the talk and walk the walk. [...] If you put your mind to it and you work real hard there's nothing you can't do. It's not easy but it's there for you. You know, but you gotta work at it. (Lucia, Interview, November 16, 2012)

For Lucia then, parents speaking English versus Nepali at home was not just a question of exposure, but one of modeling a willingness to learn and to adapt to life in America, as in the example of the parent asking for the form in English.

The teachers' wish to see parents speaking English with the children was more than concern for exposure and role-modeling, though. In a theory of practice, where belief is part of the habitus, Ellen and Lucia's thinking might stem from what Bourdieu called *doxa*—a collective sense for what is reasonable and appropriate, which comes from having habitus formed in similar conditions. Ellen and Lucia, both children/grandchildren of immigrants, had grown up with the ideal of the melting pot: Their parents/grandparents wanted better for them and better meant English and assimilation. In a few generations, both of their families had seen a shift from being part of the Italian race in the eyes of their country to being unmarked white Americans, a phenomenon experienced by millions of Europeans across the U.S. For Ellen and Lucia, then, assimilation was the model for successful immigration and they saw this as a potential outcome for the families in their class. The teachers were impressed with the drive of refugee families, who showed up at school on snow days and had alphabet posters at home and who expressed wanting a good education for their children. For the teachers, it seemed like common sense to also want English for them, even at the expense of their first language. In Ellen and Lucia's minds, the families were in River City for good and to become American. They did not consider that River City could be a temporary home⁵ or that "melting" was not the families' goal.

⁵ In my work with the community, for example, I met two men in their early twenties who were learning English and working as truck drivers in order to save enough money to return to Nepal as residents rather than refugees and to open a tour company for Americans visiting the country.

Parents reasoning through the habitus. The parents also drew on their own experiences in thinking about their children’s language learning. They hoped that learning English would help their children avoid the discomfort that many of them had experienced around language. Padma’s grandmother, for example, described her hopes for Padma in relation to her own linguistic shame: “I hope the children they can understand people, that they can talk with people. I feel bad that I need an interpreter to talk” (Interview, January 30, 2013). Anita and Pooja’s mothers both talked about how difficult it was for them to learn English now and that they hoped it would be easier for their young children. Of the six ELL parents, the only two that did *not* say that learning English was the top goal for their children were the two who carried out their interview in English.

Yet, these parents’ own lived experiences—and not research on bilingualism—were also what made them resist the teachers’ advice to speak English at home. As some of the parents expressed to Ellen, they did not want students to learn “bad” English from them. One father said to me, as he expressed that he wanted his son to learn English at school, “Actually I too can't speak American English. I don't have pronunciation like the people of America. They speak very politely. (shaking head) I hate to speak like this (points to self)” (Prakesh’s Father, Interview, January 28, 2013). For the teachers, English was a language that could be learned anywhere, but for the parents, good and “polite” English was not something that students could learn from them. It would have to come from school.

A second reason for continuing to speak Nepali at home was one that researchers would agree with: maintaining their home language. For many parents, family and community were tightly connected to the “mother” tongue. Said Monal’s father:

The native tongue, he can learn at home with his parents, with his relative, with his friend cause he's in- affiliated with the mother tongue, the language he speaks at home or at his community, cause many of his friends speak around and his parents speak and his relatives speak. (Interview, January 30, 2013)

Pooja’s mother said that she would even consider sending Pooja to bilingual school at some point, if there were one, because, as she told me, “I’m scared that my child will forget Nepali” (Interview, January 28, 2013). Other parents expressed that it is just better to know more languages. When I asked the mother of Hande, the only Turkish speaker in the class, how she felt about having so many Nepali speakers with her daughter, she said, “She’s fine - that’s no problem. She might end up knowing those languages and that’s no problem (laughing)” and went on to frame this in terms of her own language loss:

I’m really glad that [Hande]’s learning English because we live in this country and she needs it, but I was born in Uzbekistan, studying there up until grade three, and I knew the local languages. Now I can understand, but I do not speak. (shrugs) So if my daughter speaks some other languages, that’s better. (Hande’s mother, Interview, February 19, 2013)

The parents, therefore, had both practical and ideological reasons for not speaking English at home. Yet, they also did not share the melting pot *doxa* that, for Ellen and Lucia, made assimilation (and English only) the sensible goal. The Nepali parents sent their children to school with red rice on their foreheads for Diwali and insisted that they not eat beef (or in Hande’s case,

pork), despite Lucia’s attempts to convince them to take a “when in Rome” stance on this. The parents instead hoped to raise children who were tied to their community—in part through language—and who also spoke good, American English. Their goals were additive ones, rather than goals of replacement.

Spring: Teachers’ Changing Ideas

By spring, Ellen and Lucia had begun to focus less on the language of the adults in their students’ lives and more on the social and linguistic context of the classroom, including peer interaction. Table 3.2 shows these shifts, with the number of responses, as coded from teacher and parent interviews, for each category shown in parentheses (n) and the corresponding percentage shown before it.

Table 3.2

	Language Context	Child Factors	Teacher Strategies	Family Language Use		Total n
Parents of ELLs	73% (11)	27% (4)	-	-		15
Teachers Fall	23% (4)	6% (1)	53% (9)	18% (3)		17
Teachers Spring	60% (15)	20% (5)	12% (3)	8% (2)		25

The reduced focus on teacher strategies accompanied changes in the classroom across the year: routines were now well-established and the classroom was running smoothly. By the end of the year, students understood (if not always listened to) directions and requests, and the visual aids that Ellen and Lucia had made mostly sat on the shelf.

As the year progressed, family language also became less significant, and teachers became more worried about the quantity of peer English input their students were getting. Lucia now named things like “being outgoing” and “talking with English speakers,” although she herself did not feel that her ideas had changed across the year. Ellen, however, by our June interview, was seriously questioning her own theories, based on what she had been observing in her class. One catalyst for this was that the differences in parent English that she had thought to be significant in the fall did not correspond to the learning differences she now saw in the classroom. In our spring interview, she reflected aloud about this. Her shifting thinking is marked in brackets/bold:

I think a factor which is *very* strange with Kritika is that her mother speaks NONE, but yet she made a lot of progress in the classroom with [English]. And then, Monal whose dad speaks excellent English hardly made any you know. Dinesh, Dinesh’s dad speaks excellent English. Maiya’s mother and father speak nice English. Sreya::? Mmm, they're so so. Prakesh? Dad's ok, mom is not. So I don't know. **[Questions family factors]** I think the ones who are more outgoing, like Kritika and Dinesh, and even Maiya seemed to make more progress. **[Suggests child factors]** Maybe it's because they spoke to the—you'll have to look back and see—did they speak to the English children more? Did they play with the English children more? You know what I'm saying? Like who did Kelsey [English speaker] play with besides Tommy and Luke and Joey and Caleb [other English

speakers]? Like do you see her in the videos playing with- I don't really recall her playing with any of [the ELLs] [**Suggests social context factors**] (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013)

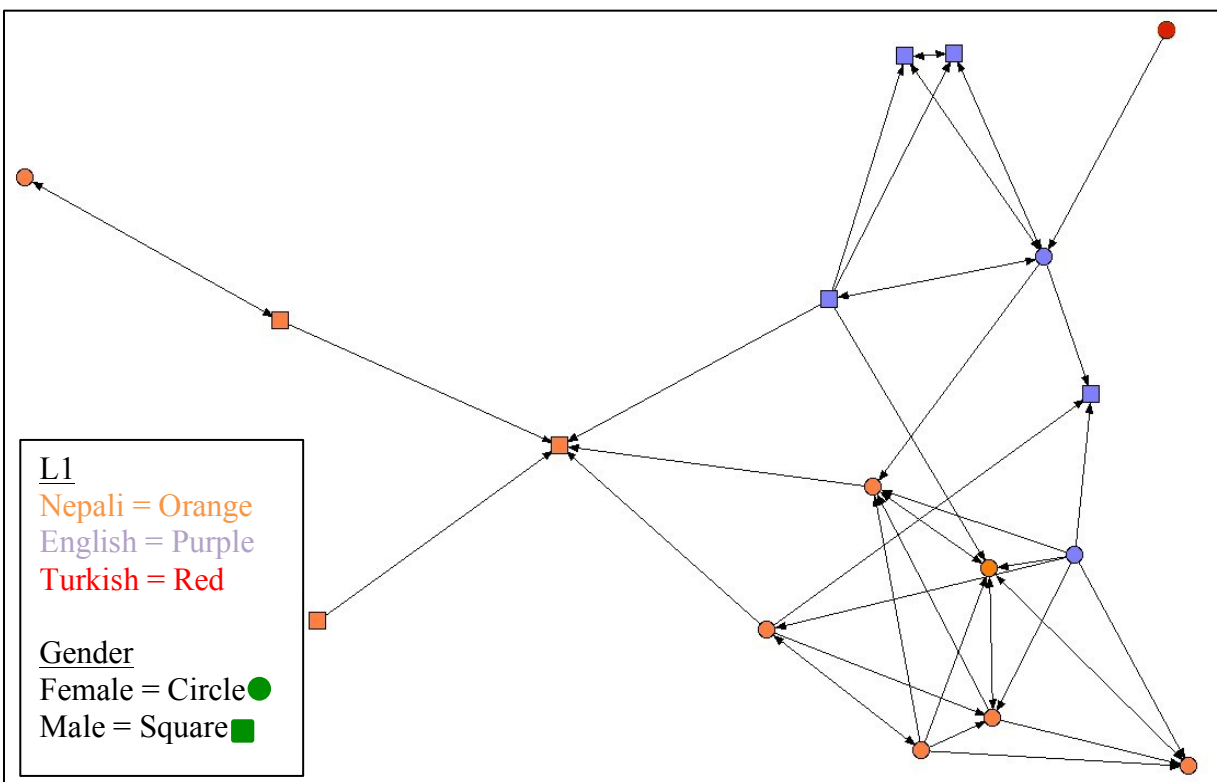
In this passage, Ellen noted that her fall hypothesis about parent language did not have a clear relationship with what, by spring, she saw as language outcomes in the classroom. She then speculated that personality might have been a factor instead, in that it might have influenced who interacted with whom, and thus how much exposure to English the ELLs would have had. She wondered at the end if Kelsey, an older English speaker whom the teachers saw as academically and verbally mature and a beneficial influence on other students, could have really been beneficial to the ELLs if she never interacted with them. This harkens back to a concern that Ellen had expressed all year: the balance of students in the class.

English Acquisition Versus Linguistic Suffocation: A Balancing Act

Even at the beginning of the year, Ellen had worried about having so many ELLs, not because she was worried about managing the class, but because as she put it, “There's not enough English speakers to go around!” (Ellen, Interview, November 16, 2012). By the end of the year, in her reflections on students’ language growth, she concluded that the high concentration of Nepali speakers was likely an important factor, if not the most important factor, in students’ language outcomes:

Were they using as much [English] as I would have liked them to be using? No. And that's because there were so many of them in the classroom. No matter when we would sit down, if there were two or three of them together, they would start speaking in Nepal. And I'd say to them “Speak English! Try to speak English!” and they just- just would not or could not do it, I don't know which. I just think I think that it helped them to feel comfortable having so many in there. You know. Because I think that it would have been scary for a lot of them: You’re in a country you don't speak English, there's nobody, there's nobody that- but, I just think we had - I think we had more than for them to really have learned English well. (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013)

In the social network mapping of the class created from student interviews, it is possible to see the division to which Ellen referred:



In this graph, orange nodes represent Nepali speakers, purple are English speakers, and red is the Turkish speaker. Circles stand for female students; squares are male. Arrows toward a node means a peer cited that student as a friend; arrows away mean the student cited another peer as a friend. Thus, the class is clustered in three primary ways: Nepali-speaking girls are mainly in the lower right corner; Nepali-speaking males are mainly in the middle; and the English-speaking students—both male and female—are in the upper right, as is Hande, the Turkish-speaking student. The grouping of Nepali-speaking versus English-speaking students is clear.

Yet, to return to Ellen’s comment above, despite her growing certainty that the make-up of the class was a barrier to English learning, she also recognized that having many Nepali speakers might have helped her ELLs (except, of course, for Hande) to adjust to school. This tension between having conditions that are ideal for language learning and having conditions that are socially comfortable is one that some of the parents also expressed. In interviews with ELLs’ parents, I asked whether they were happy that there were so many Nepali speakers in the class with their children or whether they would have preferred a class of all English speakers. Prakesh’s father and Pooja’s mother answered that they would indeed prefer not to have other Nepali speakers, as Pooja’s mother put it, so “that way she won’t be distracted speaking Nepali” (Interview, January 28, 2013). Hande’s mother (the Turkish speaker) was the only parent of an ELL who said the class was fine as it was and that it was “no problem” if she learned some Nepali (Interview, February 19, 2013).

The remaining three parents looked to balance the tension between having many opportunities for language learning (i.e., less Nepali speakers) and many opportunities for friendship and social support (i.e., more Nepali speakers). Padma’s grandmother suggested: “One, two Nepali would be better because she also doesn’t know totally English, so maybe some

friends would be better” (Interview, January 30, 2013). Anita’s mother also suggested one or two as the ideal number. Monal’s father sighed deeply when I asked him this question:

It doesn't matter, doesn't matter. Cause at least there are one or two staff to guide them who speak in English all the time. So the language he gets, the English speech he gets from the teacher is enough I feel in that age. Cause at least he's gonna learn some kind of command, some kind of vocabulary, some kind of description from the teacher. It's enough for the kid of like 3-4 years. (Monal’s Father, Interview, January 30, 2013)

His response implied that while his son might learn more with fewer Nepali speakers, for a three- or four-year-old, the initial exposure provided by the teachers was enough. Monal’s father continued, outlining what he saw as the hazards of having only English speakers:

Cause always being with English-speaking children may make him confused sometime or might make him depressed some time. But at least if he learns slowly, that doesn't make him feel shocked. I mean, linguistic suffocation. How like the woman who's sitting here⁶ might feel when we speak. We are speaking here and if she is sitting there how she would feel? Monal might feel afraid or discouraged to go to school. I think there is another term like “inferiority complex,” like as if they feel like inferior in the mass. So, if they are unable to communicate, at least if there are some students speaking the same language, it may avoid inferiority complex. Cause if he can't merge with the English speakers at that time, at least he can communicate with the Nepali-speaking children. (Monal’s Father, Interview, January 30, 2013)

Again, reasoning through their own experiences with a close-knit community, both in exile in Nepal and now in River City, all of the Nepali-speaking parents saw Nepali-speaking peers as a support system and as built-in friendship for their children, although possibly also a hindrance to English learning. As Monal’s father said, “It makes us as if we are in our original land cause all of our kins, relatives, friends, similar cultured people, are here so we feel it as if we are born here (smiles)” (Interview, January 30, 2013). Monal’s father’s term, linguistic suffocation, reflects these personal and deeply emotional experiences. When I told him I liked the term and asked if he had invented it, he apologized: “That's- that's- yeah my own term, this is. WE feel linguistic suffocation, so like in that situation, I'm using this linguistic suffocation, sorry about that, it's not the standard” (Interview, January 30, 2013). *We* feel, he said. Enough to coin a (powerfully evocative) term for the feeling. Thus, Monal’s father poignantly expressed the same tension that Ellen and others had touched on: That a Nepali community could be both a barrier to learning English at the same time that it meant support and comfort; and that the conditions that might be best for linguistic goals might not be the conditions that were best for social-emotional goals. While parents and teachers saw this as a general hypothesis, as I will show in Chapters Four and Five, this tension became particularly significant for two of the focal students.

⁶ Monal’s father and I were speaking in English and Padma’s grandmother, who was sitting by the door waiting to be interviewed, could not understand us.

Teaching and Learning through the Habitus

The chapter has, to this point, outlined teachers' and parents' beliefs about what would help or hinder students in their language learning. I showed how, by the end of the year, the teachers' views were more aligned with parents' and that everyone recognized a tension between social conditions that might best support language learning and those that would be socially comfortable for students. I also discussed how teachers and parents beliefs were, as Bourdieu wrote, part of their habitus and formed through their own experiences, which they then used to understand their new context. For Ellen and Lucia, this also meant reconciling some tensions between long-held beliefs about language and their new experiences in this classroom. The remainder of this chapter will discuss how teachers' histories also shaped their views on teaching and learning in general. It will also address how their views were put into practice in their teaching.

History into Teaching Practices

In the fall, when the teachers listed their goals for the year, they did not exhibit the same balance between academic and social-emotional goals that the parents did. While both mentioned language as a goal and each named some academic or social goals, Ellen's goals for students were overwhelmingly academic—letters and numbers, writing their names, holding a pencil correctly—while Lucia's were predominantly social—learning patience, gaining confidence, sharing, following routines, and learning to love learning. Table 3.3 shows the percentage (and raw count) of their goals for the year, from the fall interview.

Table 3.3

	Academic Skills %(n)	Social/ Emotional %(n)	Language Development %(n)		Total n
Ellen	70% (7)	20% (2)	10% (1)		10
Lucia	5% (1)	90% (17)	5% (1)		19

These differences can be understood through their histories.

Ellen's academic goals. Ellen had come to teaching as a vocation, telling me that she had always wanted to be a teacher, even as a little girl playing with a chalkboard in the basement. She had become a first grade teacher in Catholic schools and now, in PreK, her identification as a (capital T) Teacher, complete with chalk, manifested in her primarily academic goals and concerns for the year:

Yeah well for the Nepali children getting them to speak English. (5.0) And being able to write their names um being able to know the alph- I mean I have to obviously I mean I would like them to at least be able to learn the alphabet, you know and not just ABC song, KNOW mixed up that's a B, that's a B, upper and lowercase. And maybe some numbers. Um the colors, the shapes, the usual things that you would teach any preschooler but that's what I would like them to know by the time they go to kindergarten. (Ellen, Interview, November 16, 2012)

Throughout the day, Ellen's activities were organized with these goals in mind. Each week, she focused on a letter and a theme. During circle time, she would teach the children the letter, writing it on the board and then using words that began with its sound. On the day that they discussed "C," for example, they voted on their favorite type of cookie. Then, Ellen generally read a book that addressed the theme for the week: autumn, community helpers, dinosaurs, farms. Some days, rather than reading, Ellen used the theme to accomplish other goals. During the autumn-themed week, for example, the class grouped leaves first by size then by color. Later each day, during free play time, Ellen then worked one-on-one with each student on a small project that was often related to the letter or the theme—a leaf collage, a kite for "K," a picture of a cookie. Sometimes, she instead worked through the 86-point assessment that she had to carry out with each student three times per year. During nap time, Ellen also worked on writing up these assessments or other paperwork. Ellen felt, however, that Head Start did not allow her to be academic *enough*:

I mean when I taught [first grade], I had an actual CURRICULUM, so that's in the back of my mind and I know we're supposed to get them kindergarten ready. So- and a lot of times I don't quite understand HOW they want us to get them kindergarten ready when we can't do a lot of the things that I would want to do. Like I can't do any worksheets, I can't do any coloring sheets, I can't- that's- they're just supposed to be creative and let them just do kind of, let them just do- if they want to make the dinosaur purple, then they can make the dinosaur purple. And that goes against like- my brain doesn't want to think that way. (laughing) (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013)

Ellen's expectations of what teaching and learning looked like, from as far back as her childhood games at the chalkboard, clashed with Head Start's expectations of a play-based curriculum.

So a lot of times, when I did some of my projects, I shouldn't have cut the Y's for them, they should have cut them themselves. But I'm like, well, if it doesn't look like a Y then when they put it up on their refrigerator how are they going to know it's a Y??? But like I said, I would have loved to do some worksheets with them and learn how to follow directions on a worksheet, turning the pages and taking out your pencil and just so many things that when they get to school that they have to do... [I feel that it's very hard to prepare them for kindergarten when you can't do a lot of certain things. The philosophy's a little different with Head Start so I don't know. I would have liked to do more actual school stuff. (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013)

Ellen's teacherly habitus—developed in her own experiences as a student, then as a Catholic school first grade teacher—was not always aligned with the field of Head Start, resulting in a struggle for Ellen to reconcile the two. For Ellen, things like nap time and tooth brushing, both mandated by Head Start, were wastes of time from an academic perspective:

I think that the day is too long. I would rather have two classes and they go home half day. Because really, after lunch, they're napping, they're eating and they're doing some puzzles or something. There's no time to really get started on something else." (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013)

Rather than think of getting children to sleep or helping them eat lunch as teaching or “actual school stuff,” she instead characterized them as things that she understood through her experiences as a grandparent. “I’m used to more 5- and 6-year-olds. But I mean, I have grandchildren so I know. I mean (laughing) a lot of it is common sense” (Ellen, Interview, November 16, 2012.) Thus, Ellen was able to manage her job through a combination of practices that drew on her histories of teaching and of parenting/grandparenting.

Lucia’s social goals. For Lucia, on the other hand, who had developed a professional habitus in day cares and then in working with families, caring for children was not contradictory with teaching, but was central to it. She once explained to me that you never know which children brush their teeth at home, have healthy food, or a quiet place to rest and that it was great that Head Start makes sure kids have those things. Part of Lucia’s job as assistant teacher, since there was no cafeteria in the school, was to prepare breakfast, lunch, and snack. Thus, while Ellen spent the nap hour preparing lessons or doing paperwork, Lucia spent the time preparing food or cleaning up. And while Ellen would sometimes eat with the children and sometimes not, Lucia always did. She saw mealtime as a key learning time for students:

I gotta teach em patience and I think it's a good thing to learn. You know. Instant gratification isn't always so good. You know, you're ALL gonna eat at the same time. They come in and we serve breakfast and “come on” and “I want you to eat, I want you to have breakfast.” I like that part of our routine. (Lucia, Interview, November 16, 2012)

Her idea of kindergarten readiness also looked very different from Ellen’s:

I think [patience and sharing] are very much absolutely, what helps a child get ready for kindergarten, 3rd grade, 4th grade, college! I can’t stress enough how much social/emotional outweighs everything else. So when I talk to, I went to Rashmi’s house and her mother told me, “She is so smart.” Yes, she is, but we want to help her stay focused. (Lucia, Interview, November 16, 2012)

Lucia also spent a lot of time thinking about parents. She worried about whether parents understood policies, whether they had transportation, if they missed where they were from. She saw the monthly parent-child activity and parent informational meeting not as add-ons, but as an important part of her job, mentioning it in the interview as one of her favorite parts of the program:

Once a month, we have this kind of parent meeting and you know quickly talk about a little bit of everything. “Let me give you a little fresh fruit and water, let's do a little-we'll read a story to you, we'll do a little craft” and then we whisk the parents away to talk about, say, car safety or last month, it was more you know different opportunities with second-hand stores and different things in your community, where you can go to food banks or whatever and all these other places that are there for you. You know services, communities. (Lucia, Interview, November 16, 2012)

In the classroom, Lucia’s goals produced different kinds of practices. At the beginning and end of the day, she sat with children while they played on the rug, reminding them to share and be

good friends, asking them what they were making or doing, telling them that they looked nice that day. Even as she prepared food, she listened in at the art table, facilitated turn-taking, and asked students what they were working on.

Both teachers mentioned how lucky they felt that they got along so well. One reason for this feeling may have been that neither teacher's practices or goals interfered with the other's, precisely because of what each was predisposed to worry about. Interestingly, both teachers saw students' bodily behavior as an important indicator of success. As they read, for example, they expected children to sit quietly, legs crossed, with their hands in their laps and not to comment without raising their hands or waiting for her to ask a question. For Lucia, these postures and behaviors showed self-control and patience; for Ellen, they meant that students were listening and learning. Many of the teachers' indicators for success—whether academic or social—were, in essence, bodily ones: Holding the pencil correctly, walking in a line, sitting at the right time, speaking at the right time, speaking in the right language. Bourdieu (2000) wrote that, “we learn bodily” (p. 141); in preK, students also demonstrated competence bodily.

History into Classroom Language Policy

The teachers' academic and social goals intersected with their beliefs about language in their reactions to students' classroom language use. Both teachers saw speaking English in the classroom as important to the ELLs' growth, since this meant that children were practicing (important to Lucia) and this also meant increased exposure (important to Ellen). The teachers often reminded the children to use English, as in this example from March:

Outside on the playground, Pooja was hanging from the jungle gym. Someone called to her from across the playground and she yelled back a long sentence in Nepali. Lucia approached her and reminded her, “English Pooja, English!” to which Pooja said, “Hello?” Lucia smiled and gave her an enthusiastic thumbs up. “That’s better!” (Field notes, March 11, 2013)

Often, these reminders reflected the teachers' own priorities for students. Ellen frequently linked English learning to kindergarten readiness:

At lunch, Kritika was talking animatedly to Pooja, telling what seemed to be a long story. As Ellen passed by to get more milk, she said, “Kritika, speak English to her. She’s going to Kindergarten next year.” Then, to the whole table, she added, “English, let’s speak English.” (Field notes, January 14, 2013)

Lucia, on the other hand, regularly emphasized English as the language of good classroom conduct.

The children are playing on the rug after breakfast. Lucia is with them. Maiya, a younger Nepali speaker who joined the class mid-year, grabs a toy from Joey, an older, monolingual English speaker. “Heeeeeeeey!” Joey cries angrily. “It’s ok,” Lucia soothes him. “She doesn’t speak English too good yet, so we’re gonna help her. Say, ‘Here Maiya, let’s share.’ Yeah, we’re gonna help her learn English, ok?” (Video, March 3, 2013).

A group of Nepali speakers are arguing about blocks. Lucia approaches and says gently. "Pooja, English. Sh:::are" (Field Notes, April 15, 2013).

These examples link the development of English with the development of social skills, particularly sharing. In the first, Lucia implied that not knowing one (English) is a cause for not knowing the other (sharing) and that helping a student to learn one will help her to learn the other. In the second example, Lucia linked English and sharing as related solutions for a fight over blocks and connected them as the two conditions necessary for successful play.

Although the teachers encouraged children to speak English in their classroom—as Lucia put it, “We only speak English here” (Lucia, Interview, November 16, 2012)—the reality was that the Nepali speakers spoke a lot of Nepali together. While Ellen and Lucia both reminded children to use English, each also had other reactions to hearing Nepali, which were very different. Ellen, particularly after a long stretch of talk, could be heard to exclaim, “What are you saying?” to no one in particular. Once, she turned to me and said, “Lotta jabbering goin on over here. I wanna listen, but (shrugs)” (Field notes, October 29, 2012). On another occasion, Ellen passed by the sand table where Kritika, Pooja, and Padma were talking and I was taking notes. As she walked by she said, “Boy they are really jabbering away today! (.) What are you saying? (laughs)” (November 5, 2012). Ellen’s term, “jabbering,” made her rhetorical question of “What are you saying?” seem as though she politely assumed that they meant something that made sense, but she knew that, like babies and dogs, they were only producing nonsensical noise. Lucia, on the other hand, seemed comfortable on the sidelines of Nepali conversation. Each day as she prepared lunch, she listened in to the talk at the art table nearby. Sometimes, she would stop to ask the children what they had said. One winter day, Pooja was enthusiastically explaining something to her friends:

Lucia: Pooja, what does that mean? What were you saying?

Pooja: I say snowman!

Lucia: Snowman?

Pooja: One big ball, then one other big ball, then one small ball (gesturing stacking motion with her hands).

Lucia: Oh making a snowman. Alright!
(Video, February 25, 2013).

Another time, Kritika was talking to her friends about something she drew.

Kritika: (speaking Nepali)

Lucia: What does that mean Kritika?

Kritika: Sun!

Lucia: Huh? song?

Kritika: Sunnn!

Lucia: Sauna?

Kritika: Sun (points up)

Lucia: Oh sun! How do you say sun in Nepali? (starts singing “Mister Sun”)
(Video, April 2, 2013.)

By enquiring about the conversation, Lucia was able to extend it, connecting it to a song that the children knew, and through her questions, created a chance for Kritika to use English in new ways.

Officially, the classroom language policy was an English-only policy, of which the teachers reminded students through comments that linked English to academic and social aims. In practice, however, Ellen and Lucia both allowed a great deal of Nepali speaking in the classroom—Ellen, with a cautious, and perhaps suspicious, tolerance; Lucia, with curiosity and a desire to see students practice English, too. In the next chapters, Ellen and Lucia's understanding of English as intertwined with academic and social progress will become important as I look to how four students' social identities also took shape within the classroom and how their identities related to their English learning.

CHAPTER 4

STUDENT IDENTITY ACROSS THE YEAR: POSITIONING WITHIN THE SOCIAL FIELD OF THE CLASSROOM

This chapter explores the trajectory of students' social identities in the classroom across the year. It looks at the kinds of social positioning that happened for each student, as well as at her location in the class social network. The chapter moves from the adults and the ways that they shaped students' social contexts to the experiences of four focal students within the classroom. All four students—Kritika, Padma, Rashmi, and Hande—were female, were four years old, and were born in the U.S. to parents who had arrived as refugees. Each spoke a language other than English at home and none had been to school or daycare before their year in this classroom. Yet, despite being quite similar on paper, once they began school, their paths diverged toward very different social experiences and identities. This chapter asks: *Through positioning within classroom practice, how do the identities of four focal students take shape across the year?*

I briefly summarize the findings here, before addressing each student in turn:

1. Kritika had a consistently positive identity, was central in the classroom social network, and was seen as competent and authoritative, both socially and academically.
2. Padma had a positive social identity, but one that was less stable than Kritika's, and while she had many connections in the class network, but she was not central to the classroom. She was seen as competent, but not authoritative in social and academic matters.
3. Rashmi had a consistently negative classroom identity and remained peripheral in the classroom throughout the year.
4. Finally, Hande's identity was variable and contradictory, but ended as negative and remained peripheral.

The Students

Kritika Across the Year



Meet Kritika. When I first encountered her in September, Kritika had just turned four. She spoke Nepali at home and in the community around her, though she watched some TV in English and could sing the first few lines of a popular South Asian version of the ABC song (“A is for Apple, B is for Ball,” example at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6agqpwXexAo>). Kritika's round face wore a serious expression and her height and posture gave her an air of someone older than just four, but the twinkle in her big brown eyes hinted at a mischievous streak. While other children cried as their parents left them at school during that first month, Kritika was

stoic. I later learned that unlike the other Nepali children, who often lived with or near many relatives, Kritika lived alone with her mother, who worked long hours, and that the people who brought her to school were friends and neighbors. Thus, Kritika had already said her goodbyes to her mother earlier in the morning. From the beginning of the year, Kritika's wide eyes took in everything. She quickly learned how to assume a listening posture during circle time, when to speak or be quiet, and how to perform the motion and then the words of the daily Good Morning song. She was always watching other students and gauging teachers' reactions. Just a few weeks into the year, she closely followed classroom procedures and routines and even enforced them among her less watchful Nepali-speaking peers. In her reminders of when to wash their hands and her admonitions to remember to take their nametags with them, she was positioning herself as competent and knowing with regard to classroom comportment.

Early in the fall, when Kritika and her classmates were just beginning to understand English, their teachers allowed them more leeway in their behavior than the English speakers. The teachers emphasized that the English speakers, as speakers of the classroom language, should be able to follow rules, telling them things like: "Come on, you understand me." Yet, as early as October, Kritika's teachers held expectations for her that were different from the other ELLs:

The teachers have tried to curb the practice [that had developed over the first month of school] of students jumping up and running to the middle of the circle when their name is called in the Good Morning song. Out of the first several students to be called, each of the Nepali speakers gets up anyway. Ellen, who seems tired this morning, sighs and shakes her head, laughing slightly, but ignoring it for today. But, when Kritika stands up, she gestures for her to sit down, shaking her head emphatically. "No. Kritika, you know better." (Field notes, October 22, 2012)

These kinds of interactions further positioned Kritika as a rule-knower (if temporary forgetter), distinct from the other English learners and more like the English speakers in the class. By mid-November, her teachers also positioned her as a knower, a helper, and a sweet, socially competent child in interviews:

And there's uh Kritika, who's also very loving. She likes to sing me happy birthday songs, she likes to walk over and give me a kiss on the cheek like nobody else. She too um is actually from Nepal and um (4.0) kinda helps me with these other kids a little bit to redirect them cause she- she's pretty much on task. U:::m I would guess her only real weakness like other children who are from other countries is their language barrier. And first and foremost she is very, very wonderful and pretty and very you know easy to get along with, so she's really at the top of her class." (Teacher Lucia, Interview, November 16, 2012)

Yet, Kritika was not all compliance and quiet and folded hands. As a person who knew the rules and was a careful observer, she also was adept at subverting them, like using the teacher's turned back to tickle a friend, or using the rules as a cover, as when she carried her name tag with her as she wandered the room, so that it looked as if she was simply switching play areas. In a new classroom where the teachers were swimming in paperwork, in food

preparation, and in working on individual projects with students, attention was only given to more obvious misbehaviors and Kritika had plenty of chances to capitalize on these tactics.

The space that the teachers allowed the children during play times also meant that rules were broken and disputes arose out of the view of the teachers. While for the English speakers, this meant that plenty of tattling occurred, it was nearly impossible at the start of the year for English learners to recount transgressions in English to their busy teachers, especially if they took place out of sight and could not be conveyed by pointing. Instead, the Nepali speakers often turned to Kritika, the rule-knower and enforcer, to whom they could recount incidents in their first language. Across the year, even once students could tattle to teachers, Kritika was still called to hear reports of transgressions, to intervene, and to judge. Each request further solidified Kritika's position as a classroom authority figure and a little mother or teacher.

Kritika was also quick to intervene when she saw something that she thought was unfair, regardless of who was involved. In the following transcript, Kritika interrupted a conflict between two of her friends and chastised her best friend, Padma, for taking the other child's doll.

Housekeeping area, January 14, 2013



1:53 Padma puts her baby doll in my lap and walks away.



2:01 Pooja also gives me a doll to hold.



2:55 Pooja returns. She and I talk about how I have so many babies. Rashmi presents us with her baby and adds her to my lap.



3:02 We talk about what the babies' names are ("Pooja" and "Bapu Bapu").



3:18 I point to the baby Padma had given me @ 1:53' and ask its name



3:24 Padma, denies ownership of that baby, saying it's Pooja's.



3:30 Pooja corrects her and pulls Padma's hand away from the disputed baby.



3:35 Padma leans in, putting her hands on Pooja's doll and re-claims/ re-names it.



3:40 "No! Pooja! It's my doll!"
Padma and Pooja both pull on the doll.



3:48 "Come o::::n ...this is my ba::::by!"
Pooja whines as Padma yanks the baby away.



4:10 Pooja makes another plea. Kritika notices the conflict.



4:13 Padma pulls the baby to her chest.



Yo mero nani ho!

4:15 Pooja sees Kritika watching and appeals to her. "It's my baby!"



4:16 Kritika dives in and separates Padma from Pooja and her doll.



Timro nani yo!

4:18 "That's your doll!," pointing.



Aghi tyaha rakheki thiyau!

4:20 "Earlier you put it"



4:21 right there!"



4:23 "I saw- I was noticing it!"



Kina khoseko usko nani?

4:24 "Why did you snatch her doll?"



Malai yesto nani manpardaina kalo
malai YESTO

4:26 "I don't like the black baby" (baby in researcher's arms) "I like THIS" (Pooja's baby)



4:27 “I will hold her, I will hold!” reaches for the baby.



4:28 Kritika pushes Padma back.



4:28 Kritika then steps forward.



4:30 She positions herself physically between Pooja (with the baby) and Padma.

As I watched this interaction, unconsciously holding the unwanted doll protectively to my chest, I only knew the word “doll” (*nanni*), yet, I understood clearly what was happening here and could see that Kritika’s scolding had worked. Part of what made it so effective—and so recognizable as the act of scolding by a non-Nepali-speaking observer—was her coordination of multiple semiotic means: tone, facial expression, body positions, and gestures. The alignment of multiple modes to produce the same meaning, or what Royce (2007) called “intersemiotic complementarity,” often made Kritika’s speech quite powerful.

A few months into the year, Kritika’s Nepali-speaking peers also began to ask her for help in mediating interactions in English. In the following transcript, Hande (L1=Turkish) and Prakesh (L1=Nepali) had been playing together at the sand table and having a good time making “izecream” (ice cream) at the “restra” (restaurant) when Rashmi wanted to join.

Sand Table, November 19, 2012



4:33 Prakesh and Hande are playing at the sand table.



4:43 Rashmi approaches and speaks from outside the camera shot: "Praku! (nickname) Will you come out of the sand?"



4:44 Prakesh: "Can you get her out?"



4:47 Rashmi: "Why don't you come out?"



4:48 Prakesh turns to Hande and tries to tell her to leave, but she doesn't look up.



4:58 Rashmi: "Prakesh, come out!"



5:02 Prakesh to Rashmi: "I will not get out." Prakesh to Hande: "Hey get out!!!"



5:05 Prakesh: "I'm telling her."



5:08 Hande, unsuspecting of the plot against her, shows off her tower to Prakesh.



5:09 Prakesh knocks over her tower.



5:13 Prakesh: (laughs) "I'm ruining hers!"



5:18 Rashmi: "Ruin more of hers, ok?"



5:20 Rashmi hits Hande.



5:21 Hande, giggling, gives her a friendly kick back.



5:24 Rashmi tries to tell Hande to leave in English. When that doesn't work, she waits.



5:28 Kritika comes over to peer into the video camera.



Ma sandma aame bhaneko ki...
...Hema! Yo miskidai miskidama.

5:32 Rashmi looks to Kritika for help: "I am thinking of going in the sand, but this one's not coming out!" She points first to Prakesh.



5:33 Then quickly moves her hand to point to Hande .



Ta niskine ki naniskine?

5:37 Kritika ask Prakesh: "Are you going to come out or not?"



Hey get out!

Yellai bhanna yellai!
Yellai bhanna!

5:38 Rashmi: "No, tell her! Tell her!"
Rashmi and Prakesh both point to Hande.
Prakesh tries once more to tell her to go.



05:43 Kritika: "I am not going to tell her."



05:45 Prakesh tries again. Kritika is looking closely at her name tag in her hand.



Hey girl, go away!
Go Away!

6:01 Kritika acquiesces and tells her to go.

As someone who was a rule follower, Kritika was reluctant to tell Hande to leave, yet, this example highlights her peers' confidence that she could intervene on their behalf.

Overall, Kritika's maturity, fairness, and attention to rules made her a safe choice as a playmate, and she was sought out by English and Nepali speakers alike. She preferred imaginative and highly verbal games like "house" and it was in Nepali that her cleverness, articulateness, and authority were clear, so she chose to play mostly with the other Nepali-speaking girls, among whom she was a popular and in-demand playmate. Yet, by the spring, her centrality in the class as a whole was clear and through repeated positioning, her overwhelmingly positive identity—as a competent and authoritative classmate, playmate, and student—had solidified. By spring, there were no recorded instances of teachers scolding Kritika, even when she was half of an offending pair of students, and teachers spoke highly of her in interviews:

Katie: What do you think it means to be a successful kid in preK? To have a successful year?

Lucia: To know that we want you to keep your hands to yourself. When we talk about rules and routines, that we want you to follow them. So when I have a child like Kritika and Kelsey⁷ - to name some names, to give you the name with the face, THIS is what we call a successful child. That if we ask them clean up, they clean up, to sit down they sit down, to sit crisscross, to raise a quiet hand. To wait your turn and to share. That are able to possess or act on these behaviors that we are teaching you to do. (Interview, June 11, 2013)

Ellen, interviewed separately and asked the same question, said:

Kritika- Kritika was, you know, she kind of got along with everybody I thought. She was a good little girl, she listened, she was very smart, I think she's gonna do really well next year. I think she could have gone to kindergarten this year. (Interview, June 11, 2013).

In student interviews, Kritika was cited as "smart" and as a friend by more classmates than any other student. The social network mapping drawn from this interview data shows visually her central location in the classroom network (Figure 4.1):

⁷ Here, Lucia emphasized Kritika's overall success by connecting her with Kelsey, whom both teachers viewed as the most mature and brightest in the class. In the fall, for example, Lucia said of Kelsey:

We couldn't be any happier with Kelsey. She's as sweet as they come and very kind. And she's uh little much of a ring leader, where she's very cooperative with everybody and everybody kind of clings to her. And of course she so cute. Oh my goodness I do believe that she could be Miss America some day. [...] Hopefully um she will continue to grow and to be just as terrific and well-rounded as she can be. (Lucia, Interview, November 16, 2012)

Ellen said:

Kelsey was like the little mother and she was just the little person everybody wanted to- kind of flocked to her for some reason. She was very outgoing and you know she was very caring and she really uh- she knew what to do. She just- she was a good little girl, I'm gonna miss her. (Ellen, Interview, November 16, 2012).

Thus, comparing Kelsey and Kritika was a strong statement to Lucia's view of Kritika.

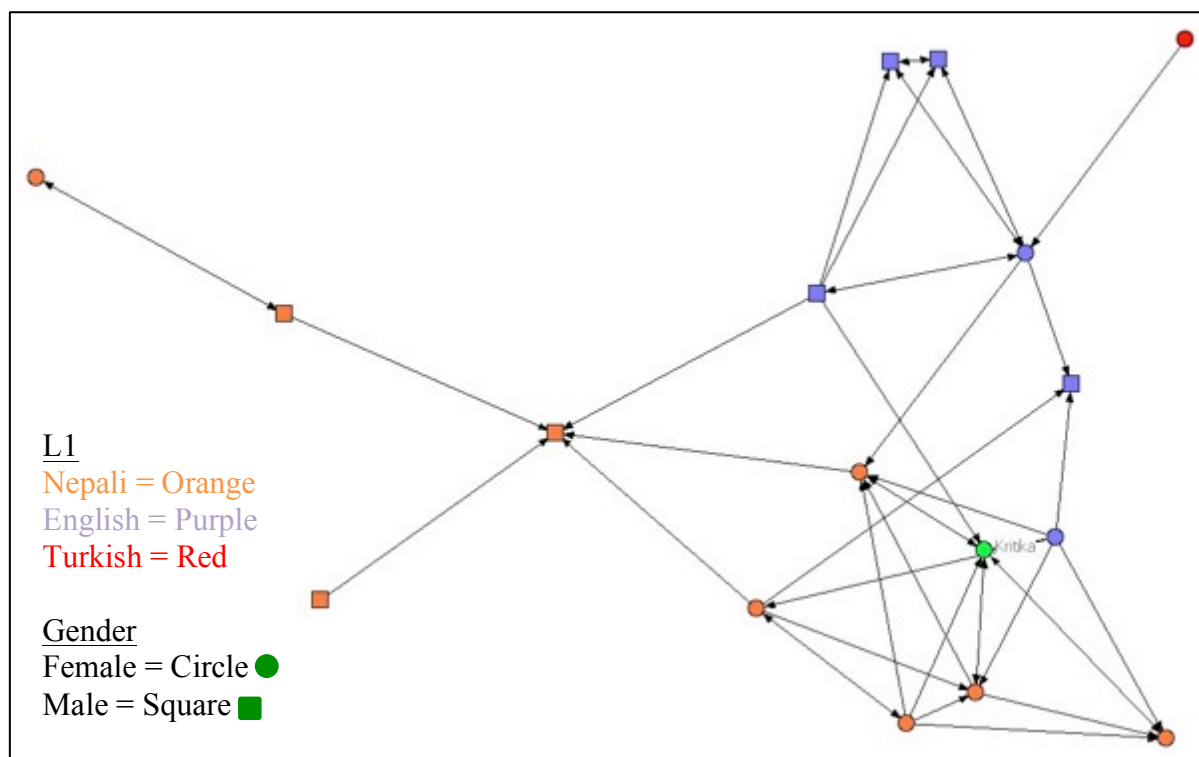


Figure 4.1

Kritika was most densely connected to the Nepali-speaking girls, in the lower right corner of the graph. (Since Kritika is the focus here, her dot, which would usually be orange, is green.) She is part of several “cliques” within this group of girls. In Social Network Theory, a clique is a group of people who are socially closer to each other than they are to other members of the network. The technical definition for a clique is a group of people among whom all possible connections are present (Borgatti, Everett, & Johnson, 2013, p.183). Kritika is thus part of three four-person cliques of Nepali-speaking female students (see figure 4.2 at right). Yet, she is also connected to two English-speaking students, one of whom is a very central student who part of the only English-speaking clique in the class (see cluster in upper right corner of image 4.1). Recall that the main ideas of SNA are: 1) that network connections provide resources and 2) that understanding a person’s location in a network can provide insight into the kinds of resources she might draw on. In terms of social capital, Kritika’s position provided connections to many people—and to several who were quite well-connected—clearly supporting the claim that she was a desired friend and playmate. In terms of English learning, the affordances of her location are less clear: While she was connected to two English speakers, she was not very central to the English-speaking network. Instead, she was most closely connected to the Nepali speakers.

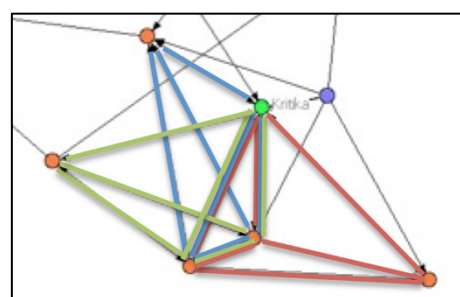


Figure 4.2

Padma Across the Year

This is Padma. Padma was very nearly four when I met her and was also a Nepali speaker. Each day in September, after Padma watched her grandmother walk out of the classroom, she spent the first ten minutes of the morning in tears, her tiny shoulders hunched over, staring down at her sock-and-sandal-covered feet. She usually allowed another parent to open her breakfast cereal and took a few half-hearted bites, her round black eyes looking mournfully at the door and her mouth in a pout so perfect that it gave the impression of being well practiced. Padma was the youngest in her household, where she had a sister in first grade, parents who worked full time, a young uncle, and a grandmother. Her grandma took care of her,



walking her to and from school, even when it snowed. Where other children missed school when their parents had scheduling conflicts or had to work an odd shift, Padma's grandmother made sure that she never missed a day. Padma was the student who showed up at 8:30 a.m. when there was a two-hour snow delay that her grandma had not heard about, then walked home, and then returned at 10:30. Padma was just ten days younger than Kritika, but a full head shorter and at least 10 pounds lighter. Between her September tears and her petite frame, she early on became a student with whom the teachers used terms of endearment like "doll baby" and "sweetheart." In October, Lucia said to her, "You're so sweet. (looks at Teacher Ellen) Isn't she sweet? Little Padma, little doll baby. C'mere. (hugs her)" (Video, October 29, 2012). Padma's positioning as "little," "cute," and "sweet" in those first months of school made her a nonthreatening (and thus tolerated and sometimes even welcomed) playmate, but also an easy target for other students to take her dolls or try to move her out of the way. It was not usual to hear howls of "*Heeey, mero naaaaaanni!*" ("Hey, my doll!") coming from her in the house corner. Often, Kritika came to her aid and, by October, the two had become fast friends. Kritika kept track of Padma and helped Padma keep track of the rules, for which Padma did not have the same zest as Kritika. The two played together frequently and, at lunch, chatted easily in Nepali, unbothered by conversations around them.

With Kritika as a friend, Padma did not mind coming to school so much. She rushed in each day, was excited to learn the letters that her older sister (her *didi*) talked about at home, and loved to take care of the babies in the house corner. She moved in the room with quick movements, was curious, and an explorer. She was more interested than anyone else in what I was doing in the classroom and whether she could write in my notebooks. She began to greet me with a loud, "Hi Miss Katie!" when I came in on Mondays and she began to find her voice throughout the day as well, singing loudly, standing up for herself, and asking frequently in both English and Nepali "What that?" and "*Yu ke ho?*" As she became happier to be at school and found her voice in English and Nepali, her positioning shifted as well. Even by November, she was positioned less and less as sweet and more as spunky and stubborn. When she crossed her arms and pouted over something at lunch in early November, for instance, the teachers no longer worried that she was sad, but told her, "Come on. Eat or clean up. Let's go" (Video, November 2, 2012). In my fall interview with Lucia, she described her:

The:::n we have Padma (downward tone), who um (2.0) you know her strength is that um (2.0) she really clinged to Kritika and I think Kritika has taken her under her wing. So she got some good friendships and she's learned to speak up more and to I think accept us

more where she was more upset about being here where I just don't think she really wanted to come. [...] But all and all she's done well. She is stubborn. But that's okay. That's her way of communicating. It's alright. Other than that, she's no problem. (Lucia Interview, November 16, 2012)

The teachers' characterization of Padma was not as positive as their evaluation of Kritika; in fact, her biggest strength was her friendship *with* Kritika. The teachers used this friendship to support Padma's behavior and rule-following, asking her to sit like Kritika or look how Kritika is walking. In late November, for instance, she and Kritika were at the sand table, and Padma had some sand in her hair. As Lucia brushed it off, shaking her head and sighing, she said, "Kritika and Padma, be careful with the sand. Kritika, tell Padma: 'Careful. Don't touch your face.'" (Video, November 19, 2012).

Yet, their characterization of her was also not negative. Although she was never positioned by teachers or peers as an authority on classroom rules or social norms, she was positioned as competent in them, if not always compliant. Over the year, teachers' reminders to her were given with a smile and a shake of the head. She was neither a student that teachers worried about, nor was she a standout like Kritika or Kelsey. By spring, her identity as Kritika's friend who was "no problem" solidified. Spring interviews reflected this:

Padma::: Padma Padma Padma. Yea:::h (2.0) Padma's a um she got she came along. You know she was very shy at first; she was crying everyday. And then she stopped doing that, you know. And then she'd come in smiling. She:::- Yeah, I'd like to see her talk a little more English. She was not saying very much. But she got along well with the kids. She was a good little girl. (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013)

Socially, as the year went on, Padma was welcomed into play as a friend of Kritika, but playing with her often required negotiation over dolls, space, seats, etc. Her humor, energy, creativity (like the time she dotted red paint on two students' foreheads and staged a pretend wedding) seemed to make it worthwhile for her Nepali-speaking peers to take the time for these negotiations, but she was not a preferred playmate of her English-speaking classmates, with whom she had more trouble working things out. Nonetheless, she had positive interactions with them, using humor to compensate for a lack of words. One day in the gym for example, she caught Kelsey's runaway ball. Kelsey, expecting a struggle, approached confrontationally, "Hey that's my ball." Padma laughing, insisted "MY ball," yet, at the same time, tossed it back to Kelsey, who laughed too (Field notes, October 29, 2012).

Padma's location in the social mapping of the classroom (Figure 4.3) reflects her position as less central to the class overall, but still well connected within the cluster of Nepali-speaking girls (Padma = green dot):

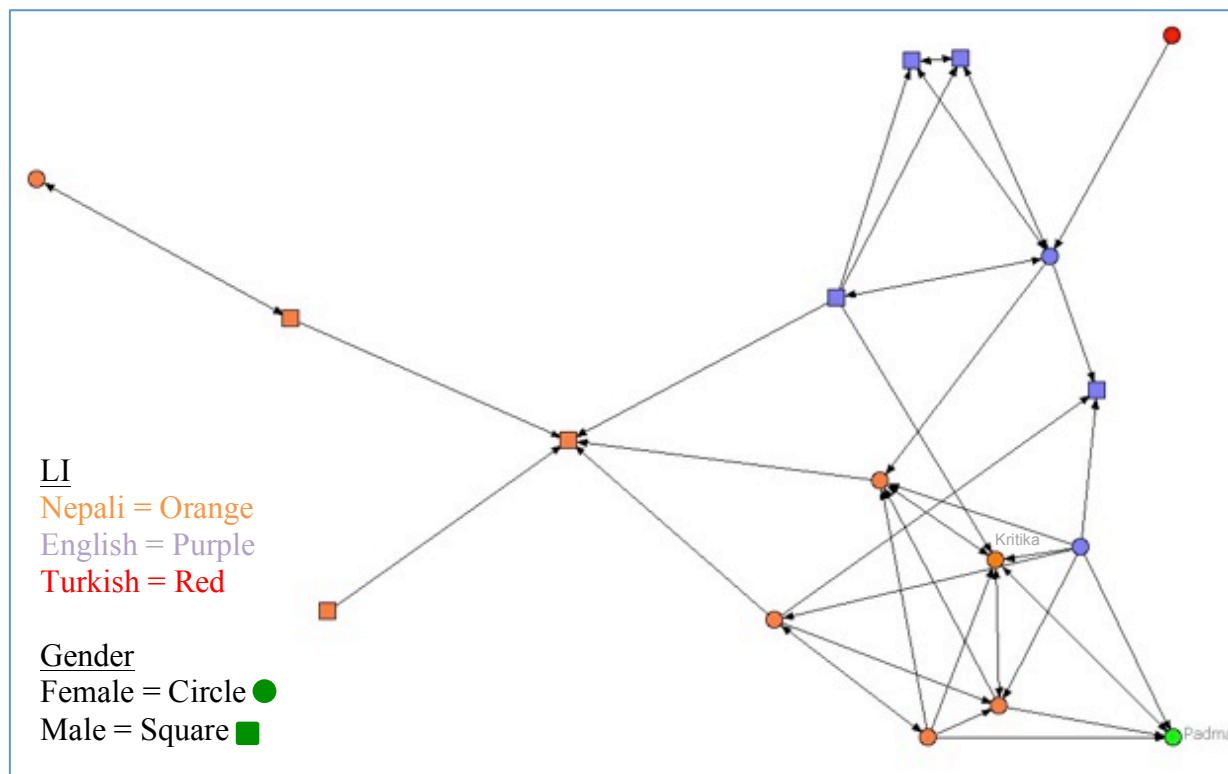


Figure 4.3

Although Padma cited only Kritika as a friend, three children, including one English speaker cited her as a friend. Thus in terms of network resources, while Padma's location would not afford the same social distinction of being highly in-demand that Kritika's had, she was not isolated either. She was, however, more socially distant from the main cluster of English speakers in the class, which might have afforded her fewer encounters with their linguistic resources. In fact, three of the six English-speaking children, with whom she had spent the last nine months, were unable to give her name in the interview, suggesting that she rarely interacted with them.

What the student map does not reflect, however, is that Padma also sought and enjoyed interactions with the adults in the room. "Look Miss Ellen!" she could be heard to say and she enjoyed helping to set up for snack, as long as she could hold a baby doll in one hand. When I was in the room, she often invited me to play and it was clear by the end of the year that she considered me a friend. She was the only child to ever climb onto my lap and she was often the last one at the snack table, forgetting to eat as she engaged me in repeating lines from "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" or pointing out things around the room, then later in the year, in conversation. Her teachers were never quite convinced that I enjoyed these interactions and frequently chided her to "Stop talking to Miss Katie and finish eating," or to "Let Miss Katie write her notes."

Rashmi Across the Year

Meet Rashmi. Rashmi was half a year younger than Kritika and Padma, with an early spring birthday, and also came from a Nepali-speaking family. She was tall and thin—all knees and elbows—and bright black eyes shone from her angular face. Unlike the other girls in the

class who wore a collection of pink and red and lace and frills that matched only because of their shared color scheme, Rashmi preferred pants and sweatshirts, especially the yellow one—her favorite color. With her clothes, her sharp jawline, and her hair cropped short, only her earrings revealed her gender to the unknowing observer. Her best friend in the class was her cousin Prakesh. She and Prakesh were one month apart in age, they lived in apartments in the same building, and one of their fathers usually brought both children to school. They seemed to transition seamlessly from playing together at home to playing together at school to the point where it seemed that they did not realize that the rules had changed. At times Rashmi and Prakesh ran in the classroom and at other times, played roughly and hit one another, which I noted that their fathers both tolerated. In the fall, the teachers spent a lot of time trying to get their attention and to have them focus where the rest of the class was focused. For Prakesh, not paying attention seemed to be a conscious choice, where for Rashmi, it seemed to be a function of not noticing that there was anything else going on.



Rashmi enjoyed meals and participated in conversations in Nepali with the other children, but free play time was Rashmi's favorite, when she could play with Prakesh undisturbed, preferably at the sand table. Circle time and nap time were the hardest times of day for Rashmi. These activities required her to do two things that she found very difficult—keep her body still and her mouth quiet. At circle time, she fidgeted and talked continuously, sometimes in Nepali to Prakesh, sometimes singing, sometime repeating an interesting word over and over again. Scolding rarely helped, nor did having a teacher sit with her, so the teachers mostly ignored her and just carried on, talking over her. At nap, when the room was supposed to be silent, her talk was more problematic. Other students could be shushed with a sharp glance or word, a finger to the lips, or even just a teacher's presence nearby, but Rashmi could not be quieted. On more than one occasion, her teachers became so frustrated that they had to walk away.

On other occasions, when they simply tried to ignore her and work on things in other parts of the room, they returned to find her mat dismantled with her blanket and pillow thrown a few feet away, or once, nearly all of her clothes off. Yet, Rashmi was never positioned as angry or intentionally defiant; in fact, she seemed quite happy at school and could make her teachers and peers laugh at her antics. It was as if she simply did not realize that there was something else she was supposed to be doing and that everyone else was already doing it. Lucia described her:

Rashmi is also from Nepal. She's our most hyper child. She's uh in her own world. She's a wonderful girl though. She has done some things that are quite funny but you can't laugh in front of them cause then you encourage it. So you really gotta keep a straight face and like turn around and like hide and laugh. She needs a little more one on one. We have to help her family know that she needs a little more assistance knowing how to listen, follow the rules, stay on task... this kind of um environment isn't so easy for certain children. You know other children, they can grasp when we're doing planning, when we're going to work time and we want you to stay in an area and if you're playing in block, keep those items in block. Some of them may want to travel and they don't get it yet. Cause this isn't Kansas, this isn't home. (Lucia, Interview, November 16, 2012)

By late fall, though still always moving and often talking, Rashmi began to tune in at circle time. Videos show her sometimes paying attention to the books and commenting on them, though in unsanctioned ways and times. Her teachers, used to ignoring her chatter as irrelevant unless it disrupted others, seemed not to notice these comments as distinct from the rest of her talk and therefore ignored them. And Rashmi, whose interest lay in the books and not the teacher talk, usually missed the sanctioned opportunities to talk that came after reading the text. During the reading of a book about seasons, for example, Rashmi commented on each page and was ignored by her teacher and classmates. Yet, when the teacher asked the very question that Rashmi had been answering all along, she was looking away and seemed not to hear:

Ellen	(reads a page about apples)
Rashmi	I like apple.
Ellen	(reads a page about pumpkins)
Rashmi	I like pumpkin.
Ellen	(reads a page about hungry squirrels)
Rashmi	I like hungry.
Ellen	(reads a page about snow, looks up to class) Who likes snow?
Rashmi	(looking toward other side of circle, does not raise hand, hear?)

(Video, November 5, 2012)

In March, as Ellen read a book about friends, Rashmi shouted “*saati, saati*” over and over. The teachers shushed and then ignored her. When I pointed out later that *saati* means friend in Nepali, Teacher Ellen was at first shocked that Rashmi might have been on-task, but then speculated that this may have just been coincidental. By this point in the year, her position as less competent in school norms and academically had been cemented.

Socially, Rashmi was often on the edge of action as well. Toward the middle of the year, Prakesh began to play with Joey, one of the English speakers in the class. When Prakesh was with Joey, Rashmi chose to play in the Housekeeping area, where she liked to take care of the baby dolls, wrapping them and unwrapping them in blankets, pushing them in the grocery cart, and cooking for them with the pretend food. She narrated in Nepali as she played, more along side the other children than with them, but her narration allowed them to come and go into her game, sometimes for extended times. While she was happy to engage as long as they were doing what she was already doing, she was not interested in collaboration or sharing, and often took other children by surprise when she left mid-play or made off with some item that they thought they had been using together. Her unpredictability made her a tolerated, but never sought-out playmate among the Nepali-speaking girls and she was one of the children regularly scolded by Kritika. Rashmi was also someone who was generally intentionally avoided by her English-speaking peers, who had seen her rough play with Prakesh and did not see playing with her as a worthwhile risk. On the rare occasion that she was invited into play in English, the lack of uptake on her part made it less likely that peers would ask again any time soon. The following example provides a contrast between how Rashmi and two other Nepali-speaking girls engaged with the ongoing play of Joy and Joey, two English-speaking students:

Joy and John have lined up four chairs next to each other in a row. Joy holds out a baby to me and invites me to “get in the car” with it. The three of us sit in the row of chairs with our babies on our laps and begin driving.

Padma wanders over. Joy invites her to join us (“Do you want to come in our car?”) and she gets in the car. I give her my baby. She thanks me and asks “Where we go?” Joy tells her, “to the grocery store.” “Okay!” she says. Joy lists some things we are going to buy and Padma nods along. When we get to the “store” and get out of the car, Padma hands me my baby back and leaves.

A little later, Maiya (a three-year-old Nepali speaker who joined the class mid-year) comes into Housekeeping and Faith says “Maiya, want to come in our car?” Maiya nods and comes to sit next to me. “Want to hold my baby?” I ask, holding it out to her. She nods again. She stays for around 5 minutes, listening to Joy and John talk about going to work, etc. She leaves after a while.

Almost right after that, Rashmi comes in and tries to take Joy’s baby from her. “No!” Joy says sharply, jerking the baby away, eyebrows furrowed. Then she changes her tone, “But you can come in our car,” she says gently. Rashmi looks at her blankly. “Do you want to come in the car?” Joy asks again, with her eyebrows raised and in an even higher, almost mother-ese pitch. Rashmi doesn’t seem to understand. She looks at Joy for a moment longer and then leaves. (Field notes, April 15, 2013)

Rashmi’s entry into the scene was typical for her. She did not seem to realize that taking Joy’s doll would make Joy angry. While Joy was more generous in this situation than most other students would have been, inviting Rashmi into play even after this transgression, the absence of any uptake on Rashmi’s part—either from lack of interest or lack of understanding—eliminated the possibility for a positive interaction with John and Joy. Through the end of the year, Rashmi continued to be a tolerated playmate of the Nepali-speaking children, but was never a preferred playmate of anyone but Prakesh. By the end of the year, the teachers’ comments about Rashmi were strikingly similar to those that they made seven months earlier, highlighting the stability of Rashmi’s identity from the initial positionings in the fall:

We gotta work on behavior. I mean uh she was hurting a lot of kids and even still though a lot of kids played with her which I thought was- cause she would you know she'd hit, she'd push, so which I was surprised at, so she does have a good little personality. You know she just has to learn how to control herself. Um, cause you would tell her no for something and she would like when I did that water table, she "I want water table" and eh, I said "Yeah, you know, in your turn" and she then she just went over and put the toys in and started playing there and I was like " N-n-n-n-no, you can't do that. Now you can't go there at all! You know you have to learn the rules." So, she's gotta work on that. Working on learning the rules and calming down. Very hyper. Sometimes at nap time she's flipping flips and I mean.... (deep sigh). (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013)

In interviews, Rashmi only cited Prakesh as a friend and was only cited *by* Prakesh (see Figure 4.4; Rashmi = Green dot.)

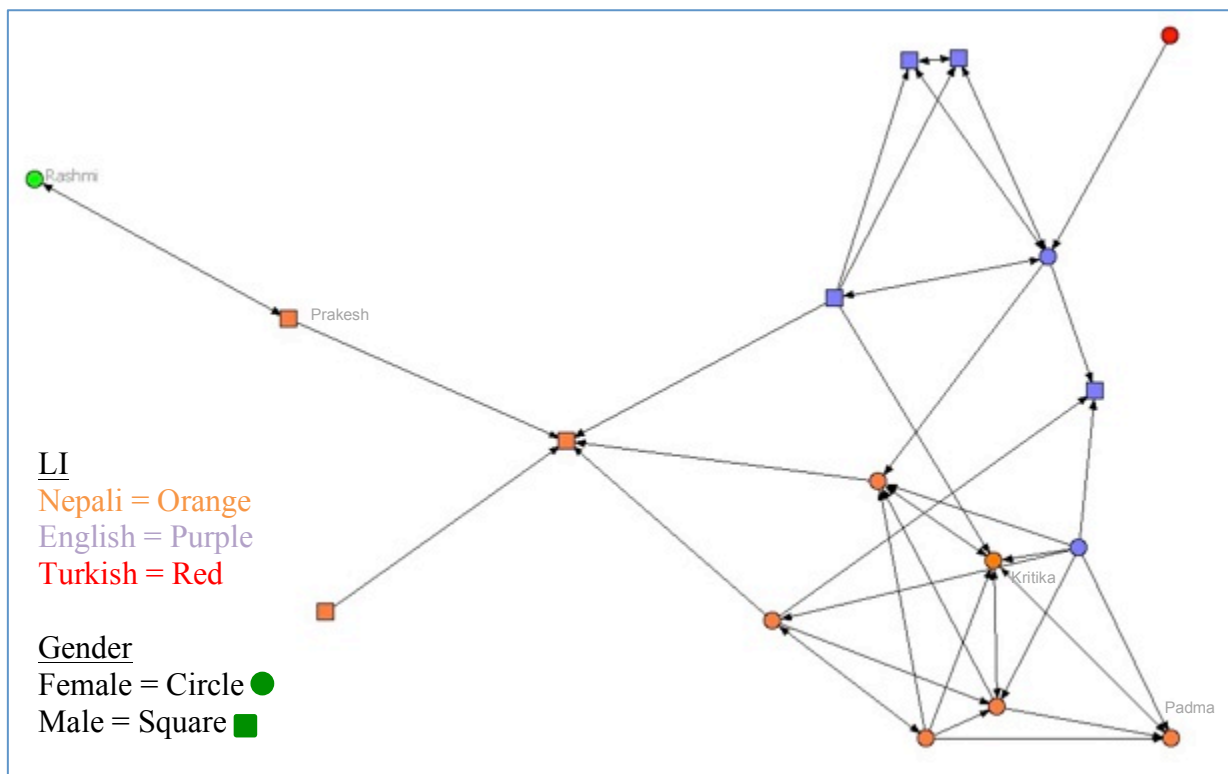


Figure 4.4

Rashmi's peripheral location in the social network was one that afforded her little social capital in terms of friendships and it put her at the greatest social distance from English-speaking classmates.

Hande Across the Year

Meet Hande. Hande had turned 4 in June and, of the four focal children, was the only one who would make the September 1 birthday cutoff to start kindergarten the following fall. Hande was also the only Turkish speaker in the class. Hande had wide, curious eyes and when she laughed, revealing a big toothy smile, her eyes laughed, too. Hande's short, wavy hair was usually tied into two tiny pigtails that stood up on the top of her head and she wore her favorite Minnie or Mickey Mouse shirts as often as possible. Hande came to the class a few weeks after school began and far into October, she still cried and clung to her mother in the morning, as her mother awkwardly stood next to the breakfast table, unable to talk with either the English-speaking teachers and parents or the Nepali-speaking ones. Hande was quiet during her first weeks, without a language in common with anyone in this class, and did a lot of watching other children. Although she was one of the oldest children, her teachers connected this quietness with being little, sweet, and cute, perhaps responding to what they saw as vulnerability, as they initially did with Padma:



Um little Hande didn't come into the class until I think towards the end of September she came in so she missed the first week and she was upset crying in the beginning and she has a different language - she's Turkish. So she's not even understanding the English OR the Nepali children so that's you know but yet she starting to pick- I just see them picking up little words here and there. The words that we keep you know saying over and over and over like you know "milk," "breakfast," "bathroom" they're just you know "walk," "quiet" (laughing). (Ellen, Interview, November 16, 2012)

Uh [Hande] can barely speak English. She's a cutie. She's opening up, she's very artistic. She's very kind um we don't have any problems with her, so that's great (rising tone) (Lucia, Interview, November 16, 2012)

Lucia connected her quietness with her not causing any problems, which foreshadows how her positioning would change as she began to use more and more English.

In the first few months of school, Hande sought connections with other students through careful observation and skillful non-verbal maneuvers. During one interaction at the sand table (November 5, 2012), she tried to add sand to her peer's sand tower and was first told sharply, "No that's mine!" She then spent almost a full minute carefully watching him play (Image 4.1) before making eye contact and offering him full cups of sand (Image 4.2).



Image 4.1



Image 4.2

Eventually, he realized that she was helping and allowed her to participate in pouring sand on the tower. In one-on-one interactions, she became successful at using these strategies to show peers her willingness to engage on their terms. While this allowed her entry into their play as a non-threat, it also positioned her as an expendable playmate who could be ousted from play when a better option came along, as in the example when Kritika was enlisted to remove her from the sand table. On many occasions, Hande would participate in a game, but when the roles or rules or players shifted, she would lose her place. Hande's strategy for being generous and easy-going also made her an easy target to be taken advantage of. On occasion, as in the following example, after being generous over and over again, Hande got angry and left an interaction. Here, Hande was playing at the playdough table with several students and was repeatedly asked for playdough or had it grabbed from her:

1:05

Kelsey: Hande, can I have some- a little bit more red? I'll give you more blue if you give me a little- a lot more red.

Hande: (gives)

...

2:22

Pooja: (Nepali) (points to Hande)

Padma: (tries to take playdough from Hande)

Hande: No! (takes back)

...

3:54

Tommy gets up and comes to Hande's side

Tommy: Please I have this? (tries to take some of Hande's)

Hande: No please no touch. (pulling his hand away)

Jalen: Just a little.

Hande: Ok! I give it to you, I give it to you! (gives)

Tommy: Thanks (walks back to other side of table)

...

4:49

Pooja: (to Hande) You making a pumpkin?

Hande: Yeah, I make it with this one (holds up cookie cutter) But you can't get it!

Somebody's playing with it! Want heart? (stands up and points to other cutter on table)

Pooja looks confused and goes back to playing

(Video, May 6, 2013)

Although in the final exchange, Pooja was only asking about what Hande was making, by this time, every single one of Hande's interactions had been with peers trying to take something from her and she was not interested in another round. So, rather than answering, she tried to redirect Pooja's attention to another cookie cutter other than hers. Pooja, confused, ended the conversation and Hande missed out on a positive peer interaction. This example shows how positioning that started as other-imposed could become self-imposed and could sediment into something more lasting.

As the year progressed and Hande became more vocal in English, her place in play became no less precarious, but her status with the teachers changed. She began to shout out answers at circle time, to tattle on other children, and to demand attention. Because this contrasted so starkly with her earlier quietness, the teachers saw this as "acting out" and as uncharacteristic. Rather than imagining that her earlier silence was the uncharacteristic behavior for her, they were again and again surprised and dismayed by her boisterousness. The new Hande seemed to surprise students as well. On one occasion when Joy was singing and Hande asked loudly, "Why you saying that?" Joy looked at her, confused and annoyed, and whined, "Sto:::::p"—as if to say "stop talking"—when Hande had done nothing but ask a question. Toward the end of the year, Hande again spent quite a bit of time alone at the art table. On May 13, for example, she sat surrounded by other children, but drawing on her own for twelve full minutes without saying anything.

Hande's identity never quite sedimented the way that many other students' had. Across the year, she was first the quiet loner, then a too-silly and boisterous squirmer, before finally returning to play on her own, though never retreating back into her former silence. Her positionings, however, were never very positive, except when the teachers were talking about her art. Ellen's comments in June reflect Hande's uncertain social place and Ellen's own uncertainty about Hande's future:

Uh Hande? Hande did not uh- well, towards the end she was speaking a lot more English I thought, but um she didn't play with the- a lot of kids I didn't think. She kind of was by herself and again too it was like she had a totally different language from everybody. She didn't speak English and she didn't speak Nepal. So she was kinda (laughing) like the outsider completely. So she did ve- I mean considering. Again, she was crying a lot too and then at the end of the year she was crying [again] . Yeah so I think you know I mean I don't know what's going to happen with her at kindergarten. She really didn't know a lot of the letters. Mom said she was going to put her in some sort of charter school. So I don't even know where she was going. (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013)

Over the year, Hande found various ways to enter into play and did have some enjoyable interactions with a variety of students, but she was never a valued playmate. In student interviews, no one cited her as someone they liked to play with and she cited only one other student as a playmate—Kelsey, the only kindergarten-bound, English-speaking girl in the class.

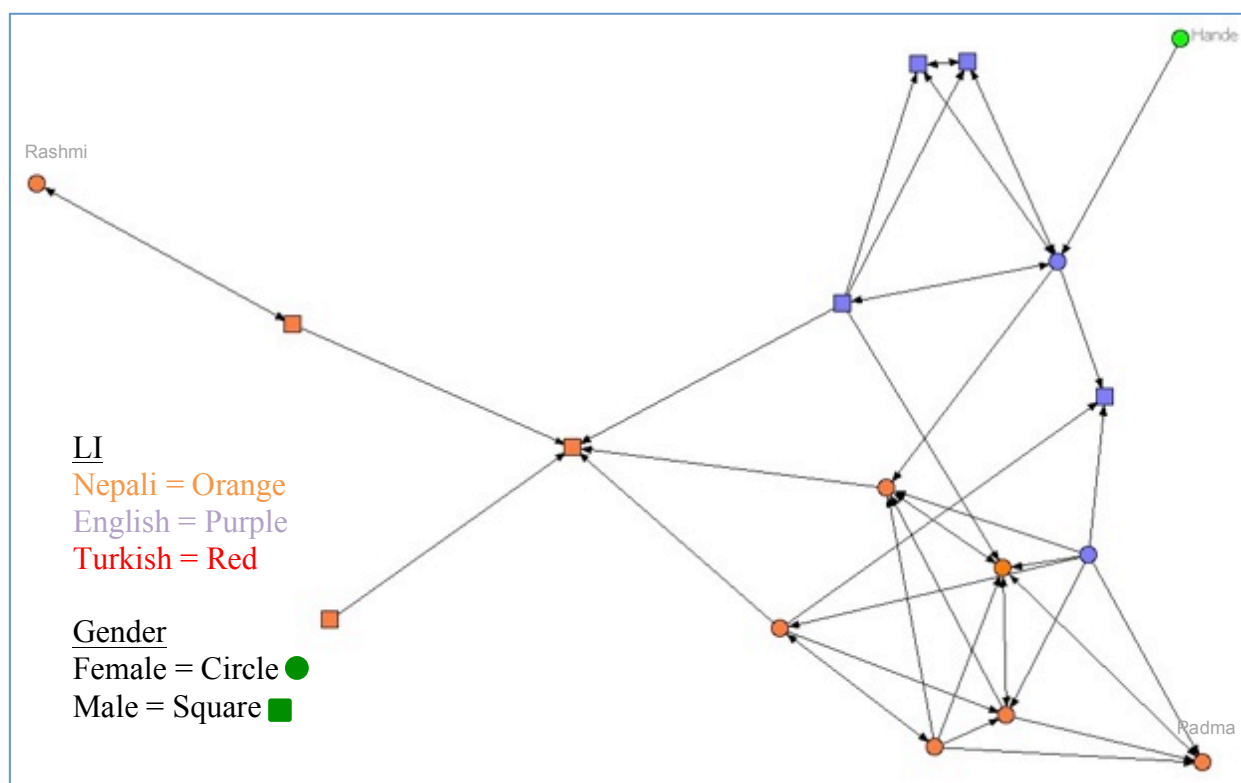


Figure 4.5

While Hande, like Rashmi, was peripheral to the class and did not have friendships that contributed to her social status, her preference for Kelsey as a playmate (even if not reciprocal) meant that she was *differently* peripheral from Rashmi. Whereas Rashmi was on the edge of the Nepali speakers, Hande was on the edge of the English speakers. This meant that while Rashmi was three connections away from the closest English speaker, Hande was just one away, and that overall, while Rashmi was an average of 4.2 connections away from the English speakers in the class, Hande was only an average of 1.7 connections from every English speaker. If access to English was important, Hande's brand of peripherality would better position her for learning.

Centrality in Numbers

Using UCINET software (Borgatti et al., 2002), it was also possible to assign numerical values to the students' positions in the network. In-Degree Centrality measures the number of peers who named a student as a friend, while Betweenness Centrality measures how many other dyads are connected along the shortest path by the student. Table 4.1 shows these measures for the class.

Table 4.1

In-Degree Centrality		Betweenness Centrality	
Kritika	6	Kelsey	24.5
Pooja	5	Kritika	15.5
Dinesh	5	Pooja	12
Padma	4	Caleb	8
Kelsey	4	Maiya	3
Anita	4	Anita	1.5
Luke	3	Sreya	1.5
Joey	3	Prakesh	1
Tommy	3	Hande	0
Maiya	2	Padma	0
Rashmi	1	Rashmi	0
Caleb	1	Luke	0
Sreya	1	Joey	0
Prakesh	1	Joy	0
Hande	0	Tommy	0
Joy	0	Dinesh	0
Monal	0	Monal	0

In both of these measures, Kritika falls near or at the top, as a popular friend and a connector between others. Padma is more ambiguous; she is a popular friend, but is only connected to students who would otherwise remain connected without her. Hande and Rashmi are neither in-demand friends nor connectors.

In this chapter, I have shown how four students who looked so similar on paper—in age, gender, socioeconomics, schooling, and past English experience—diverged sharply in classroom identity over their first year in school. In the next chapter, I discuss each student’s language growth across the same year, first as acquisition of vocabulary and syntax, then as social practice. I will also address the idea, introduced in Chapter 1, in research with older learners, that social identity and language learning are reciprocally related.

CHAPTER 5 ENGLISH LEARNING ACROSS THE YEAR

The previous chapter explored how the four focal students—Padma, Rashmi, Kritika, and Hande—came to be seen as certain kinds of students and peers in the eyes of their teachers and in interactions with classmates. But how did they fair linguistically?

Much of the research that examines the relationship between identity and second language learning for young students has focused on the ways that different identities allow for different kinds of classroom participation (c.f. Willet, 1995; Toohey, 2000; Day, 2002; Hawkins, 2005). The implication is that these different opportunities lead to differences in learning, which can thus, be traced back to having a more positive and central identity. None of these studies, however, actually measure the English that students learned. This chapter does just that. This chapter seeks to answer: *What are the differences in how these four students learn English over the year? How do these differences relate to the students' different social identities in the classroom?* I first present the teachers' assessments of language outcomes. I then present student outcomes in language-as-a-system acquisition (vocabulary and syntax), followed by outcomes in students learning to use English as part of ongoing social practice. I also discuss the relationship between this learning and students' classroom identity within the larger social field.

Who Was A Successful Language Learner?: Teachers' Assessments of Language Growth

While Ellen and Lucia did not have any formal tools or district support for assessing the students' English, this did not mean they were not thinking about it. As Chapter Three illustrated, the teachers were concerned about students' English learning as well as what would help or hinder them in their learning. But without formal training, the teachers drew on their own experiences, tying students' English learning to other kinds of classroom competences that they knew more about, namely social/emotional development and academic skill. Recall Ellen's supplications for the children to speak English for the sake of the students going to kindergarten and Lucia's linking of English to pro-social behaviors like sharing. These links to other kinds of competence thus became the tools that teachers used to assess students' linguistic progress as well.

Kritika as Linguistically Competent

In interviews at the end of the year, I asked the teachers, "Who are the kids that you saw as really successful in how their English developed over the year?" Lucia did not hesitate: "Kritika. Number one in every which way. Writing her name, following the rules—talk about a successful student, she'll take the cake. Her and Kelsey, other world" (Lucia, Interview, June 11, 2013). In this response, Lucia, ostensibly responding to my question about English development, quickly turned "successful in how their English developed" into successful "in every way," listing examples of academic skill, then social-emotional-behavioral skill. She again linked

Kritika to Kelsey, the star of the class. Lucia echoed my word “successful,” but used in the phrase, “successful student” implying that successful English learner is part of overall success.

When I asked Ellen the same question, she first said that she wished she had a class list in front of her, so I wrote out names as she listed them, going around her morning circle in her mind. As she answered then, she ran her eyes over the list and thought aloud about whether each child would qualify as “making the most progress”:

I mean Kritika came in knowing a lot. And especially that her mom speaks NONE, so I am really surprised about her you know. Monal, no. Pooja knew a lot already. Rashmi NO. Hande no. Anita, for a little girl, Anita could (nodding). Nickson no. Dinesh kind of knew some already, he made good- Dipisha no. That should be it right? I don't know, if I had to pick one that made the most progress... Oh you don't have Padma. I don't know. Padma's... (2.0) (sighs) I guess maybe I don't know Dinesh came in knowing a lot so it's hard to say. (4.0) Maybe Kritika (downward, final tone). (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013)

Ellen's initial inclination was to name Kritika, but she discounted this idea right away, instead crediting Kritika as having begun school with a lot of English (which, as I show below, was not the case). Yet, immediately Ellen also recalled that Kritika's mother did not speak English, making it even less likely, and thus more impressive, that Kritika would have “come in knowing a lot.” Ellen then progressed through the list of students, either eliminating them as possible contenders or keeping them in the running. She eliminated two focal students, Hande and Rashmi, right away, Rashmi emphatically so. She also realized that we did not have Padma on the list, but she could not settle on whether Padma made good progress or not, sighing before moving on. At the end of this block of speech, Ellen returned to Kritika. The word “maybe” suggested uncertainty, but her tone implied finality.

Ellen then continued on to the passage discussed in Chapter Three, in which she shifted her theories of language learning from one of parental influence to one of peer interaction (see bottom of page 58). At the start of the passage, Ellen had just said, “Maybe Kritika.” At the end, she then paused and returned to my original question. “So but I mean if I had to pick one I'd say Kritika made the most progress (sets list down and looks up)” (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013). In Chapter Three, I discussed how this passage showed Ellen's changing thinking about what makes a student a successful language learner. Here, it highlights Ellen's shifting epistemic stance toward Kritika as the embodiment of that learner. By the end, she named Kritika with greater certainty, setting the list down for emphasis that the matter was settled. To clarify, I asked, “So what were the factors that- she was more outgoing?” Ellen elaborated:

I think the children that were just yeah more social maybe. Right, like Kritika would come up and you could ask her a question, talk to her, carry on a little conversation. As short as it might be, you could carry on a conversation with her. I could NOT carry on a conversation with Monal or Rashmi really. I could carry on a conversation with Dinesh, to an extent. The others not. Maybe one or two- a quick question “yes,” “no,” you know one-word answer, two-word answer, that would be about it. But Kritika you could ask her you know. You might not understand everything she said but... (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013).

In this section, Ellen used the example of Kritika's strengths as an interlocutor both to highlight her linguistic growth (beyond a "one-word answer, two-word answer") and to show that Kritika was able to engage in the kinds of question-and-answer exchanges, both at circle time and when working with her one-on-one, that the teachers engaged in with the English speakers. That Ellen saw Kritika as an attentive and pragmatically appropriate interlocutor meant that Kritika had internalized ways of interacting that her teachers sanctioned, ways of interacting that were also seen as important indicators of kindergarten readiness.

Kritika as Linguistically Authoritative

In Chapter Four, I introduced Kritika as a social resource for other students. Across the year, Nepali-speaking peers who could not or would not ask for help from teachers with peer interactions instead called on Kritika to settle disputes and to intervene on their behalf. Even in late spring, videos show Padma and Anita yelling across the room to Kritika for help with a conflict or with a tattle. Yet, because these interactions were spoken ones, this also meant that Kritika was being used as a linguistic resource. Recall, for example, Rashmi and Prakesh asking Kritika to intervene on their behalves in order to evict Hande from the sand table in English. In other situations, students relied on Kritika as a spokesperson to the teachers. At lunch one day, when Rashmi had spilled her milk onto her snack plate, students at the table gasped and pointed. When no teachers appeared, the students looked to Kritika. Kritika then was the one to call out, "Miss Lucia! Miss Ellen, look!," which brought Ellen to the table with paper towels.

The teachers also needed language help at times. At the start of the year, faced with many students with whom they did not share a language, they drew on Dinesh, the only Nepali speaker who also spoke English, for help. At circle times in early fall, when they could not understand a student's response, they looked to Dinesh for help, and on a few occasions, when a student was hurt and the teachers had not seen what happened, they asked Dinesh to come talk with the crying child. Yet, by November, while the teachers continued to draw on Dinesh in order to understand students, they also began to use Kritika as an intermediary, but for the opposite situation—when they needed students to understand and listen to *them*. The following examples illustrate this role:

At morning circle time, during talk about the weather, Maiya leaves her place and crawls up to the teacher to get a closer look. Kritika appears tempted to join her as she begins to move forward onto her knees. Rather than reprimand both girls, Lucia says, "Kritika, show Maiya what to do." (Video, December 3, 2012)

During free play time, Lucia approaches the housekeeping area.
Lucia: Shhh. Boys and girls, we're getting too loud. Kritika! Kritika! Tell everybody quiet. Go around and tell everybody quiet for me. (Video, December 17, 2012)

Unlike Dinesh, who was simply a language resource, Kritika-the-translator served a dual purpose: She could convey the teachers' messages to other students, as well as use her social capital and authority to make sure that the students followed through. Thinking about participant roles and production formats is helpful here. In these interactions, the teachers were asking Kritika to act as their mouthpiece. In Goffman's terms, while the teachers' were authors (composers of the words) and principals (ones whose viewpoint the words expressed), Kritika was the animator (or better, amplifier) for them. Being a successful amplifier of the teachers'

words was not a participant role available to all students, as it required a certain social status as well as the institutional backing of the teachers. In the case of Dinesh, the teachers asked him to act as translator, but only for the words of his peers. The many occasions on which Kritika enforced the rules without having been asked showed that she was willing to take on this role of animator (and co-principle, though not author) of the rules and that her peers accepted her role. The examples of her peers asking her to intervene for them illustrate that they also asked her to animate and lend authority to their words, too.

Kritika as Having Something Valuable to Say

Just as peers listened when Kritika spoke, the teachers also listened, even when it meant having to work to figure out what she was trying to say. In the following example, Kritika was working one-on-one with Ellen on a drawing of their classroom and was trying to tell Ellen what she had drawn. Ellen had trouble understanding, but persisted.

Ellen: Okay! Tell me what this stuff is. What's this?
 Kritika: It's circle.
 Ellen: Circle rug? Circle time rug?
 Kritika: Mmmhmm.
 Ellen: (writes) What's this?
 Kritika: This is oval.
 Ellen: What is that?
 Kritika: This is oval.
 Ellen: What oval?
 Kritika: (leans forward, accentuates word) Ovone.
 Ellen: WHAT is it, honey?
 Kritika: Ovone.
 Ellen: Show me, where?
 Pooja: (tries to help) She said, "Ovone"!
 Ellen: What?
 Pooja: Ovane!
 Padma: Ovan.
 Ellen: The oven! (turns to Kritika) The oven?
 Padma: Micro-oven!
 Ellen: The oven- ohhh! The microwave?
 Kritika: (nods)
 Ellen: Oh okay! (writes) This is (shakes head slightly, chuckles to self) Ok!
 Write one more thing and you're good.
 (Video, May 13, 2013)

Here, Ellen worked for a full minute to understand what Kritika was saying, assuming that there was communicative intent in both her drawing and her speech and that she had something of substance to say that needed to be figured out. Her peers also worked to assist her. The participation framework here, like in Goodwin (2007), thus involved a distribution of the role of speaker across multiple people. While Ellen was the addressee, she could not understand Kritika alone and needed Pooja and Padma, ratified but non-addressed hearers, to serve as (re)animators

of Kritika's words. Ellen, Pooja, and Padma all assumed the importance of what Kritika had to say and were willing to cooperate in order to help her convey it.

Contrast this with Ellen's work with the next student, Monal:

- Ellen: (brings Monal over to the table) Monal, you're gonna draw- you're gonna draw- listen- look at me. (lifts up chin) You're gonna draw the room. This (gestures around) So, I want you to draw the sandbox. Okay? Can you draw the sandbox? Can you draw the sandbox?
- Monal: (draws)
- Ellen: That's the sandbox? Okay? (starts to write) Wait a minute. Okay? Wait. Now I want you to draw- Can you draw the block area? Can you draw the block area?
- Monal: (draws)
- Ellen: K, that's the block area?
- Monal: (nods)
- Ellen: Look is that the blocks? (points back)
- Monal: (looks, nods)
- Ellen: Blocks?
- Monal: Yeah.
- Ellen: Okay. That's the blocks. (writes) Ok what else do you want to draw? You wanna draw, um, tables? Draw the table.
- Monal: (draws)
- Ellen: (laughs) Okay! Good! Table. (writes) How about draw the library? (slowly) Draw the library.
- Monal: (makes mark)
- Ellen: Okay, good job! Okay, that's good!

In this excerpt, Ellen took on both roles in the conversation, providing Monal with what to draw and what to say, assuming that he would otherwise not contribute anything meaningful. Although in the fall, Kritika may have been one of the "jabbering" Nepali speakers, by spring Ellen never spoke for Kritika in this way.

Kritika's reputation as having important things to say, her role as animator for both teachers and peers, and the teacher's perceptions that she was the best language learner aligned with what would be expected based on past research, in which positive identity and greater language learning go hand in hand. In this narrative, Kritika would indeed be most likely to progress, with Padma learning less, and Rashmi and Hande not having progressed much at all. Based on my own time spent with the students, I suspected that Padma might have learned more than the teachers thought, but I otherwise generally agreed and expected to find that their assessments held true when I analyzed students' language for growth in vocabulary and syntax.

Analysis I

Acquiring Language-as-a-System: Growth in Vocabulary and Grammar

Not so. In my analysis of corpora of early and late year student talk, the assumption that positive identity leads to greater acquisition of vocabulary and grammar quickly broke down.

Being seen as a good student and playmate and being central to the social network of the class did not have a consistent relationship with language acquisition⁸. Hande—peripheral to the classroom, positioned by the teachers as socially and behaviorally problematic, and seen by students as an unreliable and undesirable playmate—showed the strongest language growth. Meanwhile, Kritika—the most central to the social network of the class, positioned as a standout student and playmate—showed significantly less growth.

The Fall (October and November)

To examine growth in language as a system, I measured three things: quantity of English use, vocabulary (word diversity), and complexity. Table 5.1 summarizes these for the fall.

Quantity of English use. (See Table 5.1, Row 1 and 2). In the fall, all four girls produced a similar quantity of English words per recorded hour: 114 (Padma), 128 (Hande), and 132 (Kritika and Rashmi). For the three Nepali-speaking girls, these words were also embedded in a comparable number of turns in English (22, 20, 24), which made up comparable proportions of their talk (19%, 21%, 17% - the rest was in Nepali). Hande had less turns at talk than the other three (54), but because she was the only Turkish speaker in the class, 100% of her turns were in English. Thus, in the fall, the students spoke around the same quantity of English words, although this constituted a much higher proportion of Hande’s talk.

Vocabulary. In the fall, the three Nepali speakers were recorded using a comparable number of *different* English words over one hour of video⁹ (24, 27, 27), with Hande using a slightly larger quantity (36). (See Table 5.1, Row 3.)

Complexity. The final three measures (Table 5.1, Row 4-7) paint a picture of how sophisticated each student’s talk was. In the fall, the four students produced utterances¹⁰ with a mean length (MLU) of between 2.07 words (Hande) and 3.00 words (Rashmi), with Kritika at 2.48 and Padma at 2.36 words (See Table 5.1, Row 4). This meant that they were producing, on average, linked speech of 2-3 words. The percentage of these utterances that contained verbs ranged from 17% (Kritika) to 43% (Rashmi), with Padma at 21% and Hande at 25% (See Table 5.1, Row 5). Additionally, their turns at talk (one or more consecutive and uninterrupted AS-units), ranged from 2.40 words per turn (Hande) to 3.82 words per turn (Rashmi), (Kritika – 3.11, Padma – 3.51) (See Table 5.1, Row 7). Thus, on all complexity measures, Rashmi’s English was most complex, while the other three students were similar across measures, with Hande slightly lower on mean length of utterance and Kritika on verb use.

⁸ In this section (“What the Students Learned: Vocabulary and Grammar”), “acquisition” and “growth” mean acquisition of vocabulary and grammar.

⁹ Words per hour counts each word in the student’s corpus, while different words per hour counts only the first instance of each word in the corpus. For example, Rashmi said, “I like apple. I like hungry. I like pumpkin.” This would count as 9 words, but only 5 different words: *I, like, apple, hungry, pumpkin*.

¹⁰ Utterance=AS-unit. An AS-unit, or Analysis of Speech Unit (Foster et al., 2001), is “a single speaker’s utterance, consisting of an independent clause or a sub-clausal unit, together with any subordinate clause(s) associated with either” (365). For example, Padma had a turn at talk, “This is hot and this is hot and this is hot and this is hot.” The longest AS-unit in this turn would be 4 words long (“and this is hot”), because clauses coordinated by “and” count as separate AS-units. If Padma had said, “This is hot, but this is cold,” the whole turn would be one AS-unit (7 words), because clauses subordinated by “but” are part of the AS-unit. AS-units are alternative to a T-unit, but more suited for spoken language as it counts sub-clausal units, not just independent clauses. Intonation and pauses help to define boundary markers. Thus, “train,” “I?,” and “this no” all qualify as AS-units, although they would not qualify as T-units.

Table 5.1

		Fall				
		Kritika	Rashmi	Padma	Hande	
Use	1	% turns at talk <u>in English</u> / hour video	19% (n= 22/118)	21% (n=24/114)	17% (n=20/98)	100% (n=54/54)
	2	# English words/hour video	105	132	114	128
Vocab	3	# of <i>different</i> English words /hour video	24	27	27	36
Complexity	4	Average utterance length (mean # words per AS-unit)	2.48 ex: "I'm done!"	3.00 ex: "I'm go here!"	2.36 ex: "This no."	2.07 ex: "Help me?"
	5	Examples	Missa, I'm water! I'm done! Missa I'm pineapple! Where Padma baby? What your name? Bread! Airplane!!!	Teacher, I need here in baby! Train! I like apple. I like hungry. I like pumpkin. I'm go here. I'm play here.	This no. I'm pineapple! I'm that! I'm bread! Water! Teacher, I'm this! This is hot.	Look at dis! It's red. Go housekeeping! I? Come on. Help me? This a car.
	6	% AS-units with verbs	17% (n=6/33)	43% (n=7/16)	21% (n=4/19)	25% (n=7/28)
	7	Average turn length (#words per turn-at-talk)	3.11 ex: "Missa, I'm bread!"	3.82 ex: "I done! I done!"	3.57 ex: "Miss Luci, I'm this!"	2.40 ex: "I done!"

The Spring

By the spring, all four students' English had grown in some way. Yet, as Ellen sensed, the students had not all "just picked it up." Table 5.2 summarizes fall and spring measures across students.

Quantity of English use. (Table 5.2, Row 1 and 2) By spring, although Kritika and Rashmi each produced a slightly higher proportion of English turns to Nepali turns than in the fall (19→25% and 21→26%), both were using about the same number of English words per hour, if not slightly less (105→98 and 132→95). Padma and Hande, on the other hand, showed strong increases in the number of English words they were using per hour, with Padma doubling her fall amount (114 →237) and Hande more than tripling hers (128→449). This meant that in the spring, Padma was using 2.5 times as many English words per hour as Kritika and Rashmi and that Hande was using 4 times as many. While Hande's English turns continued to make up 100% of her talk, Padma's English turns now made up 66% of hers (up from 17%).

Vocabulary. All four students showed growth in vocabulary (see Table 5.2, Row 3). Kritika's count of different words used nearly doubled (24→45) and Rashmi showed growth of around 50% (27→42). This meant that while their overall number of English words decreased slightly, the words they did use were more diverse. Yet, in the same time, Padma and Hande each more than tripled their vocabulary (27→92 and 36→116 different words).

Complexity. Kritika, Padma, and Rashmi ended the year with similar mean utterance lengths (see Table 5.2, Row 4) and turn lengths (see Table 5.2, Row 7). For Kritika and Padma, this meant some growth from the fall (about a half word/AS-unit for Kritika and one word for Padma), while for Rashmi this meant hardly any growth from the fall. In terms of verb use, Kritika doubled the number of utterances with verbs (to 36%), while Padma and Rashmi saw very small growth (see Table 5.2, Row 6). On all complexity measures, however, Hande far surpassed the other focal students. Her average utterance length increased from 2.07 to 4.60 words (Table 5.2, Row 3) and 84% of her utterances now contained verbs (Table 5.2, Row 6), sometimes more than one. Additionally, her turns at talk, which were often made up of more than one AS-unit, averaged 7.66 words, up from 2.40 in the fall and nearly double the other focal students (Table 5.2, Row 7).

Table 5.2

		Kritika		Rashmi		Padma		Hande	
		Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
Use	1	% turns at talk in English)/hour video (n=22/118)	25% (n=29/115)	21% (n=24/114)	26% (n=27/105)	17% 20 (98) =	66% 70 (106) =	100% 54 (54) =	100% 60 (60) =
	2	# English wds /hour 105	98	132	95	114	237	128	449
Vocab	3	# <i>different</i> English words /hour 24	45	27	42	27	92	36	116
	4	Average utterance length (# wds per AS-unit) 2.56 ex: "I'm done!"	3.09 ex: "No, it's cupcake!"	3.00 ex: "I'm go here!"	3.21 ex: "Where's my spoon?"	2.36 ex: "This no."	3.18 ex: "I like this girl."	2.07 ex: "Help me?"	4.60 ex: "I didn't do my picture!"
Complexity	5	Examples of AS-units Missa, I'm water! I'm done! Missa, I'm pineapple! Where Padma baby? What your name? Bread! Airplane!!!	Where's the red? It's ball and it's my name. Gimme black, Kelsey! It's circle. My mom's on Saturday Ewww, it's gusting. I like pink	Teacher, I need here in baby! Tram! I like apple. I like hungry. I like pumpkin. I'm go here. I'm play here.	You write my name. I want more too! What your name? Where's my spoon? You got a Nepali naam? I done. This cloth is mine!	This no. I'm pineapple! I'm that! I'm bread! Water! Teacher, I'm this! This is hot.	What about cracker? Or jacket! Princess! Shirt! My sheet, oopsies! Hey, I'm not go that! Krite!	Look at dis! It's red. Go housekeeping! I? Come on. Help me? This a car	Can I help you? You making it like a tree - big giant tree! Where's the baby doll? I didn't do my picture! Can we do puzzle? Your earrings are so nice.
	6	% AS-units with verbs 17% (n=6/33)	36% (n=14/40)	43% (n=7/16)	50% (n=16/32)	21% (n=4/19)	25% (n=18/76)	25% (n=7/28)	84% (n=84/101)
	7	Average turn length (mean # words per turn-at-talk) 3.11 ex: "Missa, I'm bread!"	3.83 ex: "Oven! This is oven."	3.82 ex: "I done! I done!"	3.92 ex: "Can you open this?"	3.57 ex: "Miss Luci, I'm this!"	3.84 ex: "Tea. I know tea."	2.40 ex: "I done!"	7.66 ex: "I have today 3 and now I get my birthday tomorrow."

While Rashmi's weak growth fit with Ellen's assessment of her, and with the idea that a negative and peripheral position would afford less interaction and practice, the other students defied both. Kritika showed weak growth overall while Padma excelled in vocabulary and English use, and Hande excelled on all counts. By these measures Kritika learned much less than her teachers or I had anticipated and Hande learned much more. Yet this analysis of language only accounts for the words that students were able to produce, without considering their effects. In order to examine language as a social practice—as utterances produced for a particular market and valued or obeyed to varying extents—it is necessary to look beyond each speaker's turn to the place of each turn within ongoing discourse.

Analysis II

Language as Social Practice: Learning How to Do Things with Language

The competence adequate to produce sentences that are likely to be understood may be quite inadequate to produce sentences that are likely to be listened to... (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 55)

Looking at the children's utterances as speech acts—for what the utterances aimed to do, whether they were recognized by others, and whether they were acted upon in desired ways—tells a different story from the analysis of vocabulary/syntax. Austin's original conception of speech acts provided the framework for this analysis, by breaking utterances into form, function, and effect. Looking at each utterance, de-identified and then in context, I asked, first, if it had a form that conventionally resembled the act that the student was trying to accomplish; second, whether it was recognized by interlocutors as that act (Was there evidence that someone heard? Was there evidence that they took the act to be what was intended?); and third, whether it produced the desired effect. For example, if a student produced the utterance, "More milk!" and was told by the teacher (as Kritika was on 10/29/12), "Milk milk milk. Drink you milk. Gotta have your strong bones and milk," the act was categorized as a Request, marked Yes for conventional form, Yes for recognized force, and No for desired effect.

To give an example of this process, the following are four acts from across the students and how I rated them, not knowing the speaker or context:

- (1) "Gimme black? Kelsey!" (request)
- (2) "I need a red!" (request)
- (3) "I want some!" (request)
- (4) "I want red this one." (request, but could also be the act of choosing or a statement of intent, as by a student about to color something red)

When I re-identified these acts, and was able to then examine each in context (see transcripts 1-4 below), I found that all were indeed requests, so each was rated as having an understandable form. I then looked to see whether there was uptake for these requests. In 1-3, the acts are acknowledged and a hearer's reaction showed that they were recognized as requests. In #4, Padma's initial request is not acknowledged at all. Thus, acts 1-3 were rated as having recognized force, while 4 was not. Finally, I looked to the hearer's (or hearers') reaction to see if the speech act achieved the desired effect. Only Kritika's act (1) was successful in this regard.

(1) April 3, 2013: Kritika is drawing at the art table and wants the marker that Kelsey is using.

		
Kritika: Gimme black?	Kritika: Kelsey!	Kelsey: (gives Kritika the black marker)
FORM: YES		FORCE: YES EFFECT: YES






(2) May 6, 2013: Hande is at the playdough table and wants more red playdough.

		
Hande: "I need a red!"	(Pooja looks up)	Pooja: You HAVE it!
FORM: YES		FORCE: YES EFFECT: NO

(3) May 6, 2013: Rashmi is at the playdough table and wants more playdough.

		
Lucia: Share the play dough, Tommy. So you don't have all of it. Luke's got some?	Rashmi: I want some!	Lucia: You got some (points).
	FORM: YES	FORCE: YES EFFECT: NO

(4) May 6, 2013: Padma is at the playdough table, holding the empty cup, and wants some playdough. She makes three request attempts. (The first was the one discussed above.)

A	 <p>Padma: I want red this one.</p>	 <p>(no one acknowledges)</p>	
	FORM: YES	FORCE: NO EFFECT: NO	
B	 <p>Padma: I want red this o:::::ne.</p>	 <p>Pooja: Miss Katie! Padma wants some red.</p>	
	FORM: YES	FORCE: YES EFFECT: NO	
C	 <p>Padma: (tries to take from Hande)</p>	 <p>Hande: No. (takes back) Padma: (doesn't persist)</p>	 <p>Padma: (to no one in particular) I want like that one!!</p>
			FORM: YES FORCE: NO EFFECT: NO

By completing this process for each speech act, it is possible to summarize the percentage of students' speech acts that were successful or not in each of the three elements:

Table 5.3, and the same data represented visually in chart 5.4 beneath it, show that while Kritika's speech acts were least often clearly recognizable or understandable in conventional ways, they were *most* often recognized and responded to in the way she wanted. This meant that in 15% of Kritika's speech acts, someone was able to read the right intention into her utterances (or to work to figure it out), even when the form was not clear, as in the "I'm oven" example above.

Additionally, every time that Kritika's acts were recognized, they were responded to in the way that she hoped. In the other students' cases, meanwhile, there was a portion of acts that were recognizable, but still went unrecognized (like Padma's request for playdough). And of the acts that were recognized, another portion of these were still ineffective, as in Rashmi and Hande's playdough requests. For

Rashmi and Hande, then, the difference between acts that were recognizable (96%) and those that produced a desired social effect (53% and 42%, respectively) was quite large.

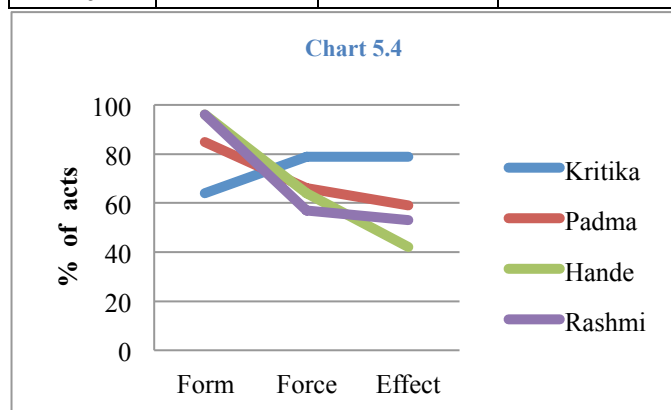
By categorizing acts by type, it was also possible to look at the same kind of act across students. The following example contrasts Hande, the least effectual focal student, and Kritika, the most effectual focal student, as they carry out the act of tattling: In late spring, Kritika approached a teacher on the playground to report that, "Anita Sreya hit," (Field Notes, May 6, 2013). By this, Kritika meant that Sreya hit Anita, to which the teacher responded by immediately calling Sreya over for a talk. Although Kritika's tattle was ill-formed and a bit ambiguous from a grammatical perspective, it was quite effective, despite a lack of evidence of the act. The teacher also knew right away who had done the hitting. This speaks not only to the classroom identities of Anita and Sreya, but it shows Kritika being positioned as a reliable witness and authoritative source of information.

About a week earlier, at snack time, Hande watched as Tommy took all of the orange slices from the snack bowl, squeezed them into his milk, and then soaked his napkin in it. As he wrung his napkin onto his plate and began slurping it up, Hande called to the teachers:

Table 5.3

	Conventional Form	Recognized Force	Desired Effect
Kritika n=38	64% (23)	79% (27)	79% (27)
Padma n=42 ¹¹	85% (36)	66% (28)	59% (25)
Rashmi n=26	96% (25)	57% (15)	53% (14)
Hande n=61	96% (55)	64% (37)	42% (25)

Chart 5.4



¹¹ An astute reader may notice that Padma had many more turns according to table 5.2. Turns in which Padma was involved in language play with the researcher were not counted here, as this was a speech event that no other students participated in and that Padma never participated in with anyone else, meaning that there were no established practices outside of our interactions to help me understand what felicitous language play would be in this classroom. I would, therefore, say that all of her language-play acts were felicitous, since she and I were making it up as we went. Were I to include these, therefore, Padma would look much more successful in classroom practice than she was outside of this play.

Hande: (pointing) Look she did her paper this! Tommy this her paper did this! She did her paper all this! Tommy did all milk. Miss Lucia! Miss Lucia!

Lucia: (comes closer to look)

Hande: Tommy all milk. She drink it. Now she drink it! No more orange! No more in here liquid! She's there. All mixed up. And she's eating.

Lucia: Alright thanks, Hande.

Tommy: No, I'm NOT a girl. I a boy!

Lucia: Tommy, finish your snack.

Tommy: She called me a girl!

Lucia: She gets mixed up, that's all. It's okay.

Tommy: YOU called me girl.

Hande: I called you a boy.

Tommy: She did. She did that to me.

Lucia: Alright sweetheart, want to eat some of your bread and jelly?
(Video, April 15, 2014)

Here, Hande flagged down the teacher and showed her what Tommy had done. Lucia thanked Hande without investigating and when Tommy loudly objected that Hande called him a girl, the teacher shifted her focus to assuring Tommy that, “She just got mixed up, it’s okay,” without intervening in Tommy’s orange monopoly and mess. When Tommy persisted, Lucia called him sweetheart and directed him to his bread and jelly. While Hande’s tattle was much more complex and information-rich than Kritika’s and was supported by immediately visible evidence, she was not positioned as a reliable source, but rather a “mixed-up” one, with the focus brought to her language mistakes rather than the content of her claim.

Speech Acts and Participant Frames

Bourdieu wrote that felicity conditions are essentially social conditions, but he did not specify how social status might translate into speech act success outside of official, institutional acts, like marriage or military commands. One potential mechanism by which social positioning might translate into successful linguistic practice are through participant frameworks. Some speech acts have particular participant frames that are a condition for their success. For instance, for a student to successfully request milk at lunch, she has to be recognized as speaker (whether on her own or another’s behalf) and someone with milk has to take up the position of hearer. The most direct way to accomplish bringing this framework into being would be for the student who wants milk to address the person with milk (whether there is a carton on the table by another student or whether a teacher has to bring it.) But if the student by the milk did not hear and an unaddressed overhearer with milk access did, she may still pass the milk. The key is to evoke, for someone capable of helping, the speech event frame for “request” and to provoke him/her to participate in the appropriate participant framework.

Thus a successful speech act involves getting someone to hear, then listen, then recognize the frame, then participate in it. In the “Request” examples above, Padma was not even able to get anyone to listen to her first attempt at a request. In her second attempt, her friend Pooja heard her, but rather than taking up the role of an addressee who could give Padma playdough, she instead took the role of animator (amplifier) of Padma’s request. This was not Padma’s desired outcome, nor did it help secure playdough. Hande and Rashmi were both able to get someone to listen and to recognize the event frame, but neither hearer was the right kind of addressee in that

neither was willing to help. In Kritika's case, she enlisted the right person (the one with the marker) into the right role (addressee) within the right framework (request) and then got Kelsey to accommodate the request. While Kritika's social capital may have made it easier to get someone to listen and eventually to participate, there were other things that Kritika did that helped here, too. She chose an addressee who could fill the role in her speech event frame and she used that addressee's name in her request to make this clear. She also looked at Kelsey and reached her arm toward her, first to ask for the marker and then to receive it. Recall Kritika's scolding of Padma, where her gaze, stance, and expression all helped to evoke the speech event frame, even for me, who could not understand the words. Kritika showed the same skill in bringing about participant frames.

In the tattling examples above, Kritika and Hande both attempted to create an event framework for tattling, in which an offended speaker reports on an absent or silent third party's deviant behavior to an authority figure addressee, who listens, sometimes asks the third party to answer to the tattle, then intervenes or punishes the third party. In Kritika's case, that is indeed how the tattle went. In Hande's case, however, the third party (Tommy) did not remain silent, but managed to hijack the speech event, taking the role of offended speaker and forcing Hande to answer to his claims of offense. Lucia never had time to intervene in Hande's tattle before being drawn in as addressee and arbiter in Tommy's tattle. Thus, part of successful linguistic practice was having the social capital and the communicative tools (in many modes) to bring about the correct participant frameworks.

Up to this point, this chapter has shown how Kritika, who was seen as a good student and playmate and who was central to the social network of the class, was consistently able to do more with less. Despite her comparatively small linguistic growth (in vocabulary and syntax – see Analysis I), classmates were less likely to ignore her utterances, teachers were better able to read the correct intention into them, and everyone was more likely to take her utterances seriously (see Analysis II). Teachers also were willing to put more work into understanding her. In other words, Kritika was more likely to be heard, listened to, and reacted to, while Padma's speech acts were effective to a slightly lesser degree, and Hande and Rashmi even less so. The exchange of social and academic capital into linguistic capital here is clear. "Symbolic capital is credit," wrote Bourdieu, "but in the broadest sense, a kind of advance, a credence" (1990, p. 120). Kritika's position in the classroom "bought" others' belief and attention, while Hande's did not. While social positioning was therefore not related to language-as-a-system growth in this classroom, it was strongly related to both the perception of linguistic competence and to actual linguistic power, or the ability to use language to get things done in practice.

Explaining the Outcomes: Looking to the Larger Linguistic and Social Field

The linguistic make-up of the class was a topic of significant discussion for teachers and parents and, as it turned out, their concern that having so many Nepali students would be socially supportive but linguistically detrimental to the Nepali speakers was a valid one, at least in terms of vocabulary/syntax. Kritika, Padma, and Rashmi, who could use Nepali at school, made much less progress than Hande, who from the beginning had to use English if she wanted to interact. Additionally, while for Kritika, Padma, and Rashmi, English interactions occurred primarily with

the two teachers, one researcher, and six English speakers, Hande's interactions took place in English with all 17 children and three adults. As Ellen said:

Whereas the Nepali kids were able to speak their own language during the day, the only time I heard [Hande] speak anything, it was in English, unless she said something to her Mom. [...] Cause if she didn't speak in English, she didn't say anything. (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013)

Yet, the conclusion that Ellen and Lucia drew from this was not that Hande would therefore learn more English, but that, "she didn't have anybody to talk to. I am surprised she didn't pick up Nepal (laughing)" (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013). Because of Hande's low social status, Ellen assumed that she would not interact much with the English speakers (although she sometimes did) or speak with the Nepali children on shared terms, in English (although she always did), rather than on their terms, in Nepali. Ellen went on:

That's why I think she was by herself a lot. You know, she would either do the art- you don't have to play- do anything with anybody there. She very rarely was in housekeeping or she'd go to Sand or she'd go to Library. She didn't really go to Housekeeping or to the block area. Well, block area? Towards the end she started going there, but she really just mostly wanted to do art. Which is- you know she was very good at it too. She liked to draw and paint so. (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013)

Hande's initial linguistic isolation contributed to her identity as a loner who struggled socially, and in turn this identity as a loner caused the teachers to see her as struggling linguistically. They did not see that she was really learning quite a bit. Thus, for Hande, the linguistic make-up of the class supported her language growth, but not the teachers' perception of her as a competent speaker.

While Hande struggled socially, but flourished linguistically, Kritika experienced the opposite. The make-up of the class ensured that Kritika's teacherly and motherly habitus had an immediate outlet from the start of school. Because she was able to speak the language of many of her peers, she was able to take her school skills, like knowing the rules and procedures, and social skills, like being an imaginative and patient playmate, and broadcast them immediately in Nepali. She thus avoided what Tabors (1987) called the "double bind" (p. 175) of entering a classroom in a new language and facing the obligation of tackling the social and the linguistic at the same time. As the examples at the start of the chapter showed, Kritika's strengths were not lost on the teachers and they came to see her as someone who was listened to and whose words were important. Kritika's Nepali interactions helped to put her at the center of the Nepali social scene, to solidify her identity, and to make her an effective speaker, yet they may have also prevented her from learning more English.












The Limits of Centrality

An assumption of this study's design, bolstered by findings from past research (e.g., Day, 2002; Toohey, 2000), was that a central social place and an identity as competent and authoritative were inherently positive and would be better for language learning. The study also assumed the opposite: that a peripheral social place and an identity as incompetent and non-authoritative were inherently negative and would be worse for language learning. In Rashmi's

case, this held true. With her cousin as her preferred playmate, her way of remaining on the edge of everyone else's play, and her air of being in her own world, she did in fact miss opportunities for English practice (e.g., in Chapter Four when she did not realize she was being invited into play). Yet, for the other three students, the question of whether centrality was positive and peripherality was negative is more complex.

For Kritika, centrality came with obligations, and being seen as a competent student and authority figure could sometimes be a burden. For instance, Kritika was constrained by a need to maintain her identity as competent. This meant that situations in which she was positioned as “not knowing” or “not able” were threatening to her. One day at art, Lucia came to ask what the students had drawn. When Kritika answered, Lucia could not immediately understand what she said, but as on other occasions, worked very hard to try to understand, as did the other children around them. Despite Kritika's repetition of her words, Lucia still could not understand.

 <p>9:18</p>	 <p>9:20</p>	 <p>9:21</p>
<p>Kritika: (Hands picture to Lucia)</p>	<p>and starts to walk away)</p>	<p>Lucia: Kritika, what is it?</p>
 <p>9:27</p>	 <p>9:29</p>	 <p>9:30</p>
<p>Kritika: It's ball (points) and it's my name (points).</p>	<p>Lucia: It's balls?</p>	<p>Kritika: (points)</p>
 <p>9:31</p>	 <p>9:37</p>	 <p>9:41</p>
<p>Lucia: Ball. Ok. (writes) Ok, what else?</p>	<p>Kritika: It's my name B (“beh”).</p>	<p>Lucia: Huh? Say that again.</p>



 <p>9:42</p>	 <p>9:43</p>	 <p>9:45</p>
<p>Kritika: It's my name B ("beh") (points).</p>	<p>Lucia: (looks)</p>	<p>Lucia: Big?</p>
 <p>9:46</p>	 <p>9:47</p>	 <p>9:49</p>
<p>Kritika: Be:::::ee. A-B!</p>	<p>Lucia: AB?</p>	<p>Kelsey: She says, "A-B."</p>
 <p>9:52</p>	 <p>10:00</p>	
<p>Kritika: A:: (as if starting to sing ABC song, stops and just says) A. AB. (leans in toward Lucia, louder) B! B!!!</p>	<p>Lucia: B for ball?</p>	<p>Kritika: (writes a pretend B on the table with her finger)</p>
 <p>10:03</p>	 <p>10:06</p>	 <p>10:08</p>
<p>Kritika: B. (crosses arms, turns away slightly)</p>	<p>Lucia: B. For ball? (1.0.) (with concern) Kritika, you're doing so good.</p>	<p>Kritika walks away. Kelsey: I think it's a snowball.</p>

Although Lucia tried to reassure her, in the end, Kritika became frustrated and left the table. Across the year, Kritika was the only ELL whom I ever saw become upset about not being understood. While not being understood was a common experience for other students, perhaps making it more tolerable, it was also not a threat to their identities, as it was to Kritika.

Just as Kritika's identity as competent could constrain her, her centrality was also limiting in some ways. As a central player in the social world of the Nepali-speaking girls, she was almost always involved in play with these students. Her popularity with them made her a welcome playmate with the English speakers, yet she rarely had the chance to join English-speaking play precisely because of this popularity. I hardly ever saw Kritika playing alone and when she did, it was not long before other Nepali-speaking girls joined her. Additionally, as an authority figure, students and teachers came to call on her for assistance in negotiations and conflict resolutions. This meant that several times a day, each day that I visited, someone yelled across the room for her help. Sometimes these conversations involved her using English, but most often she carried out her assistance or direction in Nepali.

Meanwhile, unlike Kritika, Padma and Hande were not constantly in demand. For Hande, this meant being able to play alone uninterrupted, even when surrounded by peers. In one video, Hande drew at the busy art table without being spoken to for 34 minutes—an eternity in preschool time. While in a theory of language learning that depends on interaction, this would be wasted time, a closer look at these videos shows her paying attention to the English talk around her, as evidenced by pauses in her coloring and her looking up at interesting points in the conversation. In the same situation, Kritika might have been called away or joined by Nepali speakers. Yet, while Hande was not invited into the English conversation as Kritika might have been, she was also not pulled away from it and she maintained her place, to think in terms of participant roles, as a tolerated overhearer.

Hande's loner status combined with her lack of authority offered another possibility: semi-private rehearsal and practice. When Kritika spoke, people tried to figure out what she meant; Hande instead had to work to be listened to. Although this was sometimes frustrating to Hande, it also meant that when she did *not* want to be listened to, she was free to speak unattended to. On April 15, for example, Hande carried out this snippet of conversation with herself without the other student at the table ever looking up:

 <p>3:02</p>	 <p>3:03</p>
<p>“I make this picture go to my house.”</p>	<p>“and I pictu::::re.” (sweeping gesture)</p>



Hande, therefore, was able to practice English in a private way that was not available to Kritika, the public figure. Because so many theories of language learning prize face-to-face interaction as the ideal participation framework, Hande’s story raises serious questions about the kinds of social interaction and participation necessary for language learning.

Padma, too, was given certain possibilities by her social identity. While Padma was not as far on the periphery as Hande, she was also not constrained by popularity like Kritika. When Padma wandered away from playing with the other Nepali-speaking girls, no one came to join her where she went and no one needed her social help. Yet, while Hande was able to use her freedom to listen and practice on her own, Padma used it to spend time with me. I have notebooks filled with Padma’s “field notes” from free play time and more than a dozen recordings of meals where I found myself last at the table with Padma, as she dawdled to draw out our time together. On the rare occasion that Kritika came to write in my notebook with me, videos show other student flocking to us, but Padma and I spent a lot of time chatting alone. The following transcript, while typical in length and setting, provides a particularly striking example of how our interactions were different from those that Padma would have had with teachers or peers. Here, Padma begins by naming her cup in Nepali and then English. I catch on quickly.

Snack Table - Only Padma left, Katie next to Padma

- Padma: (silent, then smiles, points to her cup) *Kolfani*, glass. Eh, English eh, Nepali eh *kolfani* and (laughs, covers her mouth with her hand and shrugs shoulders)
- Katie: (understanding that Padma is translating, laughs) I like that game. What about orange? (Points to Padma's plate) English orange, Nepali:::?
- Padma: (giggles) Um (looks off toward windows) (4.0) English orange and Nepali eh *sundala!* (smiles and crinkles her nose)
- Katie: (not sure if it is made up. later finds that it is accurate) That's a long word! How bou:::t? (looking around)
- Padma: How bout water? (2.0) English water and Nepali //paani. //
- Katie: //paani!// English friend, Nepali saati!
- Padma: (nodding, smiling) Yeah! (looks around) English trash and Nepali- ee- uh - Nepali-Nepali (1.0) trash can!
- Katie: (laughs) No::: Nepali trash can? (laughing) What else?
- Pooja: (calls from carpet) Miss Katie look! (holds up paper)

Katie: Oh wow!
 Pooja: My name!
 Lucia: Did you see how she wrote her name? look!
 Kaite: Beautiful! P-J-A!
 Pooja: No, P-O-O-J-A. (coming closer to show)
 Kaite: Nice!
 Padma: What about cracker?
 Katie: (inhales excitedly, points) English name, Nepali *naam*!
 Padma: (laughs) Yes!

[...brief interaction with Lucia about whether she is still eating...]

Padma: How bou:::t eyes. (points to hers) nnnn English, eyes, Nepali:: Nepali:::
 (3.0) I don't know.
 Katie: I don't know either.
 Padma: Eyes, I don't know.
 Katie: What's hair? (touches head) D'you know hair?
 Padma: (Nods emphatically) Nepali- English, hair, Nepali *kapaal*.
 Katie: Oh ok. What else?
 Padma: (sees Katie's water bottle on table) Bottle! English (glances at cup) kap
 and Nepali bottle. (giggles, crinkles nose)
 Katie: How bout (5.0) hmm I don't know that many words.
 Padma: (looks at art hanging from ceiling) Kite!
 Katie: Kite? I don't know kite in Nepali, do you?
 Padma: (Shakes head)
 Katie: No?
 Padma: Uhhh tea. Tea. I know tea and I know orange. English orange, Nepali,
sundala!
 Katie: (inhales, sits up) Ooh, I know another one. English cold (rubs arms),
 Nepali=
 Padma: =Hot!
 Katie: (laughs) no:: Is it *cheeso*?
 Padma: (nods, smiling) Yeah.
 (Video, May 6, 2013)

In this example, Padma and I played with language in a way that was only made possible by our extended and largely uninterrupted time together and mutual interest in each other's languages. Looking back at these kinds of interactions, it is hard to imagine that our conversations did not contribute in some way to Padma's vocabulary growth. Thus, paradoxically, the same social positioning that made Hande and Padma less effective with their language also allowed them to hear and play with language in ways that Kritika could not have, and this may have contributed to their growth in language as a system. Conversely, while Kritika's social position may have constrained her language-as-a-system growth, it also enabled her to be a very effective language user in the social practice of the classroom.

So Who Was a Successful Learner?

It is easy for me to conclude that Rashmi—lagging behind the other focal students in both acquisition and practice—was *not* the most successful, although she had a lot of fun across the year and would be returning in the fall to do it all over again (an idea that made Ellen and Lucia shake their heads and laugh). It is also easy enough, while less so, to say that Padma was not most successful, although she certainly learned quite a bit and made a very good researcher-friend. Perhaps if I had measured success in metalinguistic talk and language play, Padma would instead have looked more successful than anyone. But what about Hande and Kritika?

In her spring interview, Ellen admitted that, overall, the students had not learned as much English as she would have liked:

To me I think that (1.0) being that there was just so many, they fell back on their language and they didn't have to, you know, try that hard to learn English. But, if you are the only one, you're either going to sink or swim. (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013)

And yet, Ellen did not view Hande as having an advantage or even think of her in this discussion of sinking and swimming. In Ellen and Lucia's classroom, linguistic capital was so closely bound up with social and academic capital that it was impossible for the teachers to see value in Hande's language growth. What counted for them was what students could accomplish socially and academically through language, as part of the ongoing practice of the classroom. As such, Hande's quiet learning went unnoticed. But, while she had a more difficult year socially than some of her peers and could not write the alphabet in Ellen's assessments, looking at the growth in sophistication of her vocabulary and syntax (Table 5.2) makes it hard to say that she had an unsuccessful year.

While Kritika, Padma, Rashmi and the other Nepali speakers spent much more time speaking Nepali than their teachers would have liked, the fact that a group of three- and four-year-olds were able to create a multilingual classroom under the watch of adults who said, "We only speak English here," and in a district where everything happens in English, is quite remarkable. That Kritika was able to learn just as much English as she needed in order to accomplish her own aims, and that the teachers saw and valued this, was also remarkable. In the face of Hande's language-as-system growth, it is hard to say that Kritika made significant gains in English, but looking at Kritika's role in the interactional life of the classroom, it is just as hard to call Kritika unsuccessful.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS

Summary of the Study

This study followed a group of English learners in a Head Start preschool classroom as they made their way across their first year of school, becoming students as well as English speakers. It explored the idea that a more positive and central classroom identity would lead students to have better English outcomes, an idea supported by work on language and identity (i.e., Norton Pierce, 1995), identity and academic learning (i.e., Wortham, 2006), as well as several studies of language learning and identity in early elementary classrooms (Willet, 1995; Toohey, 2000; Day, 2002; Hawkins, 2005). Through classroom participant observation and interviews, I found that for teachers Ellen and Lucia, the relationship between identity and language learning was indeed a strong one: Kritika, most central and popular, was judged most successful in English learning by both teachers; they were less sure Padma's language progress, reflecting Padma's under-the-radar, not-a-problem positioning; and they did not see Hande or Rashmi as having made much progress, corresponding to their more negative identities.

Yet, when I analyzed corpora of the students' talk from across the year, I found that in terms of vocabulary growth and syntactic complexity development, the teachers' assessments—and my own predictions—were mistaken. Hande excelled on all measures, while Kritika showed much less growth than predicted. Padma was more ambiguous, having made good gains (though less than Hande) in vocabulary, but not much growth in complexity. Only Rashmi met the teachers' and my expectations, having shown little growth on any measures. When I conducted a second analysis, however, for the four students' success in having their linguistic acts heard, recognized, and responded to, Kritika returned to her place at the top. Her teachers and peers worked harder to understand her, even when she was less clear in her speech acts, and they more often recognized and responded to Kritika in the ways that she intended. Rashmi and Hande showed the least success here: While most of their acts were understandable, they were only recognized some of the time, and had the intended effect even less of the time. In this chapter, I discuss implications of this dissertation's findings for research, theory, and practice.

Discussion and Implications

Considering the Whole Language Ecology

Across the year, Ellen expressed concern that she was not seeing much interaction between the Nepali- and English-speaking students. She also felt that having so many Nepali speakers in the class might have hindered their English growth. At the same time, she acknowledged that having so many speakers of the same L1 must have been comforting to students in what could have otherwise been a scary, new setting. In interviews with parents of the Nepali-speaking students, the parents echoed the insight that Nepali could have been beneficial in some ways and costly in others. They debated whether it might not be better to have only one or two Nepali peers with their children, so that the children would not feel, as Monal's

father put it, “linguistic suffocation,” but so that they might also have more chances to use English. The tension between having classroom conditions that are ideal for language learning versus those that are socially supportive turned out to be quite relevant in Kritika’s and Hande’s stories. For Kritika, having so many Nepali speakers in the class was an immediate boon to her ability to achieve a desirable social identity in the class, both among teachers and peers. Enforcing and guiding others in the rules made her competence highly visible and positioned her as an authority and a knower. Having Nepali speakers around her also allowed her to make friends much more quickly than had she not shared a language with any classmates, because, as her peers’ reactions showed and my translator confirmed, she was eloquent, funny, and imaginative in Nepali. These interactions in turn helped non-Nepali speakers see that she was a responsive and competent playmate and was worth inviting into their interactions. Kritika thus sidestepped the ELL double-bind (Tabors, 1987) of having to prove her friend-worthiness in a language she could not yet use well.

Yet, the number of Nepali speakers in the class also meant that Kritika could to fulfill her social needs in Nepali and this may have, as the teachers and parents suspected, led her to learn less English. Padma and Rashmi, too, were also able to enjoy the kind of social life that they wanted—Padma with the other Nepali-speaking girls and Rashmi with her cousin, Prakesh—using mainly Nepali, and they both loved school and probably would have rated their year highly, precisely because of their Nepali-speaking peers. Meanwhile, Hande, who began school speaking a language different from everyone else, was not afforded the same social possibilities—either for showing off competence like Kritika or enjoying easy friendships like Padma and Rashmi—by her language. She had to work for interactions and work to maintain them and she had to use English for all of it. While this made it a much harder year for her socially, her vocabulary and syntax grew significantly.

Understanding the languages at play in the classroom and how they interacted to influence learning is crucial here. Had I ignored students’ other languages under the rationale that this is a study of English learning, I would have missed a piece of the story. In planning methodologies for studies of L2 learning, researchers must therefore account for all of the languages in students’ learning ecologies. Additionally, since the same social conditions that made some students successful in language-as-social-practice were those that kept them from having the comparable success in acquiring language-as-a system, helping teachers to understand how different conditions can lead to different kinds of growth is also important.

Identity and Learning, Revisited

Kritika and Hande’s outcomes challenge an assumption made by my own study’s design and research questions: That an identity as competent and authoritative and a central place in the class are inherently positive. Just as the classroom conditions that supported Kirika’s social success may not have been the best for language learning, the Kritika’s social identity as a successful student may have in fact hindered her actual learning of English words and structures. Bloome, Puro, and Theodorou (1989) discovered that successful execution of what they call “procedural displays” of classroom competence do always correspond to actual content knowledge and skills. Rymes and Pash (2001) found that in the case of one ELL in first grade, his efforts at creating and maintaining an identity of “competent” actually *prevented* him from seeking understanding and learning. Kritika’s social success may have had the same effect, constraining her to keep up her identity as competent and an authority. While teachers and students listened to what she had to say, she was also the only student who was ever visibly upset

when she was not understood, as in the example on pages 107-108. This may have meant that Kritika did less risk-taking in English than she otherwise might have. Additionally, as a central figure in the Nepali girls' social world, Kritika was frequently pulled into interactions with these girls, which may have prevented her from engaging in other potential interactions and might have resulted in less participation in English interactions overall.

Meanwhile Rashmi, Padma, and Hande did not experience these constraints. Padma used the freedom afforded by her peripherality to spend time with adults, particularly the researcher, which may have bolstered her vocabulary and metalinguistic awareness. Hande's peripherality made her a kind of free agent, able to play with anyone who invited her, which sometimes meant English speakers. Yet, it also did not make any group of students feel obligated to include her, so that students often played in her presence without pulling her in. While this may seem like a constraint, it enabled her to listen in on conversations without having to have the resources to contribute, and at other times allowed her to practice English through self-talk, uninterrupted.

This study shows therefore, that while identity indeed mattered for these students' learning, it is important to ask, "How?" when claiming identity's impact on learning. In this work, exploring the "how" in two different ways led to two opposite findings about whether positive identity mattered or not: While it did not lead to better language outcomes in terms of vocabulary and syntax, it was consequential for accomplishing social acts through language. This finding raises questions about the assumptions made by many studies of identity and learning: That different identities, which create greater or less opportunity for learning, actually result in differences in learning. While Kritika's position afforded her access to anyone in the class, this did not mean that she acted upon that access or learned more English because of it. Future work in identity and learning should not assume that learning opportunities afforded by identities always translate unambiguously into learning outcomes.

Participation in Language Learning, Revisited

Hande's case and her ways of participating in social interactions also raise questions about the very nature of participation. In Chapter One, I introduced the idea that interaction is an important condition for children learning language (Clarke, 1999; Hatch, 1978; Peck, 1980; Piker, 2013; Toohey, 2000). Interaction plays a role in nearly every theory of second language acquisition, from the most cognitively oriented, in which interaction serves as a source of input, to theories influenced by the work of Vygotsky, in which social interaction is the basis of all development, including language development (1978). In Vygotskian sociocultural theory, which has become influential in SLA through the work of Rick Donato, Jim Lantolf, Merrill Swain, and Steve Thorne, among others, learning takes place first on the social or intra-individual plane, before being internalized for use on the individual plane. For second language researchers who draw on Vygotskian sociocultural theory, interaction is therefore at the very center of language learning: Far from simply providing input, is the location of learning itself. Specifically, Lantolf (2000, 2013; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, 2007) sees interaction as mediating L2 learning in two important ways: First, by providing opportunities to understand and appropriate others' intentional ways of using language to participate in activity, and second, by enabling learners to use language in ways that are just beyond their individual capabilities, in their zones of proximal development, or the range of activities that a person cannot yet complete independently, but can in cooperation with another person. Donato (1994) and Swain (1997, 2002) describe similar learning processes, which they call "collective scaffolding" and "collaborative dialogue," respectively. Through these interactions with others, learners appropriate language that they can

then rehearse in private speech (which Lantolf—and Vygotsky—still considered to be dialogic) or use productively in other interactions.

Hande's participation, however, brings into question what the initial learning interaction must consist of. Swain (1997) found that the most important element of these interactions was negotiation of meaning, and all three authors (Swain, Donato, Lantolf) discussed interactions as spaces for co-construction of knowledge. Yet, recall Hande at the art table, listening, looking up at the right times, and paying attention, but never being drawn in to the conversation as a ratified participant and never trying to enter as a speaker. Hande was often on the sidelines of peer interaction, in the participant role of a tolerated overhearer, and while she shared physical space with these interactions, there was no collaborative dialogue or negotiation of meaning. Yet, Hande would later have the kind of private speech rehearsal events that Lantolf and Swain argue have their basis in earlier interactions with others.

Saville-Troike (1988) wrote that, “there has been a tendency in the second language field to equate overt production with active learning, and lack of overt production with passivity and disengagement” (p. 568). She argued that researchers often make the “unconscious assumption that nothing of significance was happening unless learners were talking to each other” (p. 569). Schulz (2009), in her book, *Rethinking Classroom Participation*, has argued against the view that silence = non-participation. She instead explored the multiple functions of silence in classrooms—from resistance to space for processing and creativity—and argued for them as valid forms of participation. By defining participation as synchronous, active interaction or talk with peers, studies of language learning, including this one, may have limited how they investigate students' paths to language. Hande, through active listening and later self-talk, was successful at mediating her learning in ways that Kritika, who engaged in the kinds of interactions traditionally valued in SLA, was not. By expanding our notion of interaction to include participant roles like overhearers and eavesdroppers and by considering responses across time and space as potentially part of the same interaction, we may better understand learners like Hande.

Language Learning Revisited: What Did Kritika Learn?

While Hande's path to learning raised questions for interactionist theories of SLA, her outcomes themselves can be understood in traditional ways: Hande had a greater need for English, heard more English, used more English, and thereby acquired more vocabulary and became more fluid and complex in structuring her utterances. This is what language learning is typically understood to be. Yet Kritika's learning cannot be explained in the same way. In order to understand Kritika's case, learning must be seen as not just cognitive, but as a bodily process. Kritika was quick to internalize the social conditions of the classroom—the “rules of the social game” so to speak—and to project them back at classmates and teachers. Just weeks into the school year, she was sitting exactly as she is portrayed on page 68, legs crossed, hands in her lap. Kritika raised her hand, stood in line, walked in the hallway. Her newly developing school habitus predisposed her to act in ways that matched teachers' expectations and the expectations of the field of preschool in general. Contrary to the idea that positioning occurs through language, much of Kritika's positioning as “good student” happened through bodily manifestations of her habitus, what Bourdieu (1977, 1990) called *bodily hexis*—knowing when to speak and when to stay silent, how to sit, stand, walk, and chew. Kritika was literally the embodiment of a successful student.

Kritika's language success might also be described as a kind of internalization, only in this case, of the conditions necessary for carrying out particular speech acts. While this included a nascent understanding of felicity conditions in the Austinian sense—the right form, circumstances, intent, and persons—on the most basic level, for a speech act to succeed, it is first necessary to understand what the participant roles even are for that act and to be able to get the right people to take up those roles. As the year progressed, Kritika internalized these participant frames in ways that other students did not. While Rashmi and Padma were still yelling, “I’m done” and hoping the message would hit a teacherly target, Kritika was actively recruiting appropriate addressees. In Chapter Five, for instance, Padma called out for playdough to no one in particular, while Kritika directly addressed Kelsey to obtain a marker. Kritika also had the social capital to enable her to recruit others into her desired frameworks, like in her successful tattle. Additionally, the internalization of these frames allowed Kritika to succeed in filling the right roles in *others'* frames, whether in a peer argument or circle time. Recall Ellen's comment that Kritika was the only student she could actually hold a conversation with and that while Ellen might not understand everything Kritika said, she could converse with her. Kritika's communicative success, therefore, was not about vocabulary or structure, but about frames and capital.

Practice Theory Revisited

When Pierre Bourdieu conceived of practice, he built his theory around adults whose habitus were already formed. While he discussed early experiences, it was from the perspective of looking back and trying to reconstruct the habitus's formation in order to understand its present state. While this dissertation does the same in Chapter Three in order to understand parents and teachers, it turns in Chapters Four and Five to the students. Together, these latter chapters map some of the ways that culture is inscribed in students' bodies from childhood, in how they move, talk, and hold themselves. It shows the kinds of mundane requests and reminders—how to behave at the table, how to wash one's hands, walk in line, or speak in class—that constitute a second curriculum in schools. This work thus provides insight into the process of habitus formation, particularly the habitus of school, and contributes to an understanding of the continuities and discontinuities between the teacher's histories, their practices, and students' developing habitus.

Importantly, however, this work shows what a retrospective reconstruction cannot: that even though participating in the same field eventually will result in participants having habitus that are aligned, children's habitus do not necessarily form at the same rate or along the same path. Kritika, through her careful adaptation of her actions and words to the classroom market, was quickest to develop school habits, if not yet a full school habitus, bringing her in line with what teachers and the field demanded, giving her a “feel for the game.” This in turn brought her a quantity of social capital only shared by Kelsey, another student who exhibited a similar alignment of habitus to field, and it allowed Kritika to exchange social and academic capital for linguistic capital, giving her speech a weight that came from beyond the words alone. It also gave Kritika social possibilities and constraints that others may not have had. In a sense then, in a kind of positive feedback loop, students' developing habitus shape how they experience the very field in which their habitus are being formed. While Bourdieu wrote that fields could be larger than a single space, such as the field of Head Start or of preschool, this work suggests that it may be useful to think of fields as smaller than a single space, too. Objectively, Kritika and Hande were part of the same field, but if that field provided very different experiences for them,

was it really the same field? This project suggests that longitudinal work is needed to understand and perhaps to nuance the relationship of habitus and field from a developmental perspective.

The Rope Revisited: Thinking about the Teachers

At the start of this dissertation, I discussed the metaphor of context as rope. I wrote that a rope is the context for its strands at the same time that its strands constitute it. I also gave the example from van Lier (2004) that phonemes only exist as part of words, yet words only exist by being made up of phonemes, so that “that which surrounds” is not prior to that which it surrounds. I now realize that I should have been more specific. While it is true that any one word (a token) is not prior to its specific phonemes (other tokens), the category “word” (type) can certainly exist before those specific phonemes. Similarly, while Classroom Three was brought about precisely as a result of the presence of Kritika, Rashmi, Hande, and Padma’s families in the neighborhood, the field of classrooms (and subfield of preschool classrooms) long preceded them, as did the institution called “Head Start.” And although teachers need students in order to be teachers, they do not need any one particular group of students. Thus, the teachers and the field existed on a timescale longer than Classroom Three, and their histories entered the classroom as individual and institutional habitus. Thus, it might not be as easy for the strands to redefine the rope as the original metaphor may have made it seem.

These tensions between change and stasis produced contradictory practices and ideas for Ellen and Lucia. Both teachers spoke about having the ELLs in the class as the single most defining element in the story of their year, and they told me—and I observed—all the ways that they skillfully adapted their talk to assist these students. Yet, both teachers insisted that their teaching was exactly the same as it would have been had they had all English speakers in the class. Lucia fairly scolded me when, I asked the question, saying, “No. (1.0) Sorry. (2.0) You know children are children. Boy, girl, big, small, race, creed, language, outspoken, sad” (Lucia, Interview, November 16, 2012). Ellen likewise told me:

I still planned what I would have planned whether I had all Americans or not. Cause I just I thought well, they'll eventually learn it. This is stuff they have to learn so even if they get a smidgen of it, even if they learn the letter B and Q this year, ok, that's two more letters they know. No I don't think having non-English speaking affected how I planned. (Ellen, Interview, June 11, 2013)

The teachers’ inability or unwillingness to say that they adapted to their ELLs might have come from their belief, formed long ago in their family immigration narratives, that equality comes about through erasure of difference. This was the same belief that would not allow them to see other adaptations they could have made to support these students, like learning about and inviting the families’ languages and traditions into the classroom. For instance, on the day that students all showed up with rice on their foreheads, teachers chose to ignore it, as they chose to ignore questions about why Hande did not eat pork or the Nepali speakers, beef. Just as Ellen felt that using the iPad to translate or posting signs in Nepali would be doing students a disservice, the teachers felt that discussing language and culture or inviting home practices into the classroom would have meant highlighting difference and that this would be doing students a disservice as well.

Yet changes did occur. Ellen came into the year thinking that parent language was what was holding the students back, but she was able to revise her theory to include classroom social

dynamics through empirical evidence in the classroom. In a theory of practice, while habitus change reluctantly, Bourdieu wrote that changes can occur, particularly when the field shifts and people experience a mismatch between habitus and field. Suddenly old practices do not quite work and things that are usually invisible come to light. In the fall of this study, Ellen and Lucia entered a field that they thought was the same as others that they had been in, but by nature of the participants—Kritika, Rashmi, Hande, and Padma, but also Pooja, Sreya, Anita, Dinesh, Prakesh, Monal, and Maiya—it was different in some important ways. And while this disruption occurred, creating potential for change, the teachers were not offered any alternate narratives or practices and thus fell back on (slightly adapted) old ones.

What would have happened, though, if there had been some district support? What if teachers had been introduced to the ideas about multilingualism, shown how it does not hinder English, and given practices to support growth in multiple languages? What if teachers were walked through why talking about difference is beneficial and given tools to support talk about languages, clothes, and rice on foreheads? What if they played Nepali music or asked to hear Hande’s voice in Turkish? How would it have changed the year for the children, for the parents, and for Ellen and Lucia? All across the US, in places that long seemed immune to immigration and in places where multiple languages are the norm, there are teachers who are in Ellen and Lucia’s shoes. And in many of these places, preschool teachers are not required to learn and are not taught about language or working with linguistically diverse students. When teachers are left to their own devices, they—we—fall back on our habitus, for better or for worse. This can mean that very caring teachers, who truly love their students, can end up teaching in ways that may not help their students grow as much as they could. In the current push to support all students through expanded preschool programs, we should not forget that supporting students means supporting their teachers as well.

Final Thoughts: Changing How We Define and Assess Language

Why did we all, researcher included, fail to recognize Hande’s progress during the year? While many scholars have written about the situation that the ELLs in this class were tossed into, calling it “sink-or-swim” or “submersion” learning (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2010; Wright, 2010), Ellen and Lucia were, in a sense, tossed in as well. Neither teacher had experience or training working with ELLs and, as they both expressed, had to figure it out on their own. Lucia mentioned drawing on her experiences with her father to help her, but both teachers felt that any help from the district (even “a little workshop”) would have been helpful. And while they were indeed able to find strategies to help students understand classroom routines and directions (visuals, gestures, speaking slowly), they had not established, or really thought much about, how to assess who was learning. At the same time, while they lacked experience or expectations in language teaching and learning, they both had years of experience in setting goals for and assessing social and academic progress. For Ellen and Lucia then, these other competences became proxies for language competence. Without a way to understand language as extracted from what students could do with it—both academically (naming letters, answering questions at circle time) and socially (playing, sharing, talking with teachers)—the teachers could not see language in the decontextualized, systematic way that would have permitted them to see Hande’s acquisition.

There is more to this story, however, than simple lack of experience. While the teachers had no training in working with language learners or in understanding language learning, I, on the other hand, came to the classroom with a background in linguistics, experience in teaching ELLs in preschool, and an almost-PhD. And while I suspected that Padma had made more progress than the teachers thought, I too saw Kritika as having made great strides in learning, and I too failed to see the dramatic progress that Hande had made. Even with my training and experience, I could not untangle language from what the students were able to do with it, until after the school year was over and I conducted the corpus analyses. Why might this have been?

Looking back on the year, it occurs to me that in my own careful negotiation of my classroom subject position, I may have negotiated my way right out of my expertise. As I discussed in Chapter Two, I sought to position myself with the teachers as a former teacher, now a student, trying to understand something that I had not been able to understand in my own classroom. I comported myself as someone who was there to learn from their situation and to support them in classroom operations, without seeking to change their teaching, and at no time did I ever purport to be an expert on language learning or learners. I may have been so successful in this positioning that it was only after the year had ended, when I left the classroom and resumed my role as PhD student and data analyst, that I was able to see from the position as expert. If this is the case, then it raises questions about the ways that researcher positionality in ethnographic research might mediate expertise and ability to “see” in different ways. Perhaps if I had just walked into the classroom for a day and been asked to evaluate the students, I would have come to different conclusions.

Another possibility, however, is that without using tools like assessments or transcripts or recordings, it is simply very difficult to *see* language, no matter who you are. Because we live inside language, it is often transparent, or visible only as part of social practice. Without tools to render it visible as its own object, it is difficult to reflect on it, let alone reflect on it in more than one way. When I applied tools of analysis—recording, transcription, building a corpus, sorting, counting, teasing it apart in different ways—I was able to see how Hande excelled in acquisition, how Padma could manipulate language for fun, and even how that Rashmi used language in unexpected way. I was also able to see not just that Kritika was successful, but exactly *how* she was successful.

This means that the tools, including the definitions, that we use to look at language matter a great deal. The definition of language that we choose, the slice of language that we focus on, and the tools (or no tools) that we use to assess language all shape what counts as success and who looks successful. In this dissertation, examining language as vocabulary and syntax made Hande look successful, while examining language for its effects in practice made Kritika seem to have had more success. Neither of these is wrong; rather each only tells half the story. Although Ellen and Lucia’s assessment methods may seem to have been unfair to Hande, conversely, the standardized assessment that the students would be given before kindergarten would not be able to showcase Kritika’s skill. While Ellen and Lucia should be given tools to help them assess language in ways that would allow them to see Hande’s progress, their instinct to understand language as socially embedded should be fostered as well and they should be given tools to support seeing language in both ways. One might also ask what other ways of defining language there could be and who would be made to look successful by them. Padma might be most successful, were I to judge by ability to translate and play in between languages; and were I to evaluate in terms of linguistic resiliency or the ability to persist in creating a multilingual classroom, all of the Nepali speakers might be deemed to have had success. Teachers must be

able to understand and assess language in multiple ways, and thus hold multiple definitions of success. Linguistic success does not and should not mean one thing.

Looking Forward: Avenues of Future Work

This dissertation raises several issues that merit further investigation. First, how might assessment be enlarged to include these multiple kinds of language competence? Decades ago, the concept of “communicative competence” brought the focus beyond grammar, to learners’ ability to use language appropriately in context (Bachman, 1990; Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1974, 1992). More recently, the idea of “symbolic competence” (Kramsch, 2006; Kramsh & Whiteside 2008) highlighted the possibility for multilingual speakers to “play with various linguistic codes” (2008, p. 664) in order to shape the very game being played by reframing it. While it would be easy enough to supply teachers with one of the many tools for assessing language as a system, what would it look like to incorporate these other competences, like Kritika’s brand of effectiveness, into the ways that teachers assess language growth? What tools will be needed for this?

The video and corpus methods of this study, while revelatory, were also labor intensive in a way that would prevent them from being easily taken up by teachers. Future work should explore sampling procedures that would allow teachers to look for linguistic effectiveness with much less data and effort. The same line of work should also explore other kinds of competence—communicative, symbolic, Padma’s language play—and ways to evaluate these. While developing new ways of assessing inherently involves the risk of simply creating more ways to rank and sort students, evaluate means “to see value,” and expanding the ways in which teachers value language seems worth the risk. Rashmi’s case confirms this need, for what did she learn? When I say that I do not know, it implies a failure not on her part, but on mine. I simply have yet to find the right lens for her. Rashmi’s story underlines that this work is just beginning.

A necessary corollary to seeking more ways of evaluating language will be developing ways to support students’ growth in these domains. The information provided by an assessment is only as good as what one does with it. For instance, supporting linguistic effectiveness and language play would require more than providing better input (more vocabulary, rich talk). It might instead mean drawing students’ attention to language and talking about language form, as well as how language works.

A final direction of work opened by this dissertation is a reevaluation of the interactionist perspective on language acquisition. Hande’s ways of participating as an eavesdropper, overhearer, and active listener, combined with her vocabulary and grammar growth, suggest that there are useful ways of engaging in language-building interactions other than traditional turn-taking. Her case also suggests that her peripheral positioning enabled these kinds of participation. In folk tales, legends, and myths, it is those living at the periphery—the old woman at the edge of the swamp, the leper outside the city gates, the hermit in the hills—who see and do and know things that those at the center do not and cannot. The cases of Hande and Padma suggest that studying the periphery could reveal important new ideas about where language learning happens and how.

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Appendix A

Teacher Interview Protocol – Fall

The idea of this interview is to incorporate more of your ideas and perspective into the project and to have you tell me about yourself, your class, and your students. So, I want you to think of this less as an interview and more as you telling me stories...about you as a teacher, about your class, about your students. So, my questions aren't aimed toward particular answers, but just to help you along in your storytelling. Ok?

So the first story I'm interested in is your story as a teacher:

Purpose	Possible Prompts
Background knowledge	How did you decide to become a teacher? How long have you been teaching? How long have you been teaching this age group? Where and what else have you taught?
Feelings about teaching	What do you like best about your job? What do you like least? How do you think teaching has changed since you began? How does this school compare with other places you've taught?
Individual Stories	I'm interested in the stories of the individual students in your class. Would you go through one by one and tell me about them? Special talents? Contributions to the class? Challenges for them? Challenges in working with them? Development? Place in the social fabric of the classroom? Biggest goal for each.
Feelings about the class	Now that you've thought about your students individually, tell me about your class as a whole: How does it compare with past classes? What do you like most about it? What are some of your biggest challenges with this class?

<p>Teaching ELLs (the story of language)</p>	<p>Tell me a little bit about how you think about language in your classroom?</p> <p>How do think about the ways you talk to your students?</p> <p>The ways they talk to each other?</p> <p>What is it like to teach a class with students from multiple languages and backgrounds? (How does this compare to classes you've taught in the past?)</p> <p>Does this change the way that you use language in your classroom? (How so?) Does it change other aspects of your classroom or how you teach?</p> <p>Have you ever had any training on teaching English learners? How do you decide what approaches to take? What have you found that works? Doesn't work?</p> <p>How does this affect interactions with parents?</p>
<p>Experiences with and understandings of language learning</p>	<p>Have you ever learned (or tired to learn) any other languages? Which ones? How did you learn?</p> <p>Have you ever wanted to learn any other languages? Which ones? Why?</p> <p>How do you see the students in your class acquiring language? What do you think helps? Is there anything that you think would help that is not happening right now?</p>
<p>Aims for students (The story of the school year)</p>	<p>In general, what do you want your students to get out of this year in PreK?</p> <p>Do you have different goals for different students in the class? (Do you have any different goals for ELLs?)</p> <p>What about parents? What do you think their goals are for the year?</p> <p>Do you think this is different for different parents?</p> <p>MAYBE: So to go back to those individual students, I'd love to hear your hopes for each of them? What about his/her parents?</p> <p>Why do you think Head Start offers a free PreK program? What do you think they want students to get out of this year?</p> <p>Do you think they have different goals for ELLs?</p>

Appendix B
Teacher Interview Protocol – Spring

STORY	<p>If I said, once upon a time, there was a Head Start Class called Classroom 3, how would you tell the story of your class this year? The highs the lows</p> <p>What do you think it means to have a successful year in PreK?</p> <p>I want to ask about some specific children and hear the story of their year – how they fit into the fabric of the classroom, the ups and downs, how you'd define success for them and ultimately, whether they got there or not.</p>
CURRICULUM	<p>I want to learn a little bit now about how you made decisions about running the classroom.</p> <p>How did your past experience affect your classroom decisions and daily activities? (How was your experience helpful? Did it make anything more challenging?)</p> <p>How did the curriculum and assessments provided by head start affect these decisions? (How were these materials helpful? Did it make anything more challenging?)</p> <p>How did the make up of our class affect these decisions? (How was this make up helpful? Did it make anything more challenging?)</p> <p>Do you think that your year would have been different if everyone in your class were an English speaker?</p> <p>What if you still had half the students from other places but everyone's families and all the kids spoke English?</p>
LITERACY	<p>What kinds of literacy work went on in your classroom this year? (If I asked you to list of all the kinds of reading and writing that take place in your room, what can you think of?)</p> <p>How did you make decisions about what to teach, what materials to provide, where to place them, etc?</p>
ENGLISH	<p>If the district asked you to talk to other teachers who were going to have</p>

LEARNING	<p>lots of Nepali speakers in their class, what kinds of advice would you give them?</p> <p>In general, what do you think kids this age need in order to learn English?</p> <p>What kinds of things did you notice helped the kids learn English this year?</p> <p>Was there anything that you think hindered English learning this year?</p>
EXPERIENCE WITH PARENTS/KIDS	<p>What do you think its like to be an English learner in PreK?</p> <p>What do you think its like to be the parent of an English learner in PreK?</p>
CHANGES	<p>Were there things you wanted to do this year as a teacher that you felt unable to do, either for budget reasons, time constraints, student population, regulations?</p> <p>If you could change anything for next year – magically, without causing a stir or making any upset or costing any money or taking any work - what would you change?</p>

Appendix C
Parent Interview Protocol

Purpose	Possible Prompts
Background knowledge: geographic	<p>How long have you lived in the US? In River City?</p> <p>Tell me about where you lived before...</p> <p>Why did you leave there?</p> <p>How did you decide to come to River City?</p> <p>What has living here been like for you and your family?</p>
Background knowledge: family	<p>Tell me about your family?</p> <p>Does [student] have brothers and sisters?</p> <p>Who from your family is in the U.S. with you? Who is still in [home country]?</p>
Parents' Education History	<p>Did you go to school in [former country?]. Tell me a little bit about it. (how many years, what kinds of things studied)</p>
Purposes for sending child to school	<p>How did you know about this school/program?</p> <p>What made you decide to send [student] to school?</p> <p>What do you hope s/he will learn there?</p> <p>Do you know people with children [student]'s age who don't send them to school? Why do you think they don't send their kids to school?</p>
Feelings about child's school	<p>Do you like [student]'s school?</p> <p>What's good about it?</p> <p>What would you change about it if you were in charge?</p>
Success in school	<p>Is there a particular student in the class who you think is a very good student? What makes them a successful student?</p> <p>What do you think it means for X to be successful in school this year?</p>
IF YOU WERE	<p>Would s be in school? When would go? Kind of school?</p>

STILL IN X (country)...	What are the goals for a student in his first year of school in X?
	<p>If there were a Nepali-language school available in River City, would you consider sending [student] there instead? Why/why not?</p> <p>If there were a Nepali and English bilingual school in River City would you consider sending [student] there instead? Why/why not?</p> <p>If this school decided to have one English-speaking and one Nepali-speaking teacher next year, would you see that as a positive change?</p>

Appendix D Student Interview Protocol and Some Responses

Shuffle and spread out student photos.

1. Can you tell me everyone's names?
(Point or let them point. Note: CORRECT, NONE, INCORRECT)
2. Who do you like to play with? (Let them point or pick up. Note.)
3. Who do you not like to play with? (Let them point or pick up. Note.)
4. Who is smart? (Let them point or pick up. Note.)
5. Who gets in trouble? (Let them point or pick up. Note.)
6. Why do you think I have been coming to visit your class this year? What do I do here?
7. What do you think I write in my notebook?
8. When I write all about your class, I am going to give everyone pretend names, just like in a story. What do you want your name to be?

Some Responses

<i>Why do you think I have been coming to visit your class this year? What do I do here?</i>	<i>What do you think I write in my notebook?</i>	<i>What do you want your pretend name to be?</i>
To visit Miss Ellen and Miss Lucia. I don't know. Miss Lucia called you. I don't know. I don't know. (in Nepali) She doesn't do anything!	About numbers About the class ABCD I don't know S-R-E-Y-A I don't know Nothing	Mom Cupcake Nepali Baba Mira Princess I don't want another name!

Appendix E
Summary of Parent and Teachers Goals for PreK

Academic Skills	E	E	E	L	Social-Emotional Development	E	E	E	L	Language	E	E	E	L
	L	N	L	U		L	N	L	U		L	N	L	U
	L	G	L	C		L	G	L	C		L	G	L	C
	L	E	L	I		E	E	N	A		L	E	L	A
	L	N	E	A		N	N	A			A	N	E	A
ABCs	2	1	2		Adapt to New Surroundings	1				Learn English	4	1	1	1
Colors/Shapes		1	1		Be "Socialized"? / Make friends	1	2			Learn words/ vocabulary	1			
Count		1	1		Cooperate	1	1				5	-	1	1
Foundation for kindergarten	2	1	1		Follow direction /obey teachers	1	3	2						
Hold pencil			1		Gain Social Confidence	1		1		Cultural Knowledge				
Read	1				Keep Hands to Self			2		Songs/Rhymes	1			
Learn to study/ remember what taught	2	1			Love of Learning			1		Games	1			
Spell		1			Patience (Turn-taking/Hand-raising)			2		Learn about American Communities	1			
Write name	1	1	1	1	Pay Attention /Listen /Focus	1		2			3	-	-	-
					Relationships with Teachers			1						
					Rules, Routines, Regulation	3	1	2	3					
					Sharing / Being Less Selfish	1		3						
	8	7	7	1		7	10	2	17					