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# Deaf Children of Hearing Mothers:
# Co-embodied Perspectives on Identity and Learning in a Preschool Classroom

By

Jennifer Teresa Johnson

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Education

in

the Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Claire J. Kramsch, Chair
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Eve E. Sweetser

Spring 2015

Deaf Children of Hearing Mothers:
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# Abstract

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By

Jennifer Teresa Johnson

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Claire Kramsch, Chair

This is a study about the deaf child of hearing parents in a hearing world and the hearing mother in the world of her deaf child. It is about how they, mother and child, along with classmates and teachers, come to understand the hearingness and deafness and the space in-between. This research is not just about how we understand the embodied communicative practices of deaf children in relation to identity processes, but also of the hearing co-participants. It is a study of why the body matters in how we, hearing and deaf, come to shape a sense of self and the semiotic resources we use in the process. Nonverbal elements of language production (body language), sign language, and co-gestural speech remain on the periphery of most critical discourse analyses, research in language learning and research in identity studies. However, more recently, FL and SLA researchers have paid greater attention to the subjective, affective, emotional aspects of language learning (Pavlenko 2005, 2006; Kramsch 2009; Dewaele, 2010), in short, to the embodied and mediated dimensions of intercultural communication.

This dissertation project is an ethnographic, critical discourse analytic study exploring multimodal interactions in daily focal events among four and five-year-old deaf and hard of hearing children and their parents, teachers and hearing peers in a California preschool. Drawing on videotaped interactions, field notes and interviews, I explore the role of multimodality in communicative practices of deaf and hearing participants. On a broad level, this study considers the relationship between language learning and identity, and, in the process, interrogates the cultural constructs of "hearingness" and "deafness" that permeates this relationship. On a more micro level, this study attempt to understand the use of semiotic resources, or modal choices, in discourse. I examine the relationship of modality (the use of sign, speech, gesture, bodily stance and senses), co-produced, simultaneously produced (mode-blend) and subsequently produced (mode-switch) to the identity processes and language learning processes of deaf and hearing participants.

Working from the premise of language as embodied, the overarching question that guides this research, theoretically and empirically, is what insight on human communication do we gain from a modal analysis? More specifically I ask what role does multimodality play in communicative practices of deaf and hearing preschool participants in the focal events of circle time and snack time in the classroom setting? What does

examining co-embodied dimensions tell us about how deaf and hearing preschoolers and hearing mothers position themselves in interaction? My data suggests that co- and multi-partied embodied utterances, in particular mode-switches and mode-blends, opened up narrative and learning/teaching spaces of hearing children, deaf children, hearing mothers and teachers. Modality plays a pivotal role in opening up new spaces for meaning making for Deaf and hearing alike---which is perhaps useful in examining ways that expands an understanding of the body's role in human communication.

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I am forever indebted to the teachers, staff, students and mothers of the Eagle Crest Early Intervention Center who shared their everyday spaces with me and who have taught me how love, so easily, transcends any mode of communication. To the mothers: in sharing your experiences, you have taught me so much about my own. I am particularly grateful to the head teacher who so graciously opened her classroom for this study and taught me so much about teaching - in creative, interactive and multimodal ways.

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# PREFACE

## An autosocioanalysis approach

The process of becoming a researcher in applied linguistics and SLA has been heavily influenced by the roads that have bought me here. My positionality drives me to explore and interrogate the literature from a particular angle and has led me to ask the questions I do; this is an important aspect of research often not given enough attention. *Who we are often shapes what questions we ask. And, who we are shapes how we interpret the literature.* Our habitus, at the unconscious level, embodies memories of how we have understood the past actions and carries memories into our experience of future contexts. Bourdieu (1977), in his explanation of the habitus, states: "The unconscious is never anything other than forgetting history which history itself produces by incorporating the objective structures it produces in the second natures of the habitus" (p. 78-79). As researchers, we carry a "living memory pad" (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 68) of history and context via our habitus, structured by and structuring dispositions that affect how we frame and interpret our research. Thus, the relationship of the literature, data and researcher is an active one. This relationship may change over time as new fields structures the habitus, but the primary habitus, according to Bourdieu is quite durable, carried via the embodied. Being at my research site for nearly four years, as a volunteer teacher's aide and researcher, my own perspectives underwent some changes; this affects my observations of the students and what questions I ask my mothers in the interviews. Thus, taking a "socioanalysis approach" (Bourdieu, 2004; Kramsch 2008, 2014) is useful in understanding possible researcher effects. Bourdieu (2004) puts forth a cautionary message when he explains his own research stance over time:

> If I am not impossible to situation as an empirical agent, I have always sought to be, as much as possible, in my role as a researcher, in particular by taking account of my position and its evolution over time, as I have done here, so as to try to control of effects they could have on my scientific position-takings. (Bourdieu, 2004, p. 111)

I attempt to expose my experiences in order to understand the empirical stance I take throughout the dissertation and shed light on the symbiotic manner in which my personal experiences with language and research on language *over time* have aided in coming to understand the gaps in the literature and offer new understandings on the body's role in human communication. My theoretical and research interests stem from and are shaped by the sensory sensitivity I was afforded growing up with Deaf parents, my eight years as a high school English teacher in Japan in which I struggled to "embody" a foreign language and help my students to do the same, and my experiences studying ASL formally at Berkeley City College as something like a "heritage language learner." Most influential, however, is the way in which I represent myself as a CODA (Child of Deaf Adults) in my research environment; it affords me connections and sparks tensions with the parents, teachers and children. Having a hearing body, non-hearing body, or Japanese body shifts one's access to specific bodily linguistic practices, and, in turn, shapes one's social identity.

## Discovering what's missing

In the language and literacy-focused literature I was introduced to in my early graduate school experience, I continuously found myself asking a similar thread of questions: What about the role of the body in this communicative exchange? The narrative of the deaf student learning English? The role of gesture in language learning? The differences between spoken and signed languages when conceptualizing communication? The sensory dimensions of language? I realize that such questions, directing us to an understanding of the embodied dimensions of language, stem from my positionality as a CODA and my own embodied experiences as a language learner and teacher. In reviewing the literature at the time, I could not help but intertwine my own memories and emotions with my interpretations of the literature. Interweaving the personal into my perspective initially weighed me down in frustration. I was angry at the literature for ignoring the language learning narratives of my parents and other Deaf people. I was angry with my parents for giving in to the medical and educational discourses that encouraged them to use voice and not signs with my hearing sisters and me in an effort to "make sure we would speak English properly," the same monolingual monocultural ideology immigrants and second language learners often face. And, I was angry that, even in academia, people did not understand the most basic things about D/deaf people and American Sign Language (ASL) in the United States.

Ironically, while I remained bitter about "what was missing," I pushed myself away, initially, from researching anything that related to my background as a CODA. Growing up I often felt like I was sitting on a rickety old unstable bridge between the monolingual "Hearing World" and the visual, spatial "Deaf World." I hesitated to explore my deep-rooted experiences in the DEAFWORD of my parents because I am not Deaf; I do not feel I have the right to reflect on the DEAFWORD while so many Deaf linguists, historians, poets, storytellers, artists and educators beautifully encapsulate the meaning of being Deaf in a visual medium. A hearing person's *written* account in *English* of an interpretation of an experience with Deafness or ASL initiates an interpretation *outside the very modality that encapsulates it, a visual one.*

The "history of the Deaf" in libraries is mostly a history of the deaf by the hearing. Foucault (1979) explains that some discourses are endowed with an "author" function, and others are not. Discourses as objects of appropriation and systems of property are given form, status, value through the author, an "ideological product" and a functioning principle that "limits, excludes and chooses" (p. 119). Foucault asserts that discourse should be analyzed through their "modes of existence," adding that "the manner in which they are articulated according to social relationships can be more readily understood" through author activity (p. 117). Applying Foucault's framework, one can see how, historically, the deaf discourse has been composed and manipulated through the *voice* of a hearing one. Hearing people wrote about deaf people in a language that was not theirs, English. The discourse of the deaf must begin from an understanding through multiple sensory dimensions, in particular a *seeing* one.

Despite all my hesitations in entering a discussion of the tensions of deafness and hearingness binary, my experiences were on a necessary, and, perhaps, welcomed collision course with my interest in the second language acquisition of English. The convergence spoke directly to my family's history and my sense of self. It demanded of me to understand how minority languages and their users, including ASL, are often

sucked up into a rip tide of assimilation by the power structures that quietly, yet forcefully, lurk behind monolingual "ideals" of our society.

When I found myself in a practice research context, for a qualitative methods course, at a local school for deaf and hearing preschoolers, I realized how much I could learn from observing and engaging in these multimodal-learning contexts. After continuing on as a volunteer teacher's aide at the preschool for the next two years, the school eventually became my dissertation research site. The learning and language interactions that I observed taking place between teachers, students and mothers both addressed many of the questions I often asked of the literature and pushed them further. The sensory, visual and physical ways students and teachers communicated felt familiar to my experience. Yet, such an understanding of "language" was often left out of how we conceptualize human communication. While there was much about my experiences at the site with the hearing mothers, teachers and children that felt familiar and close to my experiences growing up with Deaf parents, there was an equal part that felt new and unfamiliar; I have learned a great deal from my participants' experiences with Deafness. Through my observations, I developed new understandings of the relationship between modality and identity and the role of the body in communicative practices. Everything I had previously tried to push away from my past resurfaced in my research context. My subject position as a hearing child of deaf parents grew to become the part of the rationale of why such a study is needed and what lack of literature it could address.

I enrolled in ASL classes at Berkeley City College to fill in the gaps in my own learning and to understand what interested others in ASL, the fastest-growing foreign language at community colleges across the country. The use of ASL had mostly been with my parents, so being in a classroom and learning ASL formally felt strange at first. For the first time, I learned the visual communicative practices of ASL explicitly (for example: how to get someone's attention, how to (not) interrupt, how to walk in the path of two signers, where to focus one's eyes in signed conversation), which had, prior to my classes, felt so "normal" that it did not occur to me that such practices did not always translate to spoken languages. I witnessed some students who reported that they had previously struggled with the foreign language requirement when taking a spoken language such as Spanish or French, yet, they thrived in their acquisition of a visual language, ASL. When I ask one student why ASL was easier for her than French she replied, "My body feels more comfortable using ASL. Just like Black English feels better than regular English. It allows me to be myself." This example, along with my personal ones, triggered questions about the body's role in communication and language learning, for any language. To speak a language one must also embody that language, but, this point is not always emphasized in the teaching of foreign or second languages.

Drawing on Bourdieu's notion of reflexivity **(**Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) the process of self-reflection during research in order to understand subjectivity and possible researcher effects, I examine the subject positions and personal experiences that have pushed me to ask why I ask the questions I do. In some cases, there are triggers in my observations that mirror or spark a recollection of something in my own past. In the following section, I explain how these subject positions - the positionality as a CODA, language teacher and language learner - have allowed me to develop insight into my participants' experiences.

**Being "the ears" and experiencing the bodily: positionality as a CODA- Child of Deaf Adults**

The language environment of my home was, to quote Bakhtin (1981) was "heteroglot from top to bottom…all given in bodily form" (p. 261). It was spoken, visual, spatial and vibrational. It was English, ASL, homesign, gesture and silence. My mom called me her "ears" and we did language together. This space was also full of "socioideological contradictions" (Bakhtin, 1975) fueled by the medical and educational discourses and underpinned by the centrifugal forces of hearingness; my parents were told not to sign to my siblings and I because we may not learn how to "speak properly." For the first few years of elementary school, I was sent to the speech therapist a few times week to learn how to "speak properly" and I was held back in the first grade because the teachers were concerned about my lack of exposure to "normal" literacy practices.

As the oldest child and my mom's ears, I was often the physical access point for her communication with hearing others. I was trained to answer the phone and represent my mother from the early age of two. As I got older, depending on the type of call, I sometimes pretended to be my mother in order to avoid hassles with privacy or security, or more accurately, callers' excuses couched in such hassles. As my mom stood directly face-to-face in front on me, I had a script to follow and did with great pride, "My parents are deaf. I will interpret for them. Go ahead please." My job was to mouth English and sign, to the best of my ability, everything the caller said. About half the time, my prompt is followed with the dreaded response, "Oh we are so sorry. Oh, you poor thing. We'll just call back later." In these kinds of exchanges, I began to grow furious at people's inability to see our communicative practices as perfectly normal and, at that time, simply necessary as phone interpreting services were not as easily accessible as they are today, after the Americans with Disabilities Act, enacted in 1990, opened up many communication services for deaf people. Sometimes I would mumble a white lie to my mother, "I think they have the wrong number or something," not quite able to bring myself to translate the groundless pity and ignorance of others. But, I could tell by my mom's shrug of the shoulders and subtle sigh and how she abruptly turned away that she knew; she had been dealing with this her whole life. I later learned to retort with pride and hang up, "Well, they will be juuust as deaf LATER."

The position of cultural broker is one that I was forced into, not by my parents, but by society's inability to understand that it is society and societal norms underpinned by hearingness that disables and not deafness itself. Accompanying my mom to doctor's appointments, parent-teacher conferences and taking the role of realtor at the age of 11 when we sold our house "by-owners" were not the typical roles kids take on. It was a lot to ask from a young child and often caused tension between my parents and me. When I became frustrated at my role of "cultural broker," I reacted rebelliously by speaking English to my parents, forcing my parents to lip-read instead of using sign. I took out my frustrations with societal "norms" on my deaf parents. Part of trying to understand where I belonged was based on the constructions around the normal body and associated cultural practices society forces on us. The struggle to understand a space to belong to and the sometimes ambivalent use of language to position oneself vis-à-vis the constructs that define such shifting spaces are experiences I share with the hearing mothers and deaf children at my research site. In similar ways, we have all learned to navigate societal ideals with our own unique embodied linguistic practices.

I am not Deaf or deaf but I can claim some experience of deaf cultural practices. The visual and sensory worlds I experienced through my upbringing with my Deaf parents shape communicative practices that rely on the visual, spatial and sensorial dimensions, often overlooked in an auditory bias way "communication" is typical understood. Similarly, I see teachers and student at the research site base their communicative practices on a broader understanding of "communication" that includes visual, vibrational, gestural, tactical and olfactory dimensions. Music time, accompanied by drumming and dancing, creates a sense of *feeling the music* (drums) and experiencing it through body movement (dance). During music time, I reminded by the rare moments of my mother pulling out her accordion, the only instrument she learned to play growing up, as she could feel the music on her chest. Likewise, when my mother dropped me off at high school with the bass blasting to a slightly uncomfortable and embarrassing level, I was forced to explain to perplexed-looking peers that my mom was not listening to the music, but feeling it. Vibration alongside movement also played a role in how my sisters and I understood our parents' signs. At the dinner table, after my father returned from work, my sisters and I intensely read our parents' fast moving signs, with the sounds of their hands in heated contact and body movements alive, perhaps in passion or anger, not wanting to miss a single word. I could tell if my father was angry not through the tone volume of his voice but rather through how hard or soft his hands slapped or hit each other while he signed or how aggressive he put forth his attention-getting hand tap or foot stomp. Receptively, we depended on the visual to understand our parents' communicative intentions. My background has been crucial in allowing for insight into the wide range of modal dimensions of communication employed by students and teachers in this study.

**A fractured habitus: positionality as a language teacher and language learner**

The "body" in the literature on language learning and education research is under-analyzed as culturally and contextually situated. Living in Japan for 8 years, just prior to graduate school, as an English teacher, forced me to pay close attention the bodies of my students in the classroom. And, granted, my experience growing up in a Deaf context, certainly afforded me sensitivity to bodily practices in the classroom. While eye gaze and eye contact are generally expected in "western" conversational exchange, I noticed students did everything they could to avoid eye contact with me, as their "English teacher" and "a person of authority" in their school context. I would squat on my knees and attempt to chase and trace their eye movement at first, but this was often taken as a face threat and sometimes backfired causing communication to completely fall apart. In addition, Japanese students' formal and rigid upright bodily stances and lack of hand gestures conflicted with what I perceived as expected conversational gestural exchange. When I changed my teaching approach to explicitly discuss differences in so-called "American" and "Japanese" bodily communication and analyze the perceived differences with the students (and humor and bit of role play, in this case, helps), students appeared to have more control over making choices about what bodily practice would accompany their English utterances.

As a language learner of Japanese in my 8 years in Japan, I learned, albeit with much awkwardness and embarrassment, how to fit my habitus, my disposition and ways of being, into a Japanese context. I tried to understand the mismatch of my habitus in Japanese culture - a mismatch that was material, imagined and imposed all at once. Being

trapped in the myth the "native English speaker" at the same time I was reproducing it and being critical of the hegemonic American-ness of English Education in Japan at the same time I was teaching it filled me with unsettling contradictions. I vividly remember the first time I read Bourdieu; I had shivers down my spine. I read before me a theory that helped me understand how language learning was a deeply embodied experience always intertwined with a larger sociocultural context. His framework offered a way to tie theory to practice and understand inequalities in educational contexts. Bourdieu (1982) refers to "sens pratique" or practical sense as a "feel for the game" (p. 13), a sense of how to act appropriately in specific circumstances. In other words, your sens pratique is when your habitus matches and "fits in" with what Bourdieu calls the field, or context. The body becomes the site that naturally remembers our habitus, or as Bourdieu explicates, "system of dispositions- a past that survives in the present" (1977, p. 82).

It took me a long time to acquire (and perhaps I never fully did) the practical sense of my Japanese habitus. My primary habitus felt a bit broken or off-balance and my Japanese one never quite realized. The dispositions that made up my everyday body language, eye contact, style of communication, and the dispositional practices, how I hold my teacup or the way I washed my body at the local sulfur baths, often came into conflict with a Japanese habitus. In the beginning, my back was too rounded when I bowed or I bowed too deep or too quickly. I fumbled a name card with one hand instead of the required two hands. I sat with my legs crossed like a man or I sat with my hands in the wrong female position for pictures. I was once even told I spoke like a Japanese truck driver. The grace and fluid bodily movements of Japanese women (and men sometimes) were a daily reminder of our different practical senses. Much of the awkward ways in which I felt foreign in my "Japanese body" coincided with the Japanese words that rolled off my tongue. My body and words struggled to find their comfort zone. I use the male verb instead of the female one and the formal instead of the informal; my tone was too low for a female, my pause too short in between speaker exchange and my eyes glance too directly toward the person I addressed. To use a language is to embody it, although it may feel as if something strange and foreign is taking over your usual sense of being. With my white skin and light hair, I was often addressed by strangers and friends alike as a *gaijin* (literal meaning: outside person, commonly used to mean "foreigner"). Even after years in Japan, when a child pointed to me and interpolates, "Mitte Mitte! Gaijin da!" ("Look look! There's a foreigner!") every fiber of my being felt foreign and awkward. While "gaijin" is just a word, it evoked memories and emotions; the word triggered the bodily reality of the mismatch with the local linguistic practices.

I reflect on such personal experiences because it is through my fractured habitus and the contradictions it produces that I have been able to ask the questions that I do toward the literature and my research. Bourdieu (2004) discusses a "*cleft habitus,*" (p. 100), translated by Kramsch (2014) as a "*split habitus,*" as experiencing a duality produced by a "discrepancy between high academic consecration and low social origin" (Bourdieu, 100) that leads to tensions and contradictions. It is through the fracturing of my own habitus, a kind of "cleft habitus," in a mismatch with the field, that such tensions and contradictions cultivate different ways of being and seeing offering me the positionalities that inform my research; these positionalities offer a broaden view of the relationship between language and identity processes, important for the analytic aim of my research. Such experiences also afford me a connection with my participants, the

teachers, children and mothers. The mothers express experiencing a clash of habitus as they learn a visual language, for the first time, alongside their child. They are introduced to the sensory world of their child *through their child* and while they embrace the experience, at the same time, they express the desperate need to share the auditory hearing world with their child that is the core of their own habitus. Through the literature, I adopt a post-structural framing of identity and language that offers a lens to understand my participants' interactions that are contextually driven and grounded in the notion of language as embodied.

# CHAPTER 1
# INTRODUCTION

"Visible and mobile, my body is a thing among things; it's caught in the fabric of the world, and its cohesion is that of a thing. But, because it moves itself and sees, it holds things in a circle around itself" (Merleau-Ponty, 1964, p. 163).

"Flashing! Flashing!" The lights flash on and off repeatedly as teachers and students sign and chant "Flashing! Flashing!" to indicate that morning free play is over and it is time to put away one's toys, clean up an area of the classroom and form a circle for the morning circle time. The deaf preschoolers' heads pop up from play with each flash. The students receive three modes of notice for the change in activities: sign, speech and shift in lighting. Teachers, in order to visually get the attention of their students, engage their bodies, bending down and moving directly into the visual path of each student, producing the bimodal (speech and sign) utterance "flashing." Both of their hands, in a 5-handshape palm down, open and close alongside the rhythm of the chant "Flashing! Flashing!" Students gather in a circle, each on his/her orange square mat. A few students opt to sit on a teacher's lap; the teacher and student co-embody a signing space in front of them. The singing and simultaneous signing of the "Good Morning Song" begins. The students sitting on teachers' laps and those teachers produce the signs together, the hand of the student latching onto the teacher's and tracing its movements. The song is first sung in English accompanied by signs, and, next, in Spanish, again with signs. In just the first few moments of the initial morning activities, a wide range of semiotic resources is part of the communication and learning that takes place. The bodies of teachers and students play a crucial role in the classroom practices yet theoretical frameworks analyzing communicative practices often give the body secondary status, privileging the auditory and speaking tracks. For the deaf children learning English in this context, they are, foremost, visual and bodily learners.

This is a study about the deaf child of hearing parents in a hearing world and the hearing mother in the world of her deaf child. It is about how they, mother and child, along with classmates and teachers, come to understand the hearingness and deafness and the space in-between. This research is not just about how we understand the embodied communicative practices of deaf children in relation to identity processes, but also of the hearing co-participants. It is a study of why the body matters in how we, hearing and deaf, come to shape a sense of self and the semiotic resources we use in the process. Why does this matter? And, why does this matter now, more than ever? Around 95% percent of deaf children are born into hearing families (Mitchell & Karchmer, 2004) challenging hearing families and educators to think about issues of communication, culture and identity in new ways. The cultural, political, educational and sensorial landscape of deaf people in the United States is, at present, undergoing many significant changes that further diversify and disperse what it means to be deaf. Technological advances, improved surgical procedures, and a growing breadth of literature on the educational outcomes have lead to an increase in the use of cochlear implants[1] for deaf infants and young children (Mitchiner & Sass-Lehrer, 2011, p. 72). As a result, there has also been increased medical and educational focus on spoken/oral approaches to the language development of deaf children (Nussbaum & Scott, 2011). Valente et al. (2011), in their article "Sensory Politics And The Cochlear Implant Debate," discuss how the cochlear implant continues to stir heated debate

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[11] Chapter 2 provides a detailed definition and description of the cochlear implant, or CI.

characterized through "science and technology versus culture…pitting the well-funded bio-power industries against a tiny linguistic minority" (p. 254, also see Lane, 1992).

With federal and state policies in the United States driving intervention and inclusion efforts for students with disabilities in education, the majority of deaf students, 64%, (Gallaudet Research Institute: Regional and National Summary Reports, 2005) are now mainstreamed into regular hearing educational settings. Of the 36,710 deaf and hard of hearing students mainstreamed into American public schools in 2006-2007, half were educated in speech-only settings (Gallaudet Research Institute National Data, 2006, cited in Swiller, 2011, p. 261). In 2009-2010, only 27% of students were educated using sign only while the rest were educated using speech-only (53%) or a combination of sign/speech (17%) (Gallaudet Research Institute National Data, 2011). The increase in speech-only settings parallels the increase in CI use among deaf children.

The Cochlear Implant Education Center tells professional and families, "If you have met one child with a cochlear implant, you have met *one* child with a cochlear implant" (cited in Nussbaum & Scott, 2011, p. 176), referring to the demographic diversity of deaf children. With the varying cognitive, physical, communicative, and social needs of deaf children, the educational and language development outcomes are diverse and indicate severe disadvantages for deaf children (Nussbaum & Scott, 2011; Pisoni et al., 2008; Leigh, 2008). Pettito, a developmental cognitive neuroscientist studying ASL, captures part of the problem stating, "The human brain does not discriminate between the hand and the tongue…people do" (Gallaudet University: Bilingualism and the Brain website, n.d.). While the linguistic, educational and social avenues to explore D/deafness are vast, this study provides just a sliver of work drawing attention to understanding the experiences of deaf children and hearing parents, a narrative that has been overly-neglected in the broader second language learner narrative in the United States and in the unimodally-biased literature on bilingualism. The context of my research, in which hearing and deaf draw on a variety of semiotic resources including sign and speech to make sense of their world, provides a unique window to a particular view of bimodal or multimodal communication.

This dissertation project is an ethnographic, critical discourse analytic study exploring multimodal interactions in daily focal events among four and five-year-old deaf and hard of hearing children and their parents, teachers and hearing peers in a California preschool, The Eagle Crest Early Intervention Center (ECEIC). Drawing on videotaped interactions, field notes and interviews, I explore the role of multimodality in communicative practices of deaf and hearing participants. In examining the co-embodied dimensions, I explore how participants position themselves in and through language. More specifically, I examine the relationship of modality (the use of sign, speech, gesture and senses), co-produced, simultaneously produced (mode-blend) and subsequently produced (mode-switch) to the identity processes and language learning processes of deaf and hearing participants. Working from the premise of language as embodied, the overarching question that guides this research, theoretically and empirically, is what insight on human communication do we gain from a modal analysis?

## Review of the Literature

Nonverbal elements of language production (body language), sign language, and co-gestural speech remain on the periphery of most critical discourse analyses, research in language learning and research in identity studies. (Kramsch, 2009; Dewaele, 2010; Block, 2013). Moreover, institutional, societal and cultural norms that have privileged the auditory experience

and propelled the deafness-as-deficit perspective (Baynton, 2008; Lane et al. 1996; Padden & Humphries; 2005), continue to foster static notions of 'culture' that are void of physical and sensory depth and systematically exclude visual, spatial and modal dimensions of meaning-making we know are critical to communication and development. While it may seem easier to understand signed languages as embodied based on the inherent use of the body and space in a signed language, we give little attention to spoken languages as also embodied and interwoven with physical, spatial, emotive and psychological processes that shape our sense of self. Hanks (1995), interpreting Merleau-Ponty's ideas, emphasizes the socially mediated nature of embodiment, "I, as experiencer, am in the world with you, and we are both occupied by it even as we inhabit it" (p. 136). With the body, we "speak" ourselves, "read" the world and the world "writes" on us.

In this chapter, I will review the theoretical perspectives on language, language learning and identity in various fields of literature including theoretical perspectives on D/deaf identities and empirical studies on the social and cognitive development of deaf children in hearing families. In this study, deaf and hearing participants are involved in drawing on various semiotic resources while in a process of learning a second language, thus, reviewing second language acquisition and language socialization frameworks are important. I investigate how is the body conceptualized in the literature on SLA, language socialization, and language and identity studies. I ask how does the deaf child or hearing mother fit into these frameworks? How is the body understood more broadly in theories of language and communication? And, taking a reverse angle, what insight do fields that centralize the role the body, gesture, ASL and bimodal (sign and speech production) research, offer to an understanding of identity processes? Attention to, and lack of attention to, the embodied dimensions of communication offers the theoretical pathway to address my research questions.

**An Ecological Approach to the study of Second Language Acquisition (SLA)**

I begin by introducing an ecological framework, the most viable framework for understanding language, learning and identity processes in the context of this study that explores the language learning experiences preschool deaf children, alongside hearing peers and teachers. An ecological approach to study of SLA that highlights the dynamic, nonlinear and subjective and affective aspects of language learning (Kramsch, 2002, 2009; Pavlenko, 2006; Rampton, 2003; Lemke, 2002; van Lier, 2001) provides the theoretical framework for understanding how my participants' identities are emergent and negotiated processes. Kramsch explains the "ecology" metaphor as: "The poststructural realization that learning is nonlinear, relational human activity, co-constructed between humans and their environment, contingent upon their position in space and history and a site of struggle for the control of social power and cultural memory" (Kramsch, 2002, p. 25).

An ecological approach parallels a post-structural decentered framing of identity and language that emphasizes the social already in the individual and the subject as being constituted in and through language always in relation to a sociohistorical context (Weedon, 1997; Bulter 1997; Bakhtin, 1981; Bourdieu, 1977; Goffman, 1958). A decentered identity lacks a fixed center from which assumptions may originate. Identity, rather, is something we do, together, in and through language. To grasp the meaning behind an utterance in this framing of language and identity, it is necessary to consider the range of voices, our past, imagined and anticipated ones, which intersect at the moment of utterance and all their accompanying social, political, psychological, linguistic and moral dimensions (Kramsch, 2002).

Because I am interested in how deaf children and hearing mothers do things together with language in relation to a particular moment and context, it is more useful to understand language learning and identity tied to an ecological approach. Through an ecological approach, I understand language learning in the context of my research as multi-scaled, situated in the complex relations between the interpersonal, cultural and historical (Kramsch, 2002; Lemke 2002). Kramsch (2002) elaborates that such a framework emphasizes a relational and reflexive way of seeing language, embracing the "contradictions, unpredictablities and paradoxes" rather than reducing language learning to the linear and static metaphor of "learner as apprentice" often associated with language acquisition or language socialization frameworks. "Success," claims Kramsch, in a language socialization framework equates to enculturation while "success" in a language acquisition framework equates to full proficiency of the language (p. 2-4).

Because I am interested in deaf and hearing participants' uses of semiotic resources in relation to identity processes, a semiotic-driven definition of identity is most applicable. Blommaert (2005) takes a "performance view of identity" as "particular semiotic potential, organized in a repertoire," which, he explains, is in contrast to the "essentializing tendencies so widespread in several identity discourse"(p. 207-208). Identity work is, by this definition, contingent on the available semiotic resources. Blommaert draws on Rampton's (1995, 2005) work to exemplify his point. Rampton's notions of "crossing," codeswitching into a discourse outside your linguistic community as "as a form of everyday cultural politics," (p. 14) and "flexible strategic selection" (p. 68), the processes in which societal language ideologies influence how participants choose to draw on semiotic resources, expand the link between semiotic resources and identity processes. Rampton (1995) demonstrated how multiethnic, urban adolescents in England appropriate seemingly insignificant aspects of language, sounds, lexemes, accents and pronunciations, for ideological purposes, as markers of identity. There was an unpredictable use of these semiotic resources that saw participants intertwine their usage for particular social positionings in intergroup settings. Identity, in this framework, is viewed as changing, negotiated and non-fixed constantly articulating and rearticulating meaning through an understanding of the contractions in cultural and social practices and how power relations are shaped within them. Hearing and deaf participants in this study also demonstrated unpredictable use of semiotic resources (sign, speech gesture, space, bodily stance etc.) they had access to at a given moment as markers of identity.

**Identity framing and embodied dimensions of the self in SLA**

A post-structural discursive view of identity illuminates how we draw on symbolic and semiotic resources to position ourselves in and through language, thus constantly forming, reforming and performing identity as subject. Lemke (2002) asserts the need to address the dialogical nature of language (Bakhtin, 1981) as socially and culturally situated as "language-within-activity" (Lemke, 2000, p. 72). Often missing from this understanding of human communication, in SLA research, is detailed analysis of language as embodied at the detailed level of gesture, sign and bimodal utterances, and sensory, motor and spatial perceptions.

Non-verbal dimension is SLA frameworks have often been viewed as accompaniments to the verbal (Gee, 1996; Block, 2007). Block (2007) in his book "Second Language Identities" describes a "multimodal identity" (in a list of many other "kinds" of identities) in an oversimplified way that positions modality as "accompanying" meaning-making: "Communication is also about a range of multi-sensory accompaniments to the linguistic, such as hairstyle, clothing, facial expressions, gait and so on" (p. 41). In this study, gesture and facial

expressions were an integral part of the meaning-making practices of both deaf and hearing participants; they drew on a complex range of semiotic resources included pointing, eye gaze, facial expression and bodily stance in acts of identities while clothing and hairstyle seemed to matter much less in the linguistic processes of preschoolers. However, in Block's recent chapter, "Moving Beyond '-lingualism': Multilingual Embodiments and Multimodality" (2013), he proposes a more centralized role of embodiment, described as rooted in social activity, in language processes. He continues to view hairstyle, clothing and accessories on par with other forms of embodied communication: 'It is important to consider any number of semiotic modes— from gesture to gaze and from accessories to clothes— that come together to make commination happen in complexity" (p. 71). Block also puts forth that gesture has received a disproportion amount of attention in the study of modality in SLA. Generally speaking, however, all embodied modes have been understudied in research on SLA, so highlighting gesture as disproportionally studied appears as a moot argument. More important, I would put forth, is placing emphasis on specific non-verbal behavior in interaction when it contributes to meaning making is significant ways.

Because embodied dimensions of language such as pitch, tone, facial expressions and bodily stance carry affective meaning at both the conscious and unconscious, it is important to consider the roles of emotions in language interactions. Dewaele (2010) emphasizes in his book "Emotions in Multiple Languages" that major SLA textbooks, Gass and Selinker (2008) and Doughty and Long (2003) and literature on interlanguage pragmatics (Crystal, 1997), give little attention to affection and motivation, embodied processes that underlie communication. Pavlenko (2005) similarly describes an under-theorization of emotions in SLA. She argues that the "narrow constructs" of motivation and attitude in the literature on SLA do not "capture the diversity of affective tongue ties and the range of emotions elicited by the languages we speak and those that speak to us" (p. 32). However, more recently, FL and SLA researchers have paid greater attention to the subjective, affective, emotional aspects of language learning (Pavlenko 2005, 2006; Kramsch 2009; Dewaele, 2010), in short, to the embodied and mediated dimensions of intercultural communication.

Kramsch (2009) in her chapter "The Embodied Self," in her book *The Multilingual Subject*, discusses somatic, ecological and narrative theories of the self to understand the relationship of body and mind to language learning. Drawing on testimonies from language memories, Kramsch analyzed the relationship between the use of symbolic forms in language and affect, namely emotions, feelings and memories. She explains, "Multilingual subjects have multiply embodied understandings of social reality and a broader and more varied range of options than others to act on these understandings" (p. 124). Dewaele (2010) conducted quantitative and qualitative research with 1600 multilinguals finding a relationship between language preferences and emotions and demonstrating how affect plays a role language use and perceptions of self. Pavlenko (2005) calls for the need to frame language learning with the consideration the "language *of* emotions" rather than "language *and* emotions" highlighting "multilingual performance of affect" or the "doing" of affect through language (p. 35). Research on affective, emotions and subjectivity in the multilingual subject is important to consider for my research because it pushes an understanding of the *multimodal subject*. I believe my research, which centralizes embodied dimensions of communication in deaf and hearing participants, further interrogates possible ways we could possibly understand language learning.

A critique of the attention to embodied dimensions of language learning is the continued privileging of speech as the mode of communication. Multilinguals are conventionally defined as

*speaking* multiple languages. Studies are focused on individuals who have proficiencies in multiple *spoken* languages. Analyses are framed through the *speaker* and *hearer*. Choice of language and codeswitching are mostly understood through *verbal* choices. What about the multimodal subject? The signing subject? What about the intersection of modal choices (sign, speech, gesture, sensory) *and* emotions, feelings and memories? In the case of my student participants, some of them are language delayed, mostly as the result of first language access issues. Yet, they learn how to draw on multiple semiotic resources outside verbal production. To add to this, many of them come from homes that speak multiple languages that they may, or may not, have some proficiency in. My participants complexify the essentialized status of the multilingual speaker by broadening how we conceptualize communication.

Still, however, the renewed interest for embodied modes of meaning is the gateway push that complicates prevalent assumptions that paralinguistic features of communication are solely acts of semantic reinforcement. What should interest applied linguists today is to the simultaneity of multiple channels of communication and multiple modalities for the expression and construction of meaning in interaction. This framework allows me to ask how can we expand our understanding of students' repertoire of meaning-making practices, using not only words, but also gestures, body movements, facial expressions and positions in space? And what can we learn from observing how hearing parents of deaf children learn sign language in order to communicate with their children?

**Deaf learners: Complicating a Language Socialization Framework**

Language socialization researchers have inquired about the ways we are socialized to and through language, or, how through language-mediated interactions, routines and processes sociocultural knowledge is conveyed and reproduced (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986; Heath, 1986). Schieffelin and Ochs (1986), leading researchers on the language socialization of children, define socialization as, "An interactional display (covert or overt) to a novice of expected ways of thinking, feeling, and acting...through their participation in social interactions, children come to internalize and gain performance competence in these sociocultural defined contexts" (Ochs, 1986, p. 2). Critiques of a socialization framework (MaCay, 1975; Jenks, 1999; Speier, 1971) emphasize the adult-centered perspective of the child and child's cultural practices, viewing the child as less competent than the adult rather than viewing the child as a capable social being. Jenks (1999) concludes that social theories "spectacularly fail to constitute the child as an ontology in its own right" (p. 10) stressing the under-addressed agency of the child in interaction. However, notions of bidirectionality (Rogoff, 1990; Garrett & Baquedano-López, 2002; Ochs, 1988) do address the joint construction of knowledge between caregiver and child. Rogoff (1990), for example, posits that the "novice" is not a passive learner, rather an agent in his/her own socialization to new concepts and ways of organizing culture.

Heath (1983) describes this socialization process as the ways we come to "know" through language and learn to display and label knowledge, specifically in regards to concepts of family. The language of the family is assumed to be the first language of the child in this framework. The deaf child of hearing parents, whose access to communication in a modality "natural" to her may be very limited in her family context, might view concepts of family differently. That said, of course, children "come to know" in many ways. This leads me to ask: how might a deaf child come "know" through a visual language, home signs and other embodied practices outside the spoken language of the family or community?

In a socialization framework, "culture" is often understood as "acquired" through a linear expert-novice relationship (e.g. teacher-student or parent-child relationships). The language socialization of deaf children born into hearing families challenges the dominant, yet implicit, phonocentric "hearing world" angle, of language socialization theory. In many cases, young deaf children in hearing families do not have full auditory access to the spoken language practices of the family and school. This is distinct from spoken bilingual or multilingual contexts, where the mode of such contexts, speech, is the same and accessible for hearing individuals. When early access to a visual language is complicated by educational and medical discourses alongside family practices that may or may not include sign, deaf children cannot fully participate in the language-mediated activities of the hearing *or* deaf worlds (Erting & Kuntze, 2008). Erting and Kuntze (2008) elaborate in their article "Language Socialization in Deaf Communities":

> Most members of the DEAF-WORLD (Lane, Hoffmeister, & Bahan, 1996) have not followed a straightforward path to identification with and membership in a Deaf community…for the majority of Deaf children who are born to non-Deaf parents who do not expect their child to be deaf early access to sign languages is absent…the primary sites of language socialization for most Deaf people have been community institutions such as Deaf schools and clubs. Deaf people have acquired sign language and become oriented to the DEAFWORLD primarily when they have come into contact with peers and elders in the Deaf community, which may not occur until later in childhood, adolescence, or even adulthood. (p. 287)

As Erting and Kuntze (2008) problematize the inaccessibility of the deaf child of hearing parents to access the DEAFWORD[2], they present a definition of Deaf culture as only a something acquired through in-community practices (see Chapter 3 for a more detailed discussion on "Deaf Culture"). Examining language socialization from the understudied studied perspective of D/deaf/hearing contexts forces us to rethink a language socialization paradigm by pushing new ways to expand an understanding of the interrelationships between visually-based communication and cultural practices, stressing the importance of peers in interaction in language practices when access to other language-mediated activities are denied and making visible the reproduction of specific ways of knowing ("hearing norms") that disadvantage deaf children in education.

**Exploring the relationship between identity and language**

It is useful to recognize the breadth of literature that has concerned itself with a post-structural framing of identity and language with consideration to the role of the body in communicative practices; this framing cuts across many fields: literary studies (Bakhtin, 1981/1935), sociology/ethnography of communication (Bourdieu, 1977, 1982; Goffman, 1959; Hymes, 1974; Giddens, 1991), sociolinguistics (Bucholz & Hall, 2004; Cameron, 1998) and critical theory (Bulter, 1997; Weedon, 1987). These authors reexamine broad interpretations of "parole," building on fundamental ideas such as the social nature of language (Halliday, 1978; Vygotsky, 1978), the performative aspect of language (Austin, 1976), and an understanding of the role of language shaping thought (Sapir, 1921). They are part of the move away from

[2] "DEAFWORLD" is used in the Deaf community to refer to those who identify as a member of deaf culture (Lane et. al, 1996). The capitalization reflects the conventional use of capitalization when writing an ASL sign in English transcription.

structural linguistics or a Saussurean way of looking at big "L," language as a system of interdependent signs, langue, removed from context. To varying degrees, these authors theorize language in a way that decenters it, thus, presenting identity as contextually driven as opposed to identity as a process of attribution, assigning fixed essentializing categories to individuals. Furthermore, language examined within a static understanding of identity is most often rooted in verbal and auditory modes with little attention to the embodied ways we make meaning.

I understand culture as "a process that both includes and excludes" (Kramsch, 1998, p. 8), as "human behavior as symbolic action" (Geertz, 1973, p. 123) as "making do" (De Certeau, 1984) and as a "relationship not a state" (Baynton, 1996). I align my research with an understanding of culture as a site of struggle and a process of meaning-making emergent in and through language, which includes bodily and sensorial ways we experience the world. Agar articulates a unique definition of culture as not something you have, but something you do, an awareness or consciousness when faced with differences while navigating a multicultural context. Culture, stresses Agar, "happens in language" (1996, p. 21). The intersection of languages, discourses, and dialects are what Agar (1996) calls "rich points" of difference. In these points of contact and sometimes tension between different channels of communication, how might the deaf child or hearing mother building new knowledge though situated practices?

**The D/deaf Identity: A Deaf Studies Perspective**

Although the tides are slowly turning, a structural framing continues to dominate an understanding of a Deaf identity from a Deaf Studies perspective as a fixed cultural identity with the use of ASL as the cohesive factor behind membership into the "DEAFWORLD," a cultural and linguistic minority (e.g. Ladd, 2003; Padden & Humphries, 1998, 2005: Humphries, 2001). Participants in this study paint a complex and contextually driven understanding of being Deaf. They do not claim any kind of membership to a "DEAFWORLD" yet they demonstrate cultural practices that stem from their physical difference of being deaf (the children) or the experience of being in the world of their deaf child (the mothers). The children with cochlear implants and hearing mothers in this study used a mix-modal approach to language (ASL signs, manual-coded signs gestures and English) in home and school contexts sometimes found themselves "neither here nor there," in between the constructs of deafness and hearingness. Hearing mothers in the interview data overwhelming expressed Deaf culture and Deaf identity as exterior to their experience with their child, inaccessible and exclusive.

Lane, Pillar and Hedberg (2011) in their book, *People of the Eye: Deaf Ethnicity and Ancestry*, paint an essentialized and generalized construction of "the Deaf identity" putting forth the following assumptions: a Deaf person is a proficient user of ASL, marries within the minority, and takes caution in succeeding in the hearing world by using only "ASL technology and interpreters" so as not to try to "pass as hearing" (p. 9). The authors draw on Humphries (2001) to put forth two definitions of the Deaf identity, the hearing theory of the deaf identity and the deaf theory of the Deaf identity. The hearing theory is defined through the concepts of polarity (hear/don't hear), pathology (medical or behavior condition), adaptivity (the use of technological interventions) and exoticism (noble, special, enlightened). The Deaf theory of the Deaf is characterized by completeness (having a community), otherness (one with Deaf but immersed in hearing world), decedents (carries of ways of being and language), morality, (value systems based on notions of a "good life") and aesthetics (abstract creators) (Lane et al., 2011, 36). While such dichotomous theorizations of identity are "real" in the sense that these constructions, based on a normal/abnormal binary, have consequences leading to discrimination

and prejudice towards deaf people, it is important to recognize that individuals, deaf and non-deaf, shift ways of viewing oneself and others based on the given context.

Post structural and constructivist views on a "Deaf Identity/identities" have problematized the essentialist identity politics view (Davis, 1995; Bauman, 2008; Leigh, 2009; Skelton & Valentine, 2003; Corker, 2002; Baynton, 2002) on many points. Leigh (2009) offers a much more nuanced, fluid and socially constructed understanding that complicates the single deaf experience. What Leigh calls the d/Deaf identity,[3] (also see Corker, 1996) in her book *A Lens on Deaf Identities*, captures the multiplicity of identities "tied to time and space, language and communication" (p. viii). In that the "different deaf identity constellations" (p. 167) are "tied to" a context, therein lies is an assumption that the fixed multiplicity exists *a priori* to language. In this framing, individuals are socialized into multiple but fixed categories of identities along a big "D" (culturally Deaf) little "d" (physically deaf) continuum by communities, schools and families. Identity, however, in this sense, is not necessarily understood as constructed in and through the discourse itself.

The essentialist perspective of Deafness has had implications on the narrow research on the Deaf identity. Little attention has been given to qualitative or ethnographic research examining various identity positionings *within* the constructs of deafness and to the diversity of the deaf experience. Skelton and Valentine (2003) in their qualitative study exploring social exclusion and inclusion among D/deaf youth, included participants who were gay and deaf. The authors claim that research on deaf people is overwhelming quantitative in nature and focused on differences between the deaf and hearing identity while there is little research concerned with identity positioning within D/deafness among deaf people. In refusing to delineate between being culturally Deaf and auditorially deaf, the authors use the terms integrated as "D/deaf" to "recognize and capture the tensions and differences" (p. 456) in what the authors refer to as the "in-betweenity" (p. 464) young deaf people in the study faced. They explain: "D/deaf refers simultaneously to 'Deaf' people – those that consider themselves a minority language, and 'deaf' people – those considering themselves 'hearing impaired', and/or those that orient themselves in an oral tradition. 'Deaf' or 'deaf' refers to these groups separately" (p. 452). In their non-videotaped interview study they conclude that participants, whose signing abilities covered a great range, are not restricted to deaf/hearing and dis/abled binaries and, they, rather, "live out their identities in empowered and resistive ways" (p. 452).

In framings of language, identity and culture, some theorists in Deaf Studies are calling for more attention to the sensory and visual dimensions seeing the cultural model as constraining cultural experience (Bahan, 2008; Baynton 1996, 2008; Valente, Bahan & Bauman 2011). Baynton (2008), in his article "Beyond Culture: Deaf studies and the Deaf Body," argues that while the concept on Deaf culture has been integral to the development of Deaf studies and as an important cultural distinction it "increasingly appears inadequate in itself as an explanation of the Deaf community and the experiences of Deaf people" (p. 293) as sensory and visual beings. He calls for a "new configuration of abilities" (p. 294) that takes into account how deaf visual bodies, across broader contexts of culture, shape cultural practice. Baynton claims that preserving sensory diversity and recognizing physical difference extend the argument for "Deaf culture" as opposed to basing the cultural argument solely on a linguistic minority one (see Chapter 2 for more on the linguistic vs. disability model of deafness). Baynton strictly asserts that deaf children with CIs are not culturally Deaf as "they possess no elements of a minority

[3] d/D used by Leigh (2009) is an identity label that refers the simultaneous experience of the audiological condition of being deaf (little d) and Deafness as a cultural concept (big D).

culture"; they do, however, possess a "different sensory relationship to the world around them" (p. 303). Although Baynton explicitly excludes children with CIs from the conventional Deaf identity, he does bring sensory experience into and understanding of culture and identity. Valente, Bahan and Bauman (2011) bring to light the "sensory politics" of the CI debate, the "political implications of the enforcement of dominant cultural norms of sensory experience" (p. 264). The western ethnocentric notion of the "five senses" that shapes our normative sensory experience is culturally constructed (Csordas 1994; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999; Geurts, 2002; Valente, Bahan & Bauman, 2011). Geurts (2002) argues that "sensing or 'bodily ways of gathering information' is profoundly involved with a society's epistemology, the development of its cultural identity, and its forms of being-in-the-world" (p. 4). Expanding a notion of "sensing" (Geurts, 2002) among deaf children may open up avenues for understanding how participants draw on senses as meaning-making, shaping how one might experience the world.

Davis (1995), in his book "Enforcing Normalcy: Disability, Deafness, and the body," brings to light how identity and culture are deeply intertwined with assumptions of the normal body and subsequent constructions of cultural categories. Deafness has historically rejected association with people with disabilities in order to maintain status as a cultural and linguistic group and not as a group with physical difference. Davis argues for the "political benefits" of linking deafness to disability so that people with disabilities could be categorized as the Disabled (note capital "D") as cultural group. (see Chapter 2 for more on the issue of minority vs. disabled models of D/deafness) Noting that deafness is a "critical modality" (p. 100) he puts forth three constructions of the deaf identity to call attention to the duality of the deaf and hearing moment: the Deaf, deaf and "deafened moment." The construction of "Deaf" is conventionally defined by Davis as a linguistic and cultural minority and the "deaf" as those who do not hear. The "deafened moment", however, problematizes hidden assumptions in the processes of hearing/speaking/writing. Davis explains that the deafened moment "Does not rely on the Deaf, it exists in a dynamic relationship with that group" (p. 100). He goes on, "By the deafened moment I am speaking (writing) of a contextual position, a dialectical moment in the reading/critical process, that is defined by the acknowledgement on the part of the reader/writer/critic that he or she is part of a process that doesn't include speaking or hearing" (p. 101). While the concept is framed in terms of "writing" I believe it can be extended spoken or embodied discourse. The "deafened moment," that does not rely on spoken or auditory modes, could be useful in understanding the tension-filled positionings of participants, hearing and deaf, in understanding a sense of self.

**Notions of the self in theories of language: Bourdieu and Bakhtin**

Bourdieu and Bakhtin's views on the intersection of language and notions of self form the theoretical foundation for how I understand "language" in this research because of the consideration given to the role of the body in communicative practices and attention placed on the emergent, co-constructed and social nature of language. Through the theoretical foundations of these two authors, I extend my framework to other authors, putting Bourdieu and Bakhtin's ideas in dialogue with theirs. Building on a decentered framing for my research, identity is understood as negotiated and re-negotiated, constructed and re-constructed and narrativized and re-narrativized.

Bakhtin

> All words have the "taste" of a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular work, a particular person, a generation, an age group, the day and the hour. Each word tastes the contexts and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life; all words and forms are populated by intentions…the word in language is half someone else's. (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 293)

Literary critic and philosopher Bakhtin (1981) offers an understanding of the self as intertwined with the other. For Bakhtin, language lives at the juncture of multiple time-space scales, or what he calls the chronotope. The chronotope, defined as the "intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships" (p. 84), is never neutral in meaning; it always carries with it tastes, traces and echoes of others deeply embedded in sociohistorical contexts. The utterance, claims Bakhtin, is dialogical**,** repeating and reiterating ways the word was used in the past and foreseeing ways it may be used in the future. In a living dialogue, the utterance both anticipates and provokes an answer. The word is not just a compositional form emptied of semantic meaning or expressiveness as viewed in traditional linguistics**.** When learning a new word or expression in a different language a Bakhtinian perspective would recognize that an utterance in a new language carries both the history of past utterances and anticipated responses in two languages, often in tension with each other. As learners are introduced to ideologies of a new culture through their second language, the weight of their native languages and cultural practices acts as a centrifugal force that finds tension with the socialization into their new field and language. This dialectic framework, is particularly useful in assisting me analyze the discourse of hearing mothers in the interview data. At a macro level, the utterances of the mothers are entangled with medical, social and educational discourses, and, at the micro level, interwoven with the experiences of their interlocutor, namely, me, the hearing interviewer of deaf parents. In this sense, the hearing mother's "words" are never fully her own. Bakhtin explains the difficulty in appropriating language for one's own use because each utterance holds the "taste" through the iteration of how the words were used in past and will be used potentially in the future. He explains*:*

> Language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker's intention, it is populated – overpopulated – with the intentions of others. Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process. (Bakhtin, 1930s, p. 294)

For Bakhtin, language is not a "neutral medium that passes freely and easily*"* rather it is a site of struggle in which individuals attempt to shape a sense of self (internally persuasive discourses) while navigating the complex web of the dominant discourses (authoritative discourses). Bakhtin defines the site of struggle as *social heteroglossia,* the place of internal stratification, or a multiplicity of discourses or individual voices in any language at a given moment in any given culture. (p. 263). *Unitary language*, Bakhtin explains, is the centripetal force (in opposition to the centrifugal force - the reality of social heteroglossia) of language that serves to unify, centralize and generate a system of norms that center around the hearing, speaking able-body. (p. 270) Spoken English is an example of a unitary language at my research site; it underlines mainstream medical and educational discourses. However, in practice,

preschool classroom for the deaf and hard-of-hearing students, alongside hearing peers, is a site of social heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1930), of "crossing" (Rampton, 1995; Hill, 1999) and "codemeshing" (Canagarajah, 2011) involving a multiplicity and complexity of communicative practices resisting, conforming and manipulating the norms of spoken English through drawing on a range of semiotic resources to position oneself or the other. Resonating with Bakhtinian notions, Canagarajah (2002, 2005) proposes exploring how students can relate the discourses of their vernacular and academic communities. Canagarajah posits that all learners claim mixed identities and have the possibility to construct mixed genres and multi-vocal texts that consider the learners' multicultural background and influence from various discourses. Extending this idea to deaf learners, "mixed genres" and "multi-vocal texts" are multimodal texts, an argument proposed by Blackledge and Cresse (2014) in their recent book, *Heteroglossia As Practice And Pedagogy*.

Connections between Vygotsky and Bakhtin offer a concrete way to understand Bakhtin's concepts in relation to learning. Both Vygotsky and Bakhtin, deriving their ideas from Marxist views, are reacting against the formalist schools of thought that ignore how language shapes a semiotic and dialectic relationship between socio-historical processes and the individual. Vygotsky questions the "social origins of mind" where Bakhtin questions the social origin of language (Lemke, 1995, p. 22). "Learning" in Vygotsky's view, and "artistic potential" in Bakhtin's, grow out of the non-linear, dialectic processes between the binaries of the individual-society, norm-resistance, past- future, expert-novice and powerful-powerless. Emerson (1983) suggests Vygotsky's work could serve as important "clinical underpinnings" (p.251) to Bakhtin's concepts on language. For both, language is a "tool of pedagogy" (p. 257). Vygotsky's notions on play could be viewed as a fruitful example of how the heteroglossic tensions, between such dialectic processes are exploited for learning.

For Bakhtin, a key point is that the construction of self is never divorced from the social and the bodily. The self is in the other and the other is in the self. I draw heavily on this view of identity as a lens for understanding the "self in the other" in the language interactions between the interviewer (the hearing child of deaf parents) and interviewee (the hearing mother of deaf child) in Chapter 7. As interviewer and interviewee, our understanding of the other's experiences, feelings and memories shape the narrative of the self. The "other" is also recognized on a broader social scale leading us to co-construct our identities as a hearing mother of a deaf child or hearing child of deaf parents through circulating authoritative medical and educational discourses based on the norms of the native/non-native speaker and the normal body.

The socially immersed understanding of the self is also reflected in Giddens' (1991) notion of the "reflective project of the self." The hearing mothers of deaf children are in a process of becoming hearing mothers, a process that they are constantly negotiating through their everyday experiences. Giddens' notion of the "reflexive project of the self" illustrates the negotiation of the self and other. He explains:

> A person's identity is not to be found in behaviour, nor - important though this is - in the reactions of others, but in the capacity *to keep a particular narrative going*. The individual's biography, if she is to maintain regular interaction with others in the day-to-day world, cannot be wholly fictive. It must continually integrate events which occur in the external world, and sort them into the ongoing 'story' about the self. (Giddens 1991, p. 54)

This "reflexive project of self" is characterized by the late modernity episteme tendency for people to constantly remake and make their "selves," constructing a narrative that integrates the past, present and future. In the case of the hearing mothers in my study, they are negotiating a new way of viewing the self, as a hearing mother of a deaf child in tension with the norms that circulate around conventional ways a mother-child relationship is understood in the framework of having a common language and culture.

## Bourdieu

> "We learn bodily" (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 141)

Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's (1977, 1982) major concepts shed light on the ideological underpinnings that shape the reproduction of linguistic interactions. He offers a framework to understand language exchanges as symbolic exchanges of power in politics, education and everyday practices. For Bourdieu, each language interaction carries the whole social structure. He explains, "Language comes from the outside…language at most represents this authority, manifests and symbolizes it" (Bourdieu, 1982, p. 109). His concepts illuminate the power struggles faced by language learners as they navigate the space of the "Other." Bourdieu (1977) examines language in *context*, the relationship between one's *linguistic capital*, the *linguistic market* and one's *habitus*. He defines habitus as "a system of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structures" (1997, p. 72). While dispositions are acquired through inculcation and structured to reflect social conditions the notion that they are durable (and not fixed), generative (possibly in reproduction and production) does leave space for agency or resistance. The habitus develops in an environment called a *field*, such as the field of family, school, or interests. The field is a site of struggle where the distribution, and re-distribution of different forms of capital take place. In the field of the ECEIC's preschool for the deaf and hard-of-hearing, a learner's visual and sensory-driven habitus can be inhibited or enhanced through classroom practices, interactions and pedagogical approaches.

In exercising what Bourdieu (1982) calls '*social magic*,' an act of institution that signifies one's identity, classifies him and imposes on him "what he is and what he must be" and thus "produces what it designates" (p. 121), educational institutions play a role in shaping a deaf language learner identity as "deaf, " "hearing," "disabled" often measured against the idealized "native" able-bodied English speaker. The powerful act of an institution, which forces us to conform to our social essence, ultimately constructs boundaries, and creates differences and in what we can and cannot be. Bourdieu explains that the silent, violent suggestions ingrained in our every practices influence the formation of our habitus on an unconscious level and effectively makes those who are subjected believe in the power that appears to be imposed. Therefore, the symbolic domination requires people to believe in the legitimacy of the power. Applying Bourdieu's concepts to my the broader context of my research, language learning practices of non-native users of English, *including deaf children of hearing parents*, are framed from a deficient perspective. This framing often leads hearing parents to believe that if their child attains *spoken* English competence they will achieve the 'norm' and this, in turn, reinforces the Native/Non-native speaker, dis/able-bodied dichotomies. A *unimodal phonocentric bias* could be incorporated into or expand what SLA theorists describe as a monolingual monocultural bias. Canagarajah (1999) explains this monolingual bias:

> A debilitating monolingual/monocultural bias has revealed itself in the insistence on 'standard' English as the norm, the refusal to grant an active role to the students' first language in the learning and acquisition of English, the marginalization of 'non-native' English teachers, and the insensitive negativity shown by the pedagogies and discourse towards the indigenous cultural traditions. All such assumptions ignore the creative processes of linguistic mediation, interaction, and fusion that take place in social life. (Canagarajah, 1999, p. 3)

Canagarajah, in this above quote, discusses the context of second language learning for hearing students of indigenous languages, which I believe is applicable to deaf children who also face (although much more understudied and under-recognized) a similar kind of monolingual/monocultural/unimodal bias in language learning that may neglect to fully consider the visual and sensory dimensions that are integral to their communicative practices. In the context of deaf education in the United States, the majority of deaf students are mainstreamed and pushed into English-only contexts instead of bilingual approaches that employ a fully visual language, ASL. For the most part, the monolingual bias reproduces the values and practices of the hearing dominant rather than placing emphasis on what it means to be bilingual or bimodal and how we can use various linguistic resources and cultural perspectives to enrich a classroom. Monolingual policies that categorize a learner with labels such as "Limited English proficiency" (LEP) or "non-native" instead of in terms of the learner's bilingual and bimodal practices stigmatize language learners, often shaping how learners come to view themselves. Educational institutions promote socially constructed static representations of learners designating them to the categories without recognizing their diverse backgrounds and experiences (Harklau, 2000). The silent category that goes unquestioned is the speaking/hearing subject that constructs norms around how we communicate in our first or second languages. When a teacher informed the deaf students that Paul, the "Sunlight hearing friend" from the Sunlight classroom for typically developing students (i.e. hearing students) across the courtyard is coming for the week to act as the hearing role model, both hearing and deaf students were aware of their physical differences that place them in different classrooms. It is important to recognize that all students, and in particular for my study, deaf students, depend on what they perceive as legitimate representations that authority figures - such as teachers, parents, audiologists, doctors and speech therapists - have of them and this, in turn, shapes how students view themselves, their position and their opportunities.

Pavlenko & Blackledge (2004) provide an excellent extension of Bourdieu's notions in language learning, placing more emphasis on learner agency. The authors explain the complex nature of negotiation, "Languages may not only be 'markers of identity' but also sites of resistance, empowerment, solidarity or discrimination" (p. 4). With these insights, I examine language interaction as negotiated activity through both the L1 and L2, *and various modalities,* zoning in on different communication practices in relation to space and embodied co-participation in that space.

**Theoretical and empirical research on ASL, gesture, bimodality**

Research on sign languages and gesture, alongside phenomenological approaches to language, have theorized the body as central to understanding our sociotemporal space. The groundbreaking work on thought, language and gesture provided the foundation for understanding modality as meaning-making (Goodwin, 2006; Kendon, 2000, 2011; Sweetser,

2009, Iverson & Goldin-Meadow, 2005) and intertwined with language development (Pfau, 2011, Goldin-Meadow & Butcher 2003). From this point of view, gesture as part of the utterance design plays an integral role in communication. Kendon (2011) elaborates on this point, "The use of gesture is neither automatic or inevitable. They are shaped and adapted by the speaker according to communicative aim and circumstance and thus are as much a part of an utterance design as are its words" (p. 261). From this view, the meaning gestures hold is context dependent. In the field of SLA, greater attention has recently been given to the relationship of gesture and language acquisition: gesture as a communication strategy, gesture as a medium or reflection of language development and gesture in relation to the semantic content of L1 and L2 (see for instance Church et. al., 2004; Gullberg, 2006; McCafferty & Gale, 2008; McCafferty, 2002; Nicholadis et. al., 1999, Yoshioka & Kellerman, 2006, Stam, 2008). The majority of the work in gesture and ASL studies has been quantitative or experimental; missing from this picture is a more socially, culturally and physically contextualized view of gesture or sign use.

Research in embodied cognition (Damasio, 1984; Johnson, 1987; Schumann, 1997; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999) has challenged Cartesian notions of the disembodied mind and has underscored the importance of an embodied understanding of language. Sweetser explains embodiment and situatedness as "inseparable" (p. 2):

> Our cognition is not only embodied, but physically and socially interactive with other embodied cognitive beings, and a rich area of cognitive activity is our understanding of social relationships; linguistic communication is constantly physically and socially situated in a broader frame of social and physical interaction, activities, and environment.... It seems impossible to set the linguist the task of choosing between seeing cognition as embodied or as situated. We could not be situated as we are without being embodied. (1998, p. 1)

Sweetser claims that we experience our spatialtemporal environment not only through memory, intentionality and experience and but also through social and physical interaction with other embodied beings. Parallel to Sweetser, Goodwin's (2007) also argues for understanding "situatedness" and offers a theory of "embodied frameworks" to understand how pointing, gaze and posture of multiple participants are interrelated in co-embodied interaction. McNeill (1992, 2005) argues that visual language (gesture and sign languages) and the study of "coexpressiveness" (i.e. co-modalities) offer a new perspective on language and thought processes. His understanding of gestural analysis as a "dialectical analysis" provides me with a theoretical springboard to begin to conceptualize the role of the body and accompanying visual and motor dimensions as part of the language processes.

**Bimodal Bilingualism**

While there has been a extensive range of research providing insight on the cognitive processes, cross-linguistic language processing, and semantic and syntactical features of code-blending in bimodal communication among bimodal bilinguals in literature in ASL linguistics (see for instance Bishop & Hicks, 2011, 2005; Emmorey, et al. 2008 Emmorey et al., 2008; Kovelam et al. 2009, Casey & Emmorey 2009; Shook & Marian 2012; Emmorey et al. 2013), to my knowledge, bimodal communication has not been extensively studied from a critical discourse perspective in which identity is considered *in relation* to mode-blending and mode-switching in contexts *outside of bimodal bilinguals* (i.e. ASL/English users). Emmorey et al.

(2009) defines "bimodal bilingualism" and the related terms "code-blend" and "code-switch" in the following quote. I build on this work to develop the concepts mode-blend and mode-switch. The authors explain:

> Bimodal bilingualism is distinct from unimodal bilingualism because the phonologies of the two languages are expressed by different articulators, thus allowing simultaneous articulation. Unimodal bilinguals cannot physically produce two words or phrases at the same time…Bimodal bilinguals have the option of switching between sign and speech or producing what we term code-blends in which ASL signs are produced simultaneously with spoken English. We have coined the term code-blend to capture the unique simultaneous nature of bimodal language production that is obscured by the term code-switch, which implies a change from one language to another. (Emmorey et al., 2009, p. 5)

My study involves participants, children with CIs using multiple channels of communication, were not yet at a stage of "bimodal bilingualism," according to this abovementioned definition. The research on code-switching and code-blends concerns itself with bimodal bilinguals, primarily focused on the population of hearing children of deaf adults, who use two specific codes, ASL and English, both defined as languages independently. One exception to the ASL bias in bimodalism is demonstrated by Erting's (1994) study that found that hearing and deaf adults, and hearing and deaf children, used different codes, either ASL or manually-coded English, to index different worlds; ASL indexed Deaf cultural values and a DEAF-WORLD affiliation while manually coded English indexed hearing values and a hearing identity. Implicit in this study, however, is the simplistic equating of one language and one culture rather than a discursively performative view of identity. In other words, I think it is possible that one code may index different "worlds" (perhaps in a conflicting manner) given a consideration of the utterance in interaction at a particular moment and place.

Because the participants in my study draw on a range of semiotic resources, including sensory modes, bodily positions, gestures and other languages, I prefer to use the term mode-switch and mode-blend over code-blend and code-switch. Emmorey et al. (2009), examine frequency and types of code-blends and switches (including semantically symmetric and asymmetric blends), specifically distinguishing between "natural bimodal interactions" (p. 8), the exclusive simultaneous or consecutive use of the codes ASL and English, and the forced mixing of the codes seen in Simultaneous Communication/ Manually Coded Systems[4], used to facilitate the acquisition of English for deaf children. This natural vs. artificial false distinction does not change the fact that hearing and deaf participants still make meaning, navigating their broad range of semiotic resources in creative ways that may provide insight into identity processes.

Building on the insights from McNeil (2000), Liddell (2003), and Van den Bogaerde and Baker (2005) on the conceptually cohesive of nature of the code-blended utterance, Bishop and Hicks (2005, 2011) provide important insights into the relationship between "bimodality and expressions of Codas identity." when they use "Coda talk, " a blended ASL/English discourse used by children of deaf adults (i.e. "CODAS" and sometimes called "codas"). The authors elaborate, "Bimodality gives Codas an unsurpassed range of self-expressive skills that, if ignored, would severely restrict their communicative options" (p. 93). One type of "codaism"

[4] Signing-Exact English (SEE-sign), the language approach used at the Eagle Crest Early Intervention Center, is an example of a Manually Coded System.

entails the production of a bimodal utterance using the translation of an ASL sign into English; in other words, the codaism maps the ASL visual structure onto the English. The authors offer the example, ARROW-IN-HEAD, which translates to "get to the point" in English. Bimodally produced the coda would verbally state, "arrow in head" alongside the sign offering a more visually-oriented metaphor in verbal form. Bishop and Hicks (2011) work is on the frontlines of pushing bimodality in new directions that demonstrates a symbolic competence (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008) among bimodal/bilingual Codas who creatively complicate the symmetry or asymmetry of semantic content in the simultaneity of channels for humorous and cultural intent.

Of particular note is Goldin-Meadow's (2003, 2006) work with deaf and hearing children in learning contexts, which has offered unparalleled insights on the relationship of gestures and cognitive and language development. Goldin-Meadow, Mylander and Franklin (2006) found that Chinese and American deaf children of hearing parents who had little exposure to a conventional signed or spoken language invent gesture systems that display some syntactic and morphological structure. Rather than modeling the language input, the gestures of their hearing mothers, the deaf children initiated word-level structure in responses. The study underscores that gesture is an integral part of communication between hearing mothers and deaf children and plays a role in the development of children's language acquisition despite the children not having access to conventionally understood *verbal* comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982). This research contradicts Krashen's notion of comprehensible input, the idea that learners need understandable and conventional verbal and written language input in order to increase linguistic competence, which has played an influential role in theories of SLA and language research.

Of particular relevance to my interest in bimodal production is Goldin-Meadow's (2003) work on gesture mis-matches (co-produced gesture and speech with each medium conveying different information) in her study on young children undertaking problem-solving task in mathematics. Whereas Emmorey et al. (2008) focus more on semantically related modes in simultaneous bimodal production, Goldin-Meadow (2003) addresses semantically different modes. She found that in the speech mode students may convey incorrect information but in the gesture mode the conceptual information related to the same task is correct. The gesture mode, in fact, offered "correct" meaning prior to the verbal. In the context of Goldin-Meadow's focus on the relationship of gesture and thought processes in the gesture/speech "mis-match," the social and individual dimensions behind a "mis-match" are not explored. I build on Goldin-Meadow's concept to understand sign/speech "mis-match" or, what I call, "modal contradictions."

**Social and cognitive development and language in deaf children**

Overwhelmingly absent in the research on deaf children is naturalistic, ethnographic and holistic exploration of the deaf child in his/her sociocultural context (Blackburn, 2000; Hilton, 2011; Macaulay and Ford, 2012). I would argue that even more absent from this literature is anthropological research on deaf children who use CIs in home or educational settings using various communicative approaches. While there is little research on the language-related experiences of hearing mothers (or parents) of deaf children, the experiences of the hearing child (the CODA) of deaf parents have been discussed at length (see HEARING, MOTHER FATHER DEAF[5]: Hearing People in Deaf Families, Bishop & Hicks, 2009). However, a quick internet search yields hundreds of parenting (i.e. how to cope with a deaf child), medical and educational resources for hearing parents of deaf children. In addition, I found that most of the research on

[5] The title "HEARING, MOTHER FATHER DEAF" reflects ASL grammar. "I'm hearing and my mother and father are deaf" is the rough translation to English.

the experiences of the deaf child represents data in conventional orthographic transcription offering little or no attention to visual representation via video recordings or still images of the embodied dimensions of communication.

The studies on deaf children in hearing spaces I located are related to social, linguistic and cognitive development. Researchers found that deaf children of hearing parents who have different communicative strategies than their hearing parents may face negative effects on their social development. (Meadow-Orlans 1990; Blackburn 2000, Jamieson, 1994). In a rare and early example of videotaped linguistic data, Jamieson (1994) who, working from a Vygotskian perspective of "Teaching as Transaction," videotaped three dyads (hearing mother-hearing child, hearing mother-deaf child, and deaf mother-deaf child) and found, rather unsurprisingly, that the hearing mothers of deaf children were less able to adapt their interactive behavior to the visual needs of their deaf child than deaf parents of deaf children. Blackburn (2000), who conducted an ethnographic study tracing the "worldview of the deaf child" while living in the home of a deaf boy's hearing family while observing social and linguistic interactions for ten months, explains:

> Differing communication strategies (both linguistic and modality differences) used by hearing parents and their deaf child frequently create communicative tensions between deaf and hearing relatives. Both lack of access to the primary language of the home and communicative tensions can produce a deleterious effect on the child's and family's interpersonal communication and social interactions, as well as the deaf child's ensuing identity development. (Blackburn, 2000, p. 221)

Blackburn found, however, that the four-year-old deaf child, drawing on visual-gesture communicative strategies he learned from Deaf adults and peers, was able to develop visual-oriented worldview and function "effectively" despite living in a phonocentric "hearing world." More than ever, Deaf children today are increasingly mainstreamed into hearing educational settings, sometimes with little contact with Deaf practices or a signed language; there is a great need to explore the social, cognitive and linguistic aspects of these contexts. My research provides another angle on the issue of the deaf child's "worldview." How do deaf students with CIs draw on visual, sensory and bodily ways of making sense? With little access to cultural Deafness or other deaf individuals outside peers how do they understand a sense of self?

Hilton et al. (2011) observes that the very few studies on the identity of children with CIs in the US context have been largely quantitative in nature. These studies (e.g. Leigh et al, 2009; Mance and Edwards, 2012) examined deaf children's perceptions of their hearing and deaf selves using quantitative measures. Glickman (1993) developed the "Deaf Identity Development Scale," with the design modeled after racial identity models, to measure cultural orientations for deaf people; this model has been influential in the empirical study of the deaf identity and was later modified to include hearing people in deaf families (see Maxwell-McCaw et al. 2000). Hilton et al. (2011) conducted interviews with deaf adolescents with bilateral CIs to better understand the effects of receiving two CIs on deaf youth's social and psychological well-being. The authors noted that despite the fact that participants "grappled with their identity as a deaf person who is able to hear, " they experienced improved self-confidence and social well-being (p. 527). The researchers concluded with a call for more longitudinal, qualitative research on the identity development of deaf children with CIs, in what they call a "unique" new area of study.

A psychosocial study conducted in Sweden (Preisler et al., 2002), where bilingual approaches have been widespread and influential in educational settings for the deaf, examined

video-taped interactions of deaf preschool students, parents, peers and teachers and found that quality of peer and adult interactions and the use of Swedish Sign language were important factors in developing positive social development and language skills. Recent research in the United States has also supported the early use of sign language (Cummins, 2006; Gárate, 2011). Gárate explains the social, cognitive and linguistic benefits of a bilingual approach:

> The attainment of bilingual competencies can result in a range of language skills, communication options, and cognitive benefits applicable across contexts. Children with cochlear implants have the potential to benefit from the acquisition of ASL while still developing their spoken language within a maintenance model, which aims for bilingualism. Given that these children are still deaf, they also have the right to a visual language that is fully accessible and can provide the linguistic basis onto which spoken language development can be mapped. (Gárate, 2011, p. 224)

Leigh et al. (2009) studied cultural affiliation and self-esteem among two groups of Deaf and Hard of Hearing youth, one group with CIs, the other without, discovered that children with the CIs developed affiliation with a hearing identity while the deaf and hard of hearing without CIs developed an affiliation with a deaf identity. In a subsequent review of various studies on the social well being of CI-using children, Leigh and Maxwell-McCaw (2011) concluded that children with CIs "demonstrate positive psychosocial adjustment, whether their affirmed identity is bicultural, culturally Deaf, or culturally hearing. Cochlear implantation is not necessarily creating children stuck between the deaf and hearing worlds; they can and do often have a clear identity and can shift between identity categorizations as the situation demands" (p. 106). This finding is significant to my exploration of how deaf and hearing student understand a sense of self as they navigate ways of being deaf and hearing.

Research shows a developmental interdependence between language and Theory of Mind Development (ToM), the ability to attribute mental states to another, in infants and young children (Astington, 1988, 2006) and a linkage between linguistic experiences and cognitive and emotional development (Hintermair, 152). Macaulay and Ford (2012) examine family influences on the cognitive develop of three to five year-old deaf children (with CIs or hearing devices) of hearing parents. In their quantitative study of the cognitive development of hearing and deaf three to five-year olds, the researchers found, after controlling for SES, mother education and age, that deaf children with older siblings correlates to interference in deaf children's ToM development concerning cognitive processes such as "memory span, inhibition, belief understanding, picturesequencing accuracy, and mental-state language" (p. 558) while there was a positive correlation between hearing children having siblings and their ToM development. The authors suggest that older siblings of deaf children might decrease one-on-one opportunities for conversation for deaf children or dominate communicative practices in family settings. This study stresses the need for individualized communication for deaf children with CIs in hearing families. The authors call for more observational studies of the communicative patterns of deaf children and caregivers and propose that further studies are needed to understand the relevance of family influence on the cognitive and social development of deaf children with CIs, the recent majority of deaf children.

**Analyzing language: Critical analysis and the body**

Drawing influence from Foucault's (1966) notion of discourse[6], as organizing meaning through symbolic systems, the critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework focuses on the intersection of "language/discourse/speech and social structure" (Blommaert, 2005, p. 25) making it particularly valuable in my attempts to examine the discourses around deafness and hearingness in relation to identity processes and multimodal use. When we understand that the "multi-voiced-ness" of language as embodied (Bahktin, 2001) and that through our perceptions, memories and movements "we learn bodily" (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 141), constructs taken from critical discourse analysis will provide useful in my project to examine language-in-interaction and interrogate the relationship of the discourses of hearingness and deafness to the participants embodied choices. Until recently, this framework has largely neglected a detailed analysis of modality as part of the meaning making process. Fairclough (2001) puts forth that "visuals" in language in a CDA context are "extras" or "substitute for talk" and are "difficult to disentangle" (p. 23). What makes utterances "difficult to disentangle," as Fairclough notes (2001), is the question I am interested in. If we can understand utterances produced by deaf and hearing alike, through a multimodal analysis, we may gain insight on how to interpret the "doing" of language - including the emotional, interpersonal, social and political dimensions involved. A critical discourse analysis that incorporates a modal analysis would, in fact, benefit from being visual supplemented but most often attention to the visual is represented in orthographic form. Kendon (2011) working from the premise that "all utterances are multimodal" brings to light how the utterance continues to be underexamined in analyses despite advances in visual-audio technology in the last fifty years. He explains, "The analysts who examine these objects start from the position that assumes people go about the utterance construction first of all as if they were writing something and then add embellishments" (p. 254). Following Kendon's line of thought, beginning the analysis from the visual (via video or image) would enhance a critical discourse analysis.

**The present study**

This critical discourse analytic ethnographic study attempts to understand the role modality plays in social identity development and language learning practices among deaf and hearing preschoolers, teachers and mothers. The communicative practices and language learning experiences of deaf children with CIs and hearing mothers is under-examined in the literature on SLA, language and identity and ethnographic studies on the experiences of deaf children; most studies to date have focused on developmental and psychological aspects of language use among this population detached from a sociocultural political context. Language, in the context of my research site, is not neatly boxed up as either a spoken or signed medium. I seek to understand meaning making in communicative practices with more consideration to the "saturation of context" or, in other words, the utterance contextualized so that meaning is derived from both language and non-language dimensions including silence and the body in space (Hanks, 1995; see also Merleau-Ponty 1964). Participants in this study are not necessarily proficient in English or ASL, the two main recognized languages underpinning the communicative practices.

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[6] Foucault (1966) understands discourse as a way of organizing meaning through different symbolic systems, such as language. Discourses construct a social reality that shapes "truth" and "logic" and filters how power is accessed. Emphasized is how classification works as a tool of inclusion and exclusion. Foucault stresses that through language we group, isolate and dissect entities creating a culture of order that allows humans to rationalize experiences, makes "knowing" possible and propose a moral order.

However, this shouldn't make them less valuable to study. Language (including modal) choice is unpredictable, tension-filled and affectively driven. An analysis of the embodied dimensions of language has recently gained attention in research on SLA and research in education.

The literature on language and identity has not offered enough attention to the role of the body in the construction and co-construction of the self. This study explores these two gaps in the literature - the under-theorization of communicative practices of deaf learners and the under-theorization of the embodied dimensions of language - in connection to reach a richer understanding of identity processes. Identity, in this sense, is understood as discursively constituted and context depended. I adopt Kramsch's (2009) view of subject positioning as "the way in which the subject presents and represents itself discursively, psychologically, socially, and culturally through the use of symbolic systems" (p. 20). Why might this be important?

On a broad level, this study considers the relationship between language learning and identity, and, in the process, interrogates the cultural constructs of "hearingness" and "deafness" that permeates this relationship. More specifically, I attempt to understand the use of semiotic resources, or modal choices, in discourse. I investigate the relationship of multimodal interactions to identity processes and explore how multimodal semiotic resources may create new spaces for identity construction between children, teachers, parents and myself, the researcher. By "multimodal" I refer to various semiotic resources we draw upon in interaction via speech, sign and sensory means. In particular, building on the work of McNeill's (1992) co-speech gestures (simultaneously blending gesture and speech) and Petitto's et al.'s (2001) code-blends (simultaneously blending sign and speech), I am interested in the usage of what I call mode-blending - using sign, speech and sensory modes together - making it different from both co-speech gesture and code-blends because 1) it includes a sensory dimension and 2) as an umbrella concept, it encompasses both co speech gestures and code-blends; thus, mode-blending has a broader scope and is perhaps best applicable to the multimodal contexts I investigate.

Additionally, I seek to understand the experiences of hearing parents adapting to the visual world of their deaf children with CIs and hearing pre-school children learning to draw on sign and gesture to communicate with their deaf peers. I attempt to situate my participants' experiences in the larger educational and sociocultural context, which, hopefully, will yield new insights on the intersections of language ideology, identity processes and learning.

**Research Questions**

The breadth of literature discussed in this chapter offers a rationale for my research questions. For more detail in regards to my research questions please see Chapter 4 where I present an alignment of my rationale, data and research questions.

The overarching questions that guide my research are:

Question 1:
*What role does multimodality play in communicative practices of deaf and hearing preschool participants in the focal events of circle time and snack time in the classroom setting?*

Question 2:
*What does examining co-embodied dimensions tell us about how deaf and hearing preschoolers and hearing mothers position themselves in interaction?*

Question 3:
*How are the identities of hearing mothers of deaf children shaped through language and how do these parents carve their own sense of self through these new language practices?*

It is my hope that this study can facilitate new theoretical approaches to the study of language and identity expanding our understanding of human communication not just for deaf learners, but for all learners.

## Organization of Dissertation

This first chapter has provided a review of the literature and introduced the theoretical framework that guides the rest of this dissertation. The rationale for this study has been introduced both through the literature and through a reflexive examination of how my positionality as a child of deaf parents has shaped the questions I ask; both aspects point toward a need to explore the narrative of the deaf child and hearing mother. In Chapter 2, I offer a sociocultural overview, from both historical and current perspectives, of Deafness to contextualize the experiences of my participants and, more generally, of deaf children and hearing parents in the United States and in California. Chapter 3 provides a detailed overview of my methodological approach. In Chapter 4 and 5, I explore and analyze the role of multimodality in communicative practices of deaf and hearing students and teachers during focal events in the classroom. Chapter 4 offers close analyses of various examples of co-embodied activity, while Chapter 5 looks specifically at modeswitches relation to participant positionality. Chapter 6 draws on mother interview data to further complexify notions of D/deaf from the position of a hearing mother of a deaf child. In all the data analysis chapters, I examine the semiotic choices participants make *in discourse* and link this to how students and mothers develop a sense of self. Finally, in Chapter 7, I present conclusions, implications of this study for research and avenues for further research.

# CHAPTER 2
# CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON DEAFNESS: PAST AND PRESENT

## Introduction

This chapter surveys socio-historical perspectives on Deafness to contextualize the experiences of my participants and, more generally, of deaf children and hearing parents in the United States. Understanding the historical trajectory of the perspectives on d/Deafness and the education of the deaf in the offers insight into the present ideological tension between the constructions of hearingness and deafness that my participants experience and the ideological underpinnings of current educational practices for deaf children. Further, an understanding of the complex struggle Deaf people have faced historically and at present, draws attention to the socially constructed deficit framing projected onto the deaf by a hearing world that has left little room to understand the basis of deafness from a linguistic or cultural perspective. At the same time, however, present framings of "Deaf Culture" neglect a full range of experiences of being deaf and thus marginalize some sub-populations of deaf people.

## What is "Deaf Culture"?

Is it Deaf or deaf? The notions of big "D" and little "d" deaf roll off my tongue like a familiar rhyme but are met with confused looks and questions in a classroom or casual conversation. While they are commonplace understandings from a Deaf Studies perspective, an understanding of such notions is often unfamiliar in language or education-related studies. This is a question I have been confronted with in every paper I have written on this topic, as the very choice defines an author's stance on d/Deafness itself. More recently, however, my research has forced me to ask: does there have to be one stance on d/Deafness?

The distinction between capital "D," cultural deafness, and lowercase "d," the auditory condition of deafness, has been used by the Deaf community since the 1970s. It privileges Deafness from a sociolinguistic perspective and "the Deaf" as a community of signers with a capital letter, "D," to distinguish itself from the unmarked hearing world, the non-deaf, as the cultural norm. Definitions of Deaf culture are based around a membership in a Deaf community. Lane et al. (1996) speaks of Deaf culture as the "bonds that hold deaf people together" bounded by a common language, mores, values and territory (p. 124). In "The People of the Eye," Lane et al. (2011) put forth a notion of Deaf culture defined through a set of cultural rules and values underlining social and linguistic practices such as gaining status in the community through representing the "ideals" of the Deaf person, adhering to consensus in decision making and managing relationships through a "Deaf Way" (p. 10-14). In some sense, however, such definitions as lists of specific in-group practices essentialize culture as static and not as a process intertwined with many other situated practices. With little exposure to a "Deaf community," deaf children with hearing parents, such as the participants in my research, may never find an access point to the abovementioned "Deaf culture." Yet, they are deaf. Where do these participants' cultural practices that may be visual or sensory in nature of fit into Deaf culture? What about hearing mothers or CODAs (hearing children of deaf adults) who may or may not learn how to sign with their child or parents? Where do they fit in to definition of "Deaf Culture"?

The reality is that it is impossible to adhere to cultural categories tightly boxed up with boundaries defined by an uppercase or lowercase. So, is it Deaf or deaf? There is no right term. I

can recall my hearing grandmother tell stories of her "good hearing boy,"(my dad), excelling at lip reading, communicating in spoken English and succeeding at a hearing high school. Somehow, to my grandma, my dad's success equated him with "being hearing, " when the reality is that my father is profoundly deaf and never used ASL growing up. While he used limited home signs to communicate with the few deaf people he knew in his oral-based early education classroom, he attended mostly hearing schools and had hearing friends through his teenage years. His parents slapped his hands when he signed. Even at 95, when my grandmother was losing her hearing, she called out to my dad, "Now you don't need to use your hands! Stop that!" Learning ASL from my mother and attending a university with a large Deaf population, provided him access to big "D" Deaf identity practices. Looking back on this period of his life he explained, in an email interview I conducted for a Personal Linguistic Project assignment for a class,[7] "I was so hungry and mad for years that they treated me as normal hearing person…always telling their friends that I can understand them well…but not true." On the other hand, he expresses certainty that his parents always had his best interests in mind for him. "I was proud of my parents to encourage me to learn more speak properly with good speech and lipreading." My grandfather tape-recorded and painstakingly transcribed my father's English and History high school classes, spending his evenings going over the lessons with my Dad to make sure he didn't miss anything. Today, my father finds himself somewhat comfortable, certainly with moments of tension, in between hearing and deaf worlds: "I am really happy as I can fit into hearing and deaf worlds in two different languages..." I bring up the experience of my father because these places of being in-between hearingness and deafness are commonplace for deaf people.

The hearing mothers in my research also describe an "in-between" they experience as a "special place" they share with their deaf child on the borders of hearing and deaf worlds. This "liminal phenomenon" (Turner, 1967), or in-between state of being "neither here nor there" (p. 95) in a ritual process, which in this case is reaching "Native Speaker-ness," has a structural and social ambiguity with real social consequences that disadvantage the deaf, yet, this process opens up, according to Turner, a "realm of pure possibility whence novel configurations of ideas and relations may arise" (p. 97). In this study, I aim to explore and understand, through the language practices, these in-between language-learning spaces.

Culture moves fluid across time and space and we choose to engage in cultural practices that may, in fact, contradict each other. Cultural constructs such as "deaf-as-deficit," have forced severe disadvantages onto deaf people that are real, no matter how constructed the category. Participants at my research site have complexified an understanding of deafness that has made me re-evaluate how I position others when I choose big D or little d. I have learned to take into account the complex nature of the terrain of deafness and the ability of individuals, hearing and deaf, to choose to move in and out of cultural constructs through the practices they choose to draw on at any given moment. Moreover, the cultural practices of both the Deaf and the deaf broaden an understanding of culture from unimodal to multimodal, including visual and sensory dimensions of human communication allowing us to interrogate the physical norms underpinning the very notion of culture itself.

The monolingual/monocultural politics that play into the language practices and educational opportunities of the deaf children and hearing mothers in my research are part of a larger narrative of monolingual bias that second-language learners face in the United States. However, literature on SLA has given little attention to English as a *second* language of the deaf and as part of a second language-learning narrative. In books on the topics of Early Education,

[7] The class was "Issues in Bilingualism" instructed by Claire Kramsch in my first semester at Berkeley (Fall, 2007).

Inclusive Education or Language Development, literature on deafness is often clumped together with the literature on other disabilities located in a "Special Education" chapter, usually at the end of the book. In the chapter "Language Development," in the book *The Development of Children* (Lightfoot et al., 2009), the deaf language learning experiences are isolated in a section in this chapter called "Language Deprived Environments." Blame is directed towards hearing parents for deaf children's language delay. Lightfoot et al. (2009) claims that language difficulties arise because hearing parents "refuse to learn sign language" (p. 242). I believe this research will illuminate the complexity of the language "choices" hearing parents and deaf children face given their sociocultural context. And, in highlighting the sociocultural, historical context and ideological underpinnings of the medical and educational discourses, I hope to complicate any notions of "blame" on hearing parents. Language learning, in this context, must be examined from a much broader social context.

For the preschool children at my site, their narrative is further complicated by politics of the normal body underpinned by "hearingness." A range of institutionalized normal sensory experiences that ultimately draws a line between what is sufficient and what is deficient, and, thus, what is the privileged sensory experience. Constructs such as native speaker and non-native speaker in SLA are defined through a lens of hearingness; they are referred to as *speakers* of languages. The political and cultural motives behind the shaping of the deafness-as-deficit discourse normalize a static notion of culture excluding the visual, spatial and vibrational sensory experiences that deaf people experience. "Deaf" culture, in this sense, inherently problematizes the notion that culture is limited to something that is socialized from elders to youth or parents to children; rather, Deafness helps us understand the visual, spatial and modal dimensions of language shaping communication and culture (Banyton, 2008; Lane et al., 1996; Padden & Humphries, 2005). From this point of view, we are offered a richer sensory understanding through which cultural or counter-cultural practices are shaped.

**Gaining access to a "culture": minority model or disability model?**

It is only through the label of "disability,"[8] as "deaf," not "Deaf," that deaf people have been viewed as citizens with legal, political and educational rights. The inclusion models that have historically sought to offer participation in the hearing world are, according to a Deaf perspective, audist. "Disability" is historically constructed in opposition to a construction of a "normal body," or, as Thompson (1997) coins: "the "normate" or nondisabled. The "normate" defines a normal sensory experience including aspects of perception, mobility, bodily expression and physical space. A minority language model of deafness offers the ability to see deafness as cultural variation and would aim for full democratic participation for deaf people. For *spoken* minority languages, solidarity with other ethnolinguistic groups (that also use spoken languages) offer a more forceful, broader argument, but groups that use sign languages have historically had far more difficulty in even gaining linguistic recognition as a "real" language among the hearing majority.[9]

Kymlicka (2003) argues that access to one's societal culture is a primary good that should

[8] It is estimated that the number of people with disabilities in the United States is between thirty-five to forty three million- making up the largest minority group in the United States (Davis, 1997).

[9] The MLA didn't even recognize ASL as a legitimate language until recently - it was put under the category of "invented languages" along with the language used in the TV program Star Trek (Davis, 1997).

be offered under citizenship. Opponents of a linguistic minority position for Deaf people may argue that "societal culture" is complicated when "culture" is perceived as distinct from the notion of family and community. However, this position assumes structural notions of family and community defined by hearing and ableist norms and misunderstands language acquisition as limited to a parent-to-child auditory socialization process. And, as Kymlicka explains, access to societal culture - the right to an education, the right to a fair trial, the right to vote and the right to public health - is compromised when an individual cannot understand the dominant language in use. During the critical window of language acquisition, without access to a sign language as a first language, deaf children often experience language delays that lead them to face severe disadvantages in schooling and society at large. According to a Deaf culture perspective, when deaf people are cut off from a visual way of experiencing the world their freedom is fatally compromised. In 1910, George Verditz, president of the National Association for the Deaf, argued that it would be impossible for deaf people to give up sign language: "They are facing not a theory, but a condition, for they are first, last, and all the time the people of the eye" (quoted in Baynton, 1996, p.10). The disadvantages faced by deaf children are "arbitrary" in the sense that they have been socially constructed through an auditory-biased means of communication and other subjective notions that privilege sound.

Sociocultural, feminist and post-structural frameworks most often focus their lens around race, class and gender and neglect to incorporate an understanding of audism as a system of oppression in societies throughout the world. Audism is sometimes situated in the larger context of disability discrimination, when the presumption is that deafness is a disability. While "deafness" as a disability is widely accepted in the "Hearing World," to many deaf people, however, being deaf is *both* a cultural construction and a physical phenomenon. Baynton (1996) notes "deafness is a relationship not a state" (p. 24). From this perspective, it is the social environment, social treatment and stereotypes toward individuals who are deaf, bounded by a range of the normal or "able" body, which denies deaf people access to services, information, educational opportunities and employment and not the physical condition of "deafness" itself. "Disability" is a social construction and amorphous category based on mental, physical and behavioral norms in a particular culture at a particular time. Yet, deaf people in the United States have only been given access to democratic participation (more specifically legal, medical and educational access) through the disability label effectively washing out any cultural and social recognition of deafness. Kliewer and Fitzgerald (2001) posit their postcolonial argument that children with disabilities should be included in the community of schools but it should also be argued that full participation should not undermine deaf people's right to their first language, a visual language.

Another perspective that necessitates attention is the complex intersection of deafness and other experiences, which shapes everyday practices. In refusing the label of Deafness as "disability" the large percentage of deaf children who face developmental disabilities or behavioral disorders are overlooked. While most deaf people do not have disabilities, the percentage of deaf students with additional disabilities is twice as high as the general population; with mental retardation, the difference is ten times the general population (Cerney, 2007). The intersections between various oppressive forces and audism are hardly discussed in the mainstream sociocultural theory literature.

Lane et al. (1996) discuss how, for deaf people, having a "double minority" status translates to further prejudices in education. Cerney (2007) notes that 40% of the deaf student population is non-white and 23.7% of deaf students are from homes that use languages other than

English in the home. Research has shown that being a deaf child from a non-English speaking family makes you more likely to be labeled learning disabled, mentally retarded or emotionally disturbed (Lane et al. 1996). Black Deaf children and other minority deaf children perform below white deaf peers on standardized tests and other academic assessments (Lane et al., 1996; Kluwin, 1994; Holt, 1997). Only 3% of deaf students at the high school level read at the same average level as their hearing counterparts (Cerney, 2007). While research has shown that there are strong links between ASL proficiency and English language and literacy development (Cummins, 1979, 2006; Padden & Ramsey, 1998; Humphries, 2013), most deaf children do not develop a full command of a sign language. Humphries (2013) suggests a paradigm shift to bilingual education based on such theoretical and empirical support. He puts forth that a visual language and visual learning for deaf students are a necessary pathway to acquire a second language, the dominant spoken language, in this case English.

**Cochlear Implants**

In the preschool classroom for the deaf at the Eagle Crest Early Intervention Center, five of the six deaf children have cochlear implants (CIs). Thus, while it may useful to unpack the disability label associated with deafness and critique the historical construction of disability, it is also necessary to be pragmatic and open to discussion about technological advances and medical interventions, such as the cochlear implant, which has allowed many deaf children to adapt successfully to a hearing environment. I openly admit that this is a contradictory stance on a view of the body in Deafness, one that I have evolved into after conducting my dissertation research. In accepting the contradiction as both real and inevitable, and, as a researcher, a friend to my participants and as someone who grew up as a CODA (a hearing child of deaf adult), it has been easier for me to find a way to bridge contradictory perspectives on the educational experiences of the deaf. With a bilingual approach to the schooling of the deaf, it is possible to embrace D/deafness from a linguistic minority stance at the same time one accepts the possibility of medical intervention as long as the visual world of the child is privileged first and foremost through the early acquisition of a sign language.

The cochlear implant (CI) is a surgically implanted electronic device on the back of a deaf person's head, consisting of an external portion on the head itself and internal portion under the skin. Rather than restoring sound through the ear or amplifying sound to the ear as a hearing aid does, the CI offers a representation of sound by stimulating the auditory nerve to the brain through signals, which the brain learns to recognize as sound. It contains a microphone, a speech processer, a transmitter and an electrode array. It typically takes one to two years for the brain to "train" itself to pick up the signals and recognize them. Children begin by recognizing alarms, sirens, and doorbells, followed by the sound of their names. Little by little, the CI user begins to differentiate environment sounds from speech sounds and students slowly gain the ability to decipher speech phonologically. The production of speech approximations usually comes well after students learn to process sounds. If the device runs out of battery or when the child takes off the external part of the device to sleep, swim or relax, the child is deaf again.

The children at my research site have a complex, contextual and shifting relationship with their CIs. Some days they may embrace them, other days they may resist them. Leigh and Maxwell-McCaw (2011) elaborate on this embodied relationship, "For many who are uninitiated, it may be baffling to consider that a piece of equipment, specifically a cochlear implant, has the power to convey an identity or influence one's identity" (p. 95). One student, Irene, considers them, to use her exact words, "a part of my body," and finds great comfort in

sleeping next to them. In circle time, she explained in sign and speech alongside gestures how each morning she wakes up and excitedly feels around on her night table for her CIs while calling out for her mom to help her put them on. However, when Irene had battery issues and could not make use of her CIs one day in school, she proudly exclaimed to everyone that she would have to use more sign language. Another student, Beto, will often resist CI use, pulling off and hiding his CIs around the classroom when he becomes upset or frustrated. On one occasion, when teacher Terry and I couldn't get Beto to agree to putting them back as he flailed his arms in the air lying his back covering his ears during our attempts, teacher Julie came over stroked his shoulder and said, "He needs to change his feelings before putting them back on." An hour later, before outside playtime, he agreed to put them back on after some coaxing. Katrina taps me gently when one falls off signing energetically, "Help me! Help me!" indicating she wants assistance in putting it back quickly so she can return to play. Wearing CIs takes more listening effort and can lead to mental fatigue. Mother Terry explains that her deaf son likes to "take a break" from them on the weekend while playing at home. Experiences when wearing a CI vary and depend on the individual student's feelings and particular context. In the library corner of the classroom, a big basket holds a photo album book for each student detailing the "before and after" CI surgery process with photos from the home, hospital and school. The albums, made in cooperation with parents, assist in allowing students to process the experience and illustrates the family and school support they had during the process. Most students, at one time or another during the school year, have pulled me over to the library corner, grabbed their book and proudly walked me through their CI surgery through the pictures. Drawing on signs and speech, pointing to photos and identifying family members with names signs, they piece together their stories.

In the context the Eagle Crest Early Intervention Center, the verdict is fairly clear on the topic of CIs: Most hearing parents, given the opportunity and health coverage, are choosing to give their deaf or hard of hearing babies cochlear implants. Drawing on statistics from The Food and Drug Administration, the National Institute of Deafness and Other Communicative Disorders estimates that, since 2012, 324,200 people worldwide and 58,000 adults and 38,000 children in the United States have received cochlear implants and this number is increasing every year (The Food and Drug Administration, the National Institute of Deafness and Other Communicative Disorders, 2012, n.d.). However, the CI approach as a "cure" to deafness has been conceptualized under the disability model has been seen from the Deaf community as a threat to the existence of the Deaf people and sign languages. Moreover, the Deaf community has perceived it as unethical in that babies are unable to give consent to an invasive surgical procedure that entails a long process of recovery and subsequent arduous training of the brain to adapt to a new form of "hearing." The surgery, however, does not have the potential to "succeed" in the same way when performed on an 18 year-old adult who is able to give consent.

**A ventriloquist history: "spoken about and spoken for"**

Tracing the historical trajectory of deaf people and the development of sign language in the nineteenth century and early twentieth-century education practices illustrates that deafness has been constructed in relation to a particular sociocultural condition of possibility and through the lens of hearingness. Forces such as industrialization, urbanization and national identity have played a role in constructing the deaf body as disabled. The historical situation deaf people have faced is fraught with contradictions generated by the deaf-hearing binary the hearing imposes is illustrated by Bauman's (2002) statement that deaf people are "spoken about and spoken for in the institutions designed to serve them" (p.8). Although I will attempt to provide a brief

overview, tracing the early history of deaf people is difficult because sign languages have no written system and most of what we know is in the form of a "ventriloquist history" (Baynton, 1996) - a history only captured by the writings of others, hearing people.

**Pre-nineteenth century education of the deaf: The European influence**

I begin by discussing pre-nineteenth-century European educational methods and signing practices for the deaf because of the heavy European, and in particular, French, influence on nineteenth century developments in the education of the deaf in the United States. Before the nineteenth-century, formal schools for the deaf and educational practices for the deaf did not exist in Europe and the United States outside of small pockets of informal practices in the home or community. One notable exception was at the San Salvador monastery in Spain in the sixteenth century where the Benedictine monk Pedro Ponce de Leon documented his efforts to teach noble families' sons to speak, read and write using some signing methods. However, deaf daughters of noble families were often sent to convents or sequestered in the home. (Lane et al., 1996) Outside this example, deaf people were, for the most part, isolated because they fell outside of the "norm."

In isolation, it was difficult for deaf people to develop a shared language or constitute a subgroup. The lack of education practices for the deaf in Europe before the nineteenth century can be explained by the prevalent assumption that people who fell outside the Western social and physical norm/ideal could justifiably be dehumanized and subjugated to enslavement, forced labor and confinement (Kliewer & Fitzgerald, 2001). In this period, deaf people were often considered to be lunatics, sinners, less than human and animal-like; their social presence was seen as a trespass against a norm and, thus, a sinful act against God. In many European countries, laws were established that refused deaf people the right to primogeniture, marriage and reproduction (Lane et al., 1996). In line with the rational and humanist notions of the Enlightenment, "progress" in science and technology, and increased state intervention in health and family issues, there was a shift from the subjugation and confinement of people who fell outside the norm to the "treatment" of them. Drawing on Foucault (1977), one could say this reorganization of the "deaf" was a new form of discipline through the technologization of the body that acted as a mechanism to rationally and scientifically organize, file and portion its citizens. If the body could be treated the body could be controlled and productive. The state saw the need to make productive citizens out of deaf people and national schools were established to teach deaf students a trade such as printing, carpentry, masonry, or gardening (Lane et al., 1996). In 1755, the first free school for the deaf that used signing methods was founded in Paris by Abbé Charles Michel de L'Épée and the model soon spread around Europe and subsequently the United States.

**19th century: Deaf education development in the United States**

Around the beginning of the nineteenth century, deaf boys and girls went to separate schools and deaf girls were often sent to special asylums to prevent Deaf children from marrying and reproducing (Lane et al., p. 381). By 1822, the number of schools for the deaf in Europe increased from twelve to sixty. For the first time, the establishment of deaf schools allowed deaf people to meet other deaf people who quickly learned to communicate beyond gesture and pantomime. Around this period, publications of books related to deafness focused on the language of the deaf Davis, 1996). The success of Jean Nicolas Bouilly's play about the Abbé de l'Épée, the first school for the deaf, was marked by over one hundred performances in Paris.

An era of cultural and philosophical fascination with deafness sought to understand the human language and mind. The public flocked to open houses at schools for the deaf in fascination of the deaf students' language abilities. Hearing teachers were praised and credited for the language abilities of their students and the fascination was controlled and regulated by the "normal" hearing majority. A deaf student's ability to "overcome" his deficit was seen as an individual feat guided by professionals. However, when deaf people left school, issues of class further complicated the marginalization of the deaf as they rarely had jobs outside of menial work (Davis, 1996).

Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, influenced by his study of French Sign language in France in the early nineteenth century, and Laurent Clerc, his deaf French student, introduced methodical signing (a combination of signed English and signed French) in the United States, the initial form of instruction for deaf students in the United States (Jankowski, 1997). In 1817, Gallaudet established the first school for the deaf in the United States, The American Asylum for the Deaf at Harford, CT, a federally funded school. Deaf children, now gathered in a common place, began to form a natural method of signing that evolved into the earlier forms of ASL, namely that manual sign began to develop grammatical structures and other non-English language features. Between the years of 1818 and 1840, education for the Deaf flourished. Public residential schools in New York, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Missouri and Virginia were established and the number of Deaf educators of deaf children increased to make up 42% of the total educators (Lane et al., 1996). Soon almost every state had a public school for the deaf. Because schools for the deaf provided a place where the deaf could teach the deaf in a common mode of communication, this period was marked by significant increases in English literacy rates among deaf students. Educators during this time began to take notice of the expressional and conceptual aspects of sign that moved beyond the hands to the eyes and face but this understanding would be dismissed during the oralist movement and would not resurface until the 1960s (Edwards, 2000).

A few cases in which a high percentage of deaf people lived in close proximity led to the development of home signs, the deficit model of deafness had not taken hold (Lane et al.,1996; Groce, 1985). For example, on Martha's Vineyard, an island off the coast of Massachusetts, most residents fluently and "naturally" communicated in and between spoken and signed languages because of the unusually high percentage of hereditary deafness, a high frequency of intermarriage (1 in 25 people were deaf in the town of Chilmark, Martha's Vineyard compared with 1 in 6000 for the U.S. population) and the isolated nature of the island (Groce, 1985). From the seventeenth through the nineteenth century (before ASL was developed), the island inhabitants used the now-extinct Martha's Vineyard Sign (MVS) and dialects of MVS, which influenced the development of ASL. Deaf residents, full participants in public life, were considered so "normal" that it was hardly documented if someone was deaf in the island's historical records. Even hearing people used sign to each other in church sermons, schools and in contexts where sound did not carry (Groce, 1985). In this case, a visual modality was an accepted and important aspect of the dominant culture that allowed for communication and participation among deaf and hearing alike- there was nothing about the environment that socially "disabled" deaf people. Similar situations in which sign language was simply part of a language have been documented in rural or tribal areas around the world. In this example, the conceptualization of what a language is moves outside of the auditory-biased notion of language. The physical condition of being deaf certainly still exists; but one might say that it exists as

*adding* something rather than lacking something- it adds a sensory dimension to language that a hearing world "lacks."

Today it is widely acknowledged that deaf children of deaf adults do exceedingly better academically than deaf children of hearing parents, even if they are mainstreamed (Israelite, et al., 1989; Strong & Prinz, 2000; Wilbur, 2000). Both the academic success of deaf children in early nineteenth-century residential schools and of deaf children of deaf adults today can be attributed to an environment that supported visual language access. In the nineteenth century, it was through separate education that deaf children could have this access yet they were ironically denied an accessible language environment if they were mainstreamed into a hearing school. It follows that the higher literacy rates of students who attended deaf residential schools led to greater informational access that could increase democratic participation. During what one might call a precursor of bilingual practices in residential schools, often noted as the "golden years" by deaf scholars, students were, ironically, beginning to achieve what oralist and common school reformers sought for the deaf, democratic participation through education. Residential schools helped foster beginnings of the cultural model of deafness on the margins of the dominant culture but not necessarily in opposition to it. Why, then, did oralist "progressive" movement squash the language developments in Deaf communities?

**A pedagogical reversal: from manualism to oralism**

In the mid-nineteenth century, there was a dramatic shift from manualism (the use of signs) to oralism (the use of speech) in the United States. There are various explanations about the causes of this pedagogical reversal. Lane et al. (1996) emphasize the influence of widespread oralism in Europe. In addition, they claim that the central goal of mainstreaming deaf children into non-deaf schools was not at all for educational aims, but rather it served to prevent the socializing, intermarriage and reproduction between Deaf people. Lane et al. explain that the "Hearing Agenda" sought to eradicate the Deaf world by reducing the number of deaf- in the nineteenth century it was through eugenics, and, today, it is through cochlear implant surgery on young deaf children. For deaf people, who communicate with the world from a visually dominant modality, the body became the site onto which the institutions imposed their rules of notions of normalcy. Lane et al. place more stress on influential actors who tried to oppress a linguistic minority while Baynton (1996) attributes the shift more to the changing sociohistorical conditions in the antebellum period: more attention to the notion of a national community over a Christian community and the influence of Darwinian linguistics. Darwinian linguistics viewed speech as a higher form of communication than sign on the evolutionary scale and, thus, theorized that primitive, inferior languages like sign language would die out. In addition, during this era, schools increasingly functioned to control and regulate other bodily functions through exercise, diet, hygiene, appropriate presentation, and appropriate notions of sexuality.

Alexander Graham Bell, an eugenicist and oralist who advocated in favor of separate schools, believed the use of sign language would lead to the "formation of a deaf variety of human race" (quoted in Baynton, 2006, p. 6). The advent of eugenics studies in the nineteenth century facilitated a shift from mental deficit model of deafness towards a diseased or degenerate model (Davis, 2008). From the viewpoint of the hearing world, Deaf people were and continue to be labeled as socially deficient. As a result, deaf people were and continue to be isolated from participation in the communities of their family, race, culture, nationality or sexuality.

Edwards (2000) stresses the influence of the common school education movement as the catalyst of the pedagogical shift in shaping the vision that schools could provide a common

culture, language and values. Edwards emphasizes the role of a leading reformer and proponent of democratic idealism, Horace Mann, who believed speech had the power to humanize deaf people, allowed for a common mode of "American" expression, and helped develop them into productive, good citizens (Edwards, 2000; Mann, 1848). Howe, another leading common school reformer, doctor, educator of the deaf and friend of Mann's, strongly held the belief that deaf-blind children would benefit from a sign system based directly and only on the English alphabet rather than a conceptual-based sign language deaf and deaf-blind children often systematically developed through pantomime in home environments. Yet, Howe describes in his book *The Education of Laura Bridgman* (1893), a famous deaf-blind who became fluent in tactile fingerspelling, the sensory power of "outness"[10], a kind of "a sixth sense" of external things and their spatial positioning and time relations expressed and understood outside of language as speech, which, interestingly, are characteristic to conceptual aspects of ASL. Despite his great interest in this "intellectual sensory power" he remained a staunch oralist. Education became the main apparatus through which a hearing agenda began to shape deafness only in relation to hearingness and being void of an auditory experience- effectively denying the recognition of cultural and linguistic practices that began to flourish in residential deaf schools in the first half of the nineteenth century. In promoting oral methods of instruction and eliminating the use of sign, the reformers hoped to integrate Deaf people (along with non-English speaking immigrants and Native Americans) into the dominant culture. An exception to the oralist push were religious groups that recognized that oral methods as ineffective for communication and promoted sign language use, particularly among the clergy and in religious instruction (Lou, 1998). Paradoxically, religious groups sought to increase religious participation among deaf people through a visual mode while schools sought to increase democratic participation through oral methods.

In all cases, the explanations behind the oralism shift were ideologically tied to a new and more subtle form of audism, framed as "progress," but, with "progress" came the ability to further institutionally classify notions of societal norms. Oralism appeared to be adopted because it offered deaf people access to full democratic participation disguising what it ideologically offered hearing people in sustaining a linguistic, physical and cultural norm. Paradoxically, this pedagogical shift to oralism based on a vision of "equality" for all students viewed English as the conduit of access to common knowledge, culture and citizenship, yet, deaf students were visually dominant communicators making their access to English inherently unequal. Throughout most of deaf history, deafness as a deficient condition of the "other" (hearingness) has been the only means of "access" to democratic participation for deaf people- a view which effectively neglects the physical experience of being deaf as a valuable human or cultural experience. The move towards oralism marked by educational practices that sought to "include" or assimilate Deaf people into the "Hearing world" and the medical discourse that sought to eradicate the physical condition of deafness, began to shape deafness as something "curable" but not cultural, was the central to the shaping of the deaf-hearing binary.

The oral approach dominated both the residential and public school settings through the through the second half of nineteenth century until the mid 20th century. During this period, Deaf educators were pushed out of the education sector and the use of ASL in schooling drastically declined. Deaf instructors decreased from a high of 42% in 1870 to only 11.7% in 1961. (Jankowski, 1997) Until 1860, almost no students were taught with oral methods but by

[10] "Outness" is a term he borrows from an individual he calls "Berkeley". I was unable to find a more accurate reference in this 1893 book.

the turn of the century forty percent of deaf students were taught with oral methods. And, by the end of the World War I the percentage of deaf taught by oral methods rose to 80% (Baynton, 1996). Due to the focus on speech, early language development was severely delayed; however, most deaf children would learn sign language on their own outside of the family and instructional context in acts of resistance- often from other deaf children with deaf parents. Deaf people have much nostalgia and deep bitterness about these acts of resistance in schools. My mother, who attended a residential boarding school for the deaf in the 1950s for all of her K-12 schooling, returned home only twice a year. Her story is typical of many deaf people. She describes how hearing teachers turned their back to the blackboard and hands immediately began fluttering in signs with jokes about the teachers and with student-student clarifications about the content of instruction. Anywhere my mother and her deaf classmates could "get away" with signing (on the playground, in the classrooms and in the dorm rooms) without getting their hands hit or getting scolded, they would. During the 1960s, deaf clubs (social and political gathering places for the deaf) and deaf organizations actively fought to preserve ASL and Deaf culture (Lane et al., 1996). Also during this period the Disability Rights Movement sought to shift the construct of disability from the individual to a socially disabling environment. However, criticism has been directed at the various efforts in education, social services and technology under the American with Disabilities Acts which have resulted in unsuccessful hearing professionals interventions underpinned by "hearing" ideologies (Lane et, al, 1996).

## The D/deaf terrain today

### Assessing the number of ASL users and Deaf people in the US

American Sign Language (ASL) users are estimated to range from half a million to two million, depending on how broadly "users" is conceptualized (i.e. children, siblings and spouses of deaf and educators, interpreters, language learners, etc.) (Lane et al., 1996). ASL is also used in English-speaking parts of Canada and parts of Mexico. In addition, ASL contains regional and cultural dialects, including a distinct Black dialect that arose out of segregated schools for Black Deaf children that had close ties with Black colleges. Complicating the accuracy of the assessment on the number of ASL users is the lack of legal, educational and social recognition of sign languages. The field of sign language linguistics in the United States only developed in the 1960s. Deaf people have not been counted in the US census since 1930 and, further, sign language is not recognized as a "language *spoken* at home" on the US census. The Gallaudet Research Institute (GRI), which conducts demographic studies on school-age deaf and hard-of-hearing children, estimates fewer than 1 out of 1000 children under the age of 18 are functionally deaf (Annual Survey of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Children, 2003). The CDC reports two to three babies out of 1000 are born with detectable hearing loss. While 13% of the total US population reports having hearing problems (the majority of the 13% deriving from older age brackets), only 1.18% of children under six are reported to having hearing difficulties. Yet, despite the inability to assess how many deaf individuals use ASL in the home, it has been fairly easy to assess the dramatic increase in hearing ASL users. The MLA survey reports that ASL enrollment has increased 435% in the past 5 years making ASL the second most taught language in community colleges and fifth most taught language in American colleges (Bauman, 2002). Teaching infants ASL-based "baby signs" as a method of preverbal language acquisition has become a trend among middle-class white Americans. So, while *hearing* people are learning

ASL at unprecedented rates, historically, sign language has had a subversive existence in schools for the deaf and in society at large.

**Educational Context of Early Education for the Deaf in the US**

While the White House Press Release, detailing Obama's Preschool For All Initiative, does not mention increasing services to students with disabilities, in particular, Deaf and Hard of Hearing children, there have been inclusive efforts for children with disabilities in the Early Head Start and Head Start Programs around the country and in California. Breaking with the historical neglect of attention towards early education in the U.S., President Obama, in his 2013 State of the Union Address, proposed providing more comprehensive federal and state-funded high-quality early education programs for *all* preschool age children with special attention to the low-to-moderate income children. The recent attention to early education in the United States is fueled by reports that the U.S. ranks 26$^{th}$ in access to preschool programs compared with other countries with only 69% of 4-year-olds attending preschool. In addition, the U.S. falls far behind on other metrics such as teacher-student ratio (15$^{th}$ compared with other countries, with a 1 to 15 ratio) and preschool investment relative to wealth (21$^{st}$ compared to overall monetary investment for other counties) (Herman et al., 2013). The early education initiative was also put forth in response to recent research that confirms the correlation of early education access and academic readiness and later success in literacy and math (Yoshikawa et. al. 2013; Herman et al. 2013). Head Start (for preschoolers) and Early Head Start (for infants and toddlers) Programs are specifically geared to give low-income children the same early educational opportunities as their higher-income peers in the development of language, literacy and math skills, and social and emotional development.

Most deaf children are being mainstreamed into inclusive classrooms while deaf residential schools have faced a decrease in enrollment across the country. Austine, a deaf residential school established in 1904 in Vermont, recently shut its doors with just 20 students, and only 4 from Vermont. In comparison, the state-funded parent-run outreach program serves 600 deaf or hard-of-hearing students mainstreamed into regular schools around Vermont according to Vermont's NPR News Source (Keese, 2014). The news piece on the school closure quoted a deaf education outreach specialist, "Times have changed. There's a lower incidence of deafness, parents are...opting for medical intervention for profoundly deaf babies. And while parents might initially use sign language to bridge the gap, that's not how parents are choosing to educate their children" (Keese, 2014).

With the passing of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 1975 and the subsequent reforms in 2004, school districts are required to meet deaf children's right to access public education (IDEA, 2004). Oralism, the speech-based pedagogical approach of teaching deaf children to speak and lip-read rather than sign, and forms of "oralism" in encoded manual sign language (English-based sign systems, not ASL) remain the dominant educational approaches for deaf and hard of hearing children (Lane et al. 1996). About 64% of deaf children are now mainstreamed into regular classroom often accompanied by an interpreter who may or may not be a fluent signer (Gallaudet Research Institute Regional and National Summary Reports, 2005).

**Education for the Deaf in California**

Of the 686,000, or 10%, of students in California that have their education affected by a disability, there are 3,946 Deaf, 9,991 hard of hearing and 164,600 students with a speech or

language impairment. Since 1975, under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), federal law requires public schools to provide support for students with "diagnosed disabilities that interfere with educational attainment" (The California Legislator Non-Partisan Fiscal and Policy Advisor, 2013). The IDEA also applies to preschool children, but support is provided through California's Regional Centers rather than the schools. Regional centers evaluate a student's needs, create an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), a plan that details services for young children with developmental delays, and provide a referral to a preschool appropriate to the child's need. Gallaudet University's website, the only University for the Deaf in the country, lists only six schools or early education programs for the Deaf in California among approximately 100 nationwide (Gallaudet University Website: Schools and Programs for Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the United States, n.d.).

In 1994, the California Department of Education (CDE) established the Deaf Child's Bill of Rights supporting the right for deaf children to "have access to a complete language, visual or spoken, as appropriate, from birth." (California Department of Education website, Position Statement on Language Access, n.d.) The irony in this bill (and the discourse around accessibility for the deaf more generally) is that in being deaf it is impossible to have access auditory to a "spoken" language from birth when an infant cannot hear. According to their website, the position of CDE encourages the use of all communication tools (Cued Speech, Signing Exact English, Conceptually Accurate Signed English, Sign Supported Speech, Simultaneous Communication), supports various educational approaches (ASL/English Bilingual, Listening and Spoken Language, and Total Communication) and underscores the role of Early Head Start in providing educational services (California Department of Education website, Position Statement on Language Access, n.d.). According to their website, Early Start services provide early intervention services for children under two years old who have been diagnosed with a developmental delay affecting "cognitive, communication, social or emotional, adaptive, or physical and motor development including vision and hearing" (State of California: Department of Developmental Services, n.d.). The research site for this dissertation, The Eagle Crest Early Intervention Center (ECEIC), is a program that accepts students on referral who receive Early Start or Special Education services.

Despite the continued dominance of the Total Communication and oral approaches, beginning in the 1990s, there was a shift in the Deaf community to consider an ASL/English bilingual approach as a means to address the low academic performance of deaf children, lack of language access, ineffective teacher-student communication in a mainstream environment, and to instill a sense of belonging to a community where communication is free and natural fostering academic, social and emotional growth (Sims & Thumann, 2007). Stemming from the philosophy behind these new notions, *The Center for ASL/English Bilingual Education and Research* was established, forming a deaf-centered ASL/English bilingual professional development program know as the "Stars School project" and the Gallaudet "Masters in ASL /English" Deaf Education program (Sims & Thumann, 2007). In order to sustain the Deaf Bilingual Education movement, support through both policy and funding for more teacher-training programs that work from an ASL/English bilingual pedagogical approach and an increase in fluent ASL/English educators is paramount.

## Conclusion

This chapter has offered a broad historical and present sociocultural contextualization of the experiences of the deaf and the Deaf in the United States. Historically, Deaf people have not

refused the English language; they are, more accurately, not often given effective access, similar to other second language learners. Bilingual models of education for children with or without CIs, especially dual-immersion models, could both affirm cultural diversity and aid common civic identities. In tangent, it is of foremost importance to recognize the various subpopulations of Deaf people classified by their language differences, conflicting opinions on the "proper" language choice for Deaf people, and differences of the very definition of "D(d)eafness" (Baker, 1999).

The value in exploring different modalities and various literacy practices is accurately captured by sociolinguist Walt Wolfram, "We deprive ourselves of comprehensive insight into the human capacity for language, and the social context in which it is embedded, if we do not take full advantage of the rich sociolinguistic resources afforded by research into differential modalities of language expression" (cited in Lucas, 2001, pg. xvi).

# CHAPTER 3
# METHODOLOGY

As mentioned in Chapter 1, this study was conducted at the Eagle Crest Early Intervention Center (ECEIC), an early intervention preschool employing a speech and sign-based approach to language development. I chose to study the preschool classroom for deaf and hard-of-hearing students at ECEIC because it offered a rich context to observe multimodal interactions between deaf and hearing participants. I spent one academic year conducting an ethnographic discourse analytic study. I videotaped observations in a preschool classroom for deaf and hard-of-hearing students and videotaped interviews with hearing mothers of the deaf preschool students. In the following sections, I will describe the research settings, give an overview of the participants and examine my positionality as a researcher in the context of the ECEIC. Next, I will discuss my procedures for data collection and data analysis. I will close the chapter by aligning my data analysis with my research questions.

## Research Setting

### The city

The Eagle Crest Early Intervention Center (ECEIC) was one of the few federally funded intervention-based programs specifically for deaf and hard-of-hearing children in the large urban area covering eight different counties in California. The Center was located in an affluent, diverse urban community that hosts a prestigious research university. Half the school's budget was funded through federal money, and the other half, 600,000, was raised through grants and fundraising events and efforts (Eagle Crest City News[11], 2004). According the 2013 U.S. Census, the city's population of 116,768 was approximately 60% white, 20% Asian, 10% black and 10% Latino. Native Americans and Pacific Islanders made up less than 1% (United States Census Bureau, 2013). In the last thirty years, the once black neighborhood that hosts the school had become a gentrified residential area. Prior to this period, the area, which hugged the large bay in the city, had been the primary industrial zone in the city. Within walking distance of the red-bricked Center were art galleries and studios, new small businesses, a local organic grocer and an old factory warehouse turned trendy climbing gym.

### The school

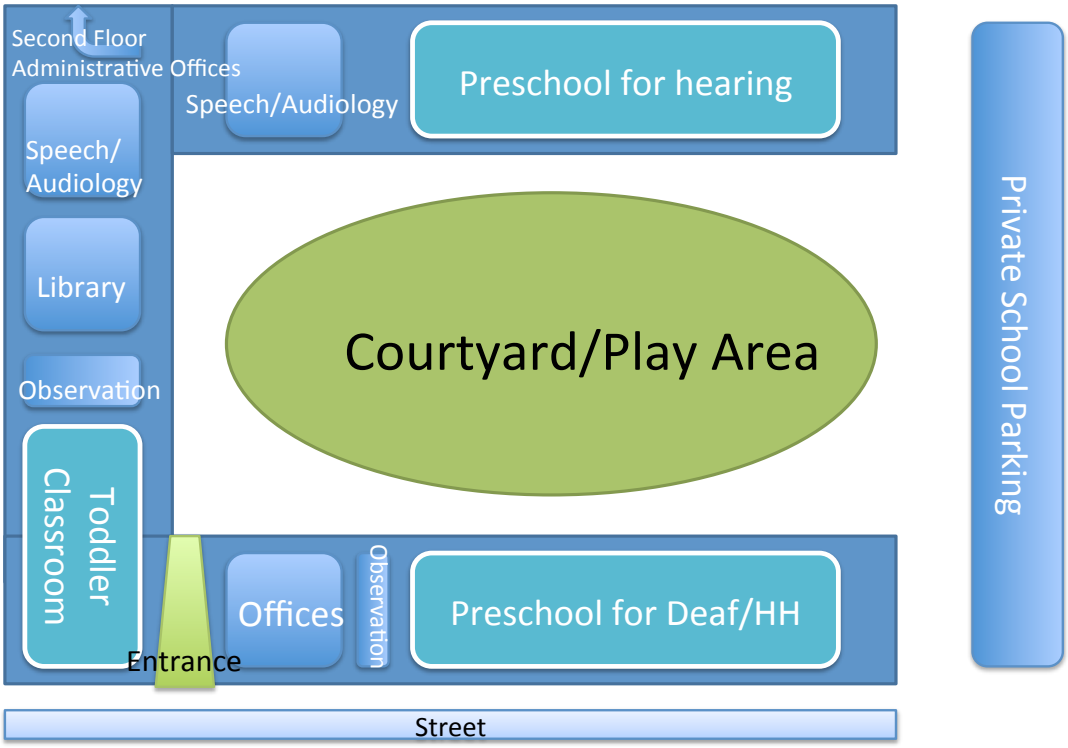
Providing early interventions services to families with young children (from birth to age five) who have hearing loss or speech and languages delays, The Eagle Crest Early Intervention Center, established in 1980, offered an extensive array of programs including a preschool program for deaf and hard-of-hearing children, toddler program for deaf and hard-of-hearing children, home visits, sign language play group, deaf-blind play group, speech therapy, occupational therapy, audiology services, educational assessments, school consolations and community education (Eagle Crest Early Intervention Center website, n.d.). With a heavy emphasis on home-based early intervention and parental involvement, the school provided extensive parent education and support services such as a parent sign and support group for hearing parents of deaf children.

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[11] The name of this city newspaper has been altered to protect the identity of the school.

The modern one-story brick building formed a C-shape around a courtyard (see figure 2.1). The open side of the C was bordered by the school's private parking lot with a gate between the lot and play space. An architect with a deaf son who attended the school designed the building. The classrooms and play areas were customized for enhancing sensory experience- high ceilings and windows accompanied by whitewashed walls opened up the visual space, slides were made with aluminum (as plastic interferes with the CI devices) and sound radiant heated floors were used in order to minimize extra background sounds (also not to interfere with the CI devices). The acoustically modified classrooms provided an optimal listening environment and acoustic-tiled walls and floors were built with materials that absorb noise. The lofty ceiling space and high windows admitted natural light enhancing the visual space deaf students heavily rely on. The preschool room had a one-way observation window, accompanied by intercoms, allowing parents, funders, policymakers and health officials to ability to observe classroom activity.

Figure 3.1 Eagle Crest Early Intervention Center: School Map




The classroom encircled a courtyard with full windows on the wall facing it opening up the space of communication as parents, teachers and students could sign and gesture through the window space. Squishy recycled rubber allowing for safe play surfaced the play space in the center of the courtyard. Most areas of the courtyard, the climbing structure, water station, and sand box, were designed to heighten sensory or motor skills of the students. There was a paved pathway around the circumference of the play space in which children could rides small tricycles, wagons or

bicycles in a one-way direction. Also located on site, in the C-shaped structure surrounding the courtyard, were audiology areas, two speech therapy rooms, administrative offices and a library. Thus, when one stands at any point in the play space in the courtyard, one had visibility to all components of the building. In addition to providing services for the students on site, the audiology services provided free screenings for hearing for low-income areas in the Bay Area. A parent library hosted the "parent sign language classes" and provides books, videos, DVDs and other resources for parents of deaf children.

The facility design included three main classrooms: a toddler class for deaf students (ages 2-3), a preschool class for deaf students (ages 4-5), and a preschool class for hearing students (ages 2-5) or "typically developing children." Each classroom boarded one side of a courtyard/playground where integrated playtime (with all three classes) takes place between 11-11:45 a.m. The two separate preschool programs held integrated activities a few times a week such as music and story time. Most of the deaf students attended speech therapy daily for a period of 30 minutes. The two preschool programs (the hearing and deaf) aimed to be well-connected and worked together to transition a child from one educational environment to the next based on the child's age and language needs. A few of the students in the preschool classroom attended the hearing daycare service offered through the preschool for hearing students in the afternoon regularly. School hours were from 9 am to 12 am and the day care service was open until 5 pm. The physical layout of the classroom contributed to the integrated, open atmosphere of the classrooms that paralleled the school integrated inclusion efforts.

**The classroom for deaf and hard-of-hearing**

The preschool for the deaf and hard-of-hearing children was spacious and open with very few objects or posters hanging on the white walls in order to present a non-distracting visual space for the children. Each corner of the room held a specific developmental function. One corner (see figure 3.2, corner A) held student-accessible low shelves for books encircling a comfortable readings space with cushions and a coach. In the opposing corner (see figure 3.2, corner B), with windows facing the street/entrance, was the Occupational Therapy (OT) space. Accompanying deafness, the majority of students had some degree of sensory processing issues, difficulties in fine/gross motor planning and coordination skills. Swings, jumping areas, ladders and mats were utilized to increase motor skills, balance and sensory stimulation. Once a week, a qualified occupational therapist held a morning long OT/sensory therapy session. Students could be found swinging, jumping, climbing, balancing and crawling at various OT stations set up around this space of the classroom. Teachers in the preschool replicated and modified the OT activities for morning free playtime on other days of the week.

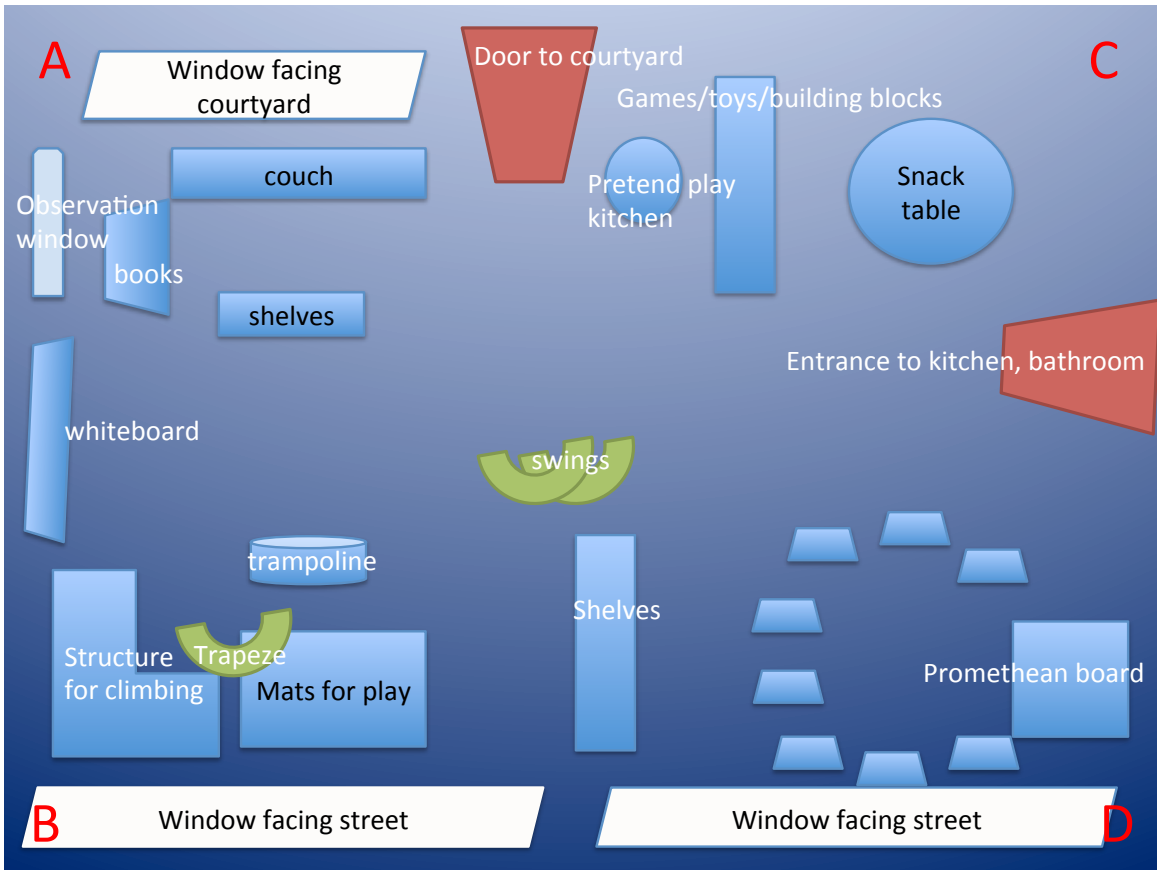
Circle times were held in the far corner (figure 3.2, corner D). Students set up their mats or small chairs in a semicircle in front of a large interactive smart-board. The teacher used images, videos and drawings via the board to supplement in the language practices. For example, when the teacher asked, "Who's here today?" in sign and speech, students take turns moving their own pictures on the screen (and their classmates' photos, if absent) with a smart pen into the proper categories of: in the class, in speech therapy, in the preschool for hearing students, at home sick or at the doctors. Students received three modes of communication: speech, sign and the interactive image for each directive the teacher puts forth.

The last corner (see figure 3.2, corner C) consisted of a low table and chairs where snack time and cooking time took place. During morning free playtime, puzzles and other fine motor skills-focused games were set up on the tables for use. Most of the videotaped interactions for this dissertation project occur in Corner C and Corner D, where snack time and morning circle

time were held. Focusing on these two activities was ideal because they offered organized and explicit learning and language interactions that are more suited to capture visually and auditorially. In addition, these spaces made it easy to place a camera strategically to record data for this study in a way that frames the entire interaction. In contrast, the rapid movement and overlapping auditory input (i.e. children laughing, screaming, talking, or crying) that characterized free play and OT times made it difficult to isolate analyze language in interaction.

The room adjacent to the classroom held a full kitchen, bathroom and corner area with a small table for individual guidance for fine motor skills activities such as cutting, buttoning and drawing. Each student had different development needs and spent differing amounts of times in organized OT activities.

Figure 3.2 Classroom for Deaf and Hard-of-hearing Children: Map



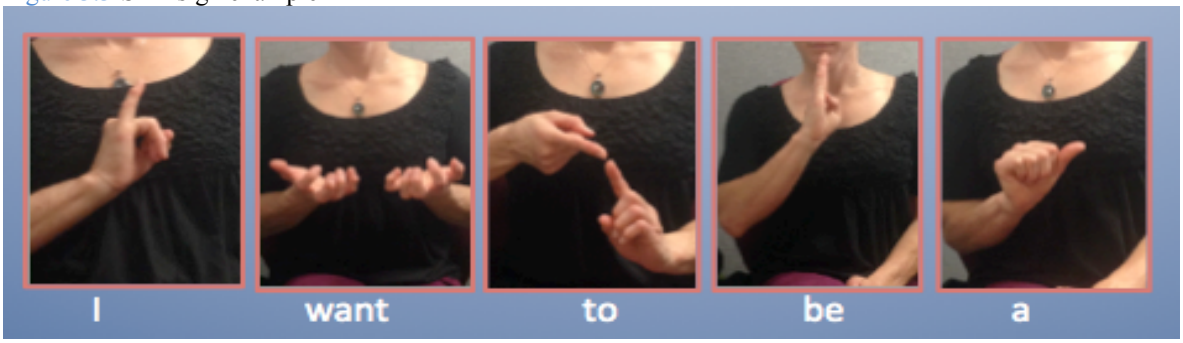

**School's mission and language approach**

The stated philosophy of ECEIC was to "maximize communication potential." (Eagle Crest Early Intervention Center website) The preschool for the deaf and hard-of-hearing employed the "Total Communication" (TC) approach to language development. The ECEIC also included a "typically developing" preschool for hearing students. Located across the courtyard from the deaf preschool; it is promoted as a "Bilingual, inclusive community preschool" (ECEIC website). The following section problematizes the notion of "bilingual" in this context.

In theory, this approach encourages the use of all means of communication with deaf people including ASL, spoken and written English, fingerspelling, drawing and mime. TC is viewed as the dominant philosophy in the education of deaf children, particularly for student mainstreamed into public schools, but much criticism has been directed towards the TC approach from Deaf educators because it is considered a variation of the oral method. Since the 1970s, various forms of sign-supported English, categorized under Total Communication (TC), emerged with the goal to employ both the oral and English manual approaches that best accommodate the needs of individual students. The school's TC approach encouraged the use of Signing Exact English (SEE-sign), one of the most commonly used manually coded English system in the United States today. SEE-sign is a communication strategy simultaneously employing a visual system of signs and producing speech ultimately facilitating English language development as signs are "dropped" when a child becomes more dependent on speech. The widespread criticism of this approach (Lane et. al, 1996; Dirksen & Bauman, 2008; Andrews et al., 2004 but c.f. Walker & Tomblin, 2014 for recent pushback on this criticism) holds that SEE-sign is an artificial sign system that attempts to "change the 'delivery system' (from voice to hands) of a language that is not accessible to Deaf children (spoken English) and is not suited to the visual manual mode of transmission" (Lane et al., 1996, p. 272). Lane et al. (1996) also explain that TC's inadequate use of each medium results in confusion, preventing students from reaching full competence in either language and marginalizing deaf students in a mainstream setting with instructors who are often not fluent in ASL. Despite these criticisms, TC approaches and manual coded sign systems remain dominant as they, in theory, attempt to facilitate the acquisition of spoken English.

The TC approach draws on borrowed and modified signs from ASL as well as invented signs that correspond with spoken English grammar. For example, in SEE-sign, -ly adverbs, such as slowly, are created by adding the fingerspelled English affix "L-Y" on the end of an ASL sign (ex. ASL for "SLOW" + LY, fingerspelled). However, in ASL, the adverb is formed by inflecting the sign, i.e. changing the speed or direction of the base sign (Lane et al., 1996). ASL does not use be-verbs or articles, but SEE-sign includes them, parallel to the grammatical structure of English. While SEE-sign consists of invented signs for pronouns such as he, she and I, ASL points to a space, in front of the signer's body, that stands for the pronoun. Let me draw on a classroom example to put this in context. When students in the preschool classroom learned how to express what they wanted to dress up as for Halloween they were encouraged to use the grammatical structure of English, "I want to be a witch for Halloween" (S-V-O) instead of the ASL structure "Halloween me dress want what? Witch." In ASL, the topic is often premised before the statement. The signs "I" "to," "a" and "be" are not ASL signs. The pronoun, article and be-verbs are displayed with "invented signs" (based on ASL, initialized with ASL letter "I" for the pronoun "I," the letter "a" for the article "a" and the letter "b" for the be verb). Important for SEE-sign approach is that there is a one-to-one correspondence of sign and spoken English. (see figure 3.3 below) In classroom practices, teachers draw on the signs to prompt the verbal correspondence.

Figure 3.3 SEE-sign example[12]




As students' speech develops and sound becomes recognizable with the assistance of cochlear implant devices (CIs), students begin to communicate with a mixture of English and sign. The ultimate goal embedded in the TC approach is to have the Deaf child mainstreamed into an English school environment. However, the overall goals of the school are intertwined with consideration to students' individual needs.

From the perspective that a bilingual program includes the teaching of two distinct languages, the definition and usage of the term "bilingual" by the Eagle Crest Early Intervention Center could be contested on the grounds that SEE-sign is a sign system and not a language. Perhaps a more accurate description of the school educational approach would be "bimodal" because a signed language, such as ASL, was not explicitly encouraged in instruction by the school's administration. Despite this, ASL usage bled into language use throughout classroom practices.

## Research Setting Rationale

My study included deaf and hearing participants making it a rich context to observe multimodal interactions. I chose to examine mostly routine and organized "communicative practices" (e.g. circle times, snack times) in the classroom in order to identify patterns of multimodal use. The structured activities where students and teachers gather made it ideal to capture visual interactions in a contained space via video. The parent interviews were intended to supplement the main data, the classroom data, providing a different angle to examine multimodality. Most parents have lived in a hearing world their entire life and are, for the first time, experiencing the visual world of their child. The mothers who are interviewed offered robust self-reflections on these experiences with their deaf child supplementing an understanding of communicative practices in a deaf-hearing world.

Some may ask why I have chosen an educational program that promotes the use of a sign system- Signing Exact English (SEE-sign), a manually coded sign system, and not a full language like ASL. I initially did not seek to do research at a site that used SEE-sign. I had no explicit intention to examine ASL use either. I was, however, interested in the experiences and communicative practices of deaf and hearing *in a deaf-hearing context.* After volunteering at the site for two years, I noticed the great need to explore an understanding of communicative practices between deaf and hearing children and parents in *various* settings in which multiple modes of communication co-exist, not just ASL-based ones, which makes up the majority of the language related research on deaf children. The lived experiences and communicative practices

[12] I have my sister, Rebecca Johnson, an ASL interpreter, to thank for these frame grabs of a SEE-sign example.

of deaf children are incredibly varied and the narratives of the students at my sight were understudied ones. Indeed, research involving a full ASL-English bilingual program could offer different insights into the relationship between modality and identity and may offer an interesting comparative study in the future.

While it may seem odd to hearing people to claim that a visual language, such as ASL, is necessarily a deaf child's first language, it probably does not seem odd at all to assume that hearing children will, at first, learn a spoken language. A deaf child does not have the physical option to begin with a spoken language as they cannot hear while a visual language is the most obvious, sensory-wise, first language choice for a child that relies heavily on visual communication in her first years, even if she get implants. Because most of the student participants at the Center will be mainstreamed into hearing settings with non-ASL interpreters, they may never have the opportunity to learn ASL. Based on my observations, many students were not acquiring their non-English home languages. These participants' experiences represent the complex home/school language environments many deaf children face. The narrative of the deaf second language learner is one that is neglected in the mainstream SLA literature because it is outside the range of what is put forth as a "normal" second language learner, assumed to have acquired a spoken first language and learning a spoken second language or assumed to have learned/learning a home language and a language of their school/peer context.

It was not my main intention or central focus to evaluate the TC/SEE-sign language philosophy to the language acquisition of the deaf children in my study although more empirical research is needed in this area (see Walker & Tomblin, 2014). Rather, I began with the practices to understand how and why children and parents "do language" the way they do given a sociocultural context. The data introduced in this study cannot do justice in conveying the students and their families' incredible stories of struggle, resilience, love and hope. Families, along with their educators at the Eagle Crest School, fought hard to gain access to language opportunities and an equitable education environment in which their children can learn and grow without the stigmatization of being outside the "hearing norm." ASL did have a presence at the Center both in interactions and symbolically as a cultural connection to the Deafness- both by teachers who have been trained in ASL, and parents and their children who have learned it outside of this setting.

## The Participants

### The Students

The seven pre-literacy four and five years-old boys and girls from the focal preschool classroom have had hearing loss or speech and languages delays. There were four female students and three male students. Six of seven children in the classroom were deaf and one child was hearing. The hearing child had developmental apraxia of speech (DAS)[13] and thus had difficulty physically producing speech and heavily relied on signs and some verbal approximations for communication. There was some suggestion by teachers that Beto might have had developmental delays. It was unclear how his language delays may have affected his cognitive, social and emotional development. Despite this potential variable, I do not exclude observing how Beto draws on communicative resources. As I understand language as a social

[13] Developmental apraxia of speech is a speech disorder that occurs in children from birth caused by damage to the brain. (National Institute of Deafness and other Communicative Disorders)

phenomenon, it was important to include all my participants as contributing to this social process of collaborative communication in focal events. Lance had a form of high functioning autism. In the parent interview, his mother noted that he had social and transition delays. In the classroom, observed patterns of Lance's autistic behavior (also discussed with his mother) included repetitive use of language, preoccupation with specific objects or topics and difficulty in breaking with routines. Lance had above average language production/development in comparison with the rest of the class and his mom notes he has "dropped" his signs and "depends heavily" on verbal English communication. Of the six deaf children, five used a cochlear implant, and one student, Alise, used a BAHA device, or a bone-anchored hearing aid. Most of the students experienced some range of motor-skills/balance difficulty often associated with deafness.

One rotating "hearing role model" (this is the school's label, not mine), a student from the "hearing" preschool across the courtyard, was present in the classroom almost on a daily basis. The hearing children rotated into the deaf classroom for one week at a time. Most hearing preschoolers expressed excitement and pride when it was their turn to be in the deaf classroom. When asked what she liked about visiting the preschool for the deaf and hard-of-hearing for the week one student responded, "It's fun! I like signing with my friends here. Do you know what my sign name is?" In theory, the hearing student acted as a "native speaker" model for the deaf students. At the same time, he/she was expected to use sign alongside the deaf children. From my observations, the hearing students enjoyed more individualized attention from teachers in the classroom for the deaf and hard-of-hearing, as the student-teacher ratio is much lower than the classroom for hearing students (1:3 or 1:4).

The students in the licensed "inclusive bilingual" hearing preschool were mainly from families with high SES. The program had a waiting list for entrance and tuition was the $1135 for a month (5 days/week for the morning program from 8:00 a.m. to 12:45p.m.). Based on informal conversations with parents from the hearing preschool program, parents were attracted to the program because it afforded their child exposure to sign language and students with a range of abilities/differences. I was not able to obtain the socio-economic status (SES) of the students in the classroom for the deaf and hard-of-hearing although it can be inferred that at least two were of lower-middle SES because they accessed the school through Early Start Program referrals and received subsidized transportation (i.e. their parents do not have a car).

Four of the six students in the preschool for the deaf were from bilingual "speaking" households. Mothers interviewed reported using various degrees of ASL or Signing Exact English signs accompanied by English speech production or the home language with their child. An example of SEE-sign home language coupling is, for instance, if a Spanish-speaking mother says, verbally, "vamos" ("let's go!") to her child at the end of the day and simultaneously uses the SEE-sign for "go" which is based on referencing the English word/spelling "g-o"(two hands employ g-shape handshape turning it away from body or in direction of planned motion). In other words, the home language is coupled with a sign system that attempts a literal representation of English and NOT Spanish. Instead of using the literal representation of "v" for "vamos" (to assist the child in coupling "v" with the Spanish-spelling) "g" for "go" is employed. Another example that clearly demonstrates this "double use" of SEE-sign was the singing/signing of the good morning song. The good morning song was sung twice every morning- first in English followed by Spanish- yet the Signing Exact English counterpart song is exactly the same in both the English and Spanish version. In other words, students are encouraged to associate the manually coded English system with *both* the Spanish and English.

While this bimodal practice of combining SEE-sign and Spanish verbal production clearly undermines the purpose of Signing Exact English, the practice is encouraged as long as consistency is upheld across the practices. While manually coded systems for deaf students are discussed and critiqued at length in the literature, I have never seen a discussion regarding the coupling of an English-coded manual sign system with a non-English language.

Listed below is a short description of the main students in the preschool of the deaf classroom I followed in my study. Students in this class were at various stages of language development- a couple with near-hearing peer verbal production and others who were completely sign, sensory and gesture dependent. I included all students, regardless of language production ability, in my classroom analysis to reach a greater qualitative depth of variables that may affect the relationship of modality and identity. I do not think that weak fine motor skills, low balance skills or other physical differences diminish the ability to examine the communicative practices in the classroom. Of course, practices in this context need to be understood *differently* (i.e. perhaps more sensorial, visual, gestural-driven). In reality, all embodied communicative practices lie somewhere on a spectrum of human communication.

It should be noted that there are also some children from the hearing preschool included in the chapter analyses. It was out of my scope for this dissertation project to include all students who have "visited" the classroom on a weekly rotating basis over the course of the year as the hearing role model, but I obtained consent from hearing students' parents whose children visited regularly and appeared regularly in the data.

In the section below, I provide a detailed description of the main students in preschool classroom to better contexualize the range of language abilities and backgrounds of the students. These students can also be viewed in figure 3.4. The students of the preschool classroom are between 4 and 6 years old. I obtained background information on the students mainly from the teachers and students' mothers in informal conversations during and after regular school hours, during school events, through the formal interviews with mothers and through my participation in the family sign class. Five of the seven students came from homes in which English is not spoken. Two parents explain that they use a combination of ASL/SEE-sign in the home and the remaining parents stated that they use primarily SEE-sign coupled with their home languages.

In the classroom, delineating when students are drawing on SEE-sign or ASL signs is complicated. Because SEE-sign draws on ASL signs, sometimes it appears the students are using ASL signs. Or, perhaps they had exposure to ASL before SEE-sign so they mix ASL signs and SEE-signs. In particular, with one-word signs it was difficult to disentangle. However, if students used English grammatical structure (S-V-O) alongside signs I could identify the signs as NOT ASL (which more often uses S-O-V). For the most part, in the classroom, students modeled their language from the SEE-sign prompts offered by the teachers. However, in some unprompted cases students would demonstrate some grammatical characteristics of ASL. For example, they may reference space in place of the pronoun "he" instead of using the SEE-sign for "he" (fingerspelled "H-E") which is a "sign" that does not exist in ASL. To sum up, when I state that students know some "signs," this is usually a combination of ASL or SEE-signs. However, if a student was clearly using sign production along side English in English word order, I referred to the student as "using SEE-signs."

**Overview of main students in the classroom**

*Beto*

Beto's parents immigrated to the U.S. before he was born. His family was from Guatemala and spoke Mam, a Mayan language, in the home. Both parents also spoke Spanish and the father had a good command of English while the mother's English was very limited. Beto arrived at the ECEIC with no verbal language skills. Over the course of the year, Beto was able to produce some (likely less than 30 without prompt) one-word signs for objects in his environment some verbs when prompted by teachers (ex. I want banana). Many of the signs he drew on in class are related to sensory experience. (hot, cold, hurt, hit) Half way through the year he spoke his first word. At the end of the academic year he verbally produced a few English words such as Mama and banana. Beto depended heavily on embodied interaction characteristic of secondary intersubjectivity in early childhood development. He was highly sensitive to touch and pressure and often communicated his feelings through tactile actions: pushing/pressing against, hitting and stroking a teacher or student. Teacher Julie explained his emotional need for extra pressure in physical contact, "Beto needs hard hugs." From the start, Beto used a great deal of pointing, head shaking, hand waving and eye gazing to reference objects or attempt to express something. Beto was shy and reserved and, at times, he was a curious boy who loved to examine things around the classroom for long periods. He could often be found studying something in a corner on his own.

*Katrina*

Katrina bubbled with questions and excitement from the moment she walked in the door. The "crush" girl of all the boys in the classroom she drew much attention and competition between the boys. From a Filipino family, Katrina's family spoke Tagalog in the home. Both parents spoke English. Katrina had a little brother whom she adores and refers to constantly in the classroom. She came to the Center school with few signs and no verbal language and she progressed tremendously in using signs, sign phrases and questions. Over the course of the year, her signing developed with many parallels to ASL conceptual structures despite the TC classroom approach of simultaneous signs matched to English. By the middle of the school year, her identification of auditory stimuli increased with her two CIs and she made a few solid verbal approximations with English words. She relied heavily on using SEE-signs/sign phrases to communicate. She was reminded constantly by teachers to use her voice (or approximations) alongside her signs.

*Alise*

Alise's family migrated from El Salvador before she was born. Her story was one that is heart stopping; I have learned much from her resilience and optimism in the face of over 10 surgeries over the span of her five short years. She was born with limited mobility in her jaw and had numerous surgeries on her jaw/mouth area to assist with opening her jaw, breathing and sleeping. Alise was born with four digits on each hand and had reconstructive surgeries to create a thumb and three fingers. Despite her physical differences, she has developed a unique way of modifying the handshapes of signs. Alise was proud of her differences and enjoyed sharing her surgery and hospital experiences with the classroom. Each time she had a major medical appointment, she "presented" her experience to the class with teacher Julie guiding her with questions. Students were, overall, very taken to her differences in a positive way. I noted fellow student Irene saying to her once, "I wish I was different like you. You are so lucky!" Alise

responded with a sassy, “I know.” Because she had a deformation of the ear, Alise used a BAHA implant that allowed sound to be conducted through the bone and not the middle ear. She had a great deal more residual hearing ability than other students and a good command of spoken English and Spanish upon entering the preschool. Alise drew on SEE-signs alongside both her spoken English and Spanish.

*Roger*

Roger, a caring and gentle student, was the youngest of two boys in his family. Roger’s older hearing autistic brother, seven, was speech-delayed so his parents used ASL in the brother’s early years to improve communicative avenues. Thus, when Roger was born, signing was already part of the language environment in his home. Initially, ASL was introduced in the home, and, coinciding with the school practices, the family later transitioned into SEE-sign. Although mainly English was spoken in the home, Roger and his brother were exposed to Mandarin and Cantonese through their extended family. Roger was able to produce a wide range of both SEE-signs and ASL signs and some words verbally, but he often required a bit of prompting from the teachers.

*Abby*

I know little details about Abby’s home language environment, English, was I never had a chance to interview her mother. Her mother was unable to attend the family sign classes and Abby is brought to school and picked up by her nanny. Abby was hearing and had childhood speech apraxia. As mentioned previously, she had difficulty physically producing speech and relied on signs and verbal approximations for communication. Over the course of the year, she initiated some verbal approximations and her signing ability greatly increased. Abby was an easygoing student eager to participate in all activities. She made great efforts to communicate through signs and got frustrated when she could not articulate her opinion and stories through signs and approximations. Because she had good auditory comprehension of English, teachers were able to help her fill in parts of her stories with verbal input that was confirmed as “understood” by Abby through other means such as a head nod, a grunt or the sign for “yes/no” Her brother, who attended the hearing preschool across the courtyard, was an occasional visitor to the classroom. Abby adored her brother and was proud when her brother visited the classroom; she was especially elated when her brother used bimodal phrases and requests during the circle times. While Abby used SEE-signs to communicate with her brother, her brother used mainly spoken English with her.

*Lance*

Lance had two delays associated with his autism, a social delay and transitions delay. Based on my observations in the classroom, his delays most notably affected his transitions between routines, his ability to adjust to spontaneous breaks in routines and his level of engagement with other children in the classroom. He verbally engaged more with the adults in the classroom than his peers. Lance’s mom described signing as “still a bridge” for him when he communicates. From an early age Lance was exposed to ASL in the home. Prior to his attendance at ECEIC, he entered an early intervention program that utilized ASL. In order for everyone to learn sign in his family, his parents labeled all objects in the home (the couch, cupboard, table etc.) with lamented ASL signs (as pictures). With the transition to the SEE-sign

program the mother stated that they use "a combination of ASL and SEE" in the home. Lance's English skills were close to being on par with the average for his age. An emotional student, he spoke rapidly and often in the third person. Although he had dropped many signs and mainly used speech his mom expressed that he reverts back to signs when talking about his feelings or when frustrated.

*Irene*

Irene was in her second year of the preschool classroom. Because Irene possessed strong verbal skills, she spent half her school day in the hearing preschool and the other half in the deaf classroom. She enjoyed taking on the "big sister" or "teacher role" in formal activities. An energetic, sympathetic and boisterous student, she often dominated conversations. Being "in-between" classrooms parallels the "in-betweenness" she often expressed about her identity as either a speaker or signer. I never had a chance to interview her parents although her divorced parents and their respective partners often chatted with teachers and I after class.

In the following table (see below, Table 3.1), I provide an overview of the students in the Deaf classroom: languages spoken at home, language abilities, hearing devices used, other development challenges faced and whether or not I interviewed their mothers. Two of the six interviews with mothers were not mothers of students from this classroom. Terry was a teacher's aide/former mother of student at the Center and Susan was a mother of a student from the previous cohort of preschool students. Susan remained in contact with the Center by bringing her son, ML, by the school to say hello to his former teachers after he entered kindergarten. When I first began taking the parent sign class she was the teacher.

Table 3.1 Overview of Students in Preschool Classroom for deaf/HH

| **Student's Name** | **Languages at home** | **Language Ability** | **Hearing Device Used** | **Other Challenges** | **Interview status of mother** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Beto | Mam/ Spanish and likely very limited or no English Unclear if signs are used at home | Limited verbal approximations | Deaf: uses bilateral CIs | Suggested developmental challenges<br><br>Some difficulties with fine motor skills/balance | Included with translator |
| Katrina | Tagalog Some signs | Limited verbal Approximations | Deaf: uses bilateral CIs | None that I observed | Not included |
| Alise | Spanish English Signs | Near peer-average verbal production of English and Spanish | Deaf: uses Baja Hearing device | Some difficulties with fine motor skills | Included |
| Lance | English | Below peer-average verbal production | Deaf: uses Bilateral CIs | High functioning autism | Included |
| Roger | English | Early Verbal | Deaf: uses | None that I | Included |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Cantonese Signs | Production | bilateral CIs | observed | |
| Irene | English Limited signs | Near peer-average verbal production | Deaf: uses bilateral CIs | None that I observed | Parents declined |
| Abby | English | Limited verbal approximations | Hearing | Diagnosed with apraxia, difficulties with fine motor skills | Mother declined |

**The teachers**

The head teacher of the preschool, Teacher Julie, fluent in ASL and English, was a white female in her thirties. She mostly used Signing Exact English in the classroom, although her background was in ASL as she holds a M.A. in Deaf Education. Teacher Julie had been teaching in The Eagle Crest Program for a number of years when I began this study. She was in charge of planning and leading most activities in the classroom. Her caring ways and commitment to providing the best individual learning context for each student, while, at the same time, creating an interactive, engaging classroom setting made her the most versatile teacher I have ever met. I am undoubtedly most grateful to Teacher Julie for accepting me on board and teaching me about teaching…in creative, interactive multimodal ways. Despite being a "researcher" in this context, teacher Julie's mentoring allowed me to develop teaching skills in an early education context in which students have incredibly varying educational, linguistic and development needs.

The first teacher's aide, teacher Margarita, was a Mexican-American female in her forties, fluent in Spanish and English. At the time of the study, she was taking ASL classes at a local community college. Teacher Margarita used Signing Exact English and English and Spanish in the classroom. However, because she was studying ASL she often tried out ASL signs with me. She took on the role of interpreter with the Spanish-speaking parents for all the classrooms at ECEIC. She excitedly volunteered to be the interpreter when I interviewed a Spanish/Mam-speaking mother. Teacher Margarita, caring and motherly in her ways, took great pride in being in charge of the kitchen activities, preparing student snacks and sharing her specialties with teachers across the classrooms after school.

The second teacher's aide, teacher Terry, was an African-American female in her thirties. She used a mixture of AAVE and Standard English in the classroom alongside SEE-sign and some ASL. Even with two boys of her own, she had more energy than all the teachers combined in the classroom. Working two or three days a week, she attended classes at a community college in the hope of transferring to a state school to study in a four-year Early Childhood Education Program. Teacher Terry had a deaf child, who graduated from this school two years ago, mainstreamed into a public elementary school. Thus, teacher Terry was also included in my parent interview study.

The parent sign class instructor, teacher Kelly, with an M.A. in Deaf Studies from Gallaudet University, the only deaf university in the country, and fluent in ASL and Kenyan Sign Language, usually had a theme that structured the topics and vocabulary of the class. Examples of themes from the classes I observed were: "Thanksgiving", "emotion", "clothing", and "pronouns." As mentioned previously, in line with the school language philosophy, the instruction of the class was in SEE-sign and not ASL, although mothers sometimes wanted to discuss the differences between the two. Despite my choice to not include the video data for my dissertation, my participation in the class offered a way to develop rapport with mothers before I

interviewed them. My participation also allowed me to better understand the language philosophy of the school and home language practices of mothers.

**The mothers**

I interviewed six hearing mothers of deaf children, mostly in their thirties, who were very involved in their deaf child's school life. Four of the six mothers participated in the school-sponsored "parent sign language class," offering parents the chance to learn SEE-sign. As mentioned previously, mothers Terry and Susan, marked with asterisks, were not mothers of present deaf students; they were mothers of deaf students the previous cohort who overlapped in attendance with some of the present students. The language profiles and country of origin (if other than the United States) of the mothers I focused on were as follows:

Mom Fernanda: Mam, Spanish, English, SEE-sign (Guatemala)

Mom Gloria: Spanish, English, SEE-sign (El Salvador)

Mom Marcia: Tagalog, English, ASL/SEE-sign (Philippines)

Mom Amy: English, ASL/SEE-sign, some Cantonese, Mandarin and Japanese

Mom Terry: AAVE/English, SEE-sign*

Mom Susan: English, SEE-sign*

Over the course of the academic year I observed the preschool classroom (2011-2012) and in the year prior (2010-11), I got to know most of mothers through my participation in the "parent sign language" class held one morning a week in the school library for a period of 90 minutes. During the academic year 2011-2012, I participated twice a month in the parent sign class when the pre-school classroom was fully staffed. The purpose of this class was for parents (mostly mothers) to learn for effective ways to communicate with their child. Additionally, this "gather with snacks and coffee setting" provided mothers an opportunity to stray from language learning to discuss their experiences with other hearing mothers. While I initially intended to use the videotaped family sign language classes I participated in for my dissertation project, a hit a few obstacles along the way. Due to a great deal of flux in regular participants and class visitors, it was extremely difficult to have consent from all participants before the class began. In any class there could be up to two or three new or visiting participants whom I did not know. Furthermore, due to limited space for camera placement and extensive parent movement in front of the camera throughout the class, I had many technical difficulties collecting video that captures all the visual interactions. All together, I collected data from six classes, each class about 90 minutes long.

**Role of the Researcher**

In line with an ecological stance I, as a researcher, am never divorced from the context of my research. Our "habitus", the inculcation of our dispositions and values through daily practices, may work at the unconscious level (Bourdieu, 1979) but it is the responsibility of the researcher to be explicit and as self-reflective as possible about their subjectivity and possible

researcher effects. Zentella's (1997) "Growing Up Bilingual,"an ethnographic study of bilingual Puerto Rican children growing up in New York, provided a model of linguistic analysis that includes social and ideological dimensions. Zentella's "anthropolitical" linguistic approach, a socially and politically conscious ethnographic positioning, provided me with the most thorough framework to understand why it is necessary to take a reflective research stance and recognize how I play a major role in translating the social reality of my participants. Similarly, I am influenced by Mendoza-Denton's (2008) ethnography "Homegirls: Language and Cultural Practice Among Latina Youth Gangs" and her emphasis on obtaining a holistic understanding of context as always in contestation and at the hands of subjectivity. These ethnographers, who place importance on reflection and self-reflection in ethnography, guide an understanding of how I shape my participants' narratives. Ethnography, according to Geertz (1973) is indeed "thick description" or semiotic interpretations of life.

Having volunteered as a teacher's aide at my site for nearly two years before beginning IRB-approved data collection at my site, I can assume that the four and five year-old students (a third of whom I knew from the toddler class when I volunteered as an aide for one full summer) viewed me as a teacher's aide at the time I begun my research while parents and teachers viewed me on a fluctuating spectrum between teacher's aide and graduate student/researcher. In the classroom, I presented myself as an aide- willing to follow the instructions of the head teacher and the procedures of the classroom and integrated myself, as much as possible, into the classroom interactions. My camera was placed and left running during focal events. Although this did not happen often, if another class was short on teachers, I put aside any researcher activity (camera activity/field notes) to offer assistance. The advantages of fully participating in the interactions afforded me the opportunity to gain the trust of my participants and to participate directly in the multimodal interactions. The disadvantage of full participation is the inability to take robust on-site field notes, which I initially found distracted the children during their classroom activity. Because using one's hands is paramount to communication in this research context, it was impossible to both participate and take notes. In short, it was important to consider the researcher-participant dynamic in the full context of my project as it progressed.

My various roles can be described as the following:

**Jennifer-the-teacher, as seen from the students**

Because I began and ended the school year with the children they viewed me as a teacher who worked a few days a week and toted around a silly camera and tripod that I let them play with sometimes. They would stand in front of it and make faces or present a monologue. Then, they asked to have it replayed- over and over. Perhaps because I was not there everyday and avoided engagement with parents on topics such as classroom procedures or behavioral issues, the students may have sensed my role as different than the other teacher's aides. Despite my honest intention to not step on any toes, I did become fully engaged in all aspects of classroom activities alongside other aides. I held students' hands as they waved the "I love you" or goodbye sign to their parents; they trusted me to help them put their CIs; and together we did morning OT exercises during the free play. At circle times, a student would often plop themselves in my lap and we would share a signing space in front of us.

**Jennifer-the teacher/researcher, as seen from the parents**

As a researcher-participant in the once-a-week family sign language class and as the "interviewer," parents viewed my positioning in a variety of ways-sometimes with reservation and other times with the warmth of a friendship. As a CODA, I was approached with a bit of curiosity and intimidation, viewed as part of the big "D" Deaf world and often asked to share my experiences growing up with Deaf parents. Undoubtedly, undertaking this ethnographic work forced me to examine my own experiences in the Deaf-hearing world and sharply challenged my understanding of "Deafness" in a way that considers a wider range of sociocultural dimensions and physical differences shaping different positionalities, educational opportunities and lived experiences.

**Jennifer-the teacher/researcher, as seen from the teachers**

I often undertook many of the same duties as the other teachers in the classroom- from helping serve the food to helping students brush their teeth after snack time. Alongside the other teachers of the classroom, I followed the bimodal SEE-sign/English approach to communication with students, although, I sometimes found myself signing without voice. I mostly acted in a supportive role in activities. During and after school, teachers and speech therapists were sometimes interested in talking about an interesting interaction that took place over the course of the morning with me. Because most of them had advanced degrees in Early Education, Deaf Education, Communication Studies or ASL studies, they were familiar with the discourses that permeated the educational practices and knowledgeable about the language and social development of children. In particular, the head teacher Julie offered valuable insight on aspects of students' language development.

**Jennifer- the graduate student-researcher, as seen from Jennifer**

As a volunteer aide-graduate-student-researcher, I was in a different position than the other aides in the classroom. I tried my best to match my schedule to the schedules and duties of other teacher's aides, but because I could leave at 12:30 and arrive just before the school day begins I had a different relationship in the teacher hierarchy and to the school administration.

I recognize that, ultimately, I decided how to frame an interaction or what features of the interaction to focus on following Geertz's (1973) assertion that data is "our constructions of other people's constructions" (p. 9). When there were multiple interactions taking place in one circle time or snack time, therein lies the impossible task of trying to capture "everything." The reader reads my interpretation of the events through the video frames I chose to pair with the transcription or what I chose to highlight in the transcription and analysis. I acknowledge that because I held the ability to represent my participants in interaction from a particular angle, I also held the responsibility of reflecting on the very process of representation. As a fully engaged participant in this study, reflecting on my own interactions was also a necessary, yet sometimes a difficult process. I have tried my best to represent my participants fairly and with justice.

## Procedures for collection of each type of data

I have been responsible for all aspects of data collection. This preschool classroom study has been conducted over the course of one academic year, from the period the school year began (September 2011) to the end of the school year (June 2012). I attend the school 2-3 days a week from 9-12:15 pm over the course of the 10 months with the exception of school holidays. Understanding language as a social and embodied process, and my interest in understanding the relationship between modality and how participants position themselves in interaction use made

video data the most relevant and fruitful median to address my research questions. My video data collection for this dissertation project can be broken down into the following two categories: 1) Participant-observations in preschool classrooms 2) Interviews with hearing mothers of pre-school-age deaf children.

**Rationale for Data Procedure**

My multi-scalar participant-observation/interview study can be understood as having two major components to understand the role modality plays in communication and the relationship between language, learning and identity processes: classroom data of hearing and deaf students and interviews with hearing mothers. In the first component (see figure 3.4 for visual example), I participated, observed and videotaped focal events in the classroom for the deaf children. The second component (see figure 3.5 for visual example), consisted of videotaped interviews that I conducted with mothers who reflected on their language learning experiences with their deaf child. My participation in the family sign language (figure 3.6 for visual example) class assisted in further contextualizing the experiences of the mothers despite the fact that I did not use those particular data directly for this dissertation, as discussed previously.

Figure 3.4 Focal Event- Snack Time



Figure 3.5 Interview with Fernanda (Spanish-English translator present)



Figure 3.6 Parent sign language class, topic: "Emotions" (class signing "mad")[14]



[14] Teacher Kelly is the parent sign class teacher, sitting at the head of the table with the students' attention directed at her in Figure 3.4. Her face is blurred for privacy.

**Participant-observations in preschool classrooms**

I collected video and auditory data from two kinds of classroom activities: structured (planned routine activated where students and teachers gather together) and unstructured (spontaneous student-student and student-teacher interaction). My data for this dissertation was primarily concerned with structured classroom activities wherein explicit learning is taking place. The wide-angle camera was placed adjacent to circle or table where students gather and positioned to best visually capture spatial orientation, language interactions including modal aspects. For the most part, the camera is left running and unnoticed. For the classroom analysis, I focused specifically on three daily focal events over the course of one academic year: morning circle time, snack/cooking time and the closing circle time.

Below are descriptions of the structured activities I observed in the classroom.

Structured Activities:

*Morning circle time*:
Students gather in a circle on mats on the floor. Routine songs are bi-modally produced (signed and voiced). Language-learning and sensory-driven activities are centered on a daily or weekly theme.

*Snack time:*
Students gather to eat a mid-morning snack at the table. Students are required to use bimodal production (i.e. signing and speaking) in requests for food or drink.

*Friday cooking time:*
Students participate in the cooking or baking of their daily snacks. The teacher scaffolds the activity to match language development, fine motor skills (for example cutting, stirring, whipping) and sensory aspects to each step in the cooking process. Snack time follows cooking time.

Below I include a chart (see Table 3.2) that roughly describes a typical day at my site- indicating during which activities data collection takes place. The diagram displays the school's routine activities and my participation as either an aide/researcher during these activities.

Table 3.2 Activity as aide and researcher

| Time | Activity | My activity as Aide | Activity as Researcher |
|---|---|---|---|
| 9-9:30 | Students arrive<br><br>Free play<br><br>fine motor activities at set table | Greet parents<br><br>Help students with morning routine (e.g. OT exercises, bathroom, taking off shoes)<br><br>Engage in free play with students | Limited- sometimes I set up a camera for free play |
| 9:30-10 | Morning Circle time | Assist head teacher with student behavior and in linguistic and physical engagement with topic or theme | Set up camera, observe |
| 10-10:30 | Snack time/cooking time | Assist head teacher with student behavior and in linguistic and physical engagement with topic or theme | Set up camera, observe |
| 10:45- | Bathroom, brush teeth, clean | My duty is managing tooth brushing | No camera |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 11 | up classroom, put shoes on | and the putting on of shoes | |
| 11-11:45 | Outside play time with other classrooms | Assist with overseeing playground activity | No camera (too many issues with consent of too many children, teachers, visitors) |
| 11:45-12 | Closing circle time | Assist head teacher with student behavior and in linguistic and physical engagement with topic or theme | Set up camera, observe |

After each daily observation, I contributed to a running tab of all video clips in a separate word document adding a summary of the event, length and time the event took place and initial emerging themes related to multimodal interactions and positioning. Because I did not collect field notes on-site, I added analytic memos to the entries allowing me to correlate the day's data with analytic reflections.

**Interviews with hearing mothers of pre-school-age deaf children**

I conducted six videotaped interviews with the hearing mothers of deaf children over the course the academic year 2011-2012. I only interviewed mothers whom I had known for extended periods and with whom I had frequent interactions. Each unstructured interview, with mostly open-ended questions, lasted roughly 20-25 minutes. In order to better contextualize the experiences of the deaf-hearing world of the deaf students I observed in the classroom, I developed questions (See interview guide in appendix A) that focused on the hearing parents' language experiences with their deaf child. In order to have the interview flow in a naturalistic way, I used the interview guide in a loose manner. New questions would result from topic changes usually via the participant. Participants often answered a question by telling a story about their child as reflected in the narrative data presented in chapter 6. I found that I added more questions about sensory experiences than originally anticipated. During the interview, I took notes on the interviewees' responses and any observed multimodal use.

For the interview, mothers and I arranged a time to meet in the school library during school hours. The school library in this preschool was a small room that hosts language-learning materials, books and games parents can review and borrow. There was a computer in the corner for general public use and a whiteboard at the head of a large long table used for staff meetings after school and for the parent sign class held on Tuesdays. On days that there was no sign class, the library was usually empty making it an ideal place to hold an interview. The library was, for the most part, a quiet interview space, however, the other mothers sometimes sporadically came in and out of the room during the interview. On two instances, another mother (one I had already interviewed) sat down and listened in on another mother's interview. The interviewee granted her permission to be present and encouraged the occasional comments chimed in by the additional mother. The space was convenient and comfortable for most mothers who did not have to adjust their schedules or travel to a new place to do the interview with me.

The interviews took place just before school, or, before or after the parent sign class, as some mothers stay on at school for the duration of the preschool class (from 9-12) after their sign class. The interviews were all held in English except one and each lasted an average of 20 minutes. In the case of the Mam/Spanish speaking mother from Guatemala, a Spanish-speaking teacher's aide assisted in the interview process by interpreting between English and Spanish. It should be noted that the mother's first language is Mam. From the six interview participants, I chose two mothers, Terry and Gloria, to focus on in the main analysis of chapter 6. While all mothers used multiple modalities (sign, speech and gesture) during the interview, I chose these

two mothers because they display extensive and clear use of multiple modalities during the interviews.

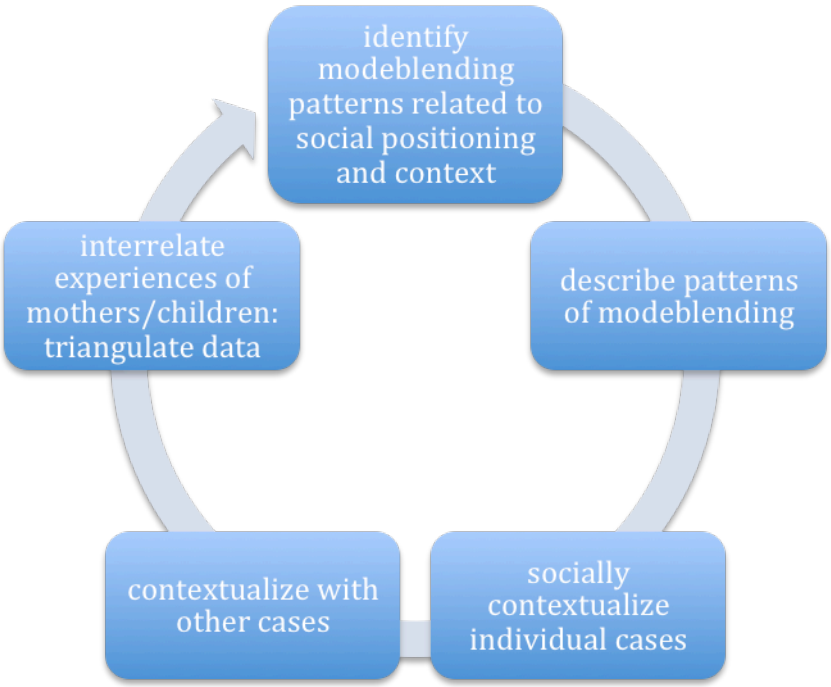
**Other documents and artifacts**

In addition to observational video, interview data and field notes, I collected lesson plans in the classroom, class materials from the family sign class and still shots from ECEIC.

## Procedure for Data Analysis

Because I am interested in the relationship between modality/mode-blending and identity, I have relied on observational data (video) to *identify*, *describe* and *contextualize* instances of multimodal use and mode blending in different interactions. Before initiating this study, I hypothesized data that the use of modalities opened up spaces for meaning making. I set out to find out how and what language/modality indexes at the individual and social level drawing on the tools of discourse analysis, in particular "indexicality" (Ochs, 1996) and "footing" (Goffman, 1981) to code modal shifts in social positioning in both individual cases and across cases *in context*. I adopted Kramsch (1993) notion of context as, "The matrix created as discourse and as a form of social practice," and, for my analysis, examined context on levels she proposes: "linguistic, situational, interactional, cultural, and intertextual" (p. 46). To recapitulate, my analysis consists of 5 phases:

Figure 3.7




I used iMovie editing to break down videos into smaller thematically coded segments. I then transcribed segments of relevant data drawing on a transcription method that captures both the speech and visual dimensions of language. Piecing together segments of transcribed interactions accompanied by video data (presented in still frames) allowed me to contribute to the larger narratives of my participants that intertwine aspects of identity, language and modality, and

ideology. The sociocultural context chapter permitted me to situate and further contextualize the experiences of the deaf children and hearing parents.

**Coding Schemas**

In total, I examined 20 hours of classroom data broken into 65 extended clips on iMovie coded through the iMovie comment function. On average, there were 5-7 students present in most focal events, one head teacher, two teacher's aides and myself. In about 50% of the clips there was a "hearing model" student present. In a preliminary analysis, I coded on a range of themes that related to my research questions on linguistic, social and individual dimensions. In particular, I cross-examined instances of modal shifts and bimodal production with the particular context in which the shift or simultaneous production took place. In addition, I coded shifts in positionality of participants and examined them in context. I also paid attention to the following aspects that were selected for their generalizability to the FL and SLA learning situation:

- Turn-taking
- Topic Management
- Repair Strategies
- Shifts in footing: code-switching/mode-switching (including mode-blends, co-gestural blends and code-blends)
- Relative semiotic value of the vocal vs. gestural track
- Intercultural competence vs. symbolic competence

The first stage of coding included identifying themes related to multimodality and identity. Below are two screenshots of my raw data in iMovie format with initial coding before clips are broken down further. In the screenshot Project #2, students were making blueberry yogurt shakes (see figure 3.8). The codes used (in capital letters) include: sensory, embodied activity, bimodal modeling, SEE-sign example, verbal, side sign conversation and hearing discourse. A short description detailing the code follows the code title. In the screenshot Project #56, students and teachers were gathered at circle time discussing Halloween topics (see figure 3.9). The codes used for this clip include: visual prompt, hearing role model signing, visual, CI refusal, space and cosign.

Figure 3.8 Project #2 Raw Data with initial coding in iMovie

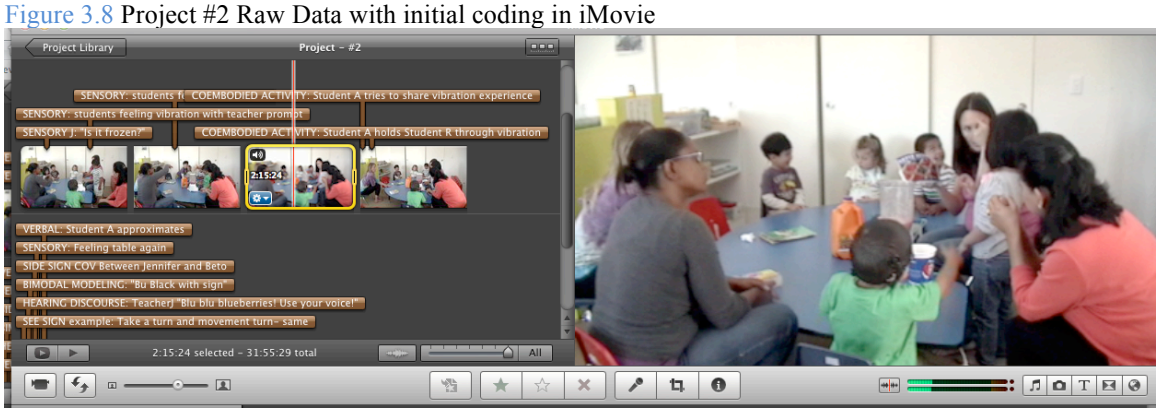
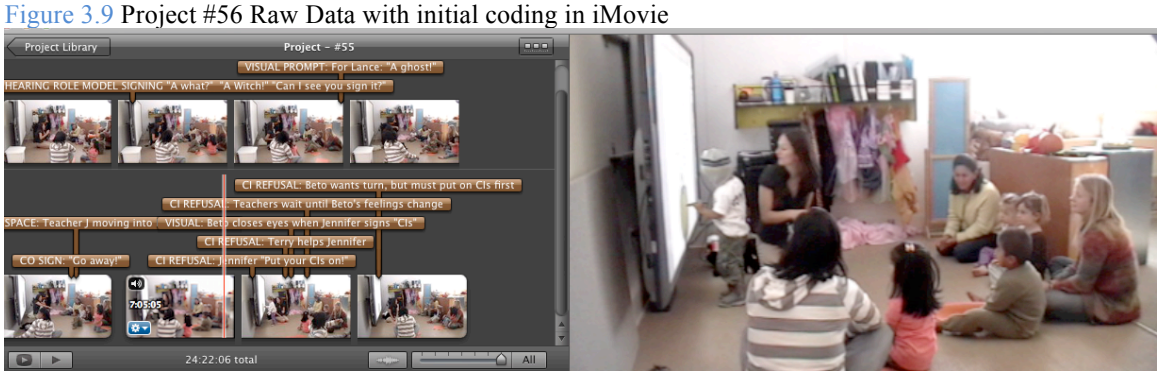


Figure 3.9 Project #56 Raw Data with initial coding in iMovie




The original clips ranged in length and averaged between 5-15 minutes each. After examining repetitive patterns in the daily summaries, post-class field notes and video coding, I chose 47 well-coded multimodal interactions and edited down the selected interactions to between 30 seconds and 3 minutes and roughly transcribed key interactions in these clips. From these 47 selected interactions, I choose seven for the classroom data analysis chapters that are representative across the data. The last step in the process was full transcription of the interactions chosen for analysis in this dissertation. I thoroughly transcribed on the level of gesture, sign, speech and spatial positioning.

Similar to the classroom data, I stored and analyzed the interview data in iMovie, thematically coding for patterns and roughly transcribing key interactions. In particular, I identified patterns of multimodal usage and mode-switches in the mother's interactions.

**Issues of transcription**

In the presentation/analysis of the data, I included video stills/frame grabs accompanied by transcription. Different from many other transcription frameworks, I transcribed spoken and signed utterances as well as other embodied modes of communication. In the first column of the transcription (see figure 3.1 for example), I indicate the addresser, the participant who is producing the sign, speech or gesture. If two participants speak or sign at the same time the participants' names are indicated in the same box. The second column indicates transcribed verbal and sign utterances marked by their parallel positions. Regular cased words indicate speech while capitalized letters are glosses of signed words recognized as either ASL signs or SEE-sign. Speech is most often in the form of a spoken language, English. However, instances of verbal approximations are also included under "speech" as well as Spanish. Speech is preceded with a 'V" (for "voice") and signed utterances are preceded with a "S" ("sign"). When the voiced and signed utterances are simultaneous produced they are aligned, one on top of the other, in the transcription. In the third column, I indicate the presence of other embodied utterances of communication, including gesture, gaze, movement, pointing and sensory modes. In this column, I included both the addresser and addressee's modal uses and reactions. The third column offers a description of the co-gestural or co-modal, in other words the modeblends, occurrences outside speech and sign.

For the interview data, there is more emphasis on the verbal interaction between two participants because participants used mostly speech, unlike the participants in the classroom

data. The lengthy narratives of the mothers in the interview provided rich context for understanding participants' experiences. Thus, I justify the modification of the transcription process in the interviews with mothers in Chapter 6 based on the type of data obtained, taking into account the totality of the interaction and what is highlighted.

Figure 3.10 Example of Transcription

Transcript 4.1 Contesting without words: Embodying intention (00:21)

| **Addresser/Addressee** | **Speech/SIGN** | **Accompanying embodied utterances of addresser and addressee** |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Teacher Julie: | V: Irene's over there.<br>S: OVER THERE | Julie points to Irene's picture in Sunlight's class book. (figure 1)<br>Beto begins to pull picture of Irene. |
| 2 Student Beto: | | Beto pulls away photo of Irene from teacher. Two taps on Irene's picture. Beto's eye gaze shifts towards Sunlight classroom. Jennifer copies Beto's pointing gesture. (figure 2) |
| 3 Teacher Julie: | V: Bye-Bye. (1.5) In Sunlight<br>S: IN SUNLIGHT | Beto continues to hold pointing gesture. |

The reader should use the transcription in tandem with the annotated video grabs (see figure 3.11 below for example), which visually illuminate important modal occurrences and the reappropriation of the space in the interactions. The video grab annotations include my translation glosses of the transcribed sign and speech. In the third column of the orthographic transcription the corresponding figure (video grab) is noted.

Figure 3.11 Example of video screen grab used to supplement orthographic transcription



In Figure 1, Beto moves himself to the center of the circle, pulls Irene's picture away from the teacher and inquires about the whereabouts of Irene. "Irene's over there!" the teacher explains with sign and speech coproduced. Other circle participants are focused on the teacher.

**Figure 1**

Listed below are the transcription conventions I follow. When two participants are communicating (sign or speech) at the same time brackets mark the overlap in utterances.

**Transcription conventions:**

| | |
|---|---|
| (.1)<br>(.5) | length of pause in seconds or fractions of seconds (0.1= 1/10 second 0.5=1/2 second) |
| Now | underline marks added stress |
| = | latching of one turn of talk to another |
| so:: | lengthening of a vowel or sign |
| [ ] | overlap of words |
| - | rising or falling intonation of the word following the arrow. |
| Capital case | Capital letters following the notation "S:" marks "sign" |
| Regular case | regular case word(s) indicates spoken language following the notation "V": "verbal" |

In her article "Transcription as Theory", Ochs (1979) highlights some of the cultural bias in transcription conventions and makes a plea for the researcher to be aware of the process of selectivity (i.e. the filtering process undertaken) because of its effects on interpretation. In other words, embedded in the process of transcription are theoretical assumptions. Ochs introduces the importance of studying eye gaze, gesture, action and setting in child behavior. She claims that conventional linguistic and sociological models ignore or minimize non-verbal considerations in adult-speech behavior. They are often considered as co-occurring with language but do not constitute the ideas being conveyed. While Ochs makes an excellent plea to include paralinguistic features of communication, the bottom line is that English or orthographic bias is difficult to escape in any conventional transcriptions. With this in mind, I wanted to draw on a framework that included a visual representation of the data. Norris' (2004) multimodal analysis framework that includes a thorough analysis of gesture, bodily spatial orientation, gaze, facial and bodily expression in group interactions is crucial in guiding my framework of analysis. However, central to Norris' visual approach remains the assumption of the hearer-speaker model and the privileging of the auditory track in representation.

By far, one of the most difficult tasks I faced in this study was the question of how to present my data in a way that maintains equal weight to various modes - speech, visual and sensory. Transcription conventions for ASL data such as The Movement-Hold Model (Liddell & Johnson, 1989) and the Berkeley Transcription System (BTS) (Slobin et al., 2001) examine signed languages at phonetic and morphological level are not particularly useful for a linguistic analysis which will be heavily contextualized for an audience of educators. The Movement-Hold Model provides a method of transcribing ASL at phonological levels noting movement segments and hold segments of handshapes and their location. There is no analysis of accompanying speech or other communicative practices that co-occur as part of the meaning making process

such as spatial positioning and paralinguistic features. The Berkeley Transcription System (BTS) provides a system of transcribing at the morphological level including a wide range of communication acts involving gesture, eye gaze, attention getting devices and role shifts. Both the BTS and the Movement Hold Models offer researchers a way to develop consistency across data. However, both systems require detailed knowledge of the complex notational system that may be unfamiliar to most educators or applied linguistics. Both systems also centralize ASL as the linguistic code. In my data, there was no one central code of language production rather the code is mixed.

I used a "mix-modal" (sign, speech and other embodied dimensions) approach to transcription. Complete translation (no 'traces' of the source language) may be used when my point was about the rhetoric of deaf or hearing discourse (perhaps most applicable in mother's reflections). I used glosses or frame grabs for specific sign sequences representing patterns of multimodal communication accompanied by further orthographic translation/transcription. One disadvantage of providing glosses alongside or orthographic transcription is that the presentation of the orthographic data becomes an interpretation in itself; it is a bimodal code represented in an English code. While providing video links to data may offer more depth to the transcription, my current two-dimensional presentation (i.e. transcription with video stills) allowed me to isolate interactions while containing and analyzing features of the interaction in a useful manner. Because I worked with a vulnerable population I do not feel comfortable providing on-line, publically accessible video links for this dissertation.

## Aligning Data Analysis and Research Questions

In the introduction, I presented three guiding researching questions. Below, I expand on the central questions with some sub-questions and align the questions with the method of data collection and chapter of analysis.

Question 1: *What role does multimodality play in communicative practices of deaf and hearing participants in the focal events of circle time and snack time?* For this question, I relied on video data taken from focal events in the classroom. I selected specific multimodal interactions that involve modal use or mode switching. The data analyses that align with this question are discussed in chapter 4 and chapter 5. This question aligns with the datum collected inside the classroom, the largest piece of my dissertation project.

Sub-questions of Question 1 include:

- How and why do teachers and children draw on particular semiotic resources for meaning making?
- What patterns of multimodality are observed in each participant and across participants?
- What patterns of multimodality are observed across different activities?
- When is speech-gesture synchronous and asynchronous? (i.e. How do modalities complement or contradict each other?)
- What are the cognitive and social implications/affordances of bimodal co-expression?
- When and how is code-switching employed?

- How and why is a multimodal utterance a part of a collaborative action (of speaker/signer and listener/receiver)?

Question 2: *What does examining co-embodied dimensions tell us about how participants position themselves in interaction?* For this question, I relied on both classroom video data and video interview data with hearing mothers. All three data analyses chapter align with Question 2.

Question 3: *How are mothers' identities shaped through language and how do parents carve their own sense of self through these new language practices?* The interview data presented in Ch. 6 offers insight to Question 3.

On a much more general level, working from the premise of language as embodied, all of my research questions are sub-questions of an important overarching question: *What insight on human communication do we gain from a modal analysis?* In the following three chapters, I offer analyses that provide insight to this question.

# CHAPTER 4
# SENSING THE OTHER AS LEARNING

## Arriving at school

As I entered my preschool site every morning, I was refreshed by the change in my space: the warm, soft morning sun beaming through the high ceiling windows, swings hanging empty waiting for the four and five year-olds, giant pillows ready for jumping and rolling in, the whitewashed walls minimally sprinkled with colorful children's work and the plush carpet waiting for the patter of children's bare feet. The students, upon entering a space designed to stimulate their movement and senses, would come alive with physical energy and language. At the core of the design, the architect and teachers considered ways to heighten students' senses and establish a visual open space- rich with movement, vibration, light and touch. I peeked outside the window and saw a van arrive with two students, Beto and Katrina. Margarita, a teacher's aid at the Center School, ran outside to greet them. At first sleepy after a long drive, the kids woke up with hands moving excitedly at the sight of Margarita, "Good Morning!" Katrina signed with no voice and a big smile. "School! School!" Beto repeated the sign, palm-slapping palm, over and over with his eyebrows raised and eyes enlarged as if "School" was a question to confirm that he has, at last, arrived.

Students came from all over the city to one of the few federally funded programs in the area for deaf students- a ride to school could take ten minutes or up to an hour or two. If parents did not have transportation, a van or taxi was arranged, and students came with their driver. Students gained access to this school after approval from their home public school district and usually such access was obtained though what one parent called "a real fight." Making it difficult to send a deaf child to an educational program for deaf children, a student's local school district could argue that they can meet the needs of a deaf child by mainstreaming him or her instead of sending the child outside the district (thus making it cheaper for the district). The reality was that there were few programs available meeting the range of bilingual/bimodal language needs these deaf children required in the area.

In the next twenty minutes, students trickled in and laughter filled the room. Alise was the next student to enter. Mother in hand she greeted Magarita, "Buenos dias Margarita!" "Buenos Dias Alise!" Margarita responded to the cheerful greeting by coupling the SEE-sign[15] for "good morning" and Spanish .[16] Students began by taking off their shoes and placing their items in their cubby. Alise waved and held the "I love you" sign in ASL until her mother returned the same sign from outside the classroom through the large window. After settling around the room in free play the head teacher and teacher's aides chased students down for brushing, jumping and PT activities. The brushing of arms, legs, hands, feet and back with a hard bristled plastic brush helped stimulate students' muscles. Students jumped up and down, warming their muscles, while counting simultaneously in sign and English. "Uno, dos, tres...." In

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[15] SEE-sign, or Signing Exact English, a manually coded sign system is explained in detail in Chapter 3.

[16] When Spanish is combined with Signing Exact English (SEE-sign), a regular practice in the classroom, it undermines the purpose of SEE-sign which aims facilitate spoken English with sign cues corresponding to English words. The benefit seen by the teachers of this SEE-sign/Spanish practice is that by integrating the home language, Spanish, into classroom practices, the school validates the Spanish-speaking child's home language. At home, Spanish-speaking parents (and families with other non-English languages) also combine SEE-sign with languages other than English.

accompanying the jumping, Alise chose Spanish to accompany her jumps, while Abby used ASL number signs. According to the teachers, beginning the day with movement and brushing helped students release energy and stimulate tactile senses before settling into a circle time. In the corner on the pillows, Beto ripped off his cochlear implant (CI) hearing devices on his ears that teacher's aide Margarita had just put on him. Refusing to wear them, he tucked them under a pillow. Catching the scene sitting on a pillow nearby, I gently urged him to put them back on. I signed and spoke simultaneously, "Beto, CIs on!" When he refused with a gestural "No," a rapid head nod left to right and a fluttery somewhat frantic hand waving left to right, the head teacher, Julie, called out from across the room, "Let's let him be!" and I let him go back to playing.

Roger, alongside his mom, and, Abby, with her nanny, appeared at the door, gave their hugs and goodbyes and raced over to take off their shoes and catch the last minutes of free play before the morning circle time began. Prompted by the head teacher, Katrina ran over to the light switch and began turning them on and off, repeatedly. Students, caught by the flashing lights and "flashing" hands look up to their teachers, followed the cue and moved towards the circle space. I set my camera a slight distance from the circle turned it to "record mode" and hurried back over to join the students in their circle.

## Research questions

In this chapter I examine focal events, snack time, and morning and closing circle times, in which language learning, for deaf and hearing four to six year olds, is either explicitly and implicitly the main pedagogical focus. Through the activities which structure each focal event, deaf students learned spoken English and English-based signs, while hearing students learned signs along side their deaf peers. The overarching research questions that guides this chapter ask: What role does multimodality play in communicative practices of deaf and hearing participants in the focal events of circle time and snack time? If we are to understand such events as "embodied participant frameworks" (Goodwin, 2006) what might this tell us about learning?

My data suggests that embodied modes (sensorial and gestural) opened up narrative and learning/teaching spaces of hearing children, deaf children and teachers. I will draw on examples of modal interaction to demonstrate how modality opened up spaces for communication, learning and the positionality of deaf and hearing children. Modality (sign, speech, gesture, senses) in multimodal form co-produced (teacher-student), bimodality produced by one participant (one student or one teacher) and simultaneously produced (two participants at the same time) complexifies the way communication and learning could be viewed in the classroom.

## Embodied co-production: The "co-grappling" of the bodily

### Contesting without words: Embodying intention through mode-blending

The following interaction took place at morning circle time. Students were seated in an oval-like circle with teacher Julie leading the activities from the "top" of the circle in front of the large screen. Teacher's aide Margarita and I joined students inside the circle. Leaning on his hands and knees, student Beto moved himself to the center of the circle in front of teacher Julie in an attempt to peak at the next planned activity. Next, teacher Julie raised up a picture of student Irene and asks the class in sign and speech, "Where is Irene?" Beto proceeded to rip Irene's picture from the hand of teacher Julie and stared closely at the picture. Teacher Julie began to explain to Beto that Irene was across the courtyard in the hearing classroom, Sunlight,

for the day. The transcription begins from this point. Remaining glued to the spot in the middle of the circle, Beto attempted to contest the teacher statement about Irene's whereabouts.

Transcript 4.1 Contesting without words: Embodying intention (00:21) Figures 4.1-4.4

| **Addresser/Addressee** | **Speech/SIGN** | **Accompanying embodied utterances of addresser and addressee** |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Teacher Julie: | V: Irene's over there.<br>S: OVER THERE | Julie points to Irene's picture in Sunlight's class book. (figure 4.1) Beto begins to pull picture of Irene. |
| 2 Student Beto: | | Beto pulls away photo of Irene from teacher. Two taps on Irene's picture. Beto's eye gaze shifts towards Sunlight classroom. Jennifer copies Beto's pointing gesture. (figure 4.2) |
| 3 Teacher Julie: | V: Bye-Bye. (1.5) In Sunlight<br>S: IN SUNLIGHT | Beto continues to hold pointing gesture. |
| 4 Beto: | | Redirects point. (figure 4.3) Points in direction of speech therapist's room. At first, Jennifer thinks she Beto is pointing toward her but Beto's eye gaze extends past her. Jennifer looks backwards. |
| 5 Jennifer:<br><br>6 Student Beto: | S: WALK WITH ME IRENE [SUNLIGHT]<br>S: [SPE:::ECH] | Two taps on Irene's picture and points again. Beto signs "speech" for 6 seconds. (figure 4.4) |
| 7 Jennifer: | Not speech Sunlight<br>NOT SPEECH SUNLIGHT | Beto looks back to teacher. Students shift attention from Jennifer and Beto's exchange back to teacher. |



Figure 4.1

In Figure 4.1, Beto moves himself to the center of the circle, pulls Irene's picture away from the teacher and inquires about the whereabouts of Irene. "Irene's over there!" the teacher explains with sign and speech co-produced. Student participants in the circle are focused on the interaction.



In Figure 4.2, student Beto questions teacher with a pointing gesture, "Over there?" Other students shift gaze in direction of pointing. Jennifer confirms Teacher Julie's declaration with a directional pointing gesture.

Figure 4.2



In Figure 4.3, student Beto redirects eye gaze and pointing gesture after tapping photo of Irene. Jennifer shifts eye gaze towards direction of Beto's pointing gesture.

Figure 4.3



In figure 4.4, student Beto follows the pointing gesture with the sign "speech" clarifying the location indicated by his pointing gesture. Simultaneously, Jennifer produces the sign "Sunlight" backing up teacher Julie's assertion that Beto is in the Sunlight classroom.

Figure 4.4

In the following sequence of interactions Beto utilized two separate pointing gestures differentiated by spatial orientation, each systematically coupled with two taps to an object, Irene's photo, and accompanied by directional eye gaze. The primary and the most obvious function of the "deictic gestures" (McNeill, 1992) placed Irene in two different places. They were non-abstract spatial placements as the two points generally matched the physical locations. It was in their juxtaposition, situated contextually, that we acquired new meaning. In the first pointing gesture, Beto pointed and looked in the identical direction of teacher Julie's sign "over there" (figure 4.1) an assertion on the teacher's part that Beto's fellow classmate, Irene, was in the hearing classroom. Without the second gesture, one could interpret the pointing by Beto as confirming the teacher's assertion. Through the shift in pointing followed by the two taps to Irene's photo, he spatially repositioned Irene in the conversation. The eye gaze and pointing shift are captured in comparing figures 4.2 and 4.3. Beto used a systematic gestural form of communication coupled with only one sign, "speech" (shown in figure 4.4), to explain a great

deal more than commonly interpreted from a pointing gesture or from just the sign "speech". The sign "speech" (bent number two handshape in a circular direction at mouth) was continued for six seconds first in the direction of me and then shifted in the direction of the teacher. In this spatial reappropriation and repositioning we can also imply that Beto was contesting teacher Julie in expressing "She's over there? No, I think she's in her speech therapy session" (my own translation). With Beto's limited speech and sign he instead drew on eye gaze and pointing to contribute to the conversation on the whereabouts of Irene. His actions were systematic, coupled with both pointing gestures the object of the conversation was referenced through two taps, a "beat gesture" (McNeill, 1992). The elongated sign "speech" was significant in that Beto placed emphasis on his assertion to the teacher, the class and I.

The shifting eye gaze of other students following the tapping reference and pointing indicated an understanding among bystanders that something was being communicated. The visual prosody in Beto's gestures and rapidly shifting eye gaze requested the attention of others in the circle. By sitting in the center of the circle directly in between his interlocutors, Teacher Julie and I, and in facilitating the visual shifts of the class, Beto was taking a powerful lead in the conversation and in teaching his audience bodily to read his utterances. His spatial position in the center of the circle demanded the attention of others.

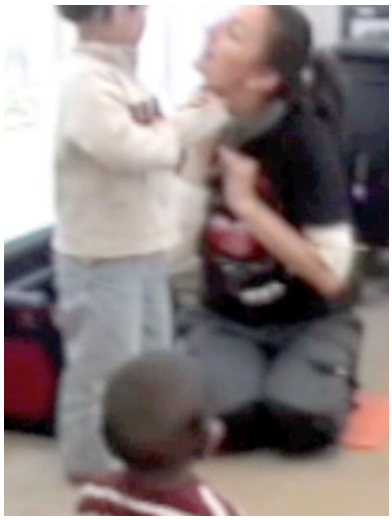
Beto's contestation was not, however, immediately felicitous. Beto's main interlocutors, the teacher and I, were reading each other's bodily movements to understand the intention of Beto's speech act. The 'reading of bodies" included teacher Julie and I reading each other's reactions to Beto's gestures. Put another way, the production of utterances was depended on a co-embodied understanding of Beto's co-participants. In figure 4.3, I displayed a confused look while turning around. At that moment, I appeared to think that Beto was pointing in my direction, or slightly beyond me. Catching the shift in Beto's eye gaze coupled with a repositioned pointing gesture, teacher Julie and I recognized that Beto's pointing angle shifted directly to the physical location of the speech therapy room. We, together, began to reinterpret his pointing not as a complement or reinforcement to teacher Julie's speech/sign utterance, but rather as a contestation of her initial assertion through speech and sign that she is "Over there." The contestation is realized more explicitly when Beto added the sign "speech" to his gestures. The incorporation of the sign "speech" back into our responses indicated that teacher Julie and I understood the meaning behind Beto's utterance. We acknowledged we understood his contestation although we did no agree and we continued to explain, " No she is in the Sunlight room." In the last figure, you see Beto and I overlapped in our communication, simultaneously producing signs; Beto signed "speech" while I signed "sun." While we were both addressing the whereabouts of Irene at the same moment, we remained in disagreement about the location.

Teachers and teacher aides were accustomed to Beto's use of pointing and other gestures to communicate outside of words or signs and teachers were constantly searching for non-verbal means of communication among students. And, Beto was well aware of the affordances of his spatial environment- objects he could touch and hold, the spatial dynamic of the circle he could shift and the eye gaze of others he could command. The spatial repositioning of his body was itself a speech act, a demand that conveyed, "Pay attention to me. I have something to share." The teachers and students were actively the "learners" in this interaction as the construction of meaning is co-produced through an understanding of our bodies and physical space. Teacher Julie was not a neutral conduit of knowledge in which learning takes place in a unidirectional teacher-to-student direction. There was not expert-novice (teacher-student) relationship guiding the interaction nor could we fit learning into the framework of a "zone of proximal development"

(Vygosky, 1978) Vygosky defines the zone of proximal development as the distance between actual development level and potential development produced through problem solving in a social environment in collaboration or guidance of more capable peers (p. 85). While collaboration in the negotiation of meaning guided the actions of participants, it was not guided in a "more skilled-less skilled" dichotomy. Learning was not just taking place via speaking and listening; it also lay in the reading and feeling of the other's bodily presence, movement and spatial orientation. Understanding and reacting to the body of the other one dialectically entered into a process of learning that needed both participants, student and teacher, to lead and be lead in a co-production of meaning.

**"Feel my words?" Co-production as a learning strategy**

In the following clips, I offer instances of the co-production (teacher-student) of language. The teacher or teacher's aide drew on a shared tactile, vibrational or motional gesture such as sign in the signing space of the child accompanied by speech to coproduce a bimodal utterance through two bodies. Such examples appear in almost every clip of data recorded. "Learning bodily" (Bourdieu, 2000), teachers drew on sensory resources as a pedagogical tool to assist in sign and speech development among the students. In this "writing on the body" the two bodies were engaged in a shared sensory world in which meaning was constructed through a moment by moment reading of the bodily imprinting and responding to it. In each co-constructed utterance, the teacher learned from how the child receives a touch or movement while the student in turn processed the sensory intentions of the teacher.



In Figure 4.5, teacher Julie places Roger's hand on her throat as she produces a verbal utterance. Roger feels the uttered word.

Figure 4.5

Throughout classroom discourse teachers assisted students in learning how to produce speech through "feeling the words" as vibrations on their throats. Words differing in tone and syllables produced different vibrations and this action of feeling assist students in their verbal output. In Figure 4.5, teacher Julia places student Roger's hand on her throat as she simultaneously verbally produces the word "I" and signs the SEE-sign "I" (letter I on chest). She urged Roger to verbally produce (with sign) the sentence, "I am at school!" by associating the vibration of "I" with the English word.



In Figure 4.6, student Roger wraps his hands around teacher Terry's wrist while she signs "finish". Roger is feeling the motion and direction of the sign.

Figure 4.6

In figure 4.6, teacher Terry entered the signing space of Roger wrapping her hands around his body and entering his signing space located directly in front of his torso. Teacher Terry allowed Roger to hold his hands and feel the words through their motion. In figure 4.6, Terry is signing "finished" as Roger held on through the repeated shakes of the Terry's number five handshape. In this co-production process, students gained a bodily memory of the sign's directionality at the same time they auditory process the sign.



In figure 4.7, Jennifer signs "funny" on student Beto's nose. The sign is co-produced using two bodies.

Figure 4.7



In Figure 4.8, teacher Margarita places the 5-handshape sign extending from Roger's head or the initial position for the sign "grandmother."

Figure 4.8

In figures 4.6 and 4.7, the teacher aides directly produced the signs on the body of the student. In figure 4.6, I produced the sign "funny" on the nose of student Beto as we laughed along together in a friendly shared sitting space and, in figure 4.7, Margarita produced the sign "grandmother" on the side of the forehead of Roger. In both cases, the sign is being marked physically on the students' bodies while the auditory equivalent is received.

I observed such co-production of embodied expressions more with students who are speech-delayed and beginning to learn signs and verbal approximations. Such co-embodiedness allowed students to "feel the words" in tactile ways. Teachers shared a signing space with students allowing them to explore the spatial semiotic means through which they eventually will utilize more and more on their own. As with the first data example, there is a sensing of the other as a dialectic process of the learning that takes place. The learning goes beyond the words and signs acquired to a co-embodied reading of each other. We understand such interactions from a chronotopic (literally "time-space") perspective in which the temporally and spatial dimensions are interdependent and inseparable. (Bakhtin, 1981) The bodily memory depends on the spatial and kinesthetic co-production of signs and the use of space relies on the previous, present and potential production of the signed expressions.

**"Hey, I didn't get a smell!" learning through sensorial association**

The following sequence of clips shed light on how the teachers and children construct meaning through tactile and olfactorial association. Students in the classroom regularly touched, felt and smelled new objects when introduced to them. While tactile and olfactorial management is characteristic of all human communication, students and teachers in the following interactions made this sensory management explicit for learning and communication purposes. Such intent is often left implicit in understanding learning in interactions. Across the focal events I analyzed in the data, teachers purposefully integrated sensory actions into the daily activities. The following interaction took place during snack time. Snack time is a prime example in which students were regularly asked to explore taste, touch, temperature, texture, vibration and smell. Students sat around a table as the teacher introduces the special Valentine's Day snacks- chocolate-covered bananas. I was present to the left of the camera as support for the head teacher. The red-shirted boy, student Mario, was the hearing role model visiting the class for the day.

In this interaction, the teacher, using SEE-sign, the simultaneously use of sign and spoken English employing English grammatical structure, requested each student takes a turn at smelling the fresh-out-of-the-oven heart-shaped Valentine's cake. Student Beto, sitting next to me, immediately associated the smell with the temperature- signing "hot" and with the consequence of heat- "hurts." Student Beto then turned to Jennifer to relay the information he has acquired

through this sensory and language interaction with the teacher. The hearing role model, student Mario expressed verbally that he also wants a turn at smelling the cake.

Transcript 4.1 "Hey, I didn't get a smell!" (00:20) Figures 4.9-4.13

| Addresser | Speech/SIGN | Accompanying embodied utterances of addresser and addressee |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Teacher Julie:<br><br>2 Student Alise: | V: Smell it!<br>S: SMELL!<br>V: Who made it? | Teacher Julie leans over with cake in hand and puts cake in front of Roger (figure 4.9). Beto looks toward Jennifer. Teacher Julie moves cake in front of Beto and Beto shifts gaze toward teach. and Jennifer leans down to smell cake. Students bang bottom of cups on table. |
| 3 Student Irene: | V: No::! | Student Beto to touch the cake. Irene reacts to his touch. (figure 4.10) |
| 4 Student Beto: | S: HOT? FINISHED? | |
| 5 Teacher Julie:<br><br><br>6 Student Beto: | V: =A little hot. [Yeah, warm warm not hot]<br>S: A LITTLE HOT. WARM.<br>S: [FINISHED] | |
| 7 Teacher Julie:<br><br><br>8 Teacher Jennifer: | V: Yeah, finished. Out of the oven. We took it out of the oven.<br>S: OUT OF THE OVEN<br>S: [FINISH] | Teacher Julie puts down plate to sign finish. (figure 4.11) (figure 4.12) |
| 9 Student Mario: | V: Hey! I didn't get a smell! | Picks plate back up and smells it. Moves plate around circle. Beto smells it. Lance smells it. Mario smells it. (figure 4.13) |
| 10 Jennifer: | S: HURT. NOT HOT. | Beto looking at Jennifer. |



In Figure 4.9, teacher Julie puts the cake out with her hand and asks the students to smell the Valentine's cake just out of the oven.

Figure 4.9



Figure 4.10

Rather than smell the cake, Beto touches the cake. In reaction to Beto's touch, Irene screams "No!" Other students are fixiated on Beto's actions.



Figure 4.11

Student Beto signs "finish" (five handshape with side-to-side shake movement) after Beto touches the cake. Teacher Julie reiterates Beto's assertion by repeating the sign "finish." Jennifer simultaneously signs "finish" too. Beto, Julie and Jennifer all overlap in the sign "finish."



Figure 4.12

While teacher Julie signs "out of oven" Beto turns to Jennifer to sign "hurt." Hearing role model student Marco raises his hand and yells, "Hey, I didn't get a smell!"



In Figure 4.13, teacher Julie goes around the circle, student by circle, to allow each student to have a smell of the Valentines Day cake.

Figure 4.13

I would like to focus on the relationship between the sensory actions and meaning-making. This interaction illustrates that there are many affordances of modal use in learning. Teacher Julie drew on olfactory modes to supplement the speech and sign production. Students associated a particular sign, gesture or spoken English with the sensory experience. The teacher used this sensory activity as a structuring principle in the larger activity of snack time- the sensory activity creates an anticipation and desire- for warm yummy cake. Students eye gaze and leaning forward body posture also hinted at their eager anticipation for cake and for engagement with smelling and touching it. Students waited as their anticipation for the snack increased perhaps facilitating their avid participation in the bimodal request that follows. ("Can I have some cake?")

It was not just the teacher who stimulated the use of sensory modes. In drawing on semiotic resources such as smell and touch students also contributed to meaning making in the interaction. With Beto's use of just two signs ("finish" and "hurt") coupled with his constant shifts in eye gazes between teacher Julie and Jennifer, Beto went through a process of meaning making stemming initially from associating touch/temperature with the state of the cake as "finished" and the consequence of heat, "It hurts" (figures 4.10-4.12). He was trying to explain more than what was associated with the request to sniff cake. He appeared to have interest in discussing the state and consequence of the state of the cake. Beto looks up towards to Jennifer and across the table toward the teacher for constant confirmation of his statement. Understanding the sensory modal actions as utterances in themselves allow us to understand both the communicative practices of the students and the structuring strategies put forth by the teacher. The sensory experience of "smelling" played a significant role in structuring the conversation and larger activity and affected student perceptions of each other. (K. Young, personal communication, April 20, 2012)

Students also positioned themselves vis-à-vis the different sensory actions. When Beto touched the cake, Irene reacted negatively with "No!"(figure 4.10); she perhaps thought that in touching the cake he disobeyed the teacher's request to "smell it" or she could have felt that he violated a sense of hygiene by touching the cake the students would eat. After noticing other students engaging with touch and smell, the hearing role model became anxious and states, "Hey! I didn't get a turn!" (figure 4.12) demanding that he too receive some sensory input. It may have seemed to him that the teacher was favoring the deaf students' sensory needs by leaving his turn for last and never making direct eye contact with him during the request.

During the same snack time the teacher introduced a second Valentine's day snack, chocolate covered bananas. I briefly introduce the subsequent interaction during the snack time

clip because a similar pattern of sensory practices took place. The teacher asked each student to feel the cold plate of frozen chocolate-covered bananas just removed from the freezer as she produces the bimodal utterance for cold, the verbal representation of cold and the ASL sign cold. If a student did not willingly touch the plate on his or her own, she pulled their hand under the plate and pressed their hand in between hers and the plate (figure 4.14). After feeling the plate Abby (the hearing student with apraxia) signs "cold" and produces a one-syllable approximation for cold, "ooood" (figure 4.13). Again we see the multiple functions of the sensory utterances- a prompt that introduced vocabulary and created anticipation for how it may taste. The co-produced gesture of touching the bottom of the plate is a co-produced utterance in which the teacher was both feeling for the reaction of the prompt and responding in turn. Similar to the last clip the hearing role model student Marco demanded participation in the activity of touching. "Can I feel it?" he asked forcefully in English.

Figures 4.13-4.14



Figure 4.13

In Figure 4.13, Abby simultaneously signs and verbally approximates "cold" after being physically prompted to experience (via touching the plate) the tactile sensation of "coldness." The student sitting next to Abby, Alise, copies the sign while Beto reaches out to jump his turn and touch the plate.



Figure 4.14

In figure 4.14, teacher Julie reaches for Roger's hand and presses it against the bottom of the cold plate.

**Bimodal requests: "I want chocolate covered bananas!"**

The final step in the sensory structuring of the activity was the production a speech and sign request. (figures 4.15-20) If students only voiced, "I want the chocolate-covered bananas!" teacher Julie did not give the student attention. She instead requested that they ask again with, "Use your signs!" In Figure 4.1515, we see Katrina made a sign only request (with some lip

movement approximations) for the bananas following teacher Julie's prompt sign by sign. Katrina was the first student in the circle to take a turn. Next, teacher Julie skipped over Irene's turn because she produced a speech-only request. Both Katrina and Alise make felicitous bimodal requests and receive a banana as their reward. The transcript begins with Abby's bimodal request as Irene appears frustrated that she has been skipped over twice at this point in the turn-by-turn circle format. Ironically, given the emphasis on English/speech production in the language philosophy of the school and the SEE-sign communication strategy employed, the teacher ignores the most outspoken child, Irene, because she is only using her words and not her signs.

Transcript 4.3 "I want chocolate covered banana!" (00:10) Figures 4.15-4.20

| Addresser | Speech/SIGN | Accompanying embodied utterances of addresser and addressee |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Student Irene<br><br>2 Student Abby<br><br><br>3 Teacher Julie | V: [Irene wants]<br><br>V: {A:::h]<br>S: I<br><br>S: [WANT] | Student Irene raises her hand forcefully and begins making a request while Teacher Julie attends to Abby's request. Abby verbally approximates "I" and signs while Irene begins a third person request. (figure 4.16) |
| 4 Student Irene:<br><br>5 Student Abby: | V: [I]…I<br><br>V:[ a:::nnnt]<br>S: [WANT] | Student Irene shifts to first person while raising hand while Abby continues her request (verbal approximations and sign) with prompts from teacher Julie. (figure 4.17) |
| 6 Teacher Julie:<br><br><br>7 Student Irene: | V: Chocolate covered<br>S: CHOCOLATE COVERED<br><br>V: Me! | Irene continues her verbal request, "Me!" with teacher Julie making no eye contact as she continues to prompt Abby. |
| 8 Student Abby: | V: a::hh<br>S: CHOCOLATE COVERED | Abby attempts a verbal approximation along with the signs. |
| 9 Teacher Julie<br><br><br>10 Student Abby: | V: Ba-na-na=<br>S: BANANA<br><br>V: =a-na-na<br>S: BANANA | Teacher Julie annunciates every syllable of banana to assist in Abby's verbal approximation while signing banana (figure 4.17) |
| 11 Teacher Julie: | V: I though you didn't want one. | Teach Julie leans over to pass Abby a banana on a stick. Without sign teacher Julie responds to Irene while turning to Irene. (figure 4.18) |
| 12 Student Irene: | V: I want<br>S: CHOCOLATE COVERED BANANAS | With Julie facing her and making eye contact Irene makes bimodal request signing second half of request. (figure 4.19) During the last part of her request Roger begins to sign his request. (figure 4.20) |



Figure 4.15

(Before transcription begins) In Figure 4.15, student Katrina follows requests her snack, "I want chocolate covered bananas." In this frame, teacher Julie uses a bimodal sign-speech cue for the sign "chocolate" (C-handshape circular motion on backside of hand).



Figure 4.16

Student Irene raises her hand and attempts a speech only request, which is ignored by teacher Julie who is focused on cuing Abby's bimodal request for chocolate-covered bananas. In this frame, Abby initiates the sign "want" while teacher Julie remains one sign ahead of Abby signing "chocolate."




Figure 4.17

In Figure 14.7, teacher Julie clearly annunciates every syllable of the word banana alongside the sign banana to assist in cuing Abby's verbal approximation of "ba-na-na." Irene raises her hand making a third person request becoming more agitated that she hasn't had a turn.



In figure 4.18, teacher Julie rewards Abby's bimodal request and passes her a banana. Using only speech she states to Irene, "I thought you didn't want one!" Irene leans back into her chair and initiates a first person request, "I want…"

Figure 4.18



In figure 4.19, Irene produces a bimodal request without any cuing from teacher Julie. Other students shift their eye gaze towards her request.

Figure 4.19



While Irene completes her bimodal request, Roger begins one keeping in line with the turn-taking sequence.

Figure 4.20

Irene made a demand for the bananas in English using only speech, "Irene want…I…I me!" (lines 1,4,7) but teacher Julie was attending to Abby's bimodal request prompting her a half a sign ahead. In Figure 4.16, you see Abby initiated the sign "want" while teacher Julie was one sign ahead in the sequence, "want." At the same time, Irene raised her hand forcefully

demanding her chocolate-covered bananas. Irene began with a third-person request then shifted into a more forceful first-person request. (line 4) The teacher continued to ignore Irene, offering her attention to Abby instead. After giving Abby her banana Teacher Julie modeswitched into speech only and retorted to Irene, "I thought you didn't want one" (line 11). Because she chose to use only speech here was significant. Most deaf students at the table would not have understood this sentence because she did not use any sign. Thus, the speech-only expression was clearly directed toward Irene. Here, a contradiction is present. Teacher Julie shifted back into her "hearing self" (using only a verbal mode) to communicate to Irene that because she didn't sign anything Julie's "deaf self" did not understand any of her forceful verbal requests and "assumed" she just did not want any banana treats. In the end of this short 10-second clip, Irene, at last, shifted into a bimodal (sign and speech) request, "I want chocolate-covered bananas". In the case of student Irene, teacher Julie did not offer a signing prompt, rather she expected student Irene to produce the bimodal request on her own.

In lines 1-3, there were three participant overlaps: Irene was speaking while teacher Julie and Abby were each producing a bimodal utterance. With the multiple modal tracks occurring at the same time, Irene had room to contest while Teacher Julie had room to reject. This all took place simultaneously while an auditory only track leaves less room for the multiple production of modes. It is difficult to have three people speak at the same time and understand each other, while three people producing bimodal utterances have more room for an understanding of multiple expressions. In this clip, we see teacher Julie shift footing (Goffman, 1981) between a hearing stance and a deaf one in a strategic manner that finally got Irene to produce a bimodal request. This example offers insight into the affordances of different modalities (simultaneously produced) as communication and the language ideologies at play; theoretically the language approach privileges English yet in practice there were multiple discourses competing and teachers and students moved in between the discourses for strategic ends- teacher Julie for pedagogical purposes and student Irene for getting her snack.

## Discussion of Findings

In unpacking the proceeding interactions, I illuminate why discourse analysis, in this case, needs to go beyond an analysis of the gestural and paralinguistic as complements (i.e. a reinforcement of semantic meaning) to meaning constructed in the embodied processes themselves. Working with the subsystems of language, pointing and eye gaze, and understanding how participants manage this gestural space, we make explicit the spatial world. In this analysis, the body was foregrounded as part of the actional field (Hanks, 1996). The interaction was understood not from the individual utterance but rather through *the relations between the embodied acts* involving the co-presence of multiple individuals. (Goffman, 1967). Sweetser (2012) similarly explains from the notion of viewpoint, "Viewpoint permeates human cognition and communication- predictably, since we never have experience of the world except as a viewpoint-equipped, embodied self among other viewpointed, embodied selves." (p. 2) In other words, according to Sweetser we co-experience our actions, spatial understandings, senses and emotions. In establishing one's positionality, the positionalities of others are intertwined in co-embodied identity processes.

Field notes, observations, and information obtained through informal conversations confirm that teachers in the classroom were keenly aware of the sensory means the students drew upon and made efforts to integrate such communication needs into the classroom discourse. Everything from a touch, gesture, point or hit could be understood by teachers as "embodying a

communicative intention" (Goodwin, 2006) and a potential means of communication in classroom activities. It is important to note that for teachers a hand waving or a redirection of gaze were not shrugged off as accompaniments, they were, rather, harnessed as meaning-making utterances and made for richer and longer conversations that fully depended on a joint attention between participants in communicative work outside an auditory track. While all human communication involves embodied processes, the more explicit and extended "co-grappling" of a multitude of semiotic resources among my participants in these focal events made for richer analyses that could, potentially shed light on any human communication.

One on hand, Beto is using gesture (combined with one sign, "speech") to convey meaning, which could be understood as a step in language development. Goldin-Meadow & Butcher (2003) argue this very point: "The combination of single word utterances and pointing gestures may function as a transitional bridge between one and two word speech" (p. 144). On the other hand, there is much more to this interaction. In all interactions presented in this chapter, there was a manipulation of the temporal or spatial dimensions of language through modal means that sometimes unveiled paradoxes and contradictions both teachers and students grapple over. Interaction is chronotopic in nature, contingent on the interdependence of time and space (Bakhtin, 1981). In the Beto case, the deictic pointing combined with the sign reference offered a different perspective to the content presented in the teacher's initial deictic gesture, "She's over there." The repetition and reiteration of the gesture Beto used cannot be simply categorized as reinforcements to the vocal track in language learning (Gee 1996, Fairclough 2001, Block 2007), but rather as a temporal manipulation and reconfiguration. In a discussion of home signing practices[17] Pfau (2011) notes "Pointing is a multifarious task, the complexity which is easily overlooked" "[18] (p. 159)

In this temporal manipulation, Beto temporally realigned the interaction, forcing time to stand still and he effectively shifts the interactional dynamic to center on his contestation. While we could claim that the vocal track could similarly do so, the multiple modal layers on which Beto and co-participants were performing opened up more spaces for contesting and creating difference and meaning, thus, "emerges as the result of creating semiotic simultaneity" (Blommaert, 2005, p. 126). In addition, Beto initiated a spatial manipulation by moving himself to the center circle in the visual communication paths of teachers and students. The body, and the body's position among other bodies, matters in the meaning making process. Merleau Ponty (1964) claims that "Our body is not in space like things; it inhabits or haunts space" meaning that humans understand their external space through their own "corporeal or postural schema" or "bodily situations" (p. 5). Beto's reconfiguration of his body in space shifted the interactional dynamic to feed his communicative intent.

In the clip of Beto, the teacher was not guiding his responses but rather it is Beto who shifted and lead the discussion, challenging the statement of the teacher. Knowledge, in this sense, was co-produced through a dialectic process. Learning was dependent on a "co-embodiedness" beyond the confines of a linear approach to language learning. By co-embodiedness I mean a mutual reading of their other through sensorial and bodily shared

[17] Home signs are system of gestures that deaf people use to communicate with the hearing people in their family or immediate, close community (Senghas & Coppola 2001; Goldin-Meadow & Butcher 2003).

[18] Head teacher Julie noted once that Beto might use home signs with his family. Pfau (2001) elaborates on pointing and home signers, "Home signers employ pointing in their self-styled gestural communication systems" similar to how the vocal track may be accompanied by manual and non-manual gestures. "These gestural points may be integrated into a developing language system; that is, a gesture may be transform it self into a linguistic element" (p.159).

experiences that, in turn, produces meaning. Language, in this example, involved the spatial body orientation, the deictic pointing, the eye gaze and the few words and signs interspersed. The bodily engagement of others in the class was also important. Fellow students' eye gazes and bodily positioning shift along with the teacher and Beto as they too gain knowledge from the interaction, and, in their attentive bystander roles, gave validity to Beto's assertion. Hanks (1996) explains that "What makes meaning possible is the anchoring of utterance forms *both* in language form and in the phenomenal field. It is the *relation between these two* that is the starting point from which literal meaning arises" (p. 142). We cannot separate the utterance from the context and the users that produce, read and anticipate it, in an embodied way.

Similarly, in the cake smelling episode, the participant overlaps involving the multiple and simultaneous use of modal tracks, could be understood as temporal manipulations that allow for the simultaneous production of Irene's contestation and the teacher's rejection. The overall way the teachers and students coordinated this particular social interaction was based on a time dimension of past and future. Memory and anticipation were linked in a learning strategy employed by the teacher assisting students in expressing new vocabulary. The sensory sequences, the linking of temperature and pain, introduced by Beto, were based on the temporal process of cause and effect. It is through this temporal process paired with sensorial stages in which Beto connected sign and meaning. Teachers activated and reactivated the sensorial memories of students while the students, through the sensorial associations (touching the plate, smelling etc.), bring past sensorial connections that teachers learn from and build on in a dialectic learning process.

The learning that takes places in the interactions discussed in this chapter involves "unpredictabilites" (Kramsch, 2002) funneled by teacher-student co-productions that undermine how language learning is typical understood. A Vygotskyian (1978) learning framework puts forth that there is a "zone of proximal development" that depends on the guidance of an expert, or teacher, to engage in learning that helps a child move between actual and potential development. He states, "The zone of proximal development is the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). In the interactions highlighted in this chapter learning is taking place through a co-grappling, on both the part of the teacher and student, of understanding of the said and unsaid. Teachers are gaining knowledge from the child's body, signs and words and building a response in relation to the knowledge they have acquired. The embodied co-production examples show that learning cannot be linearly understood or quantified neatly- it is taking place on both the teacher and student sides.

In the case of the co-produced embodied gestures during the circle times, teachers used the body of the child and their own to coproduce an utterance that gives meaning. The input in this case was not one way- the teacher giving a prompt or cue to produce an utterance, but, rather, there is was co-embodied dialectic production in which teachers and students "feel" or "sense" each other to come to an understanding. In the writing on the body of the other the utterance is co-embodied or as Goodwin claims "individual utterances are intrinsically multipartied… built through coordinated social action" (p. 118). The anticipation and production of the response in any interaction is depended on the sensing of the other yet so often we limit a discourse analysis to a speaker-hearer model with little attention to the "multipartiedness" aspect of the "individual" utterance (Bakhtin, 1981). In the following chapter, I extend an analysis of the multipartied, co-embodied utterance to one focal event interaction to better understand how students and teachers draw on semiotic resources to position and be positioned.

# CHAPTER 5
# SOCIAL POSITIONING VIS-´A-VIS MODALITY

**Introduction: "I can't hear you! You need to sign!"**

On one occasion, a hearing visitor came to the classroom to make an educational assessment of student. When the adult began to make small chat in English with the child who wore CIs and had solid English communication skills, the 5-year-old looked directly at the visitor and responded in perfect spoken English, "I can't hear you! You need to sign." It was clear that the student did "hear" with his CIs (hence the eye contact and the immediate response) and probably understood the "hi, how are you?" small chat question. However, the student made a choice align himself with deafness to avoid the conversation or interaction with the non-signing visitor. He positioned the non-signer as an outsider and offered only signs as a possible communication avenue at that particular moment. It is likely that the student did not want to be observed, yet again, by another specialist. He'd rather, like most kids, enjoy his playtime with his friends. He made a clever use of semiotic resources to position himself *and* impose a positionality on the adult visitor.

## Research Questions

Throughout my data, I find multiple cases where students make semiotic choices based on how they want to socially position themselves at the given moment and time. Despite the strong "English" ideology that plays into the educational practices of Deaf children[19] both students and teachers consistently relied on spatial, sensory and sign modes to communicate and sometimes subvert the dominant ideologies framed by the idealized native speaker, the English speaking/hearing individual. The central research question that guides this chapter is: What does examining co-embodied dimensions tell us about how participants position themselves in interaction? For example, why does one student choose sign or speech at a particular turn of talk? Or, why might a student insist on one modality over another at turns at talk? When do students resist or claim identification with other students or teachers through their semiotic choices? Answering such questions about participants' positionalities requires us to examine the role of modeswitches and bimodal expressions in relation to a given context. In this chapter, I provide a detailed multimodal analysis of an interaction between a hearing and deaf student at a focal event, snack time. Understanding the interaction through various co-embodied dimensions that also include the teachers' peripheral participation, I examine the students' uses of various semiotic and spatial resources.

In this section, I focus on a student-driven interaction that illustrates how an awareness of the constructs of hearingness and deafness that permeated everyday interactions guided students' semiotic choices. Students made use of their semiotic resources and modeswitches not solely for communicate purposes, but, rather, to make statements about how they see themselves and others. I chose an interaction between a deaf and a hearing child because it is important to emphasize the deaf *and* hearing students' use of all resources, no matter the range of their signing or speech abilities, to assert meaning outside the context of the conversational exchange. Despite the role of the hearing student as the "hearing role model,"(i.e. "Native Speaker of spoken English) supposedly providing idealized language for their deaf peer counterparts, what, in fact, often happened in the classroom was a vying of modal resources to position oneself and others. While these preschool students may have had an understanding of the differences

[19] The educational practices of the deaf in the United States are discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

between physically hearing and not hearing or signing and speaking, they also displayed a complex understanding of the ideological constructs of hearingness and deafness that are often in tension with each other.

**Overview of main participants: Irene and Andrew**

Irene spent half her day in the preschool classroom for the deaf and hard of hearing students and the other half in the classroom for hearing students. Her roles in each classroom were different. In the deaf classroom, she often took the lead in activities and group communication while acting like a big sister to the other deaf students in the classroom. After many years adjusting to her CIs, she "dropped" her signs and relied heavily on speech for communication. She would sign when prompted by teachers or when communicating with deaf students who mostly used signs. After an early struggle getting used to her CIs she, at the time of the study, took a positive view on CI use and encouraged other students to put them back on when they took them off or resist them. Despite not necessarily using signs, she still played the role of 'expert signer. Across my data, I found multiple instances of Irene "correcting" the signs of her peers, especially her hearing peers. In the preschool classroom for the hearing students across the courtyard, where she spent half her time, Irene's speech skills were below the level of her hearing peers of the same age. Irene expressed struggle in comprehending the speech of her hearing peers, following teacher instructor and expressing herself to her hearing classmates. On a few occasions, when she had become frustrated with verbal communication, she asked to come back to the deaf classroom, expressing a sense of relief after she arrives. "I can't understand what the teacher is saying…there's too much talking" she explained once. Despite some struggles getting used to the hearing classroom and her role as the only deaf student in the class, she was generally very outgoing and good at making friends. From my observations during the integrated playtime, she'd bounce around happily with students from both classrooms.

Andrew, a seven-year-old visiting role model and son of the head teacher, appeared sporadically throughout the data collected. As the son of the head teacher, Julie, he attended the deaf classroom full-time for the course of an entire year when he was younger. His mother, teacher Julie, used both signs and speech with him during his first few years as a child. On occasions when he did not have school, teacher Julie would bring him to her classroom at the school. On such days, he would participate fully in the classroom activities. As an energetic and mischievous seven-year-old, he was the oldest in the group and liked to set examples and be in charge of activities.

**Data Analysis: Playing with the semiotic**

The following interaction between Irene and Andrew took place at snack time. Students and four teachers (head teacher and three teacher's aides, including me) sat around a table eating cupcakes and cream cheese. Irene attempted to get the attention of Andrew using her voice and pointing toward him. Andrew responded by ignoring her comment and turning his back toward her. Teacher Julie and I intervened by suggesting communicative approaches. Andrew and Irene vie for semiotic resources as they playfully cross the lines of hearingness and deafness. Each strategically used resources to position themselves via each other, their peers and teachers and also as insiders or outsiders to being "deaf" or "hearing". Teachers, monitoring the conversation, used students' bodily resources (in this case signs, speech, stares and body posture) to co-facilitate the exchange.

The conversation needs to be situated in both the activities that day and in the roles each student played in the classroom. On three separate instances on this day (in the morning circle time, snack time and closing circle time) I recorded Irene trying to reach out to Andrew to communicate. In every case, Andrew gives Irene a bit of a cold shoulder in his response or non-response. In these interactions, I suggest Irene was positioning herself as his equal peer in trying to get close to and communicate with Andrew, the visiting hearing student to the classroom. She wants to sit next to him and talk endlessly as the most advanced speaker of the classroom for the deaf students. Andrew, on the other hand, asserted himself as the older and more mature student, not interested in Irene's interest in him. Both students are quite aware how the other is attempting to position themselves and each decidedly used signs and bodily communication in strategic manners. While Irene tried desperately to communicate using speech, Andrew playfully chose to play "deaf" not responding and using sign when communicating with teacher Julie.

The following interaction is preceded with a number of attempts from Irene to get Andrew's attention by calling out Andrew's name, "Hey Andrew!" while pointing at him. Other students and teachers looked on while eating their cupcakes. Irene continued to try to get Andrew's attention by alerting him to the fact that he has cream cheese on his face. Teacher Julie helped Irene express the statement by giving her vocabulary to fill in for her initial "it" (face) and "that thing" (cream cheese). After understanding the tension that is building between Andrew and Irene, teacher Julie and Jennifer suggested Andrew is being playful not mad and encouraged Irene to use playful tactics to respond to Andrew's non -response.

Transcript 5.1 Social positioning via playful use of semiotic resources (1:29) Figures 5.1-5.15

| **Addresser/ Adressee** | **Speech/SIGN** | **Accompanying embodied utterances of addresser and addressee** |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Teacher Julie: | V: A what on it? | Teacher Julie responds to Irene's comment that something is on Andrew's face. Andrew's back is turned toward Irene across the table. Jennifer is sitting next to Irene following her attempts to get Andrew's attention. |
| 2 Student Irene: | V: He's got that thing on it. | Irene pointing toward Andrew. (figure 5.1) Teacher Julie shifts gaze to Andrew's face. |
| 3 Teacher Julie: | V: On his face?<br>S: FACE | Teacher Julie looks at Andrew's face., signs "face" (figure 5.2) |
| 4 Student Irene: | V: Uh | Gestures with affirmative head nod. |
| 5 Teacher Julie: | V: Some (.2) Cream cheese?<br>S: CREAM CHEESE | Andrew looks toward teacher Julie as she signs cream cheese. (Figure 5.3) |
| 6 Student Irene: | V: Some cream cheese on yourself.<br>S: CREAM CHEESE | Irene loosely signs cream cheese with one hand while holding the cup cake in the other. (Figure 5.4) Ends sign with a point toward him. Andrew turns to face Irene during her sign "Cream cheese". (Figure 5.5) |
| 7 Student Irene: | V: That's not very nice she's saying. | Andrew smirks at Irene and turns his back toward her again. Irene |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | comments and looks down. (Figure 5.6) |
| 8 Teacher Julie: | V: Can you sit around please? (.5)<br>S: SIT AROUND<br>V: And join the group?<br>S: [JOIN GROUP] | Andrew turns back around after request. (Figure 5.7) |
| 9 Student Irene: | V: [You don't] say that when your sad. | With "sad" raises her two hands up and down. (Figure 5.8) |
| 10 Teacher Julie: | V: What do you want him to say?<br>S: WHAT WANT SAY<br>V: What should he say?<br>S: WHAT SHOULD SAY | Teacher Julie looks toward Irene. Andrew's back is toward Irene. |
| 11 Student Irene: | V: He shouldn't be mad at me. | Lowers voice and looks slightly down. |
| 12 Teacher Julie: | V: I don't think he's mad.<br>S: DON"T THINK MAD<br>V: I think he's teasing<br>S: TEASING | Teacher Julie signs " don't think mad". (Figure 5.9) while looking at Irene. |
| 13 Student Irene: | V: Mmm-nnnnn‾ | Irene groans looking down at her cupcake she is eating. Facial expression become tense, eyebrows furl. |
| 14 Jennifer: | V: He's being funny<br>S: FUNNY | Irene looks to Jennifer. Andrew turns around. (Figure 5.10) |
| 15 Student Andrew: | | After Jennifer's comment Andrew puts fist on his hips, arms bent. Stares at Irene. |
| 16 Student Irene: | V: You're being funny! | Andrew shifts hips continues to look at Irene. Then looks away, turns back again. Irene looks to Jennifer. |
| 17 Jennifer: | V: It's okay.<br>S: MAKE A FACE? | |
| 18 Student Irene: | V: yeah! | In low voice, puts cupcake down. |
| 19 Student Irene: | V: Andrew! | Andrew looks back around. |
| | | Both Irene and Andrew stare at each other moving their heads closer and closer together across the table. (Figure 5.11) Teacher observers laugh quietly while looking on. |
| 20 Teacher Julie: | V: Good idea Jennifer.<br>S: GOOD IDEA JENNIFER | Teacher Julie looks toward Jennifer. Other students draw their gazes toward the "staring match". (Figure 5.12) |
| 21 Student Irene: | V: Gra:::! | Irene and Andrew continue to rub foreheads and Izzy screams. She holds scream for 4 seconds. |
| 22 Jennifer: | V: That was loud Irene!<br>S: LOUD IRENE | Jennifer turns away from Irene. Other students are closely looking on. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 23 Teacher Julie: | ok, not at the table… Sh::: | Andrew continues to stare while Irene backs off |
| 24 | | Student Irene outstretches arm and gently puts fist on Andrew's forehead (Figure 5.13) |
| 25 Jennifer: | S: CAREFUL | Irene looks toward Jennifer |
| 26 Teacher Julie: | V: hey hey hey hey so you guys are getting to:::o physical<br>S: PHYSCIAL | Breaks apart Andrew and Irene by leaning up off of her chair and placing hand in between them (figure 5.14) |
| 27 Teacher Julie:<br><br>28 Student Andrew:<br><br>29 Student Irene: | [Please don't do that]<br><br>S: [CUPCAKE FINISH]<br><br>S: [I put my face right there] | Stares sternly and directly at Andrew while doing "no" head shake<br>Andrew signs then stands up to go (Figure 5.15)<br>Irene jokes and laughs about putting face forward |



Figure 5.1

In Figure 5.1, Irene tries to draw Andrew's attention to a spot of cream cheese on his face. Irene, while pointing to the "spot" states, "He's got that thing on it!" Andrew pretends he doesn't hear and turns his back on Irene.



Figure 5.2

In figure 5.2, Teacher Julie helps clarify Irene's statement, "You mean on his face?" In this frame, teacher Julie is signing "face" while Irene looks on.



Teacher Julie continues to further clarify Irene's statement offering the bimodal utterance (sign and speech), "Some cream cheese?" Teacher Julie signs "cheese" in this clip.

**Figure 5.3**



In figure 5.4, With the vocabulary cued by the teacher, Irene continues, "some cream cheese on yourself" while holding her hand out, extended, doing the rough sign of "cheese" with one hand while holding a cupcake in the other. Andrew begins to turn toward Irene.

**Figure 5.4**



In figure 5.5, Andrew turns around and makes eye contact with Irene. Irene continues to point towards Andrew.

**Figure 5.5**



Figure 5.6

In figure 5.6, Andrew turns his back on Irene again. In response Irene calls out frustrated, “That’s not very nice she’s saying.”



Figure 5.7

In figure 5.7, Teacher Julie asks Andrew to turn around. In this frame, Julie is signing “around” with one hand and cupcake in the other.



Figure 5.8

Irene exclaims in frustration, “You don’t say that when you are sad” while bring her hands up and down rapidly. Andrew turns around again.



Figure 5.9

Catching the attention of both students, teacher Julie responds to Irene's statement, "He's just teasing. He's not mad." In this frame, teacher Julie signs, "mad."



Figure 5.10

In figure 5.10, Jennifer supports teacher Julie's notion that "he's just teasing" by reiterating to Irene "He's just being funny." In this frame, Jennifer begins the sentence with speech and uses only sign for the last work, "funny." In this frame, Jennifer finishes the sentence without voice, signing "funny" (two fingers stroking nose). At the end of Jennifer's sign, Andrew begins to turn around.



Figure 5.11

After Irene claims, "You're just being funny!" to Andrew, Andrew responds with a staring face to match her funny face.



Figure 5.12

In figure 5.12, Irene and Andrew continue their stare off. Teachers and students begin to pay more attention to Andrew and Irene as they spread to the middle of the table.



Figure 5.13

Irene gives Andrew playful touch with her fist to his forehead.



Figure 5.14

In figure 5.14, Andrew responds to Irene's playful "soft punch" with a similar one.



In figure 5.15, Irene looks toward Jennifer with laughter after the interaction closes. Andrew remains silent and turns to teacher Julie signing (with out speech) in ASL-driven grammar "Cupcake finish" and excuses himself from the table. At the same time, teacher Julie scolds him for getting too physical.

**Figure 5.15**

In this one and one-half minutes clip, I chose to narrow the lens on one interaction that involves Irene's pleading for attention from Andrew. There are tangential interactions that took place at the snack table related to the eating of the cupcakes ( i.e. taking the paper off, not spilling something, helping a student spread the cream cheese atop the cupcake) that I chose to leave out due to the already complex interaction between Irene and Andrew at hand. However, Irene and Andrew were sharing an interactional moment at the height of snack time with the gaze of other students and teachers certainly propelling their positioning.

As stated previously, this interaction exemplifies a repeated positioning on the part of Irene and Andrew. Irene attempted to use only speech to identify and align with Andrew, the older, hearing visiting student, while Andrew remained silent and ignores the alignment seeing himself perhaps as more mature than the other students in the classroom. At six-years-old, both students demonstrated a complex command of using a variety of bodily ways to communicate with the other. Close attention to posture, gaze, facial expressions, body positioning and silence offered a fuller way to understand the reaction. The two students were aware of the ideological constructs of hearingness and deafness that infiltrate the classroom discourse as they make strategic and contradictory choices of the semiotic resources they were offered to move in between the constructs. The physicality of play co-facilitated by the teachers and students becomes a bridge of sorts that brought the two students to equal footing despite how they have attempted to position themselves.

As stated earlier, Irene made repeated direct requests for Andrew's attention prior to the start of the clip. "Hey! Andrew!" she exclaimed over and over from across the table in the preceding five minutes to this selected interaction. It was Andrew's birthday so he sat at the top of the table next to the teacher delivering the cupcakes. Irene changed her attention-grabbing tactic to something more practical as she to tried to alert him to a spot of cream cheese on his face. At this point, he has turned his back completely on Irene, which in a classroom of deaf students is a very direct (and intentional) way, discouraged by teachers, to cut off communication due to the visual dependence of all the students. Irene had trouble articulating the vocabulary she needs to tell Andrew about the cream cheese spot on his face so teacher Julie assisted in giving her the words through giving her the signs, a common strategy for building English vocabulary in Total Communication classroom that uses bimodality to produce verbal utterances. Irene stated, "He's got that thing on it" (see figure 5.1) as she points to Andrew's turned face. Teacher Julie recognized "that thing" to be the cream cheese and "it" to be Andrew's "face." After signing "face" and "cream cheese" (see figure 5.2) back to Irene, Irene was able to rearticulate

her statement to Andrew, "Some cream cheese on yourself" (see figure 5.4) as she loosely signs cream cheese with one hand (the other hand has the cupcake) and pointed to his face again. Andrew continued to keep his back to her, driving Irene into much frustration. "That's not very nice she's saying" (line 7). The "she" in this case is teacher Julie. Irene's statement forced Teacher Julie to do something about the situation by "speaking for her." Teacher Julie never actually stated "That's not very nice," rather Irene imposed the position of discipliner onto teacher Julie through her statement. Teacher Julie responded by forcing Andrew to , and "Join the group" (line 8, figure 5.7). When Andrew turned his back again Irene gets visibly frustrated and throws her arms up and down, "You don't say that when your are sad!" In this expression, I assume she meant, "You don't do that when you are sad, rather you do that when you are mad at someone" because Irene's next expression was 'He shouldn't be mad at me" as she looks down sadly toward her plate (see figure 5.8).

Teacher Julie attempted to turn around the interaction by explaining that Andrew was not mad, he was, rather, just teasing.(see figure 5.9) I followed teacher Julie's lead to interpret Andrew's actions as humorous in explaining to Irene, "He's just being funny"(line 14, see figure 5.10) and signing (without speech) "Why don't you make a face?" In making the modal choice to not using speech, I realized that I was playing Andrew's silent game. If I had spoken Andrew could have understood and thus not given Irene credit for initiating her humorous tactic to get his attention. In being silent and using only signs, I assisted in keeping Irene's humorous tactic "undercover" from Andrew. She agreed to change her tone to a humorous one and begins to start a stare down with Andrew as they face each other forehead to forehead across the table. (see figures 5.12-5.14) Their furled eyebrows and scrunched faces with hands on hips as they mimic each other has become a tactic to which they come "eye to eye" literally and metaphorically. With the "stare down" humor they were "on the same level" or playing the same game and no longer does identifying with being hearing or a good speaker matter anymore. Teachers understanding the bodily ways the students, try to express themselves often let physical communication such as this run out a bit before they intervene. When it appears to get too physical with the fists to foreheads, teacher Julie then intervenes and pulls Andrew back. Andrew, who still has not spoken any words in the entire one and a half minutes exchange finally produces an utterance. He signed to his mom, "5" (line 28, see figure 5.15) with no speech. Ironically, in any other reaction he exclusively used speech with his mother. Simultaneous with Andrew's signs teacher Julie, shifting roles from teacher to mother, modeswitched from sign to speech, stating verbally, "Please don't do that". In using only voice she used this modeswitch to shift from facilitator teacher to discipliner mother. Andrew on the other hand, chose to continued "playing deaf," using silence and a few signs to purposefully alienate himself from his own hearingness thus making it more frustrating for Irene to identity with him. In using signs and playing deaf, Andrew made a contradictory choice of semiotic resources to reinforce his hearingness and leave little room for Irene or his mom to "talk" to him.

## Discussion of Findings

The interaction between Irene and Andrew illustrates the complex ability of participants to draw upon a variety of semiotic resources. Playing with the contradiction spatially, gesturally and bodily, both Irene and Andrew display "symbolic competence" (Kramsch and Whiteside, 2008), "the ability to actively manipulate and shape one's environment on multiple scales of time and space" (p. 667). Andrew and Irene used spatial concepts-posture, facial expression, bodily orientation to reposition themselves and attempted to gain the upper symbolic edge. The CI

devices Irene used are intended to help her hear, yet "hearing" isn't symbolically useful for Irene in this instance. In the series of events that take place that day Irene latched onto Andrew, the hearing role model, as a projection of how she views and anticipates her future self, a leader and a strong verbal communicator. Temporally Irene, Andrew, teacher Julie and I moved across the constructs hearingness and deafness in strategic ways that blend and blur the constructs driving home the importance of contextually situating one's identity positionings.

Research on code switching and identity has often been framed in terms language learners with typical *spoken* language development. Most of the deaf students at the ECEIC held various ranges of verbal and signed production and have experienced severe to moderate language delays, yet this does not exclude them from making strategic language choices. Unique to this interaction is the analysis of mode switching among participants in different stages of language acquisition and the selective and complex use of semiotic resources to navigate positionality. While deafness and hearingness are constructs that are pinned as ideologically at odds with each other, the students and teachers' uses of different linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1982), or semiotic choices, demonstrate the fluidity in the constructs supporting that they are contextually driven in and through discourse itself. Andrew's ability to "play deaf" only strengthened his position as hearing and forces Irene, the deaf student, to draw on non-auditory resources to communicate. Ultimately, it is through a bodily gesture of humor (the funny faces and stances) that Irene finally took the attention of her hearing peer. Yet, seconds later he reclaimed his hearing footing (Goffman, 1981) by ironically displaying only signs to his mother, in a very ASL driven grammar, to further avoid providing any speech. There is a slight sense of this semiotic usage by Andrew as a strategy of condescension (Bourdieu, 1982). By negating a power differential in using the language of the Deaf he was reinforcing his status as more privileged "hearing kid" in the classroom. Meanwhile, in turning to Jennifer in the last video frame in a joking manner, Irene displayed satisfaction in that she found a non-linguistic way to get his attention outside of all the speech tactics she had used up to that point. Both students end the conversation thinking they have "won" in the playful semiotic positioning battle.

# CHAPTER 6
# THE CO-CONSTRUCTION OF HEARING MOTHER IDENTITY: THE SHARED INTERVIEWER-INTERVIEWEE IN-BETWEEN SPACE

## Introduction: "Becoming a hearing mother"

Using videotaped interviews, I draw on the narratives of the hearing mothers of the deaf children at my research site to explore how mothers understand a sense of self and construct positionalities in between hearingness and deafness. While mainstream social discourse views the process of "becoming a mother" or "becoming a parent" as a social norm, mothers at my site often commented that they, rather, view themselves as in a process of recognizing, exploring and struggling with "becoming a *hearing* mother of a *deaf* child." Their embodied narratives demonstrate that an aspect of their sensory world, the ability to hear, became explicit and interrogated in the process of experiencing the silent and visual world with their child. Mothers described this process as entering new social, sensorial and communicative dimensions that, often times, they would have, to quote one mother, "never imagined existed." This chapter aims to explore the experiences of hearing mothers who are situated in a unique in-between space, between modalities, languages and ideologies. In their narratives, we find contradiction. On one hand, we see the ideological pull of English and hearingness[20] that underpins the language-learning practices of their children, and, on the other, we see the mothers struggle to hold on to the visual and sensory connections they have developed with their child.

## Research Questions

Drawing on videotaped interviews conducted with six hearing mothers of deaf students in the preschool classroom, I take a critical discourse analytic approach in analyzing the data to address the following research questions: How are mothers' identities shaped through language and how do parents carve their own sense of self through these new language practices? And, more generally, working from the premise of language as embodied, what insight on human communication do we gain from a modal analysis?

In the process of coding and reviewing the data, there were two aspects of the interview data that repeatedly caught my attention: 1) participants use of mode blending and 2) participants use of mode switching. As discussed in Chapter 3, *Mode-switching* extends the concept of code switching, moving between two languages, dialects or registers, to include interactional shifts between *embodied modes*: sign, speech, gesture or a spatial/sensory aspect. As explained, I use the term *mode-blending* to encompass the blending (simultaneous use) of two different modalities: sign, speech, gesture or spatial/sensory mode (for example: touch, vibration, silence). Mode blending is more encompassing of various modes, in particular the sensory dimension, than the code-blends, the simultaneous use of ASL and speech, (Petitto et. al, 2001) or a co-speech gesture, the simultaneous use of gesture and speech (McNeil, 1992).

Despite the fact that I facilitated the interview in English as a *hearing and speaking* interviewer, participants chose to use multiple modes. This led me to ask the question: What

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[20] I choose not to capitalize "hearingness" or the hearing world because it already possesses recognition through its privileged and unchallenged position as "normal". The capitalization of "D" in "Deafness" delineates cultural Deafness from little "d" used for "deaf" in a medical model of deafness.

affordances do multiple modes offer participants in their narratives? Through a modal analysis of the utterance in the interview context, I attempt to gain insight into this heteroglossic space. What could the mode blended utterance tell us about this "in between" space? Does an analysis of "doing in discourse," that is positioning oneself through two modalities, offer temporal or spatial insights?

The "in between-ness" mothers experience can be understood as social heteroglossia, the internal stratification or the multiplicity of discourses or individual voices present in any language at a given moment in any given culture (Bakhtin, 1981). From a Bakhtinian view on language, to grasp the meaning behind an utterance it is necessary to consider the range of voices, our past, imagined and anticipated ones, which intersect at the moment of utterance and in all their accompanying social, political, psychological, linguistic and moral dimensions. My research questions aim to understand this heteroglossic embodied space and the relationship to identity processes in the interview process. I agree with Baynham's (2014) assertion that the narrative space is a "privileged site for identity work" (p. 67) to understand the dynamic relationship between the identity "brought along" or " the accumulation and sedimentation of identity positions in habitus" (p. 73), and the identity "brought about" in interaction.

I adopt a post-structural framework which views identity as fluid yet fragmented, shifting alongside changes in context, activity and time, and constructed through the negotiation between the voices or stances we take on, or perform, in spoken written or visual dialogue with others. Hall (1996) further explains this negotiation as constantly articulating and rearticulating meaning to deal with the contradictions in cultural and social practices and the power relations that are shaped within them. In these delicate yet stimulating spaces of in-betweeness, mothers navigated the use of semiotic resources much in the same way as their children do. I find that, drawing on speech, sign, and bodily positioning, mothers positioned themselves spatially and temporally in a fluctuating manner despite the constructs of hearingness and Deafness that are perpetuated as having a dichotomous relationship by the dominant educational and social discourses. I also find that, as the interviewer, I played a role in co-constructing mother positionality, through my own understanding of my past, present and future self and through my participants' understanding of their interviewer's positionality as a hearing daughter of deaf parents.

**Chapter Overview**

The organization of the rest of the chapter is as follows. First, I introduce the mothers of students in the Eagle Crest Early Intervention Center classroom. Second, I provide short excerpts from the data that offer diverse context to understand the in-between spaces the mothers experience. Then, I select two interview interactions with two participants (Gloria and Terry) among the six mothers interviewed, for a more in-depth analysis of the multimodal interactions representative across the data. Because these two interviewees drew heavily on a narrative genre alongside extensive use of mode-blends and mode-switches, they were ideal for detailed analysis. I present multimodal transcriptions of highlighted segments of videotaped interviews and provide a critical discourse multimodal analysis of the transcribed interview data. Lastly, I conclude with a discussion, integrating the findings from the analyses and situating the findings in the larger educational and sociocultural context.

**Overview of Participants**

I established relationships with participants over my years (2008-2012) as a volunteer at the Eagle Crest Early Intervention Center (ECEIC). I knew all six mothers for at least a year, and, sometimes, two years before conducting the interviews. During the classroom data collection period in the academic year 2011-2012, I asked four of the six mothers who attended the parent sign class (and had a child in the preschool cohort observed for this project) if they would agree to being interviewed. All four mothers accepted my invitation to an informal interview to discuss home language practices and the educational experiences with their deaf child. The other two mothers (Susan and Terry) each had a child in previous cohorts at ECEIC. One mother, Susan, had a son in the 2010-11 cohort and maintained relations with the school through the next year occasionally visiting the school with her son allowing me the opportunity to talk with her. Mother Terry, a teacher's aide at the school, also had a son in the previous cohort. I rarely had a chance to interact with fathers due to their infrequent participation in school activities, and, thus, no interviews were conducted with fathers.

My everyday interactions with the mothers interviewed took place during school events and class time, before and after school during drop off and pick up times and during the parent sign language class. The parent sign language class was held weekly by ECEIC to assist mothers in bridging home and school language practices. The parent sign language program encouraged the use of Signing-Exact-English (SEE sign), and not ASL, to communicate with their child. The SEE sign system draws on borrowed and modified signs from ASL as well as invented signs that correspond to spoken English grammar.[21]

The mothers I interviewed played a very active role in their child's education, often volunteering to participate in school events and spending time in the class during regular class hours. Four of the six mothers attended the weekly "parent sign language" class, a class that aimed to help mothers acquire SEE-sign or the ability to use English[22] and signs simultaneously. Terry, a teacher's aide in the preschool classroom and mother of a deaf child who attended the Center School in the year prior to my data collection when I was strictly a volunteer in the preschool classroom, did not attend the parent sign class. Terry began her position as a teacher's aide after her son graduated. Another mother, Susan, did not attend the parent sign classes in the data collection period. However, she was formerly the teacher of the parent sign class. During the time she taught the parent sign class, she allowed me to participate in learning SEE-sign.

Meeting weekly with most of the interviewed mothers made it easier for me to develop relationships with them over parents who infrequently attended school functions. Throughout my time at the school, the mothers took an interest in my experience growing up with deaf parents. The participants were, from my perspective, well informed about my research through informal conversations in the classroom context. The mothers interviewed willingly took part in helping me understand a language interaction that took place at home or in the classroom, especially when the interaction involved their child.

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[21]SEE-sign is a sign system and not a language, drawing on ASL signs and invented signs. SEE-sign corresponds to a simultaneous production of spoken English. SEE-sign is "culturally" aligned with English. See Chapter 3, the Methods Chapter, for an example of SEE-sign, a discussion of the problematic linguistic aspects of the SEE-sign approach and ideological implications of such an approach.

[22] Theoretically, in SEE-sign, one uses signs that correspond to verbal English counterparts. In reality, at least half of the participants are from non-English speaking homes; thus, participants use SEE-sign with a mixture of their home languages and English.

The preschool children at the Center School had diverse home language experiences. Four out of six of the hearing mothers I interviewed were from households in which multiple languages were spoken. All mothers used varying degrees of sign, mostly Signing Exact English (SEE-sign) and some ASL at home. Two parents expressed the desire "hold onto ASL" despite the SEE-sign focus at this school. One mother noted she wants to continue "*using* ASL because ASL is a real language" and rather "*do* SEE-because it ties in with English." In her use of "doing SEE-sign," the mother encapsulated the functional aspect of the sign system because it, ultimately, leads to English acquisition. In the two Spanish-speaking households, Spanish and SEE-sign were often used together in bimodal production, which, one could say, undermined the entire goal of SEE sign, to verbally and manually produce English.[23]

In informal settings, mothers and I exchanged stories or information about their child. At the end of the day, I informed mothers what verbal approximation, new word, question or story that their child expressed that day or how they felt, ate, played or interacted with other students and myself. When dropping off their child in the mornings, mothers told me about what they did over the weekend and often noted unique language interactions with their deaf child. As an aide and friend, I became involved in activities outside of the classroom. I dressed up for their Halloween parties and attended their graduations and birthday parties. Mothers, teachers and I found a common ground of understanding as we shared in a child's unique process of growth. I am grateful for the depth of trust and kindness we experienced together and recognize this afforded me a deeper understanding when exploring their children's language experiences in my research. In the process of this study, I have also played the role of student. With all that I have learned from the mothers and children at my site, I hope that the readers of my dissertation will also experience a new understanding.

**Providing context for the in-between: interview excerpts from the mothers**

I begin by introducing this "in-between" embodied space the mothers described through interview excerpts. Before analyzing two specific interactions in detail, I use the voices of all the mothers to paint a complex picture of ambiguity, contradiction and opportunity in the spaces in-between.

"Wow, we got this…we're learning this new thing this new world- this new whole language…its exciting. And knowing that someone else would learn it along with me…" exclaimed Mother Gloria as she describes the "new world" where she learns a language together with her daughter. Similarly, mother Susan looked back at her experience in a positive light. She reframed what the hearing discourse projects as "loss" to "gain" for her, which provided her a communication avenue to a visual world. She described, "I look at his hearing loss as a blessing…a blessing in disguise. Because if it weren't for his hearing loss I probably would have never learned sign language."

All of the mothers I interviewed put forth an understanding of "Deaf culture" or "Deafness", more generally, as exterior to their experiences- as something not their own and often inaccessible. Mother Terry explained, "I have a lot to learn about the Deaf culture." Similarly, mother Marcia stated, "It's intimidating…you know…going to those Deaf events." The "the" in "the Deaf Culture" and "those" in "those deaf events" index an exteriority or a distance to deafness although their own children are deaf. Despite this constant external indexing mothers expressed, they also claimed new language practices as their own. Mother Terry

[23] The issues associated with coupling spoken Spanish and SEE-sign are discussed in Chapter 3.

reflected on the exciting process of learning a visual language together- in which the child, a 5-year-old, takes the lead. She explained what happens when she and her son do not know a sign, "If he's not sure and I'm not sure, he'll go get the dictionary….and say, 'Let's look it up mommy!'" In this language learning process mother Terry described that there was no conventionally framed "expert-novice" or "mother-child" language-learning relationship, rather, mother and child were learning together.

Mother Marcia is a fluent Tagalog-English bilingual and uses a mixture of SEE-sign, ASL and English in the home. She understood the language approach of the school and the choice of implanting cochlear implants (CIs) on her son as distancing her from the culture of Deafness. In the interview, she described a dichotomous us vs. them view of the two visual approaches, "We're SEE and then [.5] there's ASL". Yet, a few moments later, she positioned her son as having the possibility of experiencing the deafness, just in case, the "means to hear" fails. Big "D" Deaf culture, in her view, is something her son could be a "part of" but, as a hearing mother, she distanced herself from that possibility. She continued:

> I'm just going to keep encouraging the sign because I know that when the device breaks or if he needs another mode and that was always our intent from the beginning because even though he has a means to hear- he is still deaf. I try to encourage him to be part of the deaf culture and, you know, go to those events.

Here again we see the exterior indexing of deafness with "the sign," "the Deaf culture" and "those events." Yet, she stressed the importance of the basic embodied reality her son experiences, "he is still deaf." While Mother Marcia wanted her son to experience both worlds, she elaborated that she could never really understand his physical experience of being deaf, "I didn't live it." She reflected in the interview:

> I understood where they[24] were coming from. Why can't you accept him as he is? And, you know, you are always trying to be accepted in life…and which, you know, I understand that, but, at the same time- I didn't live it. I am in a hearing world and that's what I want for my child. But, I am not taking away the fact that he is deaf. I want him to be able to function in both worlds.

The pressuring undercurrents of the ideological tension between Deafness and hearingness were also ever-present in Susan's narrative as she explained her painful experiences in making language and education choices for her child. Susan viewed ASL and SEE sign as "equally valid" yet she claimed that SEE sign is the best way to access the English language. She stated: "Using signing exact English was sort of nipped that problem in the bud." The "problem" referred to here is access to English; and, she indirectly puts forth that ASL doesn't provide the access avenue to English. Susan described her position on English: "I know the English language very well and I love the English language." She wanted her son, ML, to come to "appreciate the English language" as she did. Yet, she understood that his "hearing loss doesn't go away, it is always with him."

Many of the hearing mothers I interviewed struggled to learn the visual language of their child- a language that feels so "foreign" in a bodily way. The ways of doing, being, feeling and

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[24] The "they" in this passage refers to those who choose not to use hearing devices or get implants

thinking in a new language become a challenge and, like Susan, parents wanted the comfort of their home language to share with their child. Parents found solace in using SEE-sign because it functions (theoretically, at least) to, eventually, facilitate the fluent use of spoken English. Susan used a sequence of repairs that I find heavily immersed in her emotional struggle to understand her child's deafness. Pausing and stuttering were not in response to a linguistic error but rather they seemed to indicate a painful search for the right words to understand ML's development: "He is actually a little bit ad- he's his his scores are pretty ad-(.5) I mean he is pretty ad- I mean he's s::ome- somewhat advanced for his age (.5) in terms of the language." The first position she took was that he was "a little bit ad." In the second, he was "pretty ad", and in third round he was again "pretty ad." Finally, she completed the word on her fourth try: "he's s::ome- somewhat advanced for his age." In only producing the first syllable of "advanced" (i.e. "ad") she left room to rearticulate her thoughts before she committed to a position. The pauses and stutters in her articulation also indexed a deep "unsettled-ness" with the idea of being "on average".

Fernanda, a Mam-speaking Maya immigrant from Guatemala, expressed in Spanish with a Spanish-English interpreter by her side, that she wanted her son Beto to have, "dos culturas…la mia y esta la de Beto" (co-speech gesture or mode blend: points to ear drags index downward, see figure 6.1) ["two cultures…mine and Beto's" *my translation*] By "dos culturas" it may, at first, appear unclear what "two cultures" (American, Deaf, Guatemalan, Maya?) Fernanda was referring to in the statement. With "la mia" [mine] one may assume that she was referring to her Guatemalan roots. But, what did Fernanda mean by Beto's "culture"? From the verbal output alone it is not clear. However, in the blending together the verbal utterance "la de Beto" with the simultaneous pointing to the ear, or, perhaps, the loosely articulated ASL sign for 'deaf," we understand Beto's "culture" was connected to Deafness. If the mode blend was interpreted as a code-blend (ASL and Spanish) we may arrive at the understanding that the "two cultures" are associated with the two languages. With the extra and *different* understanding the mode blend provides (in accompanying sensory experience), I would argue then that the "dos culturas" could possibly be connected to sensory experience, hearingness ("la mia"- the mother's) and Deafness ("de Beto"/ASL sign for "deaf" or pointing gesture to the ear).

The interpreter simultaneous added another layer of co-participation to the mode blending. The interpreter translated "dos culturas" into sign language AND speech as "here" (see figure 6.1, five handshape, both hands palm-facing upward). The "here" is the interpreter's translation of "la de Beto." In Figure 6.1, you see that Margarita's "here" is produced at the same time as Fernanda's pointing gesture toward the ear. Thus, the mode-blend clearly extends across participants. The interpreter, Margarita, an immigrant to the United States from Mexico, indexed through the sign "here" and spoken word "here" a present location and, metaphorically, an "American" here as Beto's "culture." Margarita's immigrant experience intersected with the cultural difference Fernanda discussed despite that Fernanda appeared to be referring to the sensory difference between "dos culturas." Margarita mapped on her experience of "dos culturas" as home country vs. new country onto Fernanda's statement. Looking at this interaction from multiple codes (spoken, signed and translated sign/speech) we may interpret the statement differently. Another question relevant to this interaction is why did two of three hearing participants in this interaction use sign or gesture? In the following sections, I will argue that my positionality as a hearing child of deaf parents influenced the modal choices participants make in interaction. Margarita, who proudly volunteered to interpret, intersperses signs in this interaction to project herself to Fernanda and me as a skilled interpreter of English, Spanish and SEE sign.



Interview with mother Fernanda: In figure 6.1, Fernanda points to ear while Margarita, the Spanish-English interpreter, signs "here."

Figure 6.1

What is important to take away from reviewing these short interview excerpts that is that, while, on one hand, mothers may have described deafness and hearingness as dichotomous, they also held viewpoints that fluctuate on a spectrum between the constructions. Fernanda gives us insight on how the use of multiple simultaneous modes by participants may open up narrative spaces and present new meanings. Through a detailed analysis of the following two interview excerpts, I will further explore these in-between spaces. I argue that the experience of being "in-between", in between modalities, languages and sensory worlds, is reflected *in discourse*, in an *embodied* way.

**Data Analysis**

The following two interactions are presented in transcription form accompanied by video stills. I chose these interactions because they offer insight on how semiotic choices intersect with the identity processes of hearing mothers of deaf children. In applying a multimodal analysis to the data, I understand how modality intersects with participants' positionings in the context of the constructs of hearingness and deafness. "Modes" considered in the analysis include spoken language, signs (both ASL and SEE), gestures, bodily and facial movements. Before conducting the interviews, it was my intent to ask participants to reflect on their use of modality with their deaf child; I provided the context to answer this question in the previous section. However, after I reviewed the interview data it became evident that the mothers' use of modes, in particular, mode-switches and mode-blends, were an important interactional function in identity processes.

Similar to the classroom data, I build on Norris (2004) in an attempt to capture what she describes as the "modal density," or complexity of multiple modes, in interaction. However, the transcription approach in this chapter is modified to lend itself better to the interview genre. While the classroom data in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 require a wider range of attention to the spatial positioning and co-embodied activity of multiple participants in learning spaces, the interview data in this chapter required more attention to the unpacking of more lengthy verbal dialogue mostly between two participants. Turns at talk and overlaps play a different role in a group learning dynamic (the classroom) versus a two-person dynamic. In addition, the nature of the pedagogical approach in the classroom for deaf students, SEE-sign, requires the attention to two modes (verbal and sign) at all times, while, in the interview process of two hearing individuals, the language is primarily spoken English. However, because the interviewees often used bimodal utterances, I did need to transcribe those utterances at multiple modal levels.

The reader should use the transcription in tandem with the annotated video grabs, which visually illuminate important modal occurrences in the interactions. The video grabs annotations

sometimes include my translation glosses of the transcribed sign and speech. Listed below are the transcription conventions I follow. When two participants are communicating at the same time brackets mark the overlap in utterances. The first column marks the speaker. The second column marks the sign or speech content. Sign is marked by the use of capital letters. The third column marks any accompanying gestures or sign. A modification added to the interview transcript is the use of the asterisk for clarity in lengthy turns at talk. An asterisk identifies the co-occurrence of items in the second and third column, in other words, the mode blend.

**GLORIA: "I shut my mouth," embodied ways of creating the past in the present**

Mother Gloria had a strong presence in the classroom and participated in many school activities. Gloria's energy was contagious, and she could be found dancing alongside her 4-year-old daughter and other students after class, or, enjoying storytelling with the class at the end of the day. A fluent English-Spanish bilingual from El Salvador, she used both spoken English alongside signs with her daughter Ale whom she raised with her Salvadorian husband in this large California city. Gloria used English and SEE sign while her husband, Ale's father, used only Spanish and no signs. Mother Gloria noted in the interview that whenever Ale couldn't communicate what she wanted in spoken English or Spanish, she would rely on repeating the sign over and over until her mother or father understood her. However, Gloria pointed out, with her father, Ale got to the point of "screaming in sign at him" on many occasions. Her husband, she explained, is "stubborn" about learning sign. While one cannot "scream" in signs, metaphorically, this might entail more forceful signs or rapidly repeated signs. Through this phrase, Gloria expressed the frustration she fekt Ale experienced because her father did not sign and only used Spanish with her. She often acted as a translator between her husband and Ale when oral communication broke down between them. Based on my observations, the mothers had more opportunities for exploring language learning than the fathers and this transferred into have better language avenues with their deaf children at home. Gloria put forth a great deal of effort, in the sign class and at home, to use two modes of communication (SEE sign and Spanish) and viewed the bimodal production of SEE sign and English as a "bridge" between the "hearing and deaf worlds."

Throughout the interview, Gloria used sign alongside her speech. In such cases, the use of sign is not for reinforcing meaning or filling in a gap that could not be expressed through the spoken mode. Although I, as the interviewer, understand sign, I am hearing and the spoken mode would appear, in this case, to be the go-to language between two hearing individuals such as us. Yet, Gloria, similar to all interview participants, interweaved signs throughout their reflections during the interview. Such patterns guide my interests in exploring how and why Gloria used mode blending.

In the following interview clip, Mother Gloria discussed the calm and peaceful experience upon entering the visual world of her child. In this nearly one-minute interaction Gloria interspersed instances of sign. The use of sign is indicated by capital letters.

Note: All CAPS refer to the use of sign; this includes bimodal utterances (sign/speech) or modeblends or only sign modes (see third column for specific clarification).

Transcript 6.1 "I just shut my mouth" (00:54) figures 6.2-6.6

| Addresser/ Addressee: | Speech/Sign | Accompanied Embodied Utterances, marked by * |
|---|---|---|
| 1Gloria:<br>2<br>3<br>4<br>5<br><br>6<br>7<br><br>8<br><br><br>9<br>10<br>11 JJ:<br><br><br>12 Gloria:<br>13<br>14<br>15<br><br>16<br><br>17<br>18 JJ:<br>19 Gloria:<br>20<br>21 | I shut my mouth and just sign to her* (.5) and if I sign to her once twice the same sentence the same, you know, order or action or whatever I wanted her to do sign it two three times you got it↑* and she<br>said OK* and it feels so:: peaceful and calm and<br><br>LOVING* (1) that she would just sit there<br>in bed (.5)<br><br>and LOOK* at me moving* my hands and she will<br><br><br>respond back OKAY*<br>and she would try to do the okay* sign without without]<br>[without speaking=<br><br><br>=without even speaking (1) and yeah and its great that she gets to that point because then I could be completely in a loud environment and she could be like *YOU KNOW WHAT MOMMY SAY TO<br><br>YOU and she's like* (1.5)<br><br>you know she gets it]<br>[right right wow yeah<br>I know she knows that she might not PRACTICE it and see it every minute she talks but I know she is really capable of it | hand runs alongside mouth eyebrows shift up, gaze left (figure 6.2)<br><br>"OK" signed with head nod (figure 6.3)<br>"loving" signed and spoken (figure 6.4)<br><br>"look" sign and spoken "moving" accompanying by sign for "sign"<br>"OKAY" signed, whispered with nod open-close 5-handshape with "okay"<br><br>(see figures 6.5 and 6.6) gaze forward, eyes wide as signs<br><br>sits back, cross-armed gesture after "like" |



Figure 6.2

Mother Gloria's narrative shift from mother to daughter represented by gaze and posture shift left (line 4-5)



Figure 6.3

Mother Gloria imitates daughter's "Ok" sign. (In this frame she fingerspells “Ok”) She signs without speech. (line 5)



Figure 6.4

Mother Gloria signs/gestures "loving" (“s” handshape at chest) with speech. (line 6)

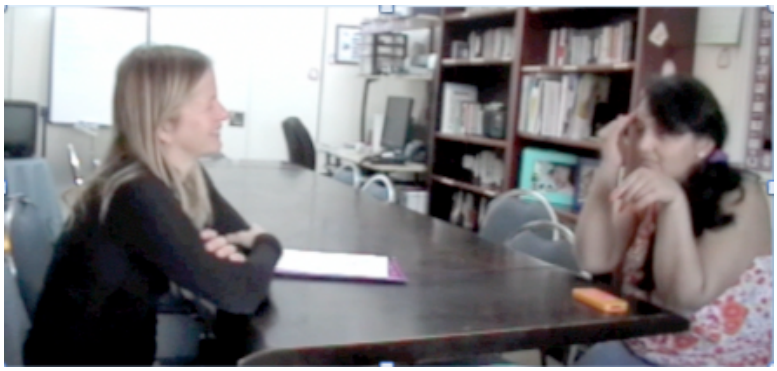


Figure 6.5

Mother Gloria signs "know" (closed “five” handshape, bent at knuckles fingertips tap forehead) without speech. (line 14)



Mother Gloria signs "Mommy" ("five"-handshape, thumb on chin) without speech. (line 15)

**Figure 6.6**

Gloria used mode-switches and mode-blends to bring herself, bodily, into a past experience, to a conversation she had with her deaf daughter, Ale. When she described the "special place" she shared with her when she "shuts her mouth" (line 1), she also physically enacted the silence of her daughter's sensory world. When she mode switched into the past experience she draws on 1st person and uses a combination of only sign production or sign and speech production (ex. "You know what Mommy say to you?" line 15-16, see figure 6.5-6.6). In this space, or "past" time scale, she took on the role of mother and projected the role of "daughter" onto me. Yet, when Gloria moved back out of the past, into the present, she shifted into 3rd person and a verbal mode. (ex. "You know, she gets it" line 17) In this "present" space, I was the interviewer and she was the interviewee.

At different points in the passage, she chose to literally "shut her mouth," using only sign with me, embodying the non-verbal as she described verbally the space of the non-verbal. In other words, in this embodied narrative, she was "doing in discourse" what she describes. The mode-switches to signing only or, metaphorically, to the silent world of her daughter (line 5, 9, 14-15), allowed her to move back in time through the sensory experience she verbally describes as, "shutting her mouth." In lines 14-15, Gloria stopped talking and reenacted the conversation with her daughter, without voice, signing "You know mommy say to you?" leaning forward, neck outstretched, eyebrows raised just as if her daughter stood in front of her. In this moment, I was, temporally, her daughter. In knowing my experience as a hearing child of deaf, Gloria positioned me in place of her daughter. This is the "in between" space we understood each other and it allowed us move from present to past. In this mode switch to silence, she affectively brought the "peacefulness" she referred to verbally into the discourse space.

Gloria explained that when she "shuts her mouth" a special embodied connection opens up with her daughter. This visual silent space was a space Gloria and her daughter reached an understanding together, but it was also the space that we, as interviewer and interviewee, found common ground. I am deeply moved in the narrative transition she made to this "silent" space because it is a space I have embodied through the experience with my deaf parents. Shifting into the signing mode allowed her re-enact the interaction and, at the same time, she remembered, bodily, how it felt. But, this bodily experience extended to me as well. I, too, remembered how it felt to enter a silent space: watch your parents' hands move, feel the vibrations of a hand hitting a table or hear the sound of a laugh sharply breaking the silence. She took on the role of mother in her interaction with me, exemplified by the posture shifts, raised eyebrows and movement forward, bringing the calmness from her past experience into the present moment effectively allowing her to blend the past into the present. The projection of "daughter" by Gloria onto me

also forced me to move back into time to remember the silent spaces I have experienced. The use of modality in this interaction opened up temporal spaces for identity processes for both the interviewer and interviewee.

In parts of the interaction, there were instances in which Gloria embodied her daughter's positioning in the interaction. In line 9, Gloria did not sign the word okay as it is done conventionally in ASL or SEE-sign (fingerspelled "O" "K") but, rather, opened and closed her hand in a loose approximation of the 5-handshape just as her daughter did. Ale has 4 digits (fingers) on each hand. Her hands were slightly less agile in producing sharp and clear handshapes than her peers although this posed no problem to communication for her.[25] With four digits, Ale did not accurately produce the handshape of the "O" and the "K" letters and her mother reproduced the same modified open handshapes as her daughter as if she had the hands of her daughter. She was embodying the physical difference of her daughter.

In line 16, Gloria took on Alise's gesture of sitting back and crossing one's arms, which functioned to finish the sentence "She's like…." The pause accompanied by the arm-crossing gesture finishes the sentence. The moment she ended the verbal utterance and shifted to the cross-armed gesture represented the shift in narrative footing from mother to daughter. And, I was, temporally, her daughter, as I sat crossed-armed across the table from her. The totality of the two utterances, Gloria's mother positioning and child positioning in the narrative, and her projection of her daughter onto me implicitly expressed, "Yes, I understand you, daughter." Moreover, we, as interviewer and interviewee, reached an understanding. In other words, through the mixed modes, Gloria attempted to convey that an understanding exists beyond words between her daughter and her; and, instead of just telling me directly, she showed me the relationship through the embodied utterances. But, what is important here is that this was not only an embodied demonstration of the mother-daughter relationship; I was feeling her mother-daughter connection and remembering my own deaf-hearing connection with my own parents.

In the last section (lines 17-21), Gloria shifted back into spoken third-person mode. She explained, "You know she gets it", (line 17) "she might not practice it" (line 19) and "see it" but "she is really capable of it" (line 20-21). In this few lines, Gloria used "it" four times and referred to her daughter in 3rd person. The "it" referred to the embodied silent, peaceful world she shared with Alise. As interviewee in this moment, the multiple "its" indexed deafness on the outside of the mother-daughter experience; she explained that the "it" is then the deafness which her daughter "gets and practices" but was not fully her own. Yet, ironically, Gloria demonstrated, in this interaction, that the "it" was something that she *has* embodied as her own. I, as the interviewer, felt this understanding. When Gloria uttered, "she gets it" (line 18) I overlap with "wow yeah" (line 18). We, Gloria and I, shared an embodied understanding of the in-between.

**TERRY: "I was talking to him and he didn't say nothing" bodily role shifts**

Mother Terry, a teacher's aid in the preschool class, referred to her experience working with the head teacher Julie and teacher aide, Margarita, in a positive light: "It's like being on the dream team." Terry was a boisterous straight-talking African-American woman with a fun-loving easy-going sparky vibe ever-present in the classroom. When she was absent, you noticed. In the home, Mother Terry used a combination of standard English/AAVE and SEE-sign. Two years ago, her deaf son Darrel attended this preschool while I was a teacher's aide. Terry later

[25] Furthermore, handshape approximations, or phonological approximations, are characteristic of young children learning signs, just as hearing children approximate verbal sounds.

became a teacher's aide in the preschool classroom while she took undergraduate college classes part-time in the field of Education and Child Development. She did everything, from school to work, with determination. She had two boys, one hearing and one deaf. Darrel is the oldest by about 3 years. Darrel, with bilateral CIs, was now mainstreamed, with the support of a SEE-sign interpreter, into a hearing classroom in the second grade at a public school. On "Deaf Culture", Terry commented in the interview, "I still feel like it's so new and I have a lot to learn about the Deaf Culture." "The Deaf culture" is understood by Terry as something to learn and acquire and somewhat outside of what she understands as "her" culture.

In this interaction, Mother Terry described an encounter she and her son had with another African American deaf kid at a Deaf event. In this situation, Mother Terry's son is shocked that Deafness could possibly exist outside the relationship he has with his mother. Following his surprise, Terry attempted to convey a new understanding of Deafness to her son. Mother Terry began by describing son Darrel's encounter with a deaf teenager with a mohawk. For the past year, Terry explained, Darrel has had a mohawk and was "obsessed" with wearing one. Her son, Darrel, was fascinated by a "big black guy with a mohawk" seemingly walking up to them. Darrel waved and hollered in an attempt to get the guy's attention, but Darrel was shocked to find that the "mohawk guy" ignored him. He didn't ignore him, the mother explained in the story, the "mohawk guy" was deaf, too.

**Transcript 6.2** "I was talking and he didn't say nothing" (00:45) Figures 6.7-6.9

| Addresser/ Addressee | Speech/Sign | Accompanied Embodied Utterances, marked by * |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Terry: | "Mom look he has a mohawk! Mom mom" (.5) | gazing upward pointing and waving taking role of son Darrel |
| 2<br>3 | ↓ and↑ then he was like you something something…he was saying to the boy | continues pointing upward, head tilted as Darrel "boy" refers to mohawk man |
| 4 | And he just ke::pt walking (1.5) | Terry shifts gaze level and opposite direction and struts across room- takes role of "mohawk man" (figure 6.7) |
| 5<br>6 | and Darrel was like (.1) MOM…WHY didn't he…and I was like | "Signs "mom" and "why" looking upward-taking role of Darrel (figure 6.8) |
| 7 | Darrel…he's DEAF …he CAN'T HEAR YOU YOU NEED TO SIGN. | gazing downward-taking role of mother, signs downward (figure 6.9) |
| 8 | And he was just… | mouth open, eyes wide, dropped jaw |
| 9<br>10 | He didn't take grasp of it at all but he just…he was just like…you could tell he was like Hu:::h? I was talking to | puts hand down, looks back at me. From "I" uses higher |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 11<br>12 | him and he didn't say nothing he didn't respond he didn't nothing | voice, marking shift to Darrel's speech. |
| 13: JJ: | That's so interesting | |
| 14 Terry: | ↓ But yeah I don't know… | Terry laughs. Returns to lower "normal" voice. |

Frame grabs:



Figure 6.7

In figure 6.7, Mother Terry takes the role of the mohawk man. She struts across room with no speech. (line 4)



Figure 6.8

In figure 6.8, Mother Terry takes on the role of son Darrel, body shift right, signing "Mom" (open "five" handshape thumb at chin). (line 5)



In figure 6.9, Mother Terry taking on the role of herself, as mother. Her gaze shifts downward, signing "deaf" (handshape "one" moving from ear to side of mouth). (line 7)

**Figure 6.9**

This interaction illustrates how a mother and child viewed deafness from different perspectives. I understand the two spatial perspectives via the two roles mother Terry took on in her narrative. While Darrell saw deafness as only from the inside of his family and school relations, Mother Terry viewed Deafness as extending outside of their relationship. As the hearing child of deaf parents, Terry viewed me as part of this "other kind" of Deafness, outside how she situated herself and Darrel. In the narrative excerpt, mother Terry described and physically enacted how her deaf son, Darrel, attempted to make contact with the "mohawk guy" on the premise that they had something similar, namely their hairstyles, the mohawks. Perhaps being black might have contributed to identification with the man, but it appeared the mohawk was the main motivator based on the son's ecstatic reaction (via the narrative) to seeing it. Based on mother Terry's embodied narrative, we understand that when Darrel found out the man did not hear his excited hollers because he was deaf too, Darrel dropped his jaw and stared at his mom in disbelief. (line 8). In this place in the story, mother Terry dropped her jaw, eyes open-wide and looks upward taking on the role of her son. Darrel did not view being deaf as an aspect that connected the Mohawk guy and himself.

Deafness, to Darrel, was found in his relationship with mother, other family members, teacher and classmates; he did not view it as existing on the "outside" of these personal relationships. When Darrel saw his hearing counterparts in the hearing classroom across the courtyard use signs, he corrected them, asserting his "Deaf" expertise, "No! That's not how you do it!" in conjunction with expressed surprise that they are actually signing. The assigned "outsider relationship" by Darrel is also viewed through his language choice with the Mohawk guy even after he knows he is deaf. Rather than addressing the mohawk man in sign after he knows he is deaf, he addressed him in spoken English. Terry responds as "Darrel" in spoken English, "I was talking to him and he didn't say nothing he didn't respond he didn't nothing"

(lines 10-12). Yet a few lines earlier, Terry portrayed Darrell using sign with her, "MOM, WHY?" (line 5) when he questioned why the Mohawk man didn't pay any attention to him. In other words, mother Terry portrayed Darrel as using sign with her but speech with the mohawk guy. This view of deafness only existing on the inside was characteristic of many deaf students in the class. All deaf student participants in this research were the only deaf child in a hearing family and have limited connections to other deaf children outside their school experience.

The contradiction (use of sign to hearing mom and speech to deaf man) was furthered by the sign/spoken expression as Terry takes the role of mother, "Darrel…he's DEAF …he CAN'T HEAR YOU YOU NEED TO SIGN" (lines 6-7, figure 6.9). This particular expression could be understood from three positionalities. First, from the perspective of Darrel, this expression was one often used toward hearing students in the classroom when they attempt to use only spoken English to Darrel. Based on my observations, teachers reiterated this expression to the hearing students, often using sign and spoken language, "Use your signs! He can't hear you. Remember, he is deaf!" Thus, ironically, an expression directed at Darrel, in the narrative by his mother, was an expression often directed at Darrel's hearing classmates in regards to him, the deaf student. Second, this is an expression that Terry, the mother, repeated a hundred times in her life as she explained to others that her son is deaf and they should use clearer communication or signs. And third, this is an expression that also struck a chord with me. I recalled, in this moment, how I have expressed, in frustration, over and over to hearing people, that no amount of speaking louder helps, my "parents cannot hear you, they are deaf." Between all three participants, present (Terry and myself) and not present (Darrel) there was a shared understanding in the frustration with the "hearing" people not "getting it." The very expression "He's deaf! He can't hear you!" acted as a trigger among participants to unleash memories, past and present. Ironically, however, in this "mohawk man" encounter Darrel took on the role of the hearing boy who didn't use his signs.

Mother Terry drew on different paralinguistic resources- the body movement, gaze, posture, hand gestures and the use of sign- to coincide with her shifts in footing (Goffman, 1981). She was "standing" as the mother, "strutting" as the deaf mohawk guy, "gazing upward" as her son and "gazing downward" as herself talking to her Darrel. In each different bodily stance, she was taking on a different role in her narration. Gazing upward and downward in narrative shifts are similar to features of ASL narration.[26] These paralinguistic shifts functioned as narrative shifts and played an important role in understanding the interaction. Having the ability to draw on ASL structures, paralinguistic features and signs afforded Terry simultaneous modes of production.

## Discussion of findings

I initially chose to include perspectives of the mothers in this dissertation because I believed it was important to understand the home language experiences of children when doing a school-based ethnography; this allowed me to better contextually situate the experiences of the children I have observed only in the classroom over the course of the academic year. The mothers I interviewed have chosen to embrace the "in between," both the opportunities and

[26] Such observations- grammatical or narrative features of ASL mixed into signing exact English-sign production are frequent in the classroom, especially in storytelling time. When I asked Julie the head teacher why she uses ASL narrative structures during story telling time she explained that it "works better" than SEE sign and makes the story "come alive" captivating the attention of the students.

struggles, as best they can. In reality, 80-90% of hearing parents of deaf children never learn a sign language such as ASL or even a visual sign system such as SEE-sign. Children from Latino and Black families (more than half of my participants) are even more likely to have a home environment in which no signs are used (Lane et al., 2006). Understanding how modality shapes a mother's sense of self through experiences with her deaf child illustrates that learning is a symbiotic process, never linear and never finished. Deafness, we find, in these relationships becomes a shared space between mother and child, often isolated from a conventionally understood big "D" Deaf community or culture. Participants found themselves on the "outside" of what they perceive as Deaf culture, yet, at the same time they shared new embodied processes with their child. While on one hand, the interview data presented a needed contexualization of the mother-child language learning experiences, the interview data, in fact, offered far more surprises about the intersection of modality and identity than I had expected.

As *multimodal subjects,* participants, drew on a range of semiotic resources similar to what Kramsch (2009) calls the multilingual subject who has "multiple embodied understandings of social reality and a broader more varied range of options than others to act on these understandings." (p.124) Through the use of different modes (sign, speech, gesture), participants constructed a sense of self *in discourse*, an identity Baynham (2014) describes as "brought about." Building on Baynham's notion that identities are both "brought along" and "brought about" in narrative, I find that the *embodied dimensions in discourse* opened the temporal and spatial avenues for such identity processes to take place. In addition, as the interviewer, a hearing daughter of deaf parents, the "in between" place is a space I have also experienced and struggled with, physically and emotionally, and, I recognize that this influenced how I frame the interview, how participants and I interact, and how we co-construct each other's positionality.

In both videotaped narratives discussed in the analysis, the body played a crucial role in opening narrative spaces and navigating ideological contradiction through temporal and spatial means. The body acted as a "memory pad" (Bourdieu, 1990) activated by how words and signs feel, how they might have been encountered before, or, how they may be encountered in the future. Knowledge about ourselves is mediated by what Merleau-Ponty (1964) calls "lived space." Perceptions of the world are negotiated in and through our bodies *and* the bodies that share space, physically and temporally. As interviewer and interviewee, the interaction evolved from our ability to impose subject positions on the other and project our own, both past and anticipated ones, onto the other.

Mode-blends (signing and speaking at the same time) allowed Mother Terry to tell the story in English to me at the same time she physically entered into a past space, signing just as she had signed with her son. While similar changes in positionality take place in verbal narration or code-switching between two languages, two simultaneous modes opened up the possibility of expanding into the past and present at the level of the utterance; this, perhaps, offers a more nuanced way of understanding what Blommaert (2005) calls "layered simultaneity" or the process in which language is expressed simultaneously on multiple time scales, as shown in the example "He's deaf! He can't hear you." With Gloria's examples, we see that the body tries to manage ideological struggle. When Gloria "shuts her mouth," she shifted into a silent mode creating a feeling of "peacefulness" by doing what she says in discourse. My "brought along" identity as a "hearing child of deaf parents" allowed her project the role of daughter onto me. And, this silent space, opened up my own memories of communication with my parents.

As Terry told the story about the deaf boy with the mohawk, she used mode-switches to move between the roles of son and mother to say something larger about the ideological

constructs of hearingness and deafness that existed outside the mom-son relationship. She reappropriated the utterance usually directed towards the hearing children in the classroom ("you need to use your signs! He can't hear you!") toward her own deaf child, likely forcing him, in that past moment, to reexamine his own understanding with deafness. But, in the present moment, as Terry projects the role her son onto me, it is me who reexamines the implications of that expression, "He can't hear you" that echoes deep into my past.

Broadly speaking, this data demonstrates that the use of multiple modalities creates spaces for new meaning making providing us with insight on the social and individual level. My data illustrates that the bimodal production allowed participants to move temporally through narrative spaces. Additionally "doing in discourse", that is positioning oneself through language and modality across both time and space illuminates dialogic tension and expands temporal notions of identity. While the cultural constructs of hearingness and Deafness are often addressed through essentializing static binary relationships: deaf vs. non-deaf and disabled vs. abled binaries, sub-binaries of the discourse on normalcy (normal vs. non-normal), my participants problematize such binaries by shaping an in-between place of ambiguity between such constructs.

The process of becoming a *hearing* mother of a *deaf* child is shaped in and by the multimodal interactions with their deaf child. However, the interview itself, the multimodal narrative shared with an interviewer who has similar in-between experiences, contributed to the mother identity construction. Participants described how they play the role of "cultural broker" between their hearing world and their child's deaf world but not necessarily the big "D" Deaf world.[27] I believe that in playing the role of cultural broker growing up as a hearing child of deaf parents, allowed participants the space to embody this positionality when conversing with me as demonstrated by the ease with which participants use signs alongside speech. De Fina (2014) stresses that the construction of identities stem from "*both* interlocutor's habitus, i.e. shared ways of understanding aspects of social experience" (p. 53). My findings add to De Fina's assertion in that I demonstrate how embodied dimensions of the addresser and addressee open up the means for identity construction. We understand our experiences through each other, triggered by the co-embodied narrative.

In process of "ideological becoming" (Bakthin, 1981) participants complicate the notion of identity bringing to the fore the complex embodied ways we perform identities- strategically positioning ourselves in relation to the "other". The "ideological becoming" of the human being is the ideological process in which we select, assemble and assimilate the words of others, or the internally persuasive discourses (Bakhtin, 1981). Bakhtin (1981) helps us understand identity processes as rooted in language interaction with others which he describes as "heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past… all given a bodily form"( p. 291) In the case of my participants, modality - both sensory and linguistic modes- opened up a space for new meanings and emotional experiences. In these meaning-making in - between spaces the children and parents - to put it in De Certeau's (1984) words, "make do", with the "plurality and creativity" offered by the in-between- drawing on semiotic resources they have to make connections to others and make sense of the their own experiences.

[27] See Ch. 2 for more discussion on big "D" little "d" discourses.

# CHAPTER 7
# CONCLUSION

## Summary and Discussion of the Study

Through participant observation and interviews, this ethnographic, critical discourse analytic study examined the role of multimodalilty in the co-embodied interactions of deaf children and hearing parents, alongside teachers and hearing peers, in an early intervention preschool program, over the course of one academic year in an attempt to broaden an understanding of the relationship between identity processes and modality. Expanding on Goodwin's (2006) notion of "embodied participant frameworks" and the view that the utterance is "multi-partied" and "multimodal," the study highlights the importance of considering all modes— sensory, bodily positioning, sign, gesture and speech—as contributing to *co-constructed* utterances and *co-constructed* identity processes in learning contexts. Having two interdependent components to my project, observations of the deaf preschoolers and interviews with their hearing mothers, offered a broader qualitative understanding of the social experiences of mothers and children in a deaf-hearing context.

The modal focus of my analysis has yielded important findings in regards to what I call mode switching and mode-blends, building on and bridging the work on codeswitching as a social act (Blom & Gumperz, 1972), co-speech gestures (McNeill, 1992), code blends Petitto (2001), and gesture mismatches (Goldin Meadow, 2003) by *situating* the modal utterance in sociocultural context. First, my data suggests that co- and multi-partied embodied utterances, in particular mode-switches and mode-blends, opened up narrative and learning/teaching spaces of hearing children, deaf children, hearing mothers and teachers. The multi-partied mode blend consisting of Beto's simultaneous pointing/signing utterance was intertwined with the spatial, bodily gestural framework of other participants at circle time, and dependent on embodied co-participation. Second, I suggest that mode-switches and modal choices (i.e. sign or English, speech or visual) were utilized as ways of socially positioning oneself. The multi-partied mode blend utterance in Fernanda and Maria's simultaneous production of asymmetric semantic content was a driven by how participants positioned each other and themselves vís a vís different cultural constructs at a particular moment and place. Multiple channels offered multiple expressions at one moment. In these two examples, understanding one mode versus the totality, or the "co-expressiveness" (McNeill 1992, 1995), of different modes, formed by one or more participants, produced different meanings. In the semiotic scuffle between Irene and Andrew at the cupcake birthday snack time, the two students mode switched in and out of a visual or speech mode to align themselves with a hearing or deaf identity while Jennifer and teacher Julie mode switched from speech to sign for other purposes; Julie switches into speech to discipline her son from a "mother role" and Jennifer switched into signing to strategically convey a visual message (without being heard by other students) to Irene in an attempt to help her win Andrew's attention. In all of these examples there was more than just the blending or switching of the code at play: posture, body positioning, silence/non-silence and eye gaze all contributed to the multi-partied utterance and to the emotive states of the participants. As communication is always linked to the affective dimensions, this example highlights what it means to learn a language under duress. In a short period, Irene, in being slighted continuously in the non-verbal dimensions displayed by Andrew, experienced a range of emotions - from anger, confusion, disappointment to humor.

This ethnographic study also aimed to get a glimpse into the worldviews and experiences of deaf children with CIs of hearing parents and their hearing mothers. Adopting an ecological view of language learning, I situated the experiences historically, culturally and socially. Through the mother interviews and classroom observations, I explored how mothers and students situated their experiences in between the constructs of hearingness and deafness through their embodied choices. While I only studied the experiences of handful of deaf children and mothers, the diversity of their experiences in a hearing-deaf context parallels the diversity of the present deaf experience in the United States. The "hearing mom-deaf child" experience offers a window into understanding language and cultural practices in unconventional ways and complexifies notions of being socialized in and through language. Students, teachers and mothers drew on semiotic resources to position themselves and their interlocutors indexing insiderness or outsiderness to the larger ideological constructs of hearingness and deafness undermining structural notions of the Deaf identity. Different from Erting's (1994) study that understood the use of codes (ASL and Manually coded English) in a "one-code one-culture" manner, this study, rather, demonstrates how a performative view of identity draws on mode and code choices tied to a moment in time and space. For example, Andrew drew on ASL to "play deaf," while, at the same time, he reproduces his status as hearing. The use of semiotic resources was with unpredictability and contradiction, "crossing" (Rampton, 1995) the boundaries of constructions in resourceful ways to socially position oneself or others.

There are some similarities and differences in how, *through discourse,* the deaf children and hearing moms navigated the in-between space, or what Skelton and Valentine (2003) call "in-betweenity." In these meaning making in-between spaces the children and parents, to put it in De Certeau's (1984) words, "make do", with the "plurality and creativity" (p. 30) offered by the in-between, drawing on semiotic resources they have to make connections to others and make sense of the their own experiences. Both mothers and children demonstrated that their ability to move around in the in-between is tied to a context.

My findings resonate with Maxwell-McCaw (2011) assertion that children with CIs are not "stuck between deaf and hearing worlds" (p. 106) despite the pushback from Deaf culture that children with CIs in a non-ASL environment don't "fit" the Deaf identity. Andrew and Irene displayed a sensory knowledge of the hearing body and deaf body; they understood how their choice of mode (speech, silence, sign) intersected with how they shaped a sense of self at a given moment in interaction, which shifted at different turns at talk. In choosing to wear or not wear their CIs at a given moment, students are making a bodily choice that reflects an emotional state or a desire "to just be" a particular way. Based on the interview data from the mothers, children's world of "deafness" seemed constrained to family and school contexts; their understanding of deafness and hearingness is, perhaps, not yet fully saturated by the identity politics that the mothers appear to face.

We see the means by which mothers gravitate towards making meaning in multimodal ways, undermining the English only path they are supposedly on with their child via educational and medical discourses. Mothers, arguably more saturated in the ideologies of norms, expressed more ambivalence, confusion and contradiction in their reflections of the space in-between hearingness and deafness. Mother participants displayed ambivalent shifts in footing, in particular, mode-switches, which reflect and reshape the fluctuating way in which they move in-between the seams of Deafness and hearingness in everyday life. On the other hand, even as the hearing mothers indexed D/deafness as an exterior, "inaccessible" to their experience, at the same time, they expressed reaching new understandings through the shared visual, sensory world

of their child. Hearing mothers tried to engage in the visual world of their child at the same time they wanted desperately to bring their child into their own hearing world. The mothers were constrained by the constructs of Deaf and deaf at the same time they subverted them. We could put forth that in such moments the mother experiences a "deafened moment" (Davis, 1995), a moment that does not rely on spoken or auditory modes, but, rather, a moment where participants reach a new embodied understanding in regards to their sense of self. Because of the narrative nature of the mother interviews, mode-switches and mode-blends were utilized in temporal ways. For example, as mother Terry embodied the role of herself and her deaf son in a story she recalled, she effectively moved back in time to capture how a mother and child viewed deafness from different perspectives. Her bodily stance, eye direction, choice of code (sign/speech) all contributed to effectively shaping each role and perspective, mother and son. The inseparable temporal and spatial dimensions, the chronotope (Bakhtin, 1981), shapes the construction of the two roles Terry took on in her narrative.

As a hearing daughter of deaf parents I have also found myself in the "in-between" deaf-hearing heteroglossic space, and this, in turns, shapes how participants interact with me as an interviewer, mixing sign into their narrative. Resonating with Bakhtin's (1981) notion that the self is in the other and the other in the self, I played a role, as interviewer, in the co-construction of the hearing mother identity as the interviewee's modal use functioned to open up temporal and spatial dimensions during the interview. A modal analysis of the interactions in the interview data and the interdepended role of the interviewer-interviewee in "bringing about" Baynham (2014) identity in interaction through temporal shifts demonstrate the need for researchers to pay more attention to the embodied dimensions in the study of identity processes. Building on De Fina's (2014) idea that the identity construction derives from "*both* interlocutor's habitus, i.e. shared ways of understanding aspects of social experience" (p. 53), I add insight on how the *co-embodied dimensions* of the participant habitus shapes a co-construction of identity.

The larger picture: hearing kids, deaf moms

A monlingual ideology and speech-based approaches permeate the educational practices of deaf students. Yet, students and teachers are both subject to these constructs at the same time they undermine them through the language choices they make. Despite the subversive presence of various signing and speech practices in the classroom, ASL, the language of the Deaf, is not recognized as the "first" language of the students and the official educational approach of the school does not "officially" recognize Deaf culture or ASL as the language of instruction. Practices undertaken by students and teachers are akin to "internally persuasive discourses" (1981) existing and thriving in tension with the dominant ideological forces that saturate the educational polices and practices of deaf children. Most importantly, in the data presented in these chapters, the use of semiotic resources for social positioning is contextually driven for both hearing *and* students challenging a notion of a fixed, structural Deaf identity.

Viewing hearingness as the "cure" to deafness in a deficit/disability framing of deafness suggests that deaf students undergo a linear process of progress: from deaf to hearing, from signer to speaker, from non-typical to typically developing. In theory, a student will begin with signs, then drop them, learn to vocalize and, then, become an English speaker. Yet, in practice, deaf students and hearing students in this study, view linguistic resources as ways to position themselves across the constructs and not necessarily as part of the dichotomized progression metaphor. Learning is a co-constructed and relational activity (Kramsch, 2002) that teachers, parents and students engage in. The so called "native" English speaker in these contexts, (the

mother, the teacher, the visiting hearing student from the typically developing classroom) also utilized modal resources to position oneself or to facilitate learning further, undermining the "progress" metaphor. That is not to say, however, that these constructs do not have real consequences for deaf students. Deaf students are often educationally and socially trapped by the spatial-temporal metaphor of normal progress and, as a result, face alienation from what is considered "normal" in society. It is in their ability to undermine such constructs that applied linguists and educators can begin to analyze the creative ways in which language allows us to find the space to redefine, reclaim and reposition.

In highlighting sensory activity, I do not intend to romanticize the sensory communicative strategies and embodied co-productions of my participants nor do I mean to overshadow the significant problem deaf children in the US face– early access to their language, a visual language. On the contrary, in bringing to light such practices, I hope to undercut the perceptions around the deficit model of deafness. The approach to understanding the experiences of deaf children, with or without CIs, who are denied early access to a visual language is often one of pity. "Oh those poor children have no language" is commonly heard in regard to deaf children who are "language-delayed". The fault is placed child and family in the deafness-as-deficient ideology. Deaf educators claim it is, instead, the society that is disabled by an auditory bias and lack of educational opportunities that fit their language needs (Padden & Humphries; 2005). I would like to make clear that my attempt at a sensory analysis is to add to the layers of what we could potentially understand as communication– as my participants show us.

**Limitations**

There are methodological constraints to this study necessary to mention. First, I only explored the use of modality in one American preschool classroom with a small group of students. Thus, it is impossible to make larger claims about experiences of deaf children of various ages with CIs or their hearing parents. Furthermore, given the diversity of the student participants' early language access and experiences it is difficult to speculate the various variables that affect the linguistic, cognitive and social development as they intersect with modality and identity. Another important consideration is that the diversity of deaf students experiences are even further diversified if one looks outside the United States. Secondly, my study in the classroom was confined to analyzing structured focal events. Further observations during unstructured activity such as play in the classroom context and in the multilingual/modal interactions in the home might illuminate how modality is used in different contexts. Third, even as I took great care in developing a multi-tiered modal analysis, it was outside the scope of the project to take into account all the activity that took place between participants in one given interaction. In addition, I only used one camera to record focal events. Multiple cameras placed from various angles would assist in capturing the language use under study. And lastly, I followed a group of students over one academic school year. Because of the tremendous linguistic, social and cognitive develop that takes place in the first year of preschool coupled with the effects of CIs taking sometimes a year to produce outcomes, there were many variables that shifted in these students lives over the course of one year. Taking the time to revisit the same students in a mainstream setting a year or two later could provide a more comprehensive analysis. My claims in this study are also limited in their application to the patterns across this data with a limited group of students. However, my claims in this qualitative research offer insights for broadening the scope of the how we begin to conceptualize the role of modality in interaction and the experiences of the deaf learner, understudied in the larger SLA narrative.

**Implications for Research**

This study attempts to bridge two gaps in the literature- the under-theorization of communicative practices of deaf learners and the under-theorization of the embodied dimensions of language to reach a more complex understanding of identity processes. Different from previous research is my attempt to understand modality beyond just linguistic meaning but also in relation to subject positioning in language. In introducing the neglected narratives of two kinds of second language learners, the hearing mother of the deaf child, and the deaf child of the hearing mother, this study fundamentally challenges language socialization, acquisition and learning frameworks. To add to this, the study underscores the need for a *unimodal phonocentric bias* to be incorporated into or expand what SLA theorists describe as a monolingual moncultural bias (Canagarajah, 1999).

My participants complexify the essentialized status of the multilingual speaker by broadening how we conceptualize communication and forcing us to think about the multimodal user. When we speak of the "experiences" of participants in research it is vital that we understand experience as fundamentally embodied. I hope this has come across in a compelling manner for my reader. Speech-based and auditory-based bias runs deep in frameworks that analyze language, culture, learning and identity. Why is that? At the root of the bias, in all these areas, is the bias in how we interpret "experience." Johnson (1987), a pioneer of the notion "embodied experiences," reminds us that "'Experience', then, is to be understood in a very rich, broad sense as including basic perceptual, motor-program, emotional, historical, social, and linguistic dimensions…experience involves everything that makes us human-our bodily, social, linguistic and intellectual being in complex interactions that make up our understanding of our world" (Johnson, p. xvi).

In centralizing the embodied dimensions of communication in deaf and hearing participants, this study further interrogates possible ways we could understand language learning. It reiterates the importance of recent literature that had suggested more attention should be paid to the embodied dimensions of language learning (Kramsch, 2009; Block 2013; Dewaele (2010). The *simultaneity of multiple channels* of communication in a participant framework needs to also be considered as part of the meaning-making. A detailed analysis of language as embodied, at the detailed levels of gesture, sign and bi/mutil-modal utterances, sensory, motor and spatial perceptions, would contribute to a richer understanding of how we experience to world.

**Avenues for future research**

Historically and at present, deaf people have been severely disadvantaged in different aspects of education, likely by not having full early access to a visual language. Research has shown that deaf in Deaf contexts historically (i.e. residential schools for the Deaf) and deaf children of deaf parents have performed better on educational measures, likely due to access to a visual language. Given the current unstable political, cultural and educational landscape of "being deaf" it is more important now than ever to better understand the experiences of deaf children as we make decisions about educational choices that shape students' linguistic and social development and allow them to succeed on par with their hearing peers.

My research presents just a glimpse into one particular deaf-hearing context. More and more, inclusion for students with disabilities is becoming the status quo in education. More qualitative, ethnographic work is needed to understand the more recent experiences of the deaf

learner, integrated into mainstream inclusive education. Research needs to concretely analyze the relationship of such experiences to the cognitive, social and linguistic development of deaf children. Likewise, it is vital that SLA frameworks contextualize the language learning experiences of all learners, deaf and hearing, in an embodied way. Attention to modality offers new avenues on identity processes and language competences in language learning and educational research. Chapter six's discussion of symbolic competence or "the ability to actively manipulate and shape one's environment on multiple scales of time and space" (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008, p. 667) expands embodied notions of symbolic competence in its application to preschoolers. To my knowledge, there has not been an application of symbolic competence to young learners of language. Lastly, this study pushes us to think about future educational research from methodological angles that consider more attention to different modalities. How we record, analyze and present the "modal density" (Norris, 2004) of data makes it imperative to rethink how we transcribe data conventionally in orthographic form.

**Conclusion**

The bi-/multi-modal interactions not only capture the performance of identity as articulating a "repertoire" of identities rather than one single identity (Blommaert, 2005) but they allow for explicit co-expressed contradiction of identity. Identity viewed as "multiple," or constantly shifting or changing, or moment-to-moment, contains some structural notions of time as it presupposes a linear nature. With a bi-/multi-modal analysis we gain the depth and multiplicity not in the moment-to-moment but rather *in-the-moment*. As seen in this study, modality plays a pivotal role in opening up new spaces for meaning making for Deaf and hearing alike---which is perhaps useful in examining ways that expands an understanding of the body's role in human communication.

Baynton (1996) stresses the importance of the body in experiencing the world, "Our bodies matter because they shape how we experience, understand and interact with the world and because they affect how others view us" (p. 296). It is important to note that the ideological and bodily struggle is different for the children and parents as they tug at the delicate seams in between deafness and hearingness and learn the sensory world of other. The mother and child come to this in-between place with different lens- for the mothers they have, for most of their lives, only understood the world through a hearing eyes and for deaf children they have mostly come to understand their world through deaf eyes. This idea of these "worlds" for these mothers and children, and me as the interviewer, can be thought of as both inseparable and engaged in a context where we "do" identity in an emergent way. Baynton (1996) further underlines the implications of an essentialist construction of deafness and captures how we need to push towards embodied notions of being, "Being deaf is more than a cultural construction. It means most fundamentally that one occupies a different sensory world from those who hear, and this has certain consequences that cannot be constructed away. This physical reality transcends culture" (Baynton, 1994, p. 160).

When we think about how we produce language- we most often make the association of a *speaking* in a language, *hearing* in a language or *writing* in a language. These are the pervasive theoretical assumptions made about how we "do" language in most unimodal hearing cultures. In the interactions discussed in this dissertation, the body plays an important role in "doing" language and, in fact, the body sometimes is the main medium through which meaning is communicated. Understanding language as embodied in my own experience and with other bimodal/bilinguals like has helped me to understand that *any* interaction could benefit from

considering more than one dimension of modality. The body's role in unimodal, hearing interactions is a point that is under-examined and under-theorized. Examining bi-/multi-modal interactions or a simultaneity of multiple channels of communication among deaf and hearing individuals may push our understanding of how one expresses and performs identity through language.

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**Appendix A:**

Interview Guide for Hearing Mothers of Deaf Children

*Educational Environment:*
1. Could you tell me a little bit about how you chose this school for your child?

2. Tell me about any other educational environments your child has experienced before coming to this school. Through which language did your child access information?

*Language Development (school):*
3. How do you feel the language environment has contributed to your child's language development?

*Language Development (home):*
4. In what language (signed, spoken English/Spanish) do you usually communicate with your child at home?

5. Could you share any memorable language learning experiences you have had with your child? (both pleasurable or difficult experiences are okay)

*Modes of Communication- hearing parent-deaf child:*
6. How has learning a visual language changed the way you and your family members communicate with your child?

7. Does your family mode-switch/ code-switch (i.e. from English to sign language)? If so, what is the motivation for doing so?

8. How do you feel your child's communications practices have changed through the use of a signed language, a spoken language or both?

*Personal experiences learning sign language (hearing individual learning sign):*
9. Could you share your experiences in the Family Sign language Program learning a visual language, SEE-sign?

10. How do you feel when you communicate through a signed language?

11. What was /is it like for you learning a second language later in life?

*Future role of sign language:*
12. Where do you see the role of sign language in your child's overall language development?

13. Do you hope that your daughter/son will continue to learn a signed language to be part of a Deaf community later in his/her life?

14. Do you have any plans to continue learning sign language?