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Social Identities and Bilinguals' Language and Literacy Development

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ABSTRACT

This is a qualitative case study that investigates bilinguals' language and literacy practices on the intersection of social identities, speaking and writing learning, and translanguaging in a Spanish-English two-way classroom.² The study proposes that certain bilinguals' language and literacy learning is closely related to the performance of their social identities, along with the language and literacy practices that they performed in school and home contexts, including translanguaging practices. Two cases of Spanish-English emergent bilinguals' and two cases of English-Spanish emergent bilinguals' speaking and writing practices are presented from a qualitative sociocultural and poststructuralist (Davis & Harré, 1990; Peirce, 1995; 2016) theoretical perspectives. Findings show that certain emergent bilinguals' speaking and writing practices are closely associated with their identities that they constructed in school and at home. Specifically, the way the emergent bilinguals were positioned on the continuum of the classroom social networks, from central to peripheral influenced their diverse ways of learning to speak and write, as well as the other way around. Further findings show that the ways how emergent bilinguals were invested in language and literacy practices in Spanish in classroom as well as in the literacy practices that they performed at home directly influenced the processes of social identity construction. In this way, these findings confirm the assumption that additional language learning can be reinforced when the linguistic, emotional and social dimensions of their developing identities were legitimized applies for certain emergent bilinguals' language and literacy learning.

Keywords: Translanguaging; identities; literacy practices; Spanish-English Two-way immersion.

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1. Introduction

Code-switching has been a central research interest in linguistic theory and sociolinguistics because of the potentiality that it raises for shedding light on fundamental issues, from generative grammar to the construction of membership and identities in particular speech groups. Despite the

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² This is one chapter of my doctoral research on translanguaging and identities.

increasing number of Latinx population in the United States, there is a great discrepancy between how we understand what Spanish-English bilinguals are capable of and what they actually do with their linguistic repertoires. There is still a need to better understand how bilinguals from both Spanish-speaking homes and English-speaking homes, who come to construct particular identities in bilingual educational settings, learn to speak and write in two or more languages. In order to fill this gap, this qualitative comparative case study investigates how emergent bilinguals make their ways into bilingual classroom and home contexts as well as how the identity construction influences their language and literacy learning through translanguaging practices.

The present study is motivated by the need to probe into bilinguals' language and literacy development at the intersection of social identities, translanguaging practices, and speaking and writing, performed by Spanish-English bilinguals (in this study, one male and one female bilinguals from Spanish-speaking homes) and English-Spanish bilinguals (one male and one female bilinguals from English-speaking homes). The cases of the focal students show that even though it is clear that the aforementioned factors are closely related to bilingual language and literacy development, certain cases indicate that bilingual learning is not unilateral, but bidirectional. These cases of bilingual young learners who learned to speak and write in the two languages are discussed, particularly when the linguistic, emotional, and social dimensions of their developing identities were legitimized (Peirce, 1995).

1.1 Background of the study

Translanguaging, a translated term originally introduced in Welsh by Williams (1996), involves pedagogically oriented language practices (Blackledge & Creese, 2017; Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; García & Wei, 2013; García-Mateus & Palmer, 2017; Pontier & Gort, 2016). It is a multilayered term that has gained ground in the field of bilingual education to refer to both a theoretical lens and pedagogically oriented language practices. In this study, this concept is used to refer to bilinguals' language practices, such as code-switching, translating, language recasting, and language-brokering.

The uniqueness and the importance of the present study lies in its particular approach to the manifestation of bilingualism from the point of view of the bilinguals. (García, 2009, p. 134). While translanguaging as a practice has been widely and extensively investigated, it is critical to understand the complex phenomenon in a particular context, a Spanish-English two-way immersion classroom. The particularity of this bilingual school setting can be accounted for by the impact of the language separation policy on both teachers' and students' language use. This school followed less strict language separation guidelines than other programs; thus, students would speak and hear Spanish even during the designated 30 percent of English portion and would speak and hear English even during the designated 30 percent of Spanish portion. This bilingual educational setting allowed us to focus on how bilingualism can be manifested "from the perspective of bilinguals themselves" (García, 2009, p. 134) by centering on "how students perform bilingually in the myriad multimodal ways of classroom" "writing, taking notes, discussing, singing, and so on" (Creese & Blackledge, 2015, p. 28).

1.2 Status of the discipline

In bilingual early childhood language and literacy education, translanguaging has been explored as a critical resource to support language and literacy learning because their social interaction such as participation and meaning-making were encouraged (Durán & Palmer, 2014; Gutiérrez, Basqueando-López, & Tejado, 1999; Martínez, Hikida, & Durán, 2015; Gort & Sembiante, 2015; Pacheco, 2016; Pacheco & Miller, 2015; Sayer, 2013). Although these studies found that even teachers with limited proficiencies in students' home languages can leverage these languages to foster student academic achievement, most of the studies have been conducted from teachers' perspectives (Durán & Palmer, 2014; Martínez, Hikida, & Durán, 2015; Gort & Sembiante, 2015; Pacheco, 2016; Pacheco & Miller, 2015). In other words, these studies have produced fruitful discourses on the co-construction of equitable dual language classrooms, but the focus has been on what translanguaging practices and pedagogies look like from a teacher's perspective rather than how translanguaging can enhance students' literacy learning spaces while the move between and across their home language and their second language from students' perspective. For these reasons, the present study explores how the performance of social identities

and translanguaging can influence bilingual language and literacy learning in a Spanish-English two-way immersion classroom from the perspective of bilinguals.

The research methodology used throughout the paper is a qualitative case study based on Merriam's (1998) guidelines for designing a case study with constant comparative methods and constructivist grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2015) in order to explain and understand "the complexity of bilingual children's lived experiences" within "particular forms of classroom life" (Erickson, 1985, p. 133).

The significant contribution of the current study is the in-depth understanding of the interrelation between social identities, language and literacy learning, and translanguaging. The main findings of the study reveal that the assumption that additional language learning can be reinforced when the linguistic, emotional and social dimensions of their developing identities are legitimized is acceptable for certain emergent bilinguals' speaking and writing learning through translanguaging practices.

The research questions that guided this research are the following: (1) How do bilinguals' identities take shape? and (2) How does it relate to their language and literacy development?

Section 2 of the article presents a brief literature review that identifies the gap to fill. Section 3 presents a description of methodology and then Section 4 provides an analysis of the data in terms of bilingual speaking and writing learning. Section 5 discusses the findings of the study and further presents policy implications.

2. Social identity, language and literacy development, and translanguaging practices

The focus of the study is on the intersection of social identities, language and literacy learning, particularly around speaking and writing, and translanguaging practices. This study brings together the two factors, translanguaging and language and literacy learning in Spanish and English, are taken into account, in relation to social identities in bilingual educational and home contexts. Spanish-English translanguaging practices have been explored, in relation to bilingual identities in school settings. The relationship between language and literacy learning of emergent bilinguals were also investigated, in relation to their developing identities. However, there remains little understanding around the intersection between primary grade bilinguals' translanguaging, identities, and speaking and writing learning in Spanish-English two-way immersion school and home contexts. For these reasons, this study attempts to fill the gap.

Translanguaging is more than linguistic, indicating critical social and power relationships, which can vary depending on interlocutors, topic, and conversational contexts, as well as social, economic, political, identity, and symbolic factors. Baker and Wright (2017), for instance, mentioned that there exist certain overlapping aims of using "hybrid language practices" (Gutiérrez, 2008), including emphasis, substitution, concepts without equivalences, problem solving, reinforcement, clarification, and identity performance, among others. In particular, they argued that translanguaging can be used to express identity, shorten social distance, and communicate friendship or family bonding. For these reasons, García (2009) contended that translanguaging extends Gutiérrez and her colleagues' concept of "hybrid language practices," i.e., a "systematic, strategic, affiliative, and sense-making process" (Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, & Alvarez, 1999, p. 128).

3. Methodology

The study employed qualitative case study methods to deepen understanding of emergent bilinguals' language and literacy learning through translanguaging practices and to consider those practices in relation to bilinguals' developing identities. The specific purpose of the inquiry was to better understand how young bilinguals become socialized through language and literacy practices, particularly in writing through translanguaging, in a Spanish-English two-way immersion classroom.

There are two major reasons to use qualitative methods to investigate translanguaging in two-way immersion classrooms. First of all, research highlights the importance of actual naturalistic settings, descriptive data, and day-to-day interactions in order to understand the meaning from participant perspectives (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Furthermore, as proposed by Bourdieu (1977), human activity as practice can be generated through the interactions of habitus and social context, or field,

and thus language and literacy practices must be understood within the social structures that condition and at the same time, are regulated by human activity through “interpersonal relations” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 81). In a primary school, students are internalizing the schooled ways of speaking, acting, and being, or a habitus that generates their practices in accordance with social context or field. In other words, these bilingual students' language and literacy experiences should be studied with attention to the ways that teachers come to shape these experiences, as well as the ways that the field shapes the students.

3.1 Main participants

For this study, four focal students were selected through purposive sampling (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Merriam, 1998). Purposive sampling was used to identify these essential participants who were positioned and positioned themselves across a variety of social contexts in the classroom. Moreover, purposive sampling was chosen to maximize the possibilities of the diversity within the boundaries of the defined population. The criteria used to identify the four focal students, two bilingual students from Spanish-speaking homes and two bilingual students from English-speaking homes, were the following: 1) Students who were positioned and positioned themselves differently in and out of the classroom, 2) gender, a male student and a female student for each language group, 3) different types of home language and second language, Spanish as a home language or English as a home language, 4) similar age, between 7 to 8 at the time of the study, 5) similar initial language ability so that their social and linguistic factors did not exclusively affect their language use and language and literacy learning.

3.2 Data collection and data analysis procedures

Data was collected two visits per week, half days (Monday afternoons) and full days (Fridays) from February, 2019 to May, 2019. Data collection was carried out through four main paths: (1) classroom observational notes, (2) formal and informal interviews, (3) students' written artifacts, and (4) curricular documents. Furthermore, the analysis of written sources, including field notes, interviews, students' writing samples, and curricular documents took place using the constant comparative method (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). The constant and iterative data analysis involved a circular process: constructing the database, synthesizing, integrating the data, and developing theories.

4. Results and analysis

4.1 Bilinguals' language and literacy development and their social identities

According to Peirce (1995, 2016), how language learners “as having a complex social history and multiple desires,” are invested in the additional (target) language is associated with their production of it. The focal students (Alicia, Yanis, Marek, and Tiara)³ brought diverse historical, social, academic, and linguistic experiences to the classroom. Spanish was the home language for the two Spanish-English bilinguals (Alicia and Yanis) and the additional language for the two English-Spanish bilinguals (Marek and Tiara), whereas English was the language that Spanish-English bilinguals had to learn as a survival language. Therefore, Spanish was, to a large extent, the “minority” language for the four focal students in and outside of the school and within the larger societal context where Spanish is implicitly proscribed (Potowski, 2007).

Qualitative interpretations of observations and interviews with the focal students, with one or both of their parents, and with the teachers are presented. The focal students' identity construction in school was related to 1) their language and literacy practices in Spanish in school and at home, 2) the teachers' positioning of the focal students, 3) the focal students' positioning of themselves, 4) the focal students' attitudes towards bilingualism and biliteracy, and 5) their literacy practices at home.

4.2 Students' making ways into the two-way immersion classroom

The focal students made their ways into the Spanish-English two-way immersion classroom differently. Auer (1984) claims, “You cannot be bilingual in your head, you have to use two or more languages on stage, in interaction, to show others that and how you can use them.” Below, I present interpretations of the focal students' ways of “doing being bilinguals” (Auer, 1984, p. 7).

³ All the names used in this paper are pseudonyms.

Yanis: a responsible leader. At school, Yanis spoke mostly Spanish and sometimes English with his English-Spanish bilingual peers. At school, he spoke in Spanish with his parents and responded to them in Spanish. Yanis had two older sisters and one older brother, and they spoke Spanish and English amongst themselves. In a parent interview, his parents reported that they tried to have their children speak mostly Spanish at home because they want to understand what they were talking about. His mother reported that Yanis spoke Spanish almost all day except approximately for forty minutes, whereas his father mentioned that Yanis spoke Spanish about 80 percent of the time and English for the remainder (Interview, 5/2/2019). Furthermore, during a student interview, Yanis was asked which language he preferred to speak, and he chose Spanish (5/20/2019). In this way, Yanis was much more invested in Spanish both at home as well as in school.

By the time the official observation for this study was about to begin, Yanis had already gained the trust of the teachers. From the perspectives of Maestro Martin and Maestro Solomon, Yanis had progressed to be at the level of his grade or possibly higher, and was not frustrated by his mistakes, nor did he doubt his own abilities, as described in the initial interview below. According to the lead teacher, Yanis learned from his mistakes and moved on to the next task (Interview, 1/25/2019). Likewise, the advanced academic aspects of social identity that Yanis constructed during the first half of the academic year continued to be reinforced through May.

Maestro Martin described Yanis as “humble,” “clever,” “smart,” an “extrovert,” “kind,” and “tenacious” (Interview with Maestro Martin, 5/16/2019). Maestro Martin’s assertion of how Yanis constructed his social identity coincides with Maestro Solomon’s observations. Moreover, both teachers mentioned that Yanis became more outgoing by the end of the academic year. In this way, the teachers positioned Yanis at the center of the classroom’s social networks.

In addition to this, over the months that the observations took place, Yanis constantly paid attention to the teacher, actively participated in classroom activities, and did his work on his own. Field note records support his responsible behavior: He was never called out for his misbehavior, whereas all the other focal students were reprimanded at least once. He was a responsible student who accomplished tasks, followed the teachers’ instruction, and got along with others, which afforded him various learning opportunities through interactions with his peers and teachers. Additionally, Yanis expressed positive understanding of bilingualism and biliteracy. In a student interview, he reported that for him, bilingualism is being able to speak two or more languages. The following interview excerpt shows how he viewed bilingualism and biliteracy.

Excerpt 1

1. Nakyung: ¿Qué significa ser bilingüe para ti? [What does it mean to be
2. bilingual for you?]
3. Yanis: Hablar bien en dos idiomas. [To speak well in two languages]
4. Nakyung: ¿Para ti, qué significa escribir y leer en los dos idiomas, español y
5. inglés? [For you, what does it mean to write and read
6. in two languages, Spanish and English?]
7. Yanis: Es una pasión. [It is passion].
8. Nakyung: Dijiste que es una pasión. [...] ¿Qué significa leer y escribir es una
9. pasión? [You said it is passion. [...] What does it mean
10. when you said reading and writing is passion?].
11. Yanis: Me gusta mucho. Me gusta mucho leer y escribir. [I like a lot. I like a
12. lot reading and writing].
13. Nakyung: Ah, okay. Te gusta mucho.

(Student Interview, 5/20/2019)

When he was asked again what being bilingual meant to him, he responded that it was to be able to speak well in two languages, as shown in lines 1 and 2. In lines 3 and 10, he articulated that biliteracy meant passion. Overall, he contended that he enjoyed learning to speak, read, and write in two languages.

At home, he also made his way into language and literacy practices by having his own routine of reading and behaving well, rather than watching TV. His mother described him as an organized and responsible child.

In this way, Yanis established his social identities as a responsible student and leader in this class. Yanis made his way into being a successful Spanish language user and writer, and thus took up the good student position in Maestro Martin's class. Yanis had his routine way of behaving at home, which was further observed in the classroom. It is possible that if had drawn upon the local model of a good student in the English-dominant contexts, he would not have identified himself as a successful student. However, Yanis, who constructed a Latinx cultural identity at home, drew upon the re-conceptualized model of good students in Maestro Martin's class and successfully re-constructed a social identity as a leader through peer interactions and social interactions with the teachers.

Alicia: a kind and helpful girl. At home, Alicia mostly spoke Spanish. According to her father's report, Alicia "spoke 99 percent Spanish and 1 percent English" at home. She read books in both Spanish and English with her father, who had immigrated from Mexico at the age of nineteen. Because her father could speak both Spanish and English, whereas her mother spoke Spanish, she sometimes read books in English for her father. Her parents tried to speak Spanish at home all the time. Although they thought that it was necessary to learn to speak English as residents of the U.S, they also thought that as "Latinos," they had to speak Spanish (Parent interview, 5/7/2019).

The teachers showed mostly positive opinions of Alicia. Both teachers gave highly positive comments regarding Alicia's social development and academic growth. Maestro Solomon's initial reaction focused at first on her "amable" and "kind" character, but he soon moved to her academic success, commenting that she was "muy inteligente," "very intelligent." For the teachers, Alicia was a "kind" and "helpful" student (Interview with Maestro Solomon, 5/14/2019).

The social identity that Alicia constructed as a kind and helpful student was illustrated in Maestro Martin's verbal notes, which Maestro Solomon confirmed. Alicia constructed her social identity as a compliant student who had close connections with the teachers. In this way, the teachers positioned Alicia at the center of the continuum of the classroom social networks.

Drawing on the observations in the classroom, Alicia, as a responsible student, actively participated in classroom activities, but at the same time did not forget to spend time with her peers. Nonetheless, Maestro González highlighted that Alicia has made efforts to adjust to the new class setting as a second grader. As the assistant teacher for first graders in the previous year, Maestro González had observed Alicia when she was in the first grade. An informal interview, as now special education teacher for Edmundo, who needed extra help, holds up the idea that Alicia was positioned as a kind, helpful companion, and a compliant student for her teachers through her interactions with her peers and teachers (Interview with Maestro González, 2/11/2019). In other words, these social identities were taken up and re-constructed through interactions with other members of the class.

Similar to Yanis, Alicia constructed the meaning of bilingualism and biliteracy in a positive light. When she was asked what being bilingual meant, as well as what it meant to read and write in two languages, she responded that it is to be able to speak and write in two languages, and that she enjoyed reading and writing. Excerpt 2 is a part of the interview that took place with Alicia and her father.

Excerpt 2

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 14. Alicia's father: | Alicia, por favor. ¿Qué significa para ti poder escribir y poder |
| 15. | leer? [Alicia, please. What does it mean to you to be able to write |
| 16. | and to be able to read?] |
| 17. Alicia: | ¡Bueno! [Good!] |
| 18. Alicia's father: | ¿Y para qué sirve leer y escribir? [What does it serve to read and |
| 19. | write for?] |
| 20. Alicia: | ¡Para aprender! [To learn!] |
| 21. Alicia's father: | ¿Para qué te ayuda? [How does it help you?] |
| 22. Alicia: | Aprender y escribir. [To learn and to write]. |
| 23. Alicia's father: | ¿Cuándo aprendes y escribes en la escuela? [When you learn and |
| 24. | write at school?] |
| 25. Alicia: | Como en ciencias, tengo que estar leyendo y después escribir. |
| 26. | [Like in science [class], I have to be reading and later writing]. |

27. Alicia's father: ¿Y cómo te ayuda para la escuela? [And how does it help you for
 28. the school?]
 29. Alicia: ¡A divertirme! [To have fun!]
 (Student Interview, 5/7/2019)

In lines 14, 18, 21, 23, and 27, Alicia's father took part in the interview as an interviewee and also as an interviewer, while I was trying to ask Alicia questions around biliteracy. When Alicia's father asked Alicia how reading and writing function for her, she responded that she could learn in line 20. For her, reading and writing seemed to be a tool for learning.

At home, her parents actually helped her challenge herself in various ways, which could have helped her make progress in school. According to the teacher, her parents were the only Latinx family who challenged their children, which is more typically found in White families. At home, she was a "fun girl" (Parent interview, 5/7/2019).

Maestro Martin further highlighted that her parents pushed her beyond what she could do at the moment and spent time regularly with her to do homework at home (Interview, 2/11/2019)

In this way, Alicia successfully constructed her social identity as a helpful student who was sometimes positioned as talkative by negotiating her new identity in hidden spaces in school as well as in home contexts. The construction of her identity as a kind person provided her with opportunities to try her English with Spanish home language students and at other times with English home language students.

Marek: a mediator between Spanish and English home language students. Marek, coming from English-speaking home, spoke only English at home with his sister and parents. However, his parents were multilingual who had conducted research in East Asia, which influenced his interest in Nepal. His father reported that they wanted "their children to develop the ability to communicate cultural values, systems, and meanings, [and thus their children] could transfer the skills of the second language they learn through language to other languages, eventually" (Parent interview, 5/25/2019). Marek tried his Spanish with the Spanish-English bilingual peers and was one of the few English home language students who socialized with Spanish home language students. However, he was much more invested in his home language, English (69%) than in Spanish (31%).

Both Maestro Martin and Maestro Solomon were a bit reluctant to share their opinions on how they would position Marek in the class (Informal interview, 3/1/2019). The lead teacher positioned Marek at the middle of the social networks in the classroom in March. However, the interview below shows how the teachers' view towards Marek changed throughout the second half of the academic year. At the initial formal interview, Maestro Martin was reluctant to highlight the confidence that Marek had, which encouraged him to actively participate in classroom activities and try out his own ideas and theories (Interview with Maestro Martin, 1/25/2019). Maestro Solomon further shared his observations on Marek's changed social identities as much less outgoing and "callado," "quiet," even if he did have his playmates to get along with. Maestro Solomon described Marek as "in general, a bit callado," "quiet," but "sometimes has some friends to get along with" (Interview with Maestro Solomon, 5/14/2019). One possibility of this shifting identity might have been associated with relocation due to his parents' new job in Pennsylvania, but it was not clear whether Marek began to construct an identity that was different from the outgoing and playful identity that he constructed throughout the first half of the semester.

During the observation period, Marek responsibly completed his tasks, engaged in language and literacy activities in his two languages, and socialized with his peers in the classroom, in the hallway, and on the playground. He regularly participated in classroom activities. When given time, he was an avid writer because he was interested in Nepali and Nepal's religions. Socially, his classmates liked him, and he got along well with both Spanish home language students and English home language students.

Additionally, Marek expressed mostly positive understanding of bilingualism and biliteracy. In the student interview, he noted that for him, bilingualism meant that he is able to speak in two languages. The following interview excerpt further shows how he viewed bilingualism and biliteracy.

Excerpt 3

30. Nakyung: Are you bilingual? What does it mean to be bilingual?
 31. Marek: Yes. It means that I speak both languages.

32. Nakyung: What does it mean to read and write in two languages?
33. Marek: It's fun and tiring. It's fun. I learn by reading from my parents. Surely my mom told me about Nepal. It's she has books to read. My dad reads. They are hopeful for me to learn.
36. Nakyung: What do you do for reading and writing at school?
37. Marek: I've read a very long story. 6 pages yeah, I like reading about fish, I also like writing about history and interesting things that like Hinduism. Read books about Hinduism at home and write at school. I also like making
40. stories I wrote four fishing stories and I wrote a bigger. One keeps coming up with other stories...

(Student interview, 5/20/2019)

In line 33, Marek answered that reading and writing could be fun and tiring. He further noted that he liked reading and writing. At home, as one of the few privileged students whose parents worked with a fixed schedule. According to the lead teacher, Marek had better access to resources, unlike other students who come from socio-linguistically and culturally minority groups, which allowed him to develop higher critical thinking through reading on diverse topics.

The processes of his social identity construction involved his shifting identities from an outgoing student to a more or less outgoing student. Even though Marek socialized with his Spanish home language classmates and invested in Spanish, his participation as an English speaker in science or social studies drew much more attention because he could express his ideas and critical opinion about concepts that he had been already exposed to and had possibly discussed at home. While Marek practiced much more Spanish in May than in the earlier period of the academic year, the teachers positioned Marek as less sociable than earlier. If Marek's investments in Spanish would have come along earlier, his social identity in this class would have impacted his positioning in the classroom by the teachers.

Tiara: an emerging bi-/multilingual learner. Tiara was mostly positioned at the peripheral edge of the classroom. Unlike most of her peers in this study who started the two-way immersion program as kindergartners, Tiara began in an English-only classroom as a kindergartner and then changed to a two-way immersion at the start of first grade. At home, she was heavily invested in Spanish and played around with Spanish words with her mom. In the parent interview, her mother reported that they sometimes practiced the additional language at Mexican restaurants by reading menus and ordering food. She further mentioned that Tiara had been surrounded by multilingual families and thus was more or less exposed to Spanish since she was a baby until they moved into their current house where they had been living in for three years.

Both Maestro Martin and Maestro Solomon reported that they were worried about Tiara's performance. The lead teacher specifically mentioned that Tiara was smart, and her reading level had improved. However, during the time of the first formal interview, both teachers were more concerned with her classroom performances because Tiara's identity as a predominantly failing student seemed to be brought to the foreground. The teacher interviews indicated that Tiara certainly had difficulties at home and thus, might have difficulties at school, socially and emotionally, not focusing on her studies and feeling marginalized (Interview with Maestro Martin, 1/25/2019). The lead teacher further noted that Tiara was having problems though he attributed these to her parent's separation rather than to innate deficiency. Maestro Martin further reported that "Tiara... su papá no está en su vida, abandonó la familia..." "Tiara... her dad is not in her life, he abandoned the family" (Informal interview with Maestro Martin, 3/1/2019).

Maestro Martin actually praised her skills in mathematics and improved reading levels at the time of the exit formal interview. However, Maestro Solomon's observations below suggested that Tiara was positioned not only as "not a good student," but also as a peer who was difficult to get along with. The assistant teacher described Tiara as "difficult, feels very exiliada de la clase," "isolated from the class," "everyone loves others but not her para tener atención... feels victimized. Acts out a fair amount." "Estaba mejor pero ahorita mal. Todavía." "She was better but now bad" (Interview with Maestro Solomon, 5/14/2019). At the exit formal interview with the assistant teacher, Maestro Solomon positioned Tiara as a very "high-head" and "bossy" peer who "want[ed] to control" (Interview with

Maestro Solomon & González, 5/14/2019), which was the way other teachers positioned her as well (Interview with Maestro González, 2/11/2019). In this way, Tiara could not re-position herself as a good student nor a pleasant peer, and ended up constructing a negative social and academic identity, which did not afford her opportunities to acquire better abilities to speak, read, and write in her additional language in and outside of the classroom.

Despite the fact that she could not develop an identity as a successful student/peer, which possibly was influenced by how the teachers positioned her, Tiara demonstrated certain instances in which she could have been positioned in the middle of the classroom social networks by the middle of the semester (May, 2019). Even though she did not engage in advanced Spanish in her daily literacy practices, she read bilingual or Spanish books during the Daily Five activities and engaged in Spanish writing. When I was in the classroom on Mondays and Fridays, she often asked me to sit with her and listen to her or help her with certain Spanish words, while reading or writing. Tiara also expressed more or less positive understanding of bilingualism and biliteracy.

Excerpt 4

42. Nakyung: Nakyung: Are you bilingual?

43. Tiara: Yes!

44. Nakyung: What is reading and writing for you?

45. Tiara: Reading and writing for me?

46. Nakyung: Yes

47. Tiara: Reading and writing for me is learning.

(Student interview, 5/20/2019)

Similar to Alicia, reading and writing meant learning for Tiara. Unlike Alicia, however, when Tiara was asked again the same question during a parent interview that took place at home, she noted that there are “so many books to read” and that there was “boring stuff” and “fun stuff” (Parent interview, 5/28/2019).

At home, Tiara seemed to read mostly English books, but sometimes read Spanish books and did homework in Spanish with the help of her mother. Maestro Martin often assigned reading or writing in Spanish as homework. For instance, students were asked to write a short essay on what they like to do and what they do not like to do in Spanish. Once the students completed homework, they needed to ask one or both of their parents to sign the homework sheet. Because her mother was simultaneously studying in a master’s program and at the same time working as an assistant teacher, Tiara’s mother could not help her daughter as much as she wanted to. It seemed that Tiara could not always complete homework successfully, but Tiara could sometimes get help from her mother, which seemed to facilitate her completion of homework in Spanish.

Overall, Tiara could not be positioned at the center or in the middle of the social network in school. However, it was clear that she was invested in Spanish reading and writing at home as well as in school, which could not be fully accepted by the teachers and peers due to her personal and emotional experiences. Drawing on her language and literacy practices that she performed at home in the two languages, Tiara’s identity as an emerging bilingual learner has been developing in certain hidden spaces of school and at home.

4.3 Young bilingual learners’ language and literacy development

Maestro Martin and Maestro Solomon assessed their students in informal ways. They observed and knew what the children were able to do and were not able to do in particular tasks and events (Genishi & Dyson, 2009, p. 117). Maestro Martin and Maestro Solomon’s assessments were conceptually opposed to traditional standardized tests but served to help the young learners grow and come to become a part of the community, linguistically and socially. For example, although Maestro Martin was under pressure to get his second graders to take the time to revise their writing once again before turning in their assignments, he also wanted to remind his students of following the routines of literacy activities, thereby internalizing the schooled ways of behaving. Both the teachers were keenly aware of the language use among these bilingual learners, and despite the lack of formal training, their assessment of the focal students’ language and literacy development was mainly tied to and aligned with their understanding of the students’ social and emotional development and their academic skills.

Current assessments in postmodern times that largely involve standardized test scores may not adequately reflect how bilinguals acquire and learn to talk, read, and write. Nonetheless, it is also important to note that teachers' efforts are "supported and constrained by the districts, communities, and society in which they work," indicating that language is "not only deeply personal, tied to our identities as family and community members, but also as political" (Genishi & Dyson, 2009, p. 19). Therefore, ways of assessing bilinguals' language and literacy should necessarily echo their on-going and complex learning process.

Peirce (1995) further argued that language acquisition cannot be separated from how learners construct their selfhood and can be understood by others. Following these scholars, analysis of the focal students' language and literacy production can reveal how students are positioned differently in classroom social networks as well as how these social identities relate to their language and literacy development, particularly in relation to writing. To this end, the analysis of language and literacy development involves their language use and writing crafts.

The focal students' language practices. In the bilingual classroom, the emergent bilingual focal students tried out their linguistic assumptions in both languages. Copple and Bredekamp (2009) argued, "children's greatly expanded vocabulary, along with their new awareness that the same word can have multiple meanings, has implications for social interactions" (p. 282). As second graders, the focal students engaged in "interactive, reciprocal conversations" with their peers and teachers while learning to speak and write. The ways they interacted with their peers and teachers influenced their opportunities to learn. All the focal students invested in Spanish oral production to differing degrees to either maintain their home language or practice their additional language. Table 1 displays ratings of the focal students' oral Spanish abilities. Gort (2012) argued that young bilingual learners translanguaged by using loan words and bilingual lexical code-switched items, and by using tag-switching forms, which indicates their sociolinguistic and sociocultural competence. Following Gort's (2012) sub-categorization of sociocultural and sociolinguistic competence, this study took sociolinguistic competence to be bilinguals' use of loan words, bilingual lexical code-switched items, and tag-switching translanguaging. Table 1 displays ratings of the Spanish oral production of the emergent bilingual focal students. Abbreviations refer to the following: N (noun), V (verb), Adv (adverb), SL (sentence lengths), SC (sentence complexity), F (female), M (male).

Table 1.

Ratings of spanish oracy of the focal students

	Spanish home language students						English home language students											
	Vocabulary			Complexity			Sociolinguistic Competence			Vocabulary			Complexity			Sociolinguistic Competence		
	N	V	Adv	SL	SC	*	N	V	Adv	SL	SC	*						
F	69	51	21	6.68	7	4	47	21	2	3.76	7	15						
M	53	34	16	5.5	4	5	22	13	5	3.88	2	3						

In Table 1, the vocabulary, (sentence) complexity, and sociolinguistic competence results indicate that both English home language students' and Spanish home language students' oral production in Spanish can learn from each other in terms of more advanced lexical items (noun) and non-lexical items (verbs and adverbs), as well as sociolinguistic competence. That is, the two Spanish home language students demonstrated higher results in the categories of verbs and adverbs than English home language students, but the English home language female student seemed to have a highly developed sociolinguistic competence. Although these results do not capture the quality of their Spanish, observations of the English home language students' interactions in and outside of the classroom demonstrated that they produced quality Spanish that took into account the language proficiency of the interlocutor.

The focal students' writing practices. In Maestro Martin's class, there was an official Spanish writing workshop in which students composed narrative, descriptive, and persuasive essays following the lead teacher's instruction. Notwithstanding that there was no official English writing class, there were writing opportunities in English for the students during certain English instructional lessons (science and social studies), through activities such as taking notes and writing a list of content-based vocabulary. Table 2 displays an overview of the writing samples written by the four focal students.

Table 2.
Writing samples

	Spanish	English	Translanguaging	Total
Alicia	13	0	0	13
Yanis	53	47	3	103
Marek	20	29	3	52
Tiara	26	85	7	118
Total	112	161	13	286

Including class notes, a total of 286 writing pieces were collected for the study. Of the 286 written texts, there were 112 Spanish texts and 161 English texts. Although every focal student, with the exception of Alicia, translanguaged in their writing, the translanguaged items were all bilingual lexical items rather than full sentences. Moreover, while all of Yanis, Marek, and Tiara's texts were in both English and Spanish, the texts obtain from Alicia writings were in Spanish. Of the 286 essays gathered for the study, 53 texts were complete essays, either in Spanish or English. These 53 writing samples consisted of Spanish essays on a topic chosen by the teacher written in a more or less structured way. Table 1 displays the task types, number of scripts including translanguaging, and the sources of the Spanish essays and notes collected for this study.

Table 3.
Writing tasks in Spanish

Essay topic	Type of task	No. of scripts gathered	No. of scripts using translanguaging
Free choice	Narrative	24	4
Free choice	Poem	10	1
<i>El águila calva</i> (The Bald Eagle)	Descriptive	7	0
<i>Mi Escuela</i> (My School)	Descriptive	3	1
<i>Mis actividades</i> (My Activities)	Narrative	2	0
<i>El sapo hambriento</i> (The Hungry Toad)	Narrative	1	0
<i>Mi comida favorita</i> (My Favorite Food)	Descriptive	1	0
<i>Mi ropa</i> (My Clothes)	Descriptive	1	0
<i>Donde vivo</i> (Where I Live)	Narrative	1	0
<i>Mi futuro</i> (My Future)	Narrative	1	0
<i>Mi horario</i> (My Schedule)	Narrative	1	0
<i>Mi opinion</i> (My Opinion)	Persuasive	1	0
Total		53	6

Table 3 shows that most of the writing samples involved narrative style (24 samples, 45%) in which students wrote in Spanish on the topic that the class was given or on a topic that the students chose. There were writing samples on the topic of "the bald eagle" that students learned about through pictures, descriptive words, and example sentences given by the lead teacher during the writing workshops. Other style of writings involved poems and descriptive and persuasive essays that students again learned about as a whole class and were given opportunities to write during the writing workshops.

Of the 53 writing texts, there were 9 English writing samples in an essay format. Table 4 presents information about the English essays and notes collected for this study, including task type, number of scripts including translanguaging, and source.

Table 4.
Writing tasks in English

Topic	Type of task	No. of scripts gathered	No. of scripts using translanguaging
Race	Class note	3	3
Dear diary	Narrative	3	0
Job list	Class note	2	1

Halloween	Descriptive	1	1
Total	-	9	5

Interestingly, these English writing samples included written translanguaging (5 pieces, 83%) whereas in the Spanish writing samples, there was only one writing sample with written translanguaging (1 piece, 22%). The rating criteria followed McCarthy and colleagues' (2005) rubric but diverged from it as their rubric was intended for fourth graders. Taking into consideration the features required for second grade bilingual writers, rhetorical style and voices were considered and the researcher rated on a scale of 5. Table 5 displays ratings of the four students' Spanish essays.

Table 5.

Ratings of Spanish writing

Name	Rhetorical style	Voice	Translanguaging	Overall
Yanis	4.5	4	No	8.5
Alicia	3.5	4.5	No	8
Marek	3.5	3.5	No	7
Tiara	3.5	3	Yes	6.5

Rhetorical style. Yanis' essays displayed his abilities in writing structured pieces that satisfied the features required as a second grader's composition. Yanis' Spanish piece (Essay 1) showed the beginnings of organization and highlighted Spanish speaker identity through characters, utterances, and details. Alicia's writing samples contained certain grammatical errors, but her writing samples focused on one topic and presented that topic in a structured way with an elegant word choice. For instance, Alicia's Spanish essay 3 deals with unicorns and demonstrates an opening, content, and an ending. Marek focused on the topic of fishing and created a story that demonstrated an understanding of organization and coherence.

Voice. The four students expressed emotions and opinions through Spanish writing. Yanis wrote about his dad, his sisters, and other topics from his own experiences in his everyday life. He also expressed his desire to practice more English, as he felt that he spoke less than expected. Alicia expressed a range of diverse emotions with details and sophisticated words. Marek wrote Spanish writing pieces that reflected his interest in fishing as well as his good relationship with his dad. Tiara secretly wrote about her close relationship with a specific friend and expressed love with drawings and words, which mostly occurred in English. She mostly used Spanish to complete assigned tasks.

Overall, it was clear that Yanis, Alicia, and Marek mostly created good student identities, whereas Tiara could not successfully construct an identity as a good student. Moreover, Tiara used English, her home language, much more frequently than the other three students. Although a comparison of the four bilinguals' writing abilities indicates differences between Tiara's writing and that of the other students, Tiara's writing deserves more recognition. Tiara did take notes during the official lessons and while engaging in literacy activities during the Spanish Language Arts lessons; her written pieces were not as advanced as Yanis' and Alicia's, but she expressed her feelings and emotions with details in a mostly structured way similar to the way other second grade students would write. Therefore, language and writing abilities are not always considered to be correlated, and emerging bilingual students can write even though they might be at the peripheral learning zone in the classroom.

4.4 Language and literacy practices in two languages as practices and cultural capital

Interviews with the focal students pointed to the assumption that for them, literacy practices were embedded in their everyday life. Interviews with one or both of the focal students' parents further revealed that for Spanish-speaking families, becoming bilingual was a fundamental or at least a necessary task to be able to live as a Latinx in the U.S, whereas for English-speaking families, becoming bilingual involved extra opportunities, such as traveling or studying abroad and gaining benefits from it.

From the perspectives of the focal students' parents, it seemed that becoming bilingual and biliterate was considered a social practice. From the Spanish-speaking parent's perspective, becoming bilingual and biliterate was fundamental to survive. For example, in a parent interview, Alicia's father reported that his sociolinguistic and demographic background made his family aware of the importance of learning to speak, read, and write in two languages. He noted that he and his wife try to speak

Spanish at home all the time because as Latinos, he thought they have to speak Spanish. However, as someone living in the U.S, he was aware that it is necessary to speak English. For Yanis' parents, becoming bilingual was necessary, but it was more important to educate their children to become not only competent but also humble. Yanis' mother thought that morality and personality possibly helped him fit into the classroom social network and being an organized student helped him become a competent student. To a varying degree, Spanish-speaking parents thought that becoming bilingual was fundamental to become successful in the U.S.

For English-speaking parents, the process of becoming bilingual was enacted differently in their everyday life practices. The process of learning to speak, read and write in two languages varied, but it seemed possible to be partially accounted for in terms of Bourdieu's forms of capital, in particular cultural capital presented in the embodied state (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991). For example, in a parent interview, I asked Marek's father whether Marek speaks languages other than English, he clearly articulated that they expect Marek's investments in Spanish to help him learn important values, such as "cultural values, systems, and meaning" (Bourdieu, 1977) (Parent interview, 5/25/2019). His statements also indicated that they not only embraced cultural and linguistic diversity, but they also felt the need to learn language to embrace "others." In another parent interview, Tiara's mother was also asked if they speak languages other than English at home, and she noted that they sometimes practice Spanish. Tiara's mother also mentioned that she told Tiara different body parts in Spanish when Tiara was a baby, and that she still tried to speak Spanish sometimes using phrases like "¿Cómo te fue hoy?" "How was your day today?" Tiara's mother thought that learning Spanish could provide her daughter with more job opportunities because she seemed to view Spanish as convertible into economic capital, "may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications" (Sadovnik & Coughan, 2016, p. 58).

For the Spanish home language focal students and their parents becoming bilingual and learning to read and write were valuable social practices that could mediate learning, as shown in Excerpt 5.

Excerpt 5

48. Alicia's father: ¿Cuándo aprendes y escribes en la escuela? [When you learn
49. and write at school?]
50. Alicia: Como en ciencias, tengo que estar leyendo y después escribir
51. Alicia's father: ¿Y cómo te ayuda para la escuela? [And how does it help you in the
52. school?]
53. Alicia: ¡A divertirme! [To have fun!]
54. Nakyung: Oh!
55. Alicia's father: ¿Cómo te divertirías leyendo y escribiendo? [How would you have
56. fun reading and writing?]
57. Alicia: Puedo escribir puedo escribir como los... que me divierte, porque
58. puedo escribir las cosas de los libros y más tienen palabras
59. interesantes y un poco eso es de plano. [I can write I can write like
60. those... that I can have fun, because I can write things from the
61. books and there are interesting words and a little bit it is definitely].
62. Alicia's father: Okay, ya tiene más sentido, tu respuesta. [Okay, now your response
63. makes sense].

(Interview, 5/7/2019)

For Spanish-speaking families, it was critical to make sure that their children had a good life which they thought they could achieve by attaining better education. In other words, it was clear for them that putting in effort to be successful is essential in a country where they were not considered to be members of the majority group, but minority members of society. For these reasons, it was possible that for these families, language and literacy learning was socially "embodied cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 1977) that could help their children live a decent life in the U.S. as Latinx.

From the students' perspective, becoming bilingual was natural, and learning to read and write was an enjoyable literacy practice that helped them learn more and complete everyday activities at school to differing extents (Interview, 5/7/2019). When Alicia, Yanis, Marek, and Tiara were asked what becoming bilingual meant to them, they all responded that it meant to speak in two languages. It seemed that for all the focal students, reading and writing were enjoyable activities, but Marek and

Tiara mentioned something different. When I asked what it means to read and write in two languages, Tiara said, “reading and writing for me is learning.” For Marek, it seemed that to Marek school-based literacy activities were doable, but he seemed to prefer home-based literacy practices (Student interview, 5/20/2019). Both Tiara and Marek seemed aware of the number of tasks given, but each of them found a way to enact literacy practices at home and in school.

4.5 Expanding bilingual learning space from home to school

Literacy practices in classroom contexts were expanded by literacy activities at home to varying degrees by the Spanish and English home language students. Specifically, the two Spanish home language students mostly focused on literacy practices in their additional language English, rather than language practices in their home language, Spanish, while the two English home language students mostly focused on language practices with different purposes. For instance, parents of the Spanish home language students reported their child’s literacy activities at home.

His interview showed that Alicia’s home literacy practices helped her expand bilingual literacy practices in school contexts. At home Alicia read with her parents both in Spanish and English and expanded her bilingual vocabulary. Their home literacy practices allowed Alicia to be a devoted bilingual writer. Another Spanish home language student, Yanis seemed not to have opportunities to engage in literacy activities with his parents. Yanis’ mother showed that Yanis’ language practices revolve around his parents’ decisions about language choice (Parent Interview, 5/2/2019). Both of Yanis parents’ priority was Yanis’ future, more than his language use. Language served as a communication tool rather than as a tool for understanding deeper meanings about language at Yanis’ home, Yanis’ language practices mostly revolved around his home language Spanish. On the other hand, Alicia’s father perceived learning English as a utilitarian act. The bilingual students, with the exception of one English home language student from a multiracial family focused on language practices in their home language rather than in their additional language.

5. Conclusion and policy implications

The young bilingual learners’ multiple dimensional identities (linguistic and social) that they constructed in school and at home played different roles in the focal students’ language and literacy development in Maestro Martin’s class. Although students like Tiara who began to study in the bilingual school later than the other students and were still in the process of catching up with the academic content, as well as language development in her additional language, seemed to fall behind, their writing practices showed that they were making an effort to draw on their linguistic repertoire and go beyond what others thought they could do.

The writing literacy practices discussed here demonstrate that bilinguals’ language development was roughly aligned with their literacy development. For certain students, however, there was bidirectional learning of speaking and writing. The two English-home language bilinguals’ writing literacy in their additional language, in this case Spanish, went beyond their oracy in their additional language. Both Tiara and Marek, as avid writers, produced writing in Spanish, even though their speaking was mostly conducted in English. For Marek, home-based literacy practices created opportunities for more reading and writing through the influence of his mother, whereas for Tiara, school-based literacy practices also helped her creatively and strategically engage in reading and writing in Spanish with the support of her peers. In this way, this study showed that bilinguals’ social identity construction was closely linked to how invested they were in school, not only in the use of their home language or their additional language, but also in the literacy practices that they performed at home.

Policy recommendations:

“Bi-/Multilingual language policies” are required to empower learners of culturally and linguistically diverse groups to express themselves in classrooms (Hornberger, 2002). Hornberger (2002) acknowledged that “the one language-one nation ideology of language policy and national identity is no longer the only available one worldwide” (p. 29). When implementing translanguaging as a resource for teaching, it is critical to take into consideration the diversity of “standard and nonstandard language varieties... communicative modes and the range of contextualized, vernacular,

minority knowledge resources that learners bring to the classroom” (p. 45). The heritage of education which left a deep blindness toward the belief that “keeping languages compartmentalized helps learning” should not prohibit emergent bilinguals from growing (Corcoll López & González-Davies, 2016, p. 67).

Production of multilingual texts that embrace the diversity of multiple cultures, languages, and identities would facilitate sustainable bi-/multilingual language policies. Bishop (1990) emphasized the power of literature that allows readers to see themselves, their lives, and experiences “as part of the larger human experience.” Metaphors such as “mirrors, windows, and sliding doors” are viewed as multicultural literature (ix). In order to include voices that have been marginalized even in multilingual classrooms, multilingual cultures should be shared, recognized, and valued through multilingual and multicultural books, as well as teaching with a focus on similarities and differences across cultures.

Taking into consideration not only “countable languages” but also “human communication” and “language environment” is fundamental for emergent bilinguals to be encouraged and to participate in the classroom, communities, and in society (as cited in Hornberger, 2002, p. 33). From Bourdieu’s (1991) practice perspective, language is both permanent and emerging: language is permanent because the goal of institutions such as schools, communities, and organizations is to maintain an authorized code; language is emerging because people’s habitus interacts with a field and thus, what interlocutors do with languages changes in accordance with contexts. For these reasons, what is needed is not to avoid the importance of helping emergent bilinguals to develop academic language but to support them to develop both oral and academic proficiencies through human-based teaching that reflects their actual use of languages and the societal demands for cognitive development.

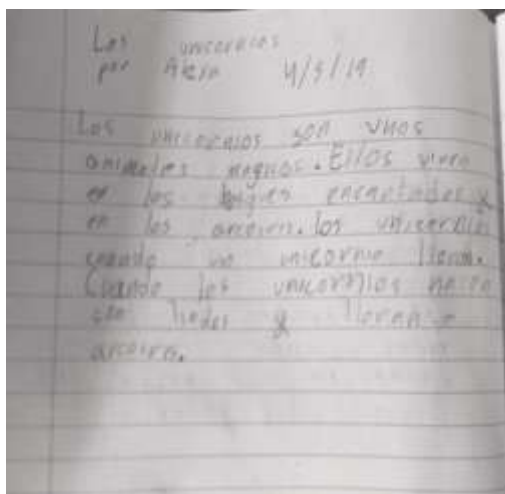
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Appendix A. Spanish Writing Samples

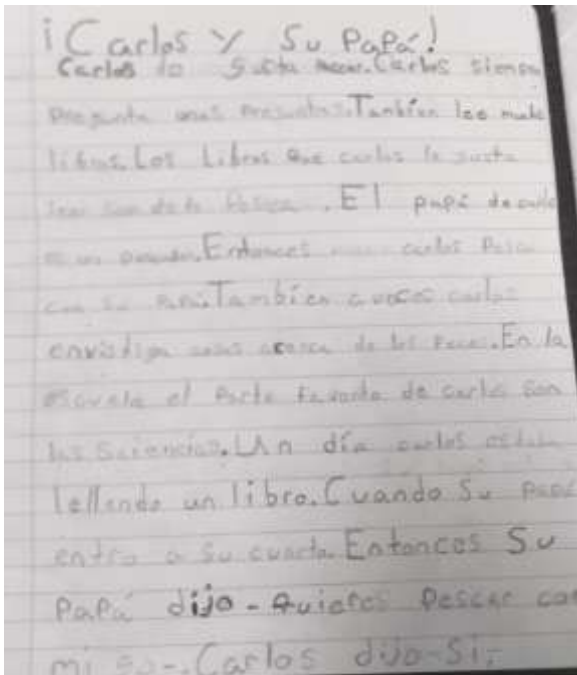
Alicia: Spanish Essay 1



Los unicornios
por Alicia 4/3/19

Los unicornios son unos animales mágicos. Ellos viven en los bosques encantados y en los arcoiris. Los unicornios cuando un unicornio llora. Cuando los unicornios nacen son lindos y lloran arcoiris.

Marek: Spanish Essay 2



¡Carlos y Su Papá!

Carlos le gusta pescar. Carlos siempre preguntaba unas preguntas. También lee mucho libros. Los Libros que Carlos le gusta leer son de la Pesca. El papá de Carlos es un pescador. Entonces cuando Carlos Pesca con su papá. *También a *vece Carlos *investiga cosas acerca de los peces. En la escuela el parte favorito de Carlos son las ciencias. Un día Carlos estaba *leyendo un libro. Cuando su papá entra a su cuarto. Entonces Su *Papá dijo- quieres pescar *con Mi papá. Carlos dijo -Si.-