

Australian Association for Research in Education

Creative Dissent: Constructive Solutions. Parramatta NSW 27th November – 1st December, 2005

Diaspora, hybridity and growing up bilingual in a globalized world

AARE ID: JON05366

Criss Jones Díaz
University of Western Sydney
School of Education

Abstract

In Australia, there has been little research into how bilingual families and their children negotiate identity in a globalised world in which the dominance of English remains a significant force in children's lives. Similarly, research that investigates the connections between language retention and identity negotiation is also limited, particularly in relation to how children experience their hybrid identities in the contexts of education and globalisation. Further, in early childhood and primary education, understandings of language and identity are often informed by developmentalist and liberal pluralist frameworks which often limit possibilities for extending children's home languages and identity construction. By drawing on cultural theory, this paper highlights the significance of hybridity and diaspora in identity negotiation and language retention within the hybridised spaces mediated by language, 'race', gender and class. Through the exploration of selected findings from recent qualitative research that investigated the significance of cultural history in the Australian Latin American diaspora, the discussion highlights the connections between multiple identity construction and language retention for bilingual children and their families.

Introduction

While the majority of the world's population do not speak English as their home language, English is the second most widely spoken language with 5.4% of the world's population having proficiency in its use (Nettle & Romaine, 2000).

However, Crystal (1997) reminds us that English has not become a powerful language because of its inherent linguistic or grammatical features, or because of the large numbers of people who speak it. Rather, much of its dominance has grown within the last fifty years in which English has gained prominence and power over other languages. For example, by 1966, 70% of the world's broadcasting systems were conducted in English (Nettle & Romaine, 2000). Consequently, it is currently considered a globalised and international language (Crystal 1997, Pennycook, 1998). Hence, there is a significant relationship between the cultural, political, economic and military might of English and its connection to globalisation.

Globalisation is the construction of world systems that merge finance, trade, media and communication technologies. It also involves the interconnection of linguistic, cultural and social ideologies across multiple sites of economic, cultural, social and political fields, which is characterised by rapid change, free markets and capitalism at global levels (Marginson, 1999). Therefore, modes of production, trade, commerce, media and communication technologies operate at global levels. Constituted in these modes of production, communication technologies are paramount and most of these technologies are transmitted in English.

Consequently, our everyday lives are continuously marked by the impact of increased globalisation, communication technologies, free markets and increased flows of human and non-human resources and capital. As a result, globalisation remains a social and cultural reality in which English plays a fundamental role. So, because English is a powerful language everyone in the world wants to speak it and gain social and economic power through its use.

While globalisation and the dominance of English are on the rise, the fact remains that much of the world's population is bilingual or multilingual. Being able to speak more than one language is for many, considered the norm. Furthermore,

being bilingual accumulates social capital and good standing within one's own language and cultural group (Singh, 2002). For example, in Australia, more than 248 languages are spoken; including 48 Indigenous languages and more than 2, 8 million people (including young children) speak a language other than English at home, with more than at least 50,000 Indigenous language speakers (ABS, 2001).

Language and identity

Language is a significant marker of identity which is inextricably linked to the ways in which we understand others and ourselves. According to Foucault (1974) discourses operate in language and meaning systems which are informed by knowledge that we have available to us. Language enables us to deploy technologies through which meanings about the world are represented, exchanged and constructed. The meaning systems we use and knowledge we draw on in our daily lives, in looking at the world, in interacting with each other, in understanding relationships, and social practices are constituted in language (Robinson & Jones Díaz, 2006). Bilingual children growing up with two or more languages often experience their identity and sense of 'self' or subjectivity through cultural practices that are constituted in discourse and expressed through their languages. Hence for bilingual children and families, their subjectivity and identity can operate in two or more languages, across intersecting or conflicting social fields and cultural practices.

Language is significant in shaping identity, building social relationships and cultural practices. Further, the transmission of the home language from parents to children through whom local identities are expressed is a worldwide occurrence (Nettle & Romaine, 2000). Family cohesion and overseas links are effectively maintained when communication and cultural practices are passed down and transformed from generation to generation, without disruption to the home language (Wong Fillmore 1991, Diaz Soto, 1997, Jones Díaz, 2003). Evidently, Wong-Fillmore's (1991) research into language shift in the United States

highlights the important role of language retention in its link to family communication and intergenerational unity.

Yet, families are under considerable and increasing pressure to abandon their home language in favour of English. Parents see the benefits in their children speaking English in an increasing globalised and competitive world in which the stakes are high for their children's educational success. As Apple (1999) argues, in globalised economies, for which profit agendas dominate, parents' concerns for their children's economic and cultural futures intensify due to lowering of wages, decreased employment security and reduced public expenditure. This anxiety often transforms into parents speaking English to their children at home. Parents abandon the use of the home language in the hope that this will give their children the necessary linguistic and cultural capital that enables them to secure increasingly competitive educational and employment opportunities.

On the other hand, families conscious of the linguistic, intellectual and cultural benefits of raising their children bilingually, may struggle to maintain their home language, yet understand full well the old adage 'use it or lose it'. Unlike bilingual families, English speaking monolingual families do not have anxieties about whether their children will grow up speaking their home language (English). They are in a position to take their language for granted. This is due to the fact that English has gained much of its dominance by replacing the languages of Indigenous groups, such as Aboriginal Australians, Native Americans, and other immigrant communities (Nettle & Romaine, 2000).

Bilingual families may choose to consciously transmit the home language to their children. However, in English dominant societies like Australia, the fact remains that in the early years, many bilingual children are exposed to 'English only' educational environments. As a result, their home language can often be replaced by English. When one language replaces another and parents experience difficulties in transmitting their home language to their children, then, a gradual

form of language shift may result (Wong Fillmore 1991, Corson, 1998). In early childhood, when English replaces the home language, this form of language shift is known as subtractive bilingualism (Wong Fillmore, 1991, Jones Díaz, 2003). Indeed, the research clearly indicates that unless there is strong institutional and family support to the home language of minority communities, the processes of language shift will not be slowed down (Makin, Campbell & Jones Díaz, 1995, Jones Díaz, 2003).

Meanwhile, language shift and cultural shift have many similarities as a large part of language is culture-specific and an important part of traditional and contemporary cultural expression is lost when the language disappears. Hence, language death is symptomatic of cultural death due to cultural, social, economic and political assimilation, homogenisation and inequality (Nettle & Romaine, 2000).

Nonetheless, linguists predict that of the 5,000 – 6,000 languages spoken in the world, half these languages will be extinct by the next century. The disappearance of languages remains a serious threat to human language diversity (Nettle & Romaine, 2000). Nettle and Romaine (2000) aptly assert that more has been said about the plight of pandas and spotted owls than about the disappearance of human language diversity. They draw on metaphors of ‘murder’ and ‘death’ to highlight the reality that languages do not die a natural death, but are, instead murdered, through processes of language death, or language shift by other more powerful and dominant languages, such as English. To this extent, they claim that some have even accused English as a ‘killer language’.

Pedagogy and identity

In early childhood education, pedagogies that are informed by developmentalism and liberal pluralism limit opportunities for extending children’s home languages and identity construction. This is often apparent in ‘English only’ settings through which discourses of monolingualism silence the use of other languages and

affirmation of diverse cultural practices (Macedo, 1997, Cline & Necocheda, 2001, Jones Díaz, 2003).

Within the social fields of early childhood, the use of language is central to the construction of social relationships, which are often constituted in power relations, discourses and identities. Pedagogies informed by Piagetian discourses of child development tend to privilege normative monolingual developmental pathways to language learning. This only accounts for the acquisition of one language, with little regard for the complexity involved in negotiating two or more linguistic codes during the early years of life.

Further, pedagogical approaches that attempt to affirm children's cultural identity have been mostly informed by broader social policies of multiculturalism or liberal pluralism. These policies have for the most part translated into pedagogies that are tokenistic and superficial towards cultural difference (Castles & Cope 1984, Robinson & Jones Díaz, 2006). Indeed, such pedagogies of cultural tokenism emphasise cultural practice as celebration, and identity as fixed, linear and categorical. Such pedagogies equate cultural identity with traditional practices, dismissing the varied ways in which children's lives are mediated and their identities constructed within contradictory social fields and power relations. For early childhood educators, both liberal pluralism and developmentalism provide limited pathways for understanding how children's and families' hybrid identities are negotiated by social structures, linguistic and cultural practices bounded by national, regional, economic, political and globalised realities.

Yet, it has only been in recent years that studies with a focus on childhood bilingualism and languages learning in education have examined the relationship between power, discourse and identity. This is particularly pertinent to how bilingual children and their families negotiate issues of language and identity in educational settings. The few studies that are emerging examine issues of equity and its impact on language retention and bilingualism in childhood (see, for

example, Martin-Jones & Heller, 1996, Valdez, 1996, Schecter & Bayley, 1997, Volk 1997, Pacini-Ketchabaw, Bernhard & Freire, 2001). Martin-Jones and Heller (1996) argue that it is essential to examine discursive practices and discourses that are evident in the daily life of educational institutions. They point out that the language practices in multilingual settings are constituted in the legitimisation of power relations among cultural groups. Further, these language practices are embedded in the pedagogical discourses informed through such processes of legitimisation most often found in the pedagogies of early childhood education.

Still, issues of equity and power in relation to language retention and identity construction remain under examined in the contest of Australian early childhood education. Hence, this paper attempts to examine power by reframing identity, highlighting the significance of diaspora and hybridity for Australian immigrant communities in relation to issues of language retention. The discussion that follows begins by discussing diversity not homogeneity in the Latin American diaspora, and highlights the marginalising affects of homogenisation produced through discourses of multiculturalism. Then, by drawing on the work of Hall (1992, 1996), Bhabha (1994, 1998), and Castells (1997), the paper explores the notions of hybridity in the context of the Latin American diaspora by highlighting identity as transformative, fluid and often unstable.

Furthermore, this paper details some of the findings of recent qualitative research that investigated the connections between identity construction and language retention in Spanish speaking Latin American families whose children attended educational and community settings in Sydney, Australia. By drawing on cultural theory, the analysis explores the diversity of migration experiences and cultural histories in the Australian Latin American diaspora. The discussion also examines children's and families' multiple constructions of their own identities in relation to how they viewed living and growing up with two or more languages in dominant English speaking social fields. Finally, this paper draws

attention to how these children and their families negotiated 'difference' within the hybridised spaces mediated by language, 'race', class and gender.

Discourses of naming: Diversity not homogeneity

In Australia, similar to United States and Canada, Latin Americans have not escaped the marginalising affects of homogenisation constructed in the terminology used for purposes of identification. In Australia, Latin Americans are categorized as 'Hispanic', 'Spanish' and 'South American'. Within Australian discourses of multiculturalism, they are constructed as one of many 'ethnic communities'. Langer (1998) argues that by constructing national groups as 'ethnic communities' multiculturalism produces dubious assumptions that despite existing divisions based on class, religion, 'race' or gender, these divisions are rendered irrelevant due to migration. She argues that 'contested histories which produce different subject positions have no place within the discourse of multiculturalism, which constructs immigrants not as bearers of history, but as bearers of something called 'ethnic culture' (p. 163).

Latin American diaspora and hybridised identities

The Latin American diaspora has its origins in the conquests and invasion of the Americas by the Spanish characterised by the dispossession of land, the erosion of many of the Indigenous and African languages, slavery, racism and rape. The subordination of the Africans and Indigenous Americans to the Spanish colonists has provided a backdrop to much of the contemporary social landscape of Latin America and Spanish speaking Caribbean. Added to this historical context, the more recent political, economic and military intervention and penetration by United States, influences much of the contemporary Latin America and the Spanish speaking Caribbean society today. Indeed, Young (2001) reminds us, Latin America has been subjected more than any other region in the world to neo-colonialism through US political, economic and military imperialism.

Notwithstanding this structural and historical backdrop of the colonial influences

of the region, the Latin American diaspora is a significant presence in United States and Canada, and to a lesser extent in Australia. Therefore, concepts of diaspora and hybridity, articulated in cultural studies highlight the contemporary cultural reality or mixed cultural and racial identities of which Latin Americans share. Diaspora, then, is the disbursement of a cultural or racial group. Cohen (1999) argues that the identities produced in the diaspora are a result of forced displacement, dispersal and reluctant scattering of populations, rather than freely chosen experiences of dispersion.

Yet, Cohen reminds us that while the word denotes scattering or flight, historically diaspora is constituted in slavery, indenture, genocide and many other human rights violations. It is this notion of diaspora that there lies much of the Latin American experience derived from a postcolonial historical context of Spanish colonisation in which the subordination of Africans and Indigenous Americans produced Afro, Indigenous and Hispanic hybrid identities. However, within a contemporary context, the term diaspora denotes transnational migration movements linked to globalisation, embedded in a social condition entailing a particular form of consciousness and sense of identity (Anthias 1998, Vertovec and Cohen, 1999). It is also from this perspective that characterises contemporary Latin American diaspora to North America, Australia, Asia and Europe in which migratory flows of human movement in search of work, and increased life chances are apparent.

Meanwhile, the term hybridity implies a two-way borrowing and lending between cultures (Rosaldo, 1995). As Young (1995) points out, hybridity involves fusion and creation of a new form that is set against the old form of which it is partially made up. Hybridity, then, comes into existence at the moment of cultural and social practice, in which meaning is, articulated both from within past and present cultural histories and trajectories. Contemporary notions of the hybridity have the potential to acknowledge the construction of identity through the negotiation of difference (Papastergiadis, 2000). Hybridity provides new understandings for

deconstructing the power relations embedded in racialised meanings historically and culturally constructed. By examining hybridity through a cultural studies lens, identities constructed through difference are transcended beyond 'race', ethnicity and gendered categories. Hence, hybridity can be understood as the 'as the ongoing condition for all human cultures, which contain no zones of purity because they undergo continuous processes of transculturation' (Rosaldo, 1995, p. xv). Friedman (1997, p. 85) adds:

...hybridity is always, like all acts of identity, a question of practice, the practice of attributing meaning. It can be understood only in terms of its social contexts and the way in which acts of identification are motivated.

Ways in which acts of identification and ways of attributing meaning for marginal groups such as Latin Americans are often expressed in cultural, linguistic and social practices. Darder (1998) argues that marginal cultural groups such as Latin Americans have experienced hybridised histories of forced interaction with dominant culture. Through this process such marginal groups have required constant forms of adaptation and transformation, which have eroded, restructured and reconstructed social, cultural and language practices, beliefs and traditions.

Indeed, Bhabba (1998) argues that '...minorities or marginalised subjects have to construct their histories from disjunct and fragmented archives and to constitute their subjectivities and collectivities through attenuated, dislocated and exclusionary practices' (p. 39). This negotiation of cultural and linguistic differences affirms new and hybrid identities marked by 'race', gender and class as expressed in the poem by Levins Morales (in Levins Morales and Morales, 1986).

I am a child of the Americas
A light-skinned mestiza of the Caribbean
A child of many diaspora, born into this continent at the crossroads.

I am not african. Africa is in me, but I cannot return
I am not taína. Taíno is me, but there is no way back.
I am not european. Europe lives in me, but I have no home there.
I am new. History made me. My first language was spanglish.
I was born at the crossroads

and I am whole.

(Aurora Levins Morales, 'Child of the Americas' *Getting Home Alive*, p. 50)

Constructions of identity

Martín Alcoff and Mendieta (2003) argue that while individuals make choices about their own identity, they have limited control over the conditions within which these choices are made. To a large extent identities are imposed on the individual through social institutions, discourses and cultural practices that give meaning to ways in which individuals interpret or challenge these impositions. Martín Alcoff and Mendieta emphasise that within this socially constructed imposition, biological markers, such as appearance, skin colour and body shape are firmly circumscribed and have the potential to invoke various meanings and interpretations to the ways in which individuals negotiate identity. Still, identity is mediated through discourses of language, history and culture constituted through collective memory, fantasy, narrative, myths and religious revelations which are rearranged by individuals, groups and institutions (Hall, 1996, Castells, 1997).

Moreover, Hall (1996) conceptualizes identity from two distinct but related viewpoints in terms of the relationship between culture and identity. The first position he argues is related to shared culture or a sense of collective culture in which the mutual histories and cultural practices bind together codes of solidarity and imagined homogeneity within individuals and groups. His second position argues that within the constructed forms of shared cultural discourses and practices, there are points of difference, which are fragmented, transformative and positional. In this sense, cultural identity is a matter of 'becoming' as well as 'being' and belongs to the future as much as to the past (Hall, 1996).

Negotiating identity and difference

Following on from the work of Hall (1992, 1996) and Bhabha (1994, 1998) in identity negotiation, the notion that identity is always subjected to the 'play of difference' is central to the ways in which identity is negotiated. This 'play of difference' is socially constructed in contexts through which people are situated

that in turn influence and shape their identity. As Papastergiadis (1998) reminds us, 'identity is no longer perceived as natural, exclusive or fixed. It is always formed in relation to others' (p. 2). It is in this relationship to others that children and adults experience their identity in multiple and often contradictory ways. These contradictions are negotiated through dominant discourses that articulate and construct one's identity. Hence, they are often marginalized and 'othered' through this process, due to their difference.

Furthermore, Hall (1996) argues that identities are constructed through difference and their function as points of identification and attachment are often legitimised through their capacity to exclude or leave out. Through processes of exclusion and closure imagined homogeneity, unity and sameness form the basis of collective identities and fixed boundaries through which power relations between the 'insiders' and 'outsiders' are reproduced. (Hall, 1992, Bhabha, 1994). Therefore an important function of identity is its capacity to build homogeneous boundaries upon which imagined unity and sameness operates to construct closure and exclusion. Within this process power relations are constructed through which hegemonic identities are able to sustain themselves. Hence, identities constructed within discourses of 'race', whiteness, gender and language, can position the subjectivities of bilingual children and adults in multiple, contradictory and unstable locations which are not fixed but arbitrary.

Context of the study

Specifically, by drawing on Hall (1992, 1996), Bhabha (1994, 1998) and Bourdieu (1992, 1993), this study has examined questions of identity, social practices and power relations against a backdrop of language retention and language learning for bilingual children and their families. The primary focus of this study is the connection between language retention and identity negotiation in children and families from Spanish speaking Latin American backgrounds. Specifically, this study aimed to explore how diverse families, including interethnic and interracial families within a Latin American community negotiated

and reconstructed bilingual identity, 'race', ethnicity, gender and cultural difference within a context of hybridity and diaspora. Hence, this study is concerned with the social experiences of living and growing up with two (or more) languages within daily experiences of negotiating identity and power relations.

Approximately 26 children and 28 family members, including grandparents and parents from different family structures from extended, blended and interethnic / interracial families were involved in the entire study. These families represented various income levels with most parents working in a range of skilled and non-skilled occupations. They were residents of the Inner-West, South-West and Eastern suburbs of Sydney, Australia. Their children also attended educational and community settings such as playgroup, day care, schools, and after-school Spanish language programs within these areas. However, the voices documented in this article represent a smaller sample of three children and six parents. In order to protect the identity of the participants, the names used in this article are pseudonyms.

This study aimed to capture the diversity and heterogeneity of language use in an urbanised Spanish speaking Latin American community. Therefore the data gathering techniques involved quasi-ethnographic, and case study approaches informed by qualitative multiple research methods to study and interpret the socially constructed forms of reality that underpin the use of language and the negotiation of identity. Data collection involved demographic surveys, open-ended informal interviews and field notes, to capture personal experience, reflexivity and autobiography in order to 'describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals lives' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003, p. 5). The data from the interviews have been analysed using thematic analysis informed by the theoretical frameworks previously discussed, identifying major issues and discourses in relation to how parents and children negotiated their identity as bilingual Latin American Australians.

Hence, the participants were encouraged to draw on their reflections, experiences and personal opinions about identity and language. Additionally, I was able to draw on my own subjectivity as a bilingual English/Spanish speaking Anglo Australian whose membership in an interracial bilingual family is experienced through daily experiences of identity negotiation, transformation and struggle. In these experiences, the intersections of 'race', language, gender and class are apparent. This grounded much of the conversations between me and the participants and we were able to share common experiences and reflections.

As a researcher, then, this study highlights the significance of reflexivity in the research process as the interplay of my membership in the field in which I am researching is bounded by personal, professional and scholarly pursuits and complexities. Hence, this study recognises that constituted in the process of inquiry, is the relationships between the researcher and the researched mediated by the situational constraints that shape the investigation (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003).

Findings and discussion

Within this study, three major issues emerged in relation to identity, language retention, migration and 'difference'. The first theme highlights the relationship between diaspora, migration and hybridity in view of how the families' cultural histories are intersected with linguistic, cultural and racial hybridity within the heterogeneous make up of families. The second theme explores the multiple and transformative constructions of identity of the adults and children in relation to their views about living in and growing up bilingual in dominant English speaking social fields. Finally, the third theme in this study demonstrates ways in which the adults and children negotiate their 'difference', in terms of how racialised, gendered and classed identities operate in monolingual social fields and power relations.

Researching children

In traditional social science and developmental psychology children's voices have most often been silenced and muted (Christensen & James, 2000). This is because within these paradigms children have been viewed as unreliable subjects, immature and irrational (Christensen & James, 2000, James, Jenks and Prout 1998, Mitchel & Reid-Walsh, 2002). Christensen and James, call for all researchers working with children to recognise and acknowledge the subordinate and marginal spaces that children occupy in relation to adults. Therefore researchers on an ethical and practical level need to pay attention to the social constructions of childhood and the power relations with which children mediate their everyday lives. This also includes the impact of institutional and social inequalities constructed through poverty, racism, sexism, linguisticism and homophobia. Mitchel and Reid-Walsh, (2002) argue that recent work within the childhood studies recognises that even very young children can and do participate in decisions about themselves. This effectively challenges ideas about children as innocent, unknowing and unreliable informants in the research process.

Hence, this study recognises and acknowledges that bilingual children's experiences in negotiating identity and the use of their home language within hegemonic and racialised spaces of community and educational fields may be more similar to adults than different. Therefore, the voices of children as well as adults have featured as significant aspects, not only in the research design, but also in the inquiry process.

Theme 1: Diaspora, migration and hybridity: Diaspora and cultural history

In many of the interviews, the participants' cultural histories were often revealed which illustrate the significance of the Latin American migration experiences and diaspora in the Australian context. These histories were often intersected with linguistic and racial hybridity, racism, poverty and hardship. The extracts below illustrate the significance of the Indigenous influences in Oriella and Carol's

biography, together with the Afro-Latino influences in Raul's family. Finally, within the Australian diaspora, through its recent immigrant history, the Chinese and Brazilian diasporas in Jenny and her partner's family represented important influences in their lives.

Oriella

Oriella's, cultural histories were forged in the memories of her Indigenous grandparents. Oriella's memories of her Indigenous grandmother '...mi abuela paterna era Mapuche'...[my grandmother was a Mapuche] were set against a context of poverty and hardship. In the conversation below, she recalls her grandmother's mud brick house with a dirt floor:

Pienso que una vida muy dura yo pienso que también porque la vida es muy difícil pero yo no se tanto de mi abuela...El techo de la tierra. ...[E]ra solo de tierra no tenia madera ni nada mas, [El piso] estaba duro y yo lo regaba con agua entonces ... como siempre se puso duro, duro como se fuera cemento.

[I think that life was very hard and I think that life was difficult, but I don't know much about my grandmother...Her house was made from mud... [I]t was only a mud house, with no wood, or anything else. [The floor] was hard and I would clean it with water and it would always get hard, hard like cement].

Oriella's father died before she was five years old, and she recalled her childhood experiences of poverty marked by the intersections of gender, 'race' and class discrimination. She continues:

... tu era pobre, tu tiene Mapuche pobre con viviendo con la madre sola porque no ya tenia esposo. Tenia una seria de tres puntos como un tipo de discriminación.

[You are poor, you are a poor Mapuche, [and] your mother is alone, without a husband. I had three types of discrimination].

Carol

Carol recalled her grandmothers' ability to speak Quechua, one of the Indigenous languages of Peru. The data below is Carol's explanation for why her mother never passed the language on to her.

Carol: Para hablar no ha hablado [Quechua]no porque nunca ha practico tampoco. Pero ella como hablaba con la, la creció con gente mayor en la familia entonces entendía todo. Pero nunca la practicado porque su madre no le dejaba

Criss: ¿Porque?

Carol Porque eran cholos.

Carol: She didn't speak it [Quechua] no because she never spoke it much. But she could speak with the, she grew up with the elders of the family so she understood everything. But she never spoke it because her mother would not let her.

Criss: Why?

Carol: Because they were 'cholos'.

Carol's description of her grandmother as a 'cholo' is indicative of the racialised terms that exist in Peru, to describe people of hybridised Indigenous descent. Her incidental use of the term 'cholos' signifies, the taken-for-granted meanings constituted in racialising practices, which appear to have remained unquestioned in Carol's family. In the process the marginalising affects of such racialised terms has perhaps prevented her mother from passing on the language to her children.

Raul

In the Caribbean, the Afro-Caribbean diaspora is a significant feature of the social, cultural and racial diversity of the region. Hall (1999) argues that Caribbean diaspora is made up heterogeneity and diversity, which lives with and through hybridity and difference. Raul was born in the Dominican Republic, a country that has only in recent years celebrated its cultural history embedded in an Afro-Latino diaspora. The Afro-Latino Caribbean diaspora, like many diasporas of Latin America are constituted in the historic memories of enforced slavery, dispersion and colonisation.

In the Dominican Republic, identity has been historically the site for political manipulation. This was most apparent in the years of President Trijillo's dictatorship (1930 – 61). During this time, the ruling elite silenced and denied the Afro-Latino diaspora, by telling the people that despite the colour of their skin they were white, Catholic and Hispanic (Nyberg Sørensen, 1997). In the data below, Raul reflects on how 'whitening' processes manipulated the 'race' relations in his country.

Es una tragedia muy feo que ... cada un gobierno, empezar en como blanquear a Republica Dominicana...Entonces estaban de tratar categorar lo diferentes personas, diferentes mujeres y hombres por su colores para talvez saber como manejar la política interior. Pero estoy seguro de que para allá por el Trullijo ... hay un odio de los negros. Los mismos Dominicanos no le gustan negros...Ellos dicen '¡mira tu maldito negro...!'. A veces they blame themselves y yo, se que sé llaman a unos con otros negro...

[It's an ugly tragedy that ... every government started to whiten the Dominican Republic... So they tried to categorise different people, different women and men by colour maybe in order to manipulate internal politics. So, that's why I am sure that over there because of Trillijo ... there is a hatred of the blacks. The same black Dominicans hate blacks. They say look you damn 'negro'... Sometimes they blame themselves and I know that they call each other 'negro'...

This constructed form of identity politics denied the heterogeneous reality of Dominican life. This encompasses the everyday experiences of African, white Catholic and Indigenous Taíno heritage where spaces of multiple cultural, social, and racial differences co-exist (Nyberg Sørensen, 2001). Yet despite this reality, discourses of Dominican national identity adopted nineteenth century racialising categories of essentialised difference. According to Banton (in Young, 1990), there are 128 words in Spanish for different combinations of mixed race. In the data below, Raul refers to common Dominican terms used in the process of labelling and classifying people according to their skin colour.

O si, socialmente estaba establecido que ... los diferentes grupos de colores [de la piel] en la gente son los mulatos, los mestizos, los negros, que descendieron de de los esclavos de Africa... Allá si Republica Dominicana tiene varios llaman la gente por... diferentes colores [de la piel] ...

[Oh yes, people were socially classified according to colours [of the skin]. They were mulattos, mestizos, negroes that descended from the slaves of Africa... There in the Dominican Republic there are different names for people according to...different [skin] colour...

Raul's comments exemplifies how such forms of institutional racism produced power relations between Dominicans which served to reinforce the construction of the 'self' as the marginal 'other', in the diaspora of Dominican society.

Jenny

Jenny, was born in mainland China, and her partner migrated from Brazil to Uruguay as a child. Jenny and her partner lived with her parents where up to six languages were spoken in the family. Jenny spoke some Cantonese, Mandarin and Shang-hai dialect to her parents and English to her partner. Her partner spoke both Portuguese and Spanish. While Jenny and her parents did not speak Portuguese or Spanish, there were many occasions when her partner's friends visited the home and these languages were spoken. Within such a multilingual context, the children were exposed to all six languages in varying degrees and contexts.

In the data below, Jenny describes how the different language and dialects are used interchangeably in the family.

- Criss: So she (your daughter) can speak Cantonese?
Jenny: Mandarin.
Criss: Mandarin. Okay.
Jenny: My mum speaks Cantonese, but I don't teach her [my daughter] because it's important that the Mandarin
- Criss:...Right, so do you speak to your mum in Cantonese?
Jenny: No I couldn't [can't] speak, I understand about 70% but I can [only use] very simple [words to], speak it correct[ly].
Criss: So she speaks to you in Cantonese and you respond to her in Mandarin?
Jenny: I can understand her.
Criss: Because she can't understand Mandarin can she?
Jenny: We speak Shang-hai-ese dialect.
Criss: Shang-hai-ese- dialect, Oh, and so did your mum speak to Meira and um Bella in.....?

Jenny: ...No I speak Mandarin to my kids.
Criss: And your mum?
Jenny: My mum [and we] all try to speak Mandarin with our kids. In the family everybody tries to speak Mandarin.

This couple represented the kind of multilingualism evident in many Australian bilingual and multilingual families. Such diversity is due to Australia's recent immigration history which has also produced a plethora of cultural, linguistic and racial hybridity. Interracial unions within many families bring with them, various forms of interlingual contact between parents, grandparents and family friends. In Jenny's family, while there is a strong desire for the children to use Mandarin, '[we] all try to speak Mandarin with our kids', other dialects such as Cantonese and Shang-hai-ese are unwittingly spoken to the children.

Homogenising identity

As previously discussed Latin Americans are often labelled into homogenising categories, such as 'Hispanic', 'Spanish', or 'South American'. Like many other immigrant communities in Australia, the homogenisation of Latin Americans reproduces assumptions that there is a singular Latin American culture and identity. These assumptions effectively deny and eclipse the varied cultural, social and political histories of different Latin American nation states (Langer 1998, Acosta-Belén & Santiago, 1998), while simultaneously presuming that there exist levels of cohesion and solidarity within Latin American communities.

This homogenising tendency was evident in how some of the children and adults located their Latin American identity. Lola who is eleven years old lived with her mother, grandmother and her older sisters. Her father lived in Panama and is of a Greek background. In the conversation below, I asked Lola what it meant to speak Spanish and have a Latin American background.

Criss: Do you know what your culture is?
Lola: Maybe I don't know. My mum's Uruguayan.
Criss: So what does that make you?
Lola: Spanish.

Lola's identified herself as Spanish and conflated her mother's cultural background with the Spanish language. She positioned her own identity in relation to this homogenised category, 'Spanish', which is often applied to all Latin Americans and Spaniards. However, this is a problematic generalisation because it works on two distinct levels. Firstly it implies that the Spanish language is unique to Spain and Latin American cultures are duplicates of Spanish culture. Secondly, 'Spanish' refers to the generic language group, spoken by both Spaniards and Spanish-speaking Latin Americans. However, Lola's identification as 'Spanish' reifies and homogenises both Iberian and Latin American languages and cultures as one unified homogeneous category.

Theme 2: Identity as socially constructed, multiple, transformative, positional and contextual

Cultural identities are formed through historical and contemporary power relations but are subject to the continuous influences of culture, power and history. Consequently, identities are constantly changing, transformative and multiple. They are also often unstable and subject to negotiation, contingent upon the discursive positioning of the 'self'. Questions of identity arise from 'lived experiences' in which the process of identification is never complete and constantly in the process of change and transformation (Hall, 1996). This change and transformation is often positional, strategic and fluid, which are produced through the different social fields such as family, education, church etc. These fields are mediated by language, cultural practices and relations of power.

Hall's conceptualisation of the transformative and fluid aspects of identity is applicable to our understandings of the impact of English on young bilingual children's identity formation in terms how they negotiate two linguistic codes. Yet many of the parents and children in this study expressed the importance of belonging to a cultural minority in which shared cultural and language practices are significant. Like their parents, many of the children also negotiated multiple identities in which they located their own subjectivities. When asked questions

about their identity many of the children fused their parents' national identities with language and cultural practices, while simultaneously locating themselves as Australians.

Yeah, I was born in Australia, but my mummy was born in Peru... So I speak Australian and Spanish.
(Barbi 5 yrs)

Si, ella por supuesto se considera Australiana pero se considera Peruana. Se identifica con el país, con las costumbres, con la música... [Of course she considers herself Australian but she [also] considers herself Peruvian. She identifies with the country, the customs, with the music...]
(Carol, mother of Barbi)

... y pienso que ella es Australiana, sus idioma es ingles pero ella también entiende que sus raíces son de Latinoamerica, somos de sur America de habla español también.
[... I think that she is Australian, her language is English, but she also understands that her roots are from Latin America. We are from South America and we speak Spanish].
(Miryam, mother of 12-year-old Alison).

Some parents were aware of their children's negotiation of cultural differences between their parents, in which identity is mediated across cultural, linguistic and racial lines. This awareness was apparent in Raul's comments about his children, '...parecido ellos saben que hay una cultura en el medio de mama y papa' [It appears that they know that there is a culture in between the mother and father]. For Raul, his cultural background signified the negotiation of 'difference' for his children.

Theme 3: Identity, power and difference

Sociologists, cultural theorists and poststructural feminists have begun to examine whiteness as a social construction and its place in the making of subjectivity and its relationship to structural institutions (Frankenberg, 1997). The central aim of such work is to examine how 'white dominance is rationalized, legitimized, and made ostensibly normal and natural' (p. 3). This means that questions are raised as

to how whiteness is normative and authorised in institutional policies, procedures and everyday social practice.

However, defining whiteness is not easy or clear-cut. As an unmarked identity it constantly evades scrutiny while maintaining social privilege. It is a refusal to acknowledge white power and those who are white are often unknowingly implicated in social relations of privilege, domination and subordination (McLaren 1999). As a result, the structural and subjective constructions of normative whiteness as universal, homogenised and essential remain under examined. Still, Kincheloe and Steinberg (1998) point out that whiteness, like other racial categories and social identities, is a sociohistorical construction. Hence, whiteness is not only subject to political, social, economic and cultural histories but also to contemporary shifts and changes in a globalized world.

Consequently, for interracial children, and children of colour, whose visible difference positions them in racialising discourses. Their experiences of negotiating whiteness and meanings of 'race' in their daily lives implicate their subjectivities through which they experience their identity. As Ali (2003) argues, drawing from her research with interracial children, the children in her study were in the process of recognising their racialised identities as contingent upon meanings of racism which constructed their understandings of their own position.

The discussion that follows is a conversation between me and my son around issues of 'race' and whiteness and his relationships with other children. As a white mother of Afro-Latino Australian bilingual boys, whose father is an Afro-Latino immigrant from the Caribbean; issues of 'race' emerge on a daily basis and form part of the ambience of everyday lived experience in my family. The extract below also highlights the significance of children's voices in attempting to draw attention to real (and imagined) effects of whiteness for a child from an interracial family

Negotiating heteronormative whiteness

Martín was 9 years old and he attended a primary school situated in the Inner-West of Sydney. The families of the children ranged from disadvantaged, working class to upwardly mobile double income middle class professional families. Hence the diversity of class, cultural, racial and linguistic representations at this school is characteristic of many Inner-West schools in multicultural Sydney.

Martín had expressed a liking for a girl in his class. He often told me about his plans to ‘get Rubie to talk to me’, ‘to get Rubie to sit next to me’, and more importantly ‘to get Rubie to play with me’ and so on. However, Martín’s progress with Rubie had not gone according to plan. One day, Martín arrived home from school, and hurled himself down on the chair sighing:

Martín: Mummy, I don’t want to be brown anymore.

Criss: Uhh, why not?

Martín: I’m sick of being brown, it’s not working. I can’t attract Rubie’s attention, and anyway she likes Joseph more than me.

Criss: Joseph? But isn’t that because they are friends outside of school.

Martín: Yeah, but he’s white and Rubie’s white and she talks to him a lot.

Criss: (a long pause of silence, and hesitation) But, but... oh maybe, you know that, you know that, you have beautiful brown skin and oh, Martín when you say that you don’t want to be brown anymore, that really upsets me. I get really sad.

Martín: But it’s true.

Criss: Yeah but there are lots of black and brown kids in your class and you are not the only one.

Martín: Yeah but Joseph isn’t black and Rubie is starting to like him more than me.

Conversations such as the above are not unusual in my family. There are always ambiguities and uncertainties around such issues in which racialised and heteronormative discursive practices arise. However, my subjective realities of being white and living in a non-white family bring into question my own shifting and transformative location in ‘whiteness’. For my family, ‘whiteness’ is always interrogated and visible, yet, its shifting, contradictory and transparent character in

regards to the interplay of the day-to-day social and power relations and experiences are highly ambiguous and often difficult to locate.

My response ‘but there are lots of black kids in your class and you are not the only one’ was possibly an attempt to diffuse his concern perhaps (perhaps due to my perceived limitations during the course of this conversation to deal with the power of normative whiteness and racializing discourses in Martín’s life). Yet, for Martín it did not appear to be about how many other children in his class were black or brown. Later I asked Martín:

Criss: Martín, can I ask you a question about the Joseph thing and sitting next to Rubie?

Martín: What?

Criss: If Joseph was black or brown, would it still worry you that he gets to sit next to Rubie?

Martín: No.

Martín’s firm response to my question, ‘no’, suggests that he perceived Joseph to have a structural, spacial and temporal advantage of sitting next to Rubie. The structural mechanisms operating here appeared to be beyond his control and for Martín his capacity to access Rubie were thwarted against the prevailing fear that perhaps Joseph’s cultural capital embodied in his whiteness would ultimately prevail. This situation was even more aggravated due to the spacial and temporal set up of the seating arrangements in this classroom [1]. While Joseph was in the right place at the right time, for Martín, his whiteness gave him additional symbolic advantage, despite being amongst a racially diverse group of children, where he was potentially in the minority, ‘yeah but Joseph isn’t black and Rubie is starting to like him more than me’.

Who does the language work in home language retention?

Bourdieu’s (1990) concept of habitus involves the production and reproduction of knowledge, dispositions, skills and practices generated in early childhood. His framework is useful for understanding how cultural and linguistic capital (knowledge and skills) are produced and reproduced in the home. Bourdieu has

recognised 'the family' as a site of social and cultural capital in which the habitus is produced and cultural and social capital is accumulated (Reay, 1998). However, as Reay (1998), points out, when habitus is viewed from a gendered perspective, the invisibility of women's work as mothers can be de-naturalized. Hence, the division of labour between men and women can be effectively revealed.

In this study, 'the family' provided a field in which cultural capital is accrued in the linguistic habitus of the interaction and communication between family members, particularly between mothers and their children. For example, implicit in discourses of motherhood and femininity, normative gendered practices of child rearing are apparent. These practices are intersected with ways in which language was used with children in the home. Further, in bilingual families the work involved in producing cultural capital in the home through the retention and extension of the home language can be arduous and challenging (Jones Diaz, 1999). In this study, since language retention was the site of the production of cultural capital in the home it was the women who did much of this work. As part of their gendered mothering habitus, this work involved strategies for encouraging the children to use Spanish in the home. In fact their partners' role in implementing these strategies was rarely mentioned and their limited involvement was often taken for granted.

The extract below illustrates the kind of gendered work many of the women in this study undertook that ensured the retention and transmission of Spanish to their children:

...and then I'll say listen to that [the music], listen to that, listen to what they are saying, can you say that? What are they singing, ok, do you know what it means and that's just apart of our listening skills because we don't have it daily (Clarissa).

Strategies for extending the children's Spanish at home, undertaken by many of the women in this study included the following:

- Singing to their children,
- Scaffolding their children's responses in conversations,
- Reading,
- Playing language games at the dinner table,
- Going to the library and video shop, and
- Being conscious of sustaining interactions in Spanish in conversations with their children.

Conclusion

This paper has investigated how identities are shaped and mediated through the broader social constructions of discourses and shared social practices in an increasing globalised world in which English continues to play a prominent role. There are few studies in Australia that have investigated the views of bilingual children and their families, in growing up and living with two or more languages. This paper has attempted to address this research gap by documenting the voices of children and their families as they negotiated issues of identity, language retention and language learning.

The themes emerging from the data have exemplified how frames of hybridised and diasporic cultural identity can be extended to explore the significance of language in identity negotiation in everyday lived experiences and cultural practices of bilingual children and their families. In particular, this paper has emphasised identity as transformative, changeable and hybrid. The data has revealed how the children and parents negotiated their multiple gendered, 'racialised' and classed identities.

Ways in which this negotiation took place has also been exemplified by the ways in which the parents and children negotiated 'difference' on a daily basis often positioning their subjectivities in ambiguous and arbitrary locations. These locations were often informed by normative and competing discourses of

femininity and whiteness. Issues of 'race', gender, class and language impacted on the children's and parents' interpretations of their 'difference' through which they experienced their identities and subjectivities.

In early childhood education, it is crucial that educators gain contemporary insights into the various ways in which young children negotiate identities within a context of hybridity and diaspora in a globalized world. Early childhood pedagogies need to incorporate the voices and experiences of children as they mediate their emerging identities across the various social fields of their daily life. These social fields include home and community contexts. It is important that educators acknowledge that bilingual children's use of their home language/s and English are significant in shaping identity and building social relationships through engaging in cultural practices which accumulate social, cultural and linguistic capital. Consequently, educators also need to move beyond pedagogies that privilege monolingualism through 'English only' pedagogies that silence 'difference' and other languages. Furthermore, it is important that pedagogies avoid emphasising cultural practice as celebration and identity as fixed, linear and categorical.

In regards to interracial children, their unique experiences of negotiating visible whiteness and meanings of 'race' in their daily lives are unknown to educators (and to some of their parents). Therefore, it is necessary for educators to engage in reflexive processes of deconstructing whiteness and normalising practices that privilege white dominance as normal and natural. This process involves a willingness to reflect on preconceived and unexamined discourses of whiteness that operate in institutional policies, procedures and everyday social practices authorized in early childhood settings (and in the community).

References

- Acosta-Belén, E., & Santiago, C.E. (1998) Merging borders: The remapping of America. In A. Darder & R. D. Torres (Eds.), *The Latino studies reader. Culture, economy & society* (pp.29-42). Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- Ali, S. (2003) *Mixed-race, post-race. Gender, new ethnicities and cultural practices*. Oxford: Berg.
- Anthias, F. (1998) Evaluating 'diaspora': Beyond ethnicity? *Sociology*, 32(3), 557 - 580.
- Apple, M.W. A. (1999) *Power, meaning and identity: Essays in critical educational studies*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2001) *Yearbook Australia: Population: languages* retrieved, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs>, (accessed 11th July, 2005)
- Bhabha, H. (1994) *The location of culture*. London: Routledge.
- Bhabha, H. (1998) Culture's in between. In D. Bennett (Ed.), *Multicultural states. Rethinking difference and identity* (pp. 29-36). London: Routledge.
- Bourdieu, P. (1992) *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- Bourdieu, P. (1990) *The Logic of practice*. Translated by R. Nice. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1993) *Sociology in question*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Castells, M. (1997) *The power of identity*. Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Inc.
- Christensen, P., & James, A. (2000) *Research with children. Perspectives and practices*. New York: Falmer Press.
- Cline, Z., & Necochea, J. (2001) ¡Basta Ya! Latino parents fighting entrenched racism. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 25(1/2), 89 - 113.
- Cohen, R. (1999) *Global diasporas. An introduction*. London: UCL Press Limited.
- Corson, D. (1998) *Changing education for diversity*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Crystal, D. (1997) *English as a global language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Darder, A. (1998) The politics of biculturalism: Culture and difference in the formation of the warriors for Gringostroika and The New Mestizas. In A. Darder & D. Torres (Eds.), *The Latino Studies Reader. Culture, Economy & Society*. Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2003) *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Diaz Soto, L. (1997) *Language, culture and power: Bilingual families and the struggle for quality education*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Foucault, M. (1974) *The archaeology of knowledge*. London: Tavistock.

- Frankenberg, R. E. (1997). *Displacing whiteness: Essays in social and cultural criticism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Friedman, J. (1997) Global crises, the struggles for cultural identity and intellectual porkbarrelling: Cosmopolitans versus locals, ethnics and nationals in the era of de-hegemonisation. In P. Werbner & T. Modood (Eds.), *Debating cultural hybridity. Multi-cultural identities and the politics of anti-racism* (pp.70-89). London: Zed Books.
- Hall, S. (1992) Cultural studies and its theoretical legacies, reprinted in Morely, D. & Cohen, K. (Eds.), *Stuart Hall, critical dialogues*. London: Routledge.
- Hall, S. (1996) Who needs 'identity'? In S. Hall & P. du Gay (Eds.), *Questions of cultural identity* (pp.1-17). London: Sage Publications.
- Hall, S (2001) Foucault: power, knowledge and discourse, in M. Wetherell, S. Taylor and S.J. Yates (Eds.), *Discourse Theory and Practice*. London: Sage.
- James, A., Jenks, C., & Prout, A. (1998) *Theorising childhood*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Jones Diaz, C. (1999) *Bilingualism, biliteracy and beyond*. Paper presented at the Bilingualism: Building blocks for biliteracy. Conference Proceedings of the Bilingual Children's Interest Group and the Language Acquisition Research Centre.
- Jones Díaz, C. (2003) Latino/a voices in Australia: Negotiating bilingual identity in early childhood education. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 4(3), 314 - 336.
- Kalantzis, & Cope (1984) Multiculturalism and education policy. In G. Bottomley & M. deLepervanche (Eds.), *Class, gender and ethnicity in Australia* (pp. 82 - 97). Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
- Kincheloe, J. L., & Steinberg, S.R. (1998) *Addressing the crisis of whiteness. Reconfiguring white identity in a pedagogy of whiteness*. London: Macmillan.
- Langer, B. (1998) Globalisation and the myth of ethnic community: Salvadoran refugees in multicultural states. In D. Bennett (Ed.), *Multicultural states: Rethinking difference and identity* (pp. 163-177). London: Routledge.
- Levins Morales, A., & Morales, R. (1986) *Getting Home Alive*. New York: Firebrand Books.
- Macedo, D. (1997) English Only: The Tongue-tying of America, in A. Darder, R. Torres, & H. Gutiérrez (Eds.), *Latinos and Education. A Critical Reader*. New York: Routledge.
- Makin, L., Campbell, J., & Jones Diaz, C. (1995) *One childhood many languages: Guidelines for early childhood education*. Pymble: Harpers Educational.
- Marginson, S. (1999) After globalisation: Emerging politics of education, *Education Policy*, 14(1),19-31.
- Martín Alcoff, L., & Mendieta, E. (2004) (Eds.), *Identities: race, class, gender, and nationality*, Malden, Mass: Blackwell Pub.
- Martin-Jones, M., & Heller, M. (1996) Introduction to the special Issues on education in multilingual settings: Discourse, identities, and power. *Linguistics and Education*, 8, 127-137.

- McLaren, P. (1999) Unthinking whiteness, rethinking democracy: Critical citizenship in Gringolandia. In C. Clark & J. O'Donnell (Eds.), *Becoming and unbecoming white. Owning and disowning a racial identity* (pp 11-55). Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.
- Mitchel, C., & Reid-Walsh, J. (2002) *Researching children's popular culture. The cultural spaces of childhood*. London: Routledge
- Nettle, D., & Romaine, S. (2000) *Vanishing voices: The extension of the world's languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nyberg Sørensen, N. (1997) There are no Indians in the Dominican Republic. The cultural construction of Dominican identities. In K. Fog Olwig & K. Hastrup, (Eds.), *Siting culture. The shifting anthropological object*, (pp. 292-310). London: Routledge.
- Pacini-Ketchabaw, V., Bernhard, J.K., & Freire, M. (2001) Struggling to preserve home language: The experiences of Latino students and families in the Canadian school system. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 25(1/2), 115 - 145.
- Papastergiadis, N. (1998) *Dialogues in the diasporas. Essays and conversations on cultural identity*. London: Rivers Oram Press.
- Pennycook, A. (1998) *English and the discourses of colonialism*. London: Routledge Pettman.
- Reay, D. (1998) Cultural reproduction: Mothers involvement in their children's primary schooling. In M. Grenfell & D. James (Eds.), *Acts of practical theory. Bourdieu and education* pp. 55-71). London: Falmer Press.
- Robinson, K. H., & Jones Díaz, C. (2006) *Diversity and difference in early childhood education: Issues for theory and practice*. London: Open University Press:
- Rosaldo, R. (1995) Foreword. In N. García Canclini, *Hybrid cultures. Strategies for entering and leaving modernity*. Translated by C.L. Chiappari & S.L. López. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Schechter, S. R., Bayley. R. (1997) Language socialization practices and cultural identity: Case studies of Mexican-descent families in California and Texas. *TESOL Quarterly*, 31(3), 513 -541.
- Singh, M. G. (2002) The sustainability of the earth's people and their cultures. Risks and opportunities: the multilingual knowledge economy. Paper presented to RMIT, 12 September.
- Valdez, G. (1996) *Con respeto: Bridging the distance between culturally diverse families and schools. An ethnographic portrait*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Vertovec, S., & Cohen, R. (1999) Introduction. In S. Vertovec & R. Cohen (Eds.), *Migration, diasporas and transnationalism* (pp.xii-xxvii). UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.
- Volk, D. (1997) Continuities and discontinuities: Teaching and learning in the home and school of a Puerto Rican five year old. In E. Gregory (Ed.), *One child, many worlds. Early learning in multicultural communities* (pp. 47 - 61). London: David Fulton Publishers.
- Wong Fillmore, L. (1991) When learning a second language means losing the first. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* (6), 323 - 347.

Young, R.J.C. (1990) *White mythologies: Writing history and the West*. London: Routledge.

Notes

1. In Australia, primary schools with composite classes will often combine children from two year levels. Martín's class is a composite class of year 2 and year 3 children and the seating arrangements are devised by the teacher. According to Martín, when the children are working at their tables they are assigned to particular areas of the room in which year 2 and year 3 children do not sit together. Consequently, part of Martín's frustration is related to the teacher's seating arrangement and hence his inability to sit closer to Rubie.

2. Some aspects of this paper have been published in Chapters 4, and 6 in Robinson and Jones Díaz (2006).