# Students Investigations into their Plurilingual Practices: The Development of a Participatory Research Project

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## Why a Participatory Approach to the Study of Language Practices

1. Two-way dual language programs are expected to separate languages for instruction by teacher, time or subject (Howard et al., 2018)

2. Institutions' expectations on language use influence students' linguistic practices in ways that may limit learners' engagement with a  "fuller range of semiotic resources (The Douglas Fir Group, 2016)

3. A participatory approach may create the conditions for students to examine and reflect on their language practices, assign new understandings to their practices and create knowledge that transforms their world (Luke, 2012)

## Participatory Research

- Mutually beneficial to both the stakeholders involved and the researcher (Tseng et al, 2017)
- Opportunities for the institution and the individual to cultivate new intellectual, creative and leadership capacity (Campano et al., 2015)
- Research informed improvement efforts and findings that lead to changes in programs, curriculum or professional development (Tseng et al., 2017)
- Involves students in real world context for research and practice (Campano et al., 2015)
- Opportunities for students to influence school policies and practice (Ozer et al., 2010)
- Students develop a concern for social justice (Voight & Torny-Purta, 2013)

## Pilot Study

Context

**School:** Dual Language Immersion Spanish School in the United States

**Participants:** eighth grade students

## Apprenticeship Design of a Pilot study

Apprenticeship Design

Training
- Training session 1:
  - Video
  - Discussion
- Training session 2:
  - Video
  - Discussion

Data Collection
- Recording 1
- Recording 2
- Students' work

Analysis
- Transcription 1
- Written Activity 1
- Transcription 2
- Written Activity 2

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## Apprenticeship Program

▶ Training session 1:
  ▶ expectations of roles and responsibilities
  ▶ Overarching research focus
  ▶ Ethical considerations
  ▶ Data collection tool recording
  ▶ Practice recording

▶ Training session 2:
  ▶ Practice session
    ▶ Transcription analysis
  ▶ Coding

(adapted from Carrington, Bland and Brady, 2010)

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# Training:
# Session 1

- Video
  - Purpose of the Project
  - Ethical research practices
  - Data Collection Tools
- Video Discussion
- Practice Recording

"My voice" Project
TRAINING

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# Problem

No recordings

Session 2

▶ Video on Translanguaging
▶ Discussion:
  ▶ Translanguaging
  ▶ Research questions
  ▶ Data collection tools
  ▶ Students as co-researchers
▶ Example of Transcription taken from a Spanish class
▶ Practice coding

## Steps to Analysis

Considering the turn as the unit of analysis, the process consisted of the following steps:

▶ Identify all turns in English or turns containing English and highlight them.

▶ Discuss each turn and agree on its function. Write each function next to the turn.

▶ Write each function in a Post-it note. Classify them in groups.

▶ Analyze the student work. Identify direct links between the transcription and the work. Do any of these links reveal learning?

▶ Make a T-chart. List benefits and disadvantages of students using language in that way.

(Adapted from Swain and Lapkin's (2000)

## Examples

## What worked

🏖 Hands-on activities

🧠 Being part of decision making

## What needed improvement

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Access to children and duration of access | Cover instructional standards | Survey children |
| Data collection tasks | Age appropriate and engaging | Multimodal |
| Students' vs. Researcher's Data | Students' data collection tools | Researcher's data collection tools |

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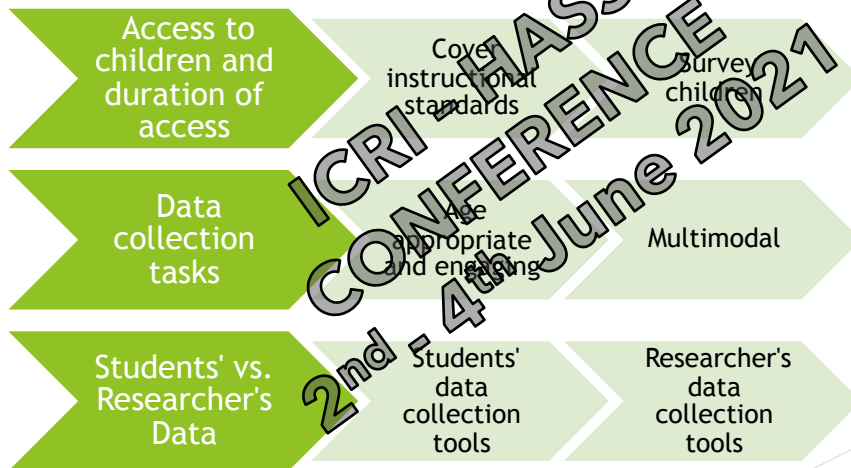
## Project Organized in Four Cycles:
## Cycle 1: Scaffolding and Initial Reflections

| Student's Data and Analysis | Researcher's Data |
|---|---|
| Data: Drawings | Interviews |
| Analysis of bilingual authors' use of language | Still photos |

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## Cycle 2: Exploring Language Practices within the Family

**Students' data and analysis**

Retrospective report

Examination of language choice

**Researchers data**

Recording of discussions and individual interviews

Still photos

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## Cycle 3: Exploring Language Practices when having Fun with Friends

**Students' data and analysis**

Diary and Comic Strip

Examination of language choice related to context

**Researchers data**

Recording of discussions and individual interviews

Still photos

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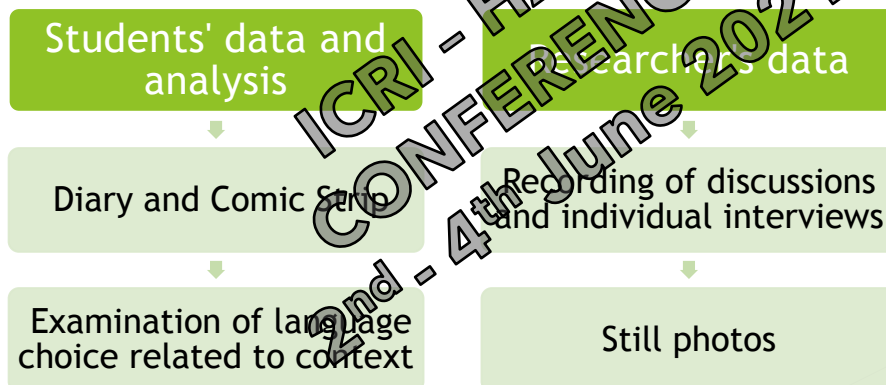
## Cycle 4: Exploring Language Practices when having Fun with Friends

| Students' data and analysis | Researchers' data |
|---|---|
| Recordings and artefacts | Recording of discussions and individual interviews |
| Transcription of excerpts and preliminary analysis | Still photos |

## References

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