

**LISTENING TO STORIES:
COLLABORATING WITH CHILDREN AND THEIR TEACHER TO EXPLORE THE
COMMUNICATIVE REPERTOIRES OF YOUNG EMERGENT BILINGUALS**

by

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Abstract

This study explores ways to value emergent bilinguals' rich communicative repertoires and to design multimodal and multilingual pedagogical practices that build on these resources students bring from home to school. I listen to children's stories as they draw from their various languages, multiple modes of expression, and socioculturally informed ways of engaging with the self and others. I also present young children's views on linguistic diversity and multimodal learning, and their perspectives on the inclusion of their linguistic resources in classrooms.

Interconnecting theories of multilingualism and translanguaging, and multiliteracies and multimodality, I researched in a Canadian public Grade 2/3 classroom. I used education design research and methodologies for collaborating and researching with the children and their teacher, while paying attention to contextual realities. Data were generated through home visits and in-class interactions and projects that integrated a variety of multimodal methods, and included my subjectivities as a multilingual and racialized parent.

The stories in the study emphasize different communicative repertoires – including languages, drawing, photography, pop culture, conversations, collaboration, and playfulness – that emergent bilinguals use as resources to showcase their learning and capacities. Pedagogical designs were co-constructed valuing these creative repertoires and multiliterate practices as resources for learning and I interpret learnings from this process. Congruently, I also stress raciolinguistic ideologies and the realities of class, cultural, and systemic inequities that multilingual and marginalized students and families frequently experience in their interactions in schools and in society.

My findings highlight the synergistic connections between multimodal and multilingual ways of meaning making and the identities of competence that emerge when we listen carefully

to children's stories. I emphasize the significance of process and relationships at the heart of children's language and literacies learning and the need to center these connections as we collaboratively design processes to support children. I highlight systemic constraints on children's capacities and the need to purposefully resist raciolinguistic ideologies and normative practices for facilitating equitable translanguaging practices. Implications align with translanguaging and multimodality as collaborative, reflective, and critical processes that educators and researchers can harness towards creating sustaining practices and caring communities of belonging.

Lay Summary

In this year-long study, I collaborated with students in a Grade 2/3 classroom and their teacher to understand how children's home languages and literacies can support their school learning. Particularly, I interacted with the children who were categorized as English learners – who can be emerging as bilinguals – and designed practices with the class to welcome their languages and their capacities in drawing and photography. I found that when collaborative processes, various languages, and creative ways of making meaning were intentionally included in the classroom, these emergent bilinguals found powerful and resourceful ways to display their learning and identities. However, these processes were impacted by class and cultural inequalities that marginalized students frequently experience in their interactions in society. By designing inclusive and anti-racist pedagogies, the study connects diverse ways of meaning making, highlights the importance of relationships in learning contexts, and the identities of competence that emerge when listening carefully to children's stories.

Preface

All parts of this dissertation were designed, researched, analyzed, and written by the author, Harini Rajagopal. This study was approved by the University of British Columbia's Behavioural Research Ethics Board (UBC BREB Number: H16-02984) under the original title: Valuing "multilayered lifeworlds": Working with children and teachers to explore the multimodal communicative practices and identities of young English language learners.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Stories as bridges

Stories are everywhere. This dissertation is full of stories and is fueled by my love of stories. Stories are like bridges, and like bridges they help us cross chasms safely, emerging on the other side of the crossing or going back and forth while constructing a sense of a broader reality for ourselves. Like bridges, stories offer a chance to view ourselves reflected upside down and right side up, to offer clarity through the reflection of our lives in the story.

I love stories also because they offer creative ways to see possible connections before one is able to express them in any formal way. Archibald in *Indigenous Storywork* (2008) states that weaving knowledge collaboratively and sharing experiences helps “people think, feel, and ‘be’ through the power of stories” (p. ix) before making meaning for ourselves. Because they are connected, like bridges, invoking the past, speaking to the present, and journeying to the future, stories are ongoing, context-ful, and heartfelt, locating intricate experiences in people, time, place, and emotions. Since much of the work discussed in this dissertation offers designs and critiques systems, we need the human stories of the people in this endeavor for us to understand how to make change. The stories are presented in different languages, use different modes, involve different characters and relationships, access different narrative styles, present different emotions, and can be perceived in different ways. Each aspect of a story builds up to the whole, much like Marco Polo says to Kublai Khan in *Invisible Cities* (Calvino, 1972) when describing the stories of different cities: “The bridge is not supported by one stone or another, but by the line of the arch that they form...without stones there is no arch” (p. 82).

Stories are everywhere, we only need to pick them up, to listen when they whisper, as Nobel-prize winning Chilean poet Gabriela Mistral reminds us in this excerpt from her poem “La Contadora/The Teller of Tales,” translated from Spanish to English by Ursula K. Le Guin (2003).

La Contadora

*Cuando camino se levantan
todas las cosas de la tierra
y me paran y cuchichean
y es su historia lo que cuentan.*

*Y las gentes que caminan
en la ruta me la dejan
y la recojo caída
en capullos que son de huella.*

The Teller of Tales

*When I'm walking, everything
on earth gets up
and stops me and whispers to me,
and what they tell me is their story.*

*And the people walking
on the road leave me their stories,
I pick them up where they fell
in cocoons of silken thread.*

The arch of the stories in this dissertation bridges home and school, children and adults, families and teachers, systems and the people in it, pedagogies and theories, languages and literacies, research and story, context and text, playfulness and skepticism, messiness and clarity, self and society. Through bridging these relationships and spaces, I engage with authentic and generative tension and balance. No story is complete and perfect in itself, being filled with uncertainties and ambiguities. However, as Canadian educator Ted Aoki (1986/2005) mused on the idea of “bridging of two worlds by a bridge, which is not a bridge” (p. 228), pausing on the bridge through stories presents a way towards connecting with ambiguity and viewing diverse perspectives, eventually moving us to more just and democratic spaces.

One story starts when I was a child, growing up in Chennai, India. My daily life involved doing crossword puzzles with my mother over her afternoon tea, sharing stories with friends, and playing word games after dinner. While bedtime involved oral storytelling, my brother and I had access to books throughout the day, spent lots of time drawing and colouring, listened to music in three languages – தமிழ் (Tamil), हिंदी (Hindi), and English, apart from multilingual South Indian classical music, and heard many stories from Indian mythologies. As we improved our reading and writing at school, my uncle would get us chapter books for summer reading and these were exchanged with friends. My friends and I would create and enact impromptu multilingual dramas with screenplay and dialogue, send letters to each other over summer break, organize clean-up projects for our neighbourhood, initiate a greeting card company to raise funds for charity organizations. Over long hot summers, I also took it upon myself to catalogue the books and music cassette tapes we had at home and created a mini-library where I could read and listen in peace amid my noisy household. As I grew older, this library became my sanctuary when we faced years of financial uncertainty, and I remember both losing and finding myself in stories, books, friendships, and magic potions of mindfulness, feminism, social justice... all of which charted future directions in my life.

While the socially and cognitively engaging nature of these practices is what sustained my wholehearted love of literacies, these stories from my middle-class childhood point to the importance of sociocultural context in our construction of and understandings about literacies as well. These stories also speak to the interrelationship between literacy opportunities and literacies practices in my life. Like my mother always reminded us, “we are lucky to have a home, and food, and be able to read and write.” I hear myself telling my own children these

exact words, most especially during the pandemic as many global inequities have been exacerbated.

I share these vignettes from my childhood as an invitation, and a bridge, to offer a reflected glimpse of who I am – as a book lover, an idea collector, an educator, a researcher, a mother and a daughter, and a storyteller and listener, among others. I also share these stories to gesture, with humility, that aspects of who I am has a significant bearing on the way the stories in this work are represented and the relationships with my participants, which I chose to place at the heart of this work. I share these to also represent the myriad little stories that bridge their way into the classroom space and the types of diverse literacies that permeate the home cultures of many children (noting, of course, that the timeline of my childhood meant it did not include much digital technology at all), including my own children. My privileged positionality, which I explore further in Chapter 3, is significantly different from many of the children and their families in this study and my awareness of that is included in reflexive notes through this dissertation.

I began my doctoral program when my son was four years old and remember bringing in some of his creations (emergent writing, drawings, story books, recycled inventions) to classes to form connections between my thoughts and stories with what I was learning. I have written papers and presented at academic conferences about my son's and, later, my daughter's identities and interests as pivotal to my growth as a learner and a teacher, to my identity as an intersectional feminist (Ahmed, 2017; Davies, 2017; Langford, 2019) and a woman of colour attending to issues of equity and justice, to my interest in relational ethics (Clandinin et al., 2018), to my understanding of languages and literacies in homes, and to my perspectives on the assortment of stories that we listen to and those that are missing within educational systems.

In this dissertation I aim to listen to and listen for some such stories, and to value, voice, and share them. In the section that follows this introduction, I explore this idea further by focusing on whose stories are often absent from schools.

1.2 Rationale: Whose stories are not listened to?

As a consequence of increasing geopolitical struggles, entangled international economies, and environmental upheavals, there has been increased global movements of people, with many students as newcomers to the country and to the educational systems in Canada. While some students arrive with privileges, many do not – and their access to official languages and normative practices often becomes a prerequisite for participation in the country’s cultural, economic, political, and educational institutions (Toohey, 2019). In addition, children and families that are Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour, have also been historically excluded and marginalized in schools (Yu, 2021; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015), and the well-being of these children and families continues to be impacted (see Blackstock, 2017; Acevedo-Garcia et al. 2020; Iruka et al., 2020).

Studies that have investigated literacy within the home and community context of families have shed light on the varieties of literacy practices that offer meaning making opportunities to children (e.g., Heath, 1983; Scribner & Cole, 1981; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988) and the highly contextualized and ideological set of practices that constitute literacy (Street, 1994, 2006). For instance, studies have shown that children in racialized and low-income families lag behind their more affluent peers academically and socially due to varying socialization at home, and that persistent forms of class and cultural inequality have been consistent challenges for marginalized students (Delpit, 1993, 2004, 2016; Foster, 2002; Gee, 2003; National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2004; Lareau, 2011; Neuman & Celano,

2006; Rothstein, 2004). Luke (2018) asserts that one of the key problems facing educators and systems in children's early years at school is the powerful effects of poverty and inequality, both in its most historically persistent forms and those emergent in communities experiencing the immediate impacts of structural economic, cultural and socio-demographic changes. When differing material conditions, social relations, institutional discourses, and the textual and social practices of cultures and languages interact with socioeconomic realities of childhood in the classroom, children who have been historically marginalized due to their non-normative literacies practices do not have equivalent opportunities to learn.

Scholars working on patterns of academic achievement (e.g., Cummins, 2019a; Cummins & Early, 2015; DeVillar et al., 2013) note that three groups are commonly seen as “disadvantaged”: students from low-socioeconomic backgrounds, immigrant- and refugee-background students whose home language is different from the language of school instruction, and students from communities that have been marginalized or excluded from educational and social opportunities as a result of discrimination in the wider society (Cummins, 2014). However, a deeper examination of these issues is warranted since some students from these groups show distinct differences in academic success related to variables like immigrant class, gender, and first language (Gunderson et al., 2012; Gunderson, 2021). As cultures and families across the world have differing opinions on the capacities, roles, and ways of conceptualizing not only childhood but also learning (Harkness et al., 2010; Lin et al., 2019; Razfar & Gutierrez, 2003), these impact families' and children's participation in school. Cummins (2014), nevertheless, asserts that actual educational disadvantage is not socially determined by the realities outside of school but by a dynamic socially constituted process within the structures of schooling and the interactions between teachers and students. Further, critical scholars (Kubota

& Bale, 2020; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Lee, 2020) have argued that raciolinguistic ideologies often lie at the core of deficit perspectives directed towards multilingual communities whose stories of capacity are rarely heard in schools.

Viewing the issue of disadvantage from another perspective, it becomes crucial to learn the stories of how young marginalized and racialized children bridge their familiar home and community literacies practices with the often mismatching “official world” of the classroom when they are in school. While scholars (Dyson, 1997, 2004) have been extending this argument for a few decades, there has been only sporadic acknowledgement in education policies about the importance of literacy engagement and identity affirmation for “disadvantaged” students in mainstream classes and for the role of students’ diverse languages as a cognitive resource (Cummins, 2019b; Iannacci, 2016; Viesca & Poza, 2019).

One way to acknowledge these stories is to recognize and value the communicative repertoires that these children bring with them, most especially in the early years of children’s schooling. I use the term *communicative repertoires* to emphasize the multiple resources and practices of communication that children possess, including multiple languages, modes of expression, and socioculturally informed ways of engaging with the self and others (Dyson, 2016; Hornberger & Link, 2012; Pahl, 2008; Rymes, 2018). At the same time, understanding the systemic constraints and productive connections between cultures of these children’s two major learning spaces, home and school, offers insight into the communicative repertoires rather than taking a deficit view of their ability to function in the mainstream language or with normative literacies (Anderson et al., 2017; Bialystok, 2011; Cummins, 2019a; Pahl & Burnett, 2013). How might these children navigate the complex relationship between the institutions of home and school where different languages are spoken and different values are enacted? How does looking

closely at their nuanced meaning making offer perspective on valuing their multilingual and multimodal capacities? How might listening to their stories work towards designing more equitable classroom practices and pedagogies?

1.2.1 A note on terminology related to English learners

The discourses that we use have histories and it is important for us to be aware of these histories and perspectives when we use them. As is common in the literature, I considered using the term Culturally and Linguistically Diverse to describe the children in my study but resisted the phrase to critically interrogate the White listening subject position (Rosa & Flores, 2019) from which these children and families might be considered “diverse.” Additionally, although different Canadian Ministries of Education may use different terms, the BC Ministry of Education uses the term *English language learners* (often referred to as ELLs) or learners of *English as an Additional Language* (EAL learners) to refer to students whose primary language, or languages, of the home are other than English and might need extra support. However, as a way of valuing linguistic resources rather than from deficit-thinking perspectives, García (2009) used the term *emergent bilinguals* to describe students who are in the early stages of developing their bilingualism in two languages. García and Kleifgen (2018) argue:

Referring to these students as English language learners (ELLs) or English learners (ELs) – as many school district officials and educators presently do – signals the omission of an idea that is critical to the discussion of equity in the teaching of these students. English learners are, in fact, *emergent bilinguals*. That is, through school and through acquiring English, these children become *bilingual*, able to continue to function with their home language practices, as well as in English – the new language practices that they acquire in

school. The home language is a significant educational resource for these students as they develop their English for academic purposes. (p. 18-19, emphasis in original)

The term emergent bilinguals (with an awareness that multilinguals might use more than two languages) allows educators and policymakers to see learners' potential to develop complex language and literacies practices and to rethink teaching practices to provide opportunities that build on the resources students bring from home to school (García & Kleifgen, 2010, 2019).

From this anti-oppressive position, I use the term *emergent bilinguals* to describe the young children in my study who are categorized as English language learners in school while they are in the process of becoming bilingual or multilingual in English as well as in another language(s) at home, irrespective of their competencies in each language. Depending on the context of the classroom activity and for clarity, at times, I use the term EAL learners (as they have been characterized) to refer to the same group of children whose stories I seek to represent here.

1.3 Research Questions

This study explored the multimodal communicative repertoires and interactions of young emergent bilinguals in a Grade 2/3 classroom that was superdiverse –a term that acknowledges the range of social and cultural differentiators within a diverse group of people (Blackledge et al, 2018; Meissner & Vertovec, 2015), and ways to include their repertoires within pedagogical practices. It is hoped that this exploration of children's practices and classroom pedagogies will contribute to an increasing understanding of communicative repertoires, the processes that support the expression of these repertoires, and ways in which these children can be best supported.

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the multimodal and multilingual communicative repertoires and identities that emergent bilinguals in a Grade 2/3 classroom bring with them?
2. How can these communicative repertoires and identities be valued towards transforming pedagogical practices and inviting children's lifeworlds into classrooms?

For a year, I researched in a public elementary classroom and in the home of a focal child who was an emergent bilingual to investigate these questions while also exploring the ways classroom and home communicative practices unfold within the realities of systems. A major focus of this work was working collaboratively with the children and the classroom teacher in the urban Grade 2/3 classroom. I adapted principles from educational design research methodology (McKenney & Reeves, 2019; Reinking & Bradley, 2008) in conjunction with collaborative practices that sought the voices and stories of children. Data were generated through home visits, and in-class projects that included drawing, photography, and multiple informal research conversations with children and the teacher, which I describe further in Chapter 3. Utilizing these methods, I aimed to bridge research with practice through investigating ways to bring multilingual and multimodal approaches to classroom pedagogical practices, and through looking closely and listening carefully to children's stories.

1.4 Purpose: How do we listen for new stories?

As discussed, research exploring the discontinuities between home/community and school settings has shown how certain literacies are privileged in educational contexts and what counts as legitimate learning and representation of knowledge remains narrow (Anderson et al., 2016; Dyson, 2016; Pahl & Rowsell, 2019). Rosa and Flores (2017) in concert with intersectional language-based scholarship, have extended this argument to include a raciolinguistic perspective that contributes to understandings of the ways that institutions'

categorizing conventions work against those that are facing inequities due to race, social class, ethnicity, and culture being perceived as non-normative. While these have been issues in the field for a while (especially with Indigenous and immigrant languages and literacies having no legitimate space in schools), the longstanding inequities exposed by the Covid-19 pandemic demand that the varieties of competencies of children in Canadian schools cannot be ignored as a matter of justice (Adams, 2021; Bailey et al., 2021; Kubota & Bale, 2020; UNESCO, 2021; van Leeuwen, 2015; Wong, 2021). In this dissertation, by listening closely and looking carefully for the nuanced stories that speak to the multilingual realities of young emergent bilinguals, I suggest designs for classroom practices towards pluralistic futures.

Jewitt (2008) states that the classroom is “one node in the complex intertextual web of the communicational landscape of young people *even when it appears isolated and autonomous*” (p. 32, emphasis in original). A key route to traversing the boundaries of children’s spaces of learning hinges on the kinds of stories and literacies - filled with digital artifacts, material objects, and multiple modes, media, and languages - that are permitted to flow and move across the lifeworlds of children (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015; Pahl & Rowsell, 2010; Pennycook, 2017). These “diverse communicative repertoires” allow us to imagine new identities and new ways of being in the world (Dyson, 2004, p. 214). Distilling this idea to educational contexts, if we are to be sensitive to how people learn, we must understand how our identities are constructed from past experiences, available cultural resources, and possible future selves (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Holland et al., 1998; Norton, 2013; Norton & Toohey, 2011) and enacted through language and other communicative practices (Cummins, 2014; Cummins & Early, 2011; Makalela, 2015). Multimodality begins with the understanding that language is just one of the communicative resources through which we make meaning (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001) and

exploring multimodal communicative practices connects students' ways of knowing, their identities, and school literacies practices. Looking closely at multimodal meaning making presents another way to listen for new stories.

Additionally, by no longer privileging English, a focus on communicative repertoires and translanguaging critically challenges the devaluation of identity that multilingual and marginalized students have frequently experienced in their interactions in schools and in the wider society (Cummins, 2019a; García & Kleifgen, 2019; Stein, 2008; van Leeuwen, 2015). Through welcoming culturally sustaining practices (Alim & Paris, 2017) that include all the languages and literacies that children bring with them through translanguaging pedagogies, educators can move towards valuing and recognizing the multilingual competencies of children while responding to local contextual realities (de Jong, 2011; García, et al., 2017). Also, an emphasis on collaborative practices helps emergent bilinguals transform what they know into modes of representation that allow for a full range of human experience, one that includes the child's social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and personal spheres of knowledge construction and one that enables students to develop identities of competence (Cummins et al., 2015; Manyak, 2004; Prasad, 2020).

I situate this study within an effort to seek openings within educational settings to “create agentive spaces by acknowledging a child's resources” (Dyson, 2016, p.177) in the form of their communicative repertoires and identities. With an emphasis on collaborating with the young children to engage with their communicative repertoires and translanguaging practices, this dissertation draws particular attention to children's agency in negotiating relationships with peers, teachers, and families to learn. Working with teachers using education design research to construct practices offers us the capacity to use students' representations as the basis for critical

engagement and connection, to broaden the diversity of signs and cultural meanings that circulate in the classroom, and to learn how to listen for new stories.

Having outlined some purposes for the present study, I offer a research context of BC's Curriculum, and why it impacts the present study.

1.5 Research context related to BC Curriculum

Schools in BC had transitioned to a new Curriculum ("B.C.'s Redesigned Curriculum", 2015) a year and a half before this research was conducted in the classroom. While at the time of this writing the curriculum is well-established, it was new when I was in the classroom. This timing was one of the reasons why the participating teacher was interested in collaborating on my study. The BC Curriculum (BC's Curriculum, n.d.) focuses on thematic, multi-disciplinary, personalized learning, with a significant emphasis on Indigenous cultures and perspectives integrated across all subject areas. The curriculum is broadly made up of three elements: Content (What students are expected to know), Curricular Competencies (What students are expected to do), and Big Ideas (What students are expected to understand). For instance, one of the English Language Arts curriculum's Big Ideas focus for Grade 2/3 is on language and stories ("Language and story can be a source of creativity and joy"), echoing my own interest in listening to the stories that the children bring with them to class and the ways these are enacted through their communicative repertoires. Additionally, there is an emphasis on an integrated collection of core competencies (sets of intellectual, personal, and social and emotional proficiencies) that students need to develop to engage in deep and life-long learning.

The curriculum's design that involves more interactive learning and collective problem-solving provided an excellent backdrop for my study. Examining pedagogical approaches that provide for emergent bilinguals to bring their different identities and interests to the classroom

offered an opportunity that includes benefits for not only them but also for the monolingual/monocultural learners in the classroom (Cummins, 2019b; Early & Kendrick, 2017). My interest in creative and flexible learning and pedagogical practices provided the collaborating teacher with an opportunity to critically reflect on the curriculum and how it impacted practice (personal communication with Sufi, teacher participant, September 2016).

1.6 Outline of the dissertation

Six chapters follow this introduction. Chapter 2 presents an overview of the theoretical frameworks that support the study and elaborates on the how the three findings chapters in this manuscript-based dissertation map onto the various processes of education design research. Chapter 3 presents a description of methodological decisions, including selection of participants, an overview of education design research, data generation and analysis, and aspects of research ethics. The findings chapters (4, 5, and 6) were written as stand-alone manuscripts to facilitate dissemination to families, schools, and researchers through future publications. While these are more extensive than regular journal submissions, for the purposes of this dissertation (and in keeping with education design research's focus on building from scholarly work), they include context, theoretical considerations, expansive literature reviews, outlines of data generation and analysis, findings, discussion, and implications. In Chapter 7, I weave together the themes and work on synthesizing the findings. This final chapter also includes a discussion of the broad implications from this work, acknowledges limitations and particularities, and points to directions for future research. Through the chapters I include some pieces of art that I created. While they are not perfect, I include them to emphasize the importance of process, emotions, and subjective understanding. These pieces sustained my reflection and engagement with some of the themes from this research and helped to bridge stories from this work with my life.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework and structure of dissertation

This chapter has two distinct parts. The first connects with the conceptual ideas and theoretical frames that guided the research. The second part outlines the structure of this dissertation and its connection to various processes of education design research. Since this methodology is grounded in theoretical understandings to shape and evolve various designs, the juxtaposition of theory and design processes within this chapter is particularly appropriate to provide a perspective on the ways in which the research progressed.

2.1 Introduction to conceptual ideas

Metaphors of crossing boundaries and blurring borders have been used to explain multilingual families' and children's complex and creative language and literacies practices as they combine diverse literacies, cultures, and identities to navigate across different sociocultural contexts. Whether these emerge as hybrid literacies (Dyson, 2003; Gort & Sembiante, 2015; Moje, 2013), transliteracies (Stornaiuolo et al., 2017), or codemeshing (Canagarajah, 2011, 2012) these creative practices connect lifeworlds. Similarly, Gutiérrez (2008)'s concept of Third Space examines the contexts of home and school where the boundaries of official and unofficial discourse create opportunities for "authentic interaction and a shift in the social organization of learning and what counts as knowledge" (p. 152). Gregory et al.'s (2013) concept of syncretism, involving the "active creation of new practices—not just blended ones" (p. 311), recognizes learner agency in creating innovative and cohesive approaches that draw resources from multiple worlds.

Martin-Jones and Jones (2000) examined what they describe as multilingual literacies in contexts where different languages and language varieties, written and oral, script conventions, and social contexts are interwoven, refocusing the concept of community through a multilingual

lens. Studies in plurilingualism and pluriliteracies (Dagenais, 2013; Prasad, 2013) represent a significant shift away from monolingual norms and binary constructions that dominated the field for a while. Each of the above perspectives redesign learning environments to help marginalized learners reconceive who they are, what stories of their lifeworlds we can listen to and learn from, and how we can best support them to accomplish academically and beyond by prioritizing learning that embraces identities, imagination, dialogue, and embodied practice.

This dissertation is underpinned by sociocultural theories (Barton & Hamilton, 1998, 2012; Heath, 1983; Purcell-Gates, 2007; Street, 1984; Vygotsky, 1978) that explore and value emergent bilingual's diverse communicative resources using qualitative approaches. These theories recognize that languages and literacies are mediated across different groups and linked to complex social, cultural, historical, and political practices that vary from one context to another. Sociocultural theories view children's meaning construction as deeply embedded in their social and cultural environments and forefront a dialogic interaction between individual and culture. Rogoff (2003), with her apprenticeship model of guided participation, has further highlighted the involvement of children in communication, socialization, and learning activities by emphasizing the collaborative and cultural nature of the learning process.

Using sociocultural theories of thinking and learning, I view children as "meaning-makers and social actors" (Siegel, 2006, p. 68), as creative people who are actively participating in learning, acting on their place in the world, and sharing their stories. Regarding children as social agents shifts the focus from what they cannot do to the ways they frame, interpret, navigate, respond, conform, and contest as they learn and participate in society. With an emphasis on the mediating and change-making influence of social conditions and culture, an understanding of the role of history, agency, and power, and a positive attitude towards the social

distribution of knowledge, the sociocultural perspective offers an expression of diverse children in the classroom as cultural beings transforming and being transformed by their environment. By thus disrupting discourses of deficit and reconstructing attitudes to diverse communities, education is viewed not only as cognitive development but also as a “quintessentially sociocultural activity” (Moll, 1990, p. 1).

Importantly, sociocultural theories define literacy practices as the dynamic ways in which literacy is carried out in particular social groups (Heath, 1983, Street, 1984). At the same time, practices change because they are socially constructed (Purcell-Gates et al., 2011b); they experience ebb and flow (Pennycook, 2010). This understanding of practices as being invisible, silent, flexible, and powerful ways of operating become crucial to understanding pedagogies and how these can adapt to meet children’s diverse needs. Considering change and variability within and across literacy practices offers us expansive ways of thinking about how time, space, context, networks, systems, and identities play out in classrooms, and how pedagogies can be transformed to include considerations of these ideas.

In this chapter, I engage broadly with two theoretical areas relating to my study - multiliteracies and multimodality; and multilingualism and translanguaging - and dive deeper into specific aspects of these theories within Chapter 4, 5, and 6, as they relate to the context and findings described in those chapters. Following this theoretical framing, I outline the formation and configuration of the three findings chapters in this manuscript-style dissertation to present how they map onto to the various processes of education design research (McKenney & Reeves, 2019; Reinking & Bradley, 2008).

2.2 Multiliteracies and Multimodality

The term *multiliteracies* was first introduced by the New London Group (NLG) (1996) to highlight the multiple forms and functions of literacy related to changing identities, work, and citizenship. Rooted in a social justice orientation, the NLG believed that with the development of new technologies, the expansion of communications and their different modes, together with the way social and cultural contexts were emerging globally, there were disparities in equitable access to learning. One of the crucial educational issues addressed by the multiliteracies framework (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, 2009; NLG, 1996, 2000) was a growing divide between traditional pedagogical practices and the radical changes in social, economic, and political life that made it necessary to recognize “productive diversity, civic pluralism, and multilayered lifeworlds” (NLG, 1996, p. 71) as the norm. This aspect presents the “**why**” of the multiliteracies argument.

The “**what**” of their argument – both of which have significance for my research – addressed two “multis” with the idea of literacies: the ‘multi-’ of significant differences in contexts and ways of communication, and the ‘multi-’ of multimodality. The first ‘multi’ refers to the diversity of social, cultural, linguistic repertoires available to students and the need for literacy to move beyond “the rules of standard forms of the national language” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015, p. 3). Learners negotiate differences between patterns of meaning making across contexts and these differences emerge from the diversity of their lifeworlds, including culture, gender, social class, life experience, subject matter, social or subject domain. Lotherington (2011) has argued that recognizing multiliteracies in English language teaching is “re-examining the fabric of the language to situate changing norms and conventions; integrating new modalities; and fostering complex linguistic and cultural identities” (p. 898). At the same time,

there is some consensus that the inclusion of cultural and linguistic diversity within educational spaces has been more challenging within the broader uptake of multiliteracies (Early & Kendrick, 2017; Garcia et al., 2018; Luke, 2018) and I explore these critiques as part the theoretical sections of Chapter 4 (Navigating languages and literacies at home in a superdiverse life) and Chapter 6 (“Can I speak that *यहाँ पे* (here)?: Reframing emergent bilinguals’ competencies through photography, drawing, and translanguaging in the classroom), where multilingual repertoires are particularly highlighted.

The other ‘multi-’ aspect of multiliteracies, *multimodality*, arises from characteristics of the new information and communications media where meaning is made in multimodal fashion. As we continue to move away from a culture privileged by language to one in which various other modes and their interactions are increasingly important, it is critical that understandings of literacies include broader and more multimodal communicative practices beyond “lettered representation” (Kress, 1997, p. 116). With multimodality, the understanding is that written-linguistic modes interface with oral, visual, audio, gestural, tactile, and spatial patterns of meaning, and together this composite meaning deepens and extends the range of literacy pedagogy, whether online or offline (see Kress, 1997; Rowsell & Walsh, 2011). Scholars of multimodality contest the general assumption that language is a communicational and representational resource that is fully adequate “to the expression of anything that we might want to express: that anything that we think, feel, sense, can be said (or written) in language” (Kress 2000b, p. 193). These scholars assert that this assumption raises language to an exceptionally privileged position, particularly when many young children are just learning to use print to represent their understanding of the world and in cases where children have just moved to a new

country and/or are learning a new language. In response, the multimodal perspective recognizes that children use signs (e.g., drawings, speech, photos, actions, sounds, objects) to communicate within a social context, using the resources “to hand” from the world around them (Kress, 1997).

Multimodality brings our human ways of being in society in conversation with cognitive and biological processes (Gee, 2004). Every communicative event involves simultaneous modes whereby meaning is conveyed in complex and fluid ways and the interactions of these modes – that are socially and culturally shaped – support learning in diverse ways and help us represent and communicate feelings, emotions, ideas, thoughts, and understandings (Jewitt & Kress, 2005). This perspective offers a foundation for synesthesia, or the nuanced learning that emerges when learners switch modes, moving within and across representations in text, image, sound, gesture, object, and space. This multimodal perspective views children as sign-makers who make use of the resources available to them in their specific sociocultural environment. As they build on and experiment with different sign systems or modes and the “interplay between and across modes,” this affords new identities of empowerment in language learning (Kendrick et al., 2013, p. 397). In my research, I view all communication as multimodal (Kress, 2010) and all learning as multimodal (Jewitt et al., 2016; Stein, 2008), and that even thinking in the classroom requires multimodality (Kress, 2000a). Many of these specific aspects of multimodal theory will be further explored in the individual chapters’ theoretical sections.

The “**how**” of multiliteracies, associated with learners’ knowledge processes is also important to this dissertation. I pay attention to knowledge processes: *experiencing (the known and the new)*, *conceptualizing (with theory and by naming)*, *analyzing (critically and functionally)*, and *applying (creatively and appropriately)*, in engagement with activities and in transition between these processes. Cope and Kalantzis (2015) highlight that

each of the Knowledge Processes is a way of seeing and thinking, an orientation to the world, an epistemological take, a sensibility, or way of feeling, and for shorter or longer moments in time, a way of being in relation to the knowable world (p. 28)

A multiliteracies approach views learning as a weaving within and across various pedagogical moves and considers pedagogy as “learning by design,” for both teachers and students (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015; Kalantzis & Cope, 2014). In expanding the concept of literacy education from a limited vision of reading and writing instruction to a plural vision of literacies that includes multiple modes of meaning making, communicative repertoires, types of knowledge and imaginative inquiries, multiliteracies pedagogy “suggests a very different curriculum . . . and a fundamentally different notion of learning” (Kress, 2000a, p. 140). This perspective of agentive and collaborative knowledge construction is central to my research.

The pedagogy of multiliteracies highlights the pragmatic and consequential role of the *designs* that teachers and learners construct towards creating learning conditions leading to full and equitable social participation (NLG, 2000). Crucial for my research is the multiliteracies notion of design (available design, designing, and redesign) and the ways in which the study’s methodology of education design research (where practices are collaboratively designed) and multiliteracies share fundamental understandings. These shared understandings emerge from intentional and student-centered designing of learning processes that support knowledge creation and creative experiences for all children in the classroom. Any production in the classroom is treated as part of design, which involves three elements: *available design* (the resources on hand for meaning making); *the designing* (the processes of representing and making sense of meaning); and *the designed* (the outcome of meaning making). Meaning makers and designers have the potential to be transformed during this design process; redesign and re-negotiating

outcomes supports re-construction of their identities. As teachers innovate and design to meet the needs of all learners in the classroom, so do the children innovate to redesign and recreate their learning and their identities.

2.3 Multilingualism and Translanguaging

Emergent bilinguals/EAL learners, who are the focus of this dissertation, are multilingual learners. A variety of research studies (Cenoz & Gorter, 2015; Panda & Mohanty, 2015; Shank Lauwo, 2021; Wright et al., 2015) has shown that multilingualism has long been the norm in many parts of the world, including countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, and South America. Multilingualism is usually defined as the use of more than one language in day-to-day living (Cenoz, 2013) and a dynamic mixing of codes, varieties, and modes of expression in many domains – social, cultural, political, economic, technological, and educational. As with every social process, multilingual language use, language forms, and social arrangements are ideologically replete with disparity, selective privilege and prejudice, and are enhanced by critical reflection especially within educational contexts. In the field of education, we are in the midst of a “multilingual turn” (Cenoz & Gorter, 2015; Little et al., 2014; May, 2013) that presents a move from monolingual norms that have long dominated the field. Due to superdiversity – a theoretical understanding that the term ‘diversity’ is not enough to capture the range of social, economic, and cultural differentiators amid those who (im)migrate across countries (Vertovec, 2007) and transnational flows – the ways in which people, cultures, media, technologies, and ideas flow and are transformed across the globe (Appadurai, 1996), driven by shifting understanding of multilingual practices (García & Otheguy, 2020), various conceptualizations around multilingualism have been advanced. At the heart of my multilingual approach to learning is that students’ diverse linguistic repertoires are communicative resources,

and their skills in languages other than Standard English are valuable classroom assets to be built on rather than handicaps to be overcome.

One perspective that is prominent in this dissertation is translanguaging (Baker, 2011; Canagarajah, 2013; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; García, 2009; García & Li, 2014; Hornberger & Link, 2012; Li, 2018) with heteroglossic language ideologies that position multilingualism as the norm and analyze the linguistic *practices* of language-minoritized students from this outlook. The focus is on building the agency of the multilingual learner “to language in order to act and mean” (García & Otheguy, 2020, p. 28), and as a means to decolonize raciolinguistic ideologies that uphold linguistic practices (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Rosa & Flores, 2017). Translanguaging, originally conceived by Williams (1996), presents a focus on the practices of emergent bilinguals who are learning to speak two (or more) languages and have a language repertoire, which “includes linguistic features that are associated *socially* and *politically* with one language or another” (García et al., 2017, p. 18, emphasis in original). Unlike additive or subtractive notions of bilingualism that separate languages, García (2009) proposed a *dynamic* model of bilingualism to refer to the varying competencies and practices that multilinguals develop in their plural repertoires for specific purposes. Cummins (2017), in a recent discussion of additive approaches to language education, included the term “*active bilingualism*; that endorses the legitimacy of dynamic heteroglossic conceptions of bi/multilingualism, or the understanding that languages are intertwined in complex ways in the minds of multilingual individuals” (p. 406, emphasis in original). With this in mind, he outlined pedagogical practices where educators can become knowledge generators, agents of pluralistic language policies, and collaborators towards building multilingual competencies (Cummins, 2019a).

Translanguaging centers on the *creative and flexible practices* by which individuals draw from their entire language repertoires and this dissertation presents some ideas around those practices. Scholars have drawn attention to the complex processes by which bilinguals make meaning while drawing from various resources, including how different modes are involved in communication and literacies within the processes of translanguaging. García and Otheguy (2020) state, “this conception of language, communication, multimodality and, most centrally, this conception of the bilingual student’s life puts students first, not language first” (p. 27). In moving us methodologically beyond the realm of comparing varieties and standards of languages to the ways in which users creatively, critically, and dynamically innovate on those, translanguaging focuses on “giving equal weight to the *trans-* prefix and the *-ing* suffix of the term” (Li, 2020, p. 246). Translanguaging also considered bilingual students’ construction of translanguaging space, one where they engage in fluid language practices with others in the classroom and the transformative power of this type of space (García & Li, 2014; Kelyn & García, 2019). At the same time, in concert with intersectional scholarship, a raciolinguistic perspective on translanguaging contributes to understandings of the ways that social hierarchies and discourses are intersectionally and historically assembled and communicatively co-constituted in social spaces. These perspectives that I engage with in this dissertation work to decolonize raciolinguistic ideologies that uphold linguistic practices (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Rosa & Flores, 2017).

Relatedly, it is important to note that some scholars (Cummins, 2017; Kubota, 2016; May, 2018; Turner & Lin, 2017) have critiqued a translanguaging concept that named languages (like English, Tamil, Polish, Spanish, etc.) are socially constructed in colonialism and nation-state formation and that this naming obliges individuals to conform to the standard forms of the

language(s). These scholars argue that named languages and language varieties exist as a practical reality in the everyday lives of multilingual students, their families, and communities, and denying the reality of named languages does not support students pedagogically in building their linguistic repertoires, and might inadvertently reproduce hierarchies of power. In response, Li (2018) has recently offered some clarification of translanguaging theory in which he “does not deny the existence of named languages, but stresses that languages are historically, politically, and ideologically defined entities” (p. 19). From a translanguaging perspective, “multilingual language users are aware of the existence of the political entities of named languages, have acquired some of their structural features, and have an ability to use them” (p. 15). While cautioning against rigid perspectivism in schools devaluing minoritized students’ linguistic practices and skills, Cummins (2019a, 2019b) stresses that instruction about how languages work need to be taught explicitly in schools to demystify not only how languages work but also how language use interacts with hierarchies of power in society. As with many other theoretical concepts, translanguaging has been theorized and taken up by researchers in diverse ways and various practices have expanded to include translanguaging principles.

My stance on translanguaging as a multilingual researcher is that we draw on our fluid and expanding repertoire of linguistic and communicative features, which are often associated with languages, and thus, it is important to acknowledge how these languages and practices associate with broader socio-political contexts and structures. At the same time, I acknowledge the ongoing impact of structural constraints such as unequal capital, access to education, mobility, family background, personal dispositions, language ideologies, racialized identities, economic gaps, political oppression, xenophobia, etc. and that all communicative choices are not equally available to all multilingual learners (May, 2018; Rosa & Flores, 2017; Sah & Li, 2020).

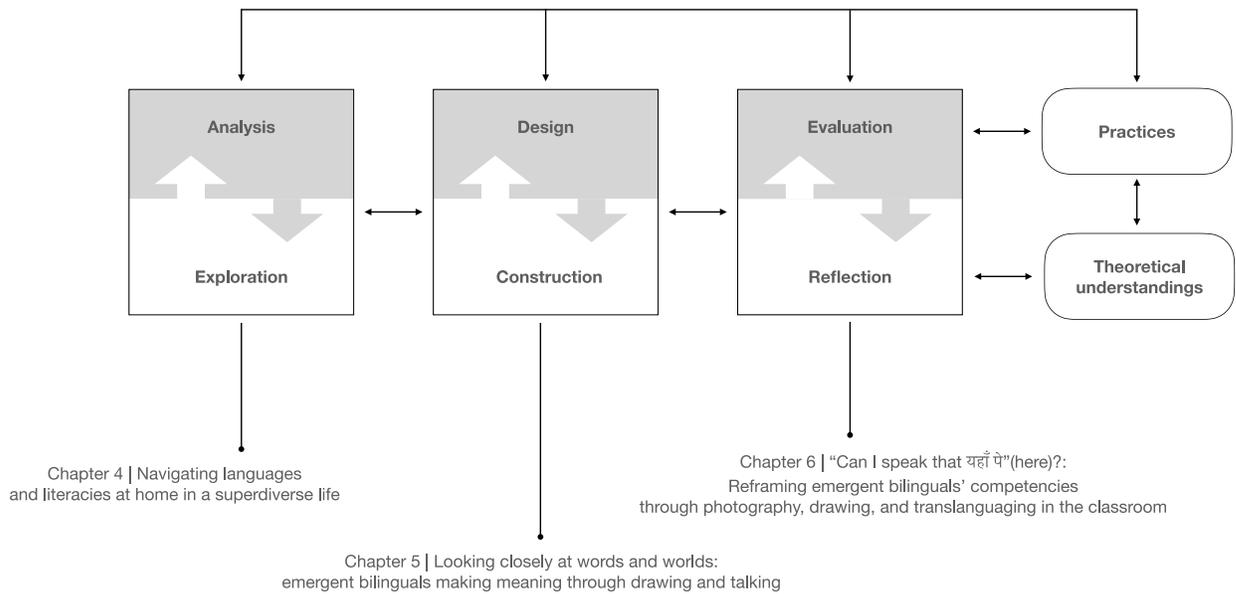
This dichotomy between fluidity of multilinguals' practices and structural constraints limiting their choices is a productive tension I explore within this work with an interest in how critical practices and reflection can contribute to translanguaging pedagogies and support minoritized learners. Turner and Lin (2017) suggest incorporating the naming of languages as part of translanguaging theory, and to harness the social category of named languages to consciously expand repertoires and critically examine differentiated linguistic inequities as an end in itself. Accounting for racialized privilege, Flores and Rosa (2015) highlight the need to consider why the linguistic practices of racialized populations are systematically stigmatized, regardless of the extent to which these practices might seem to correspond to standardized norms. It is these agentive yet critical semiotic spaces that are important to my research. I believe that translanguaging concepts can be used towards creating effective and equitable pedagogical strategies "that leverages all the features of the children's repertoire, while also showing them when [...] to use some features of their repertoire and not others, enabling them to also perform according to the social norms of named languages" (García & Kleyn, 2016, p. 15). Since the theoretical stance of translanguaging affirms dynamic multilingual realities, my interest is in its *practice* to offer the potential to reframe minoritized communities' sense of self, transcend boundaries between semiotic means, and decolonize monolingual norms and practices within Canadian educational spaces.

2.4 Processes of education design research and construction of chapters

As mentioned in Chapter 1, this manuscript-based dissertation includes three findings chapters that represent the sets of processes of the year-long study focused on emergent bilinguals in the Grade 2/3 classroom where I undertook my research. In this section, I begin with the motivation for this way of presenting the research, and continue by outlining the details

of the iterative processes that formed the basis of each chapter as the education design research (EDR) methodology proceeded. By presenting and describing these connections, I offer clarity on the process of the research and also about its representation through the various chapters of this dissertation (See Fig. 2.1)

Figure. 2.1: Processes of EDR and connections with chapters



This model, adapted from McKenney and Reeves (2019), shows the core processes of EDR and also how the three findings chapters in this dissertation map onto each process. The bidirectional arrows between the different elements indicate that the process is iterative and flexible, with ideas from each process feeding into the other with multiple pathways options. EDR’s foundational connection with theory and practice is made explicit with the curved rectangles on the right which feed into the processes, and in turn transform through the processes. This model shows an integrated design process, including how interaction with research, practice, and context, influences both the design process and ultimately practices. The chapters in this dissertation may be considered as providing nuanced stories and additional context within the process of this particular design.

Educational design research (EDR) (McKenney & Reeves, 2019) draws from theory and literature to develop learning designs and document the process of adapting them in context of the classroom, within a cycle of iterative analysis and implementation. Some core processes of the design include *Analysis and Exploration* (focused on needs and context), *Design and*

Construction (focused on design development and formation), and *Evaluation and Reflection* (focused on new learnings). While in reality the research was a much more iterative, fluid, and “messy” process, Chapters 4 to 6 map onto these three core processes of EDR so as to pragmatically offer a structure for representing the designs within the format of this dissertation. These three chapters highlight three specific sets of stories in the process of this EDR, look at separate framings of the data generated through the year-long process, and have their own distinct yet overlapping theoretical and conceptual approaches and extensive reviews of research. See Chapter 3 for a detailed description of EDR.

In each chapter that I summarize below, I report on different participants, bringing forward their diverse voices and their particular stories. While I conducted this year-long study in collaboration with the teacher and the whole class, I focused on the emergent bilinguals (see Table 2.1) in particular to understand how to better value their communicative repertoires.

Table 2.1: Emergent bilinguals in the focal classroom

Name (alphabetical, pseudonyms)	Details	Languages
Anh	Male, 8	Jrai, Vietnamese, English
Kimi	Female, 7	Japanese, Mandarin, English
Jay	Male, 7.5	Spanish, English
Jordan	Male, 8	Tagalog, English
May	Female, 7	Mandarin, English
Nicole	Female, 8	Cantonese, English
Pari	Female, 7.5	Hindi, Punjabi, English
Sarah	Female, 7.5	Spanish, English

In Chapter 4, I describe the home literacies of the focal child in the study – eight-year-old Anh, who is from Vietnam and has a refugee background. I explore themes that emerged from the analysis of Anh’s home literacies and use the perspectives of multiliteracies and superdiversity (with the understanding that all refugees do not fit into a simplistic unitary category because of complexities within their migration contexts) to complicate and question understandings of literacies of children from refugee backgrounds. The two themes relate to a home context where traditional literacies are minimal, and highlight Anh’s agentic literacies using drawing, orality, and digital and popular culture, and the translanguaging practices and brokering skills that he engages with to mediate complex social and cultural situations. I discuss how powerful these practices are for his own learning and argue that dominant models of school literacy practices often do not recognize these significant day-to-day literacy practices of multilingual children.

Chapter 4 maps onto *Analysis and Exploration processes* in EDR because the iterative and reflective processes of conducting literature reviews and classroom visits, alongside conversations with Sufi (self-selected pseudonym), the participating teacher, generated many of the ideas discussed in that chapter. This process was context-specific and open-ended to support the analysis and exploration that guided next steps for the research (McKenney & Reeves, 2019). Focusing on the home gave Sufi and me insight about our work, since we wanted a sense of the home literacies and strengths of emergent bilinguals in the class. Also, this exploration established ways to share social resources (networks and people), conceptual resources (ideas and processes), and physical resources (materials and tools). This sharing contributed to our collaboration on this year-long study and presented a way to listen to Anh’s stories in a way we did not have access to at school. Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie asserts that “the

single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story” (Adichie, 2009). This chapter offered one way to disrupt the dominant deficit-oriented “single story” about children who might be labelled as EAL learners.

With the Chapter 4 exploration as a foundation, Chapter 5 delves into an in-class collaborative drawing project titled *Looking Closely* by the children in the class. Using perspectives from multiliteracies and multimodality, I outline the project where children drew objects in their school yard, discussed their drawings with their friends, and wrote narrative pieces to further describe their pictures. I explore the communicative repertoires of the eight children assessed as EAL learners in the class, and ways in which their competencies as meaning makers became apparent through these drawing and ensuing collaborative interactions, and practices that become powerful when we look closely at their words and their worlds. The processes of iteratively looking closely at the emergent bilinguals’ stories of drawing, talking, writing, and collaborating offered the children (and adults) new ways of seeing, representing, and belonging in the classroom.

Chapter 5 mapped onto *Design and Construction processes* in EDR where ideas for change are collaboratively constructed with participants. Since Sufi and I had observed that drawing was a modality that the emergent bilinguals were comfortable in, this project suited our contextual needs. Throughout this chapter, I discuss stories of collaborative work related to the design processes emphasizing “teamwork, communication, and creativity” (McKenney & Reeves, 2019, p. 131), aspects that correspond directly with BC’s Curriculum’s Communicative Core Competencies, connect with my research interests, and also relate to Sufi’s expectations for classroom work. Also important, is considering specific contextual needs and how these can be

met (these needs included the emergent bilinguals' interest in drawing, Sufi's interest that the children participate in writing narrative pieces).

Following this, Chapter 6 describes the collaborative design idea of working on a multilingual and multimodal project titled "Something/Someone I love" with the class, its steps and processes, and the learnings from the various aspects of this work. With a focus on Jay's and Pari's photography, drawings, and multilingual narratives, this chapter presents the ways in which, over time and through iteration, children productively reach to their communicative repertoires to generate new understandings and re-frame their identities *when* pedagogical practices in the classroom transform to accommodate these. Using concepts from translanguaging and multimodal theories, touching on English-language ideologies, and highlighting stories about collaborative process and relationships, this chapter discusses how multilingual and multimodal practices can reciprocally support listening closely for emergent bilinguals' competencies.

Chapter 6 maps onto *Evaluation and Reflection processes* in education design research. What is described in this chapter is evaluation of research on and through the introduction of new pedagogical design and practices with this classroom, in collaboration with participants. As we participated and created the design of the photo project, we were evaluating it for our needs and purposes and making meaning of it for ourselves. Given the crucial role of reflection in the process of design, McKenney and Reeves (2019) point to aspects of "creative thoughts and feelings" (p. 183) as a factor in enabling valuable knowledge creation. In this chapter, I report on ideas from both organic and more structured reflection with the children and Sufi, and my own reflections and feelings.

As Leggo (2012) said, "because I can never tell a whole story, I seek fragments" (p.17).

In each chapter, I draw on specific examples through stories to present key themes I identified from within that framing about communicative repertoires and classroom pedagogies. As well, I reflect on collaborating with children by including children's voices and centering their perspectives. Taken together the three chapters represent the cyclical and reflective processes that ground the research, build on relationships, and connect the dissertation.

2.5 Chapter Summary

At the beginning of this chapter, I presented the theoretical frameworks guiding this study. Specifically, I briefly described foundational ideas from sociocultural theory about literacy (Vygotsky, 1978; Heath, 1983). I outlined key ideas from multiliteracies (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015; NLG, 1996) and multimodality (Kress, 1997; Stein, 2008; Kendrick, 2016) that ground this exploration of emergent bilinguals' communicative practices including their drawing, photography, interactions and collaborations, and the design choices undertaken in this study. I also described theories on multilingual education (Cenoz & Gorter, 2015; Dagenais, 2013), in particular translanguaging theory (García, 2009; García & Li, 2014) to explore emergent bilinguals' practices and engage with criticality. Following this, I described the structure of this dissertation to outline how the three findings chapters (Chapters 4, 5, 6) are visualized with the three iterative sets of processes of educational design research methodology that underpinned this study. In the next chapter, I describe the research methodology and ethical considerations used in this study.

Chapter 3: Methodologies

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the methodological foundations that guided this study. First, I describe in detail some ethical considerations, including a few relevant stories and notes from my study that speak to those considerations in the research process. Following, I outline the research contexts beginning with description of the school, the teacher – Sufi, and other research participants. Next, I summarize my research strategies, methodologies, and methods of data generation and analysis. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of practices of interpretation, validation, and evaluation.

3.2 Researcher ethics, reflexivity, and positionality

In this section I describe ethical aspects that were at the foundation of my research intentions and endeavors and to make my work as transparent and ethical as possible (Tracy, 2020). In addition to gaining approval from UBC’s Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BREB) and the school board’s research committee, I wanted to engage with the “business as *unusual* nature of ethical challenges” (Williams, 2010, p. 257) that emerge from qualitative research. I begin with a section on my positionality since it directly impacted the ways in which this research unfolded. To build into my research ways of being respectful of the processes by which knowledge is gathered and presented, and to acknowledge the conundrums that naturally arise when researching with humans, I borrowed principles of Indigenous research accountability. According to Weber-Pillwax (2001), this accountability includes nurturing healthy relationships in research through respect, reciprocity, and responsibility. Alongside these, I include the idea of reflexive practices as an ethical consideration to acknowledge the imbalances of power in research relationships (especially with children). These considerations of privileging and

prioritizing people and human relationships formed the heart of the methods, processes, and decisions undertaken during the research.

3.2.1 Positionality

This discussion of positionality is rooted in the belief that knowledge production is a compromised enterprise interwoven with power relations between the researcher and the researched. I was consistently aware of my position as an adult woman within an elementary classroom with children from diverse circumstances, and of being a representative from an academic institution. Even when I wanted to distance myself from these positions to take up other identities, these often became the predominant ways in which I was positioned in the school by the children, the staff, and the families. “She’s the teacher from UBC,” was how I was regularly referred to in the school.

I participated in the research with my various subjective identities, among others, as a multilingual immigrant from south India, a parent of two young multilingual children, a feminist researcher focused on research process, a doctoral student with the stated purpose of generating data for my study, and an equity-oriented educator. The privileges in my life often outnumber the struggles my participants or I might have to face, but I was able to share with them some common experiences and observations as an immigrant, a parent, and a linguistic and visible minority. In addition, during the study, I performed various roles including classroom support, collaborator, teacher, photographer, and interviewer in the classroom; and I was interviewer, resource person, and observer and language interpreter during home visits with the focal family.

Congruently, researchers argue that researcher positions should be examined within particular ethnographic settings and within unique relationships between researcher and participants, instead of delineating the researcher’s identities in terms of social categories. My

static social identities, such as researcher, multilingual, etc., became more fluid by relational interactions with participants and with the co-construction of language and race. Like Anzaldúa (1987) who theorized intersectionality from a borderlands perspective and Ahmed (2017) who wrote about identifying with feminists of colour, my positionality was fluidly shaped by my intersectional identities. My racialized position as an immigrant woman of colour intersected with my position as a university-educated researcher when sharing stories and resources with the families. My position as a middle-class parent of children who attend a public school interacted with the researcher role undertaken in a school with many working-class families. These positions also interacted with the element that my own schooling was much less resourced compared to the children at the school, from which I drew experiences and stories that I was able to share with some children in the class. These types of disjunctures between varying situated positionalities revealed complexities beyond the identities described above, speaking to contextually negotiated identities and power relations.

Individuals are “always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising ... power” (Foucault, 1972, p. 98) and this aspect played out in the ways I was positioned during the study. I appreciated feminist psychologist Michelle Fine’s (1994) conceptualization of *Working the Hyphens* with the idea of creating spaces of possibilities instead of boundaries between various researcher identities, and between researchers and participants. The fluid nature of “working the hyphen” offers the possibility for researcher and participants to shape each other’s identities and actions, offer new ways of understanding tensions in such connections, and practicing relational ethics through the research process (Clandinin et al., 2018; Cunliffe & Karunanayake, 2013; Langford, 2019). For instance, there were times when the children used my position as a researcher visiting the classroom to get out of doing unenjoyable worksheets or

classroom tasks. In another way of upending power, children would try to trick me into permitting them to use the washroom as a group of two or three even though their teacher had forbidden them from going in groups. A few took it upon themselves to make sure I was heard above the classroom noise, which was a running joke since I use a comparatively quieter “teacher voice.” To support me with this issue, the children came up with a classroom clapping routine where they took turns bringing the class to attention.

3.2.2 Respect

Creating respectful relationships is at the foundation of research work with human participants. This meant committing the time to build trust and to develop an inclusive, flexible, collaborative, and participatory process with the children, the teacher, and the families. Trust-building with participants was enhanced by a conscious attention to gentle pacing of research activities in the year-long research process, with member reflections (Tracy, 2020), and a focus on mutual sharing in the research .

I spent the first two months of the new school year volunteering in the classroom two times a week so that the children in the Grade 2/3 class and staff at the school became familiar with my presence. These early months that included wide-ranging conversations and sharing ideas with the children were pivotal in building trust. We established routines and rhythms, and while I visited at different times in the school day, the children knew when to expect me. I was mindful of the knowledge and experience the participants brought with them and for the time it took from the individual – whether child or adult – and what they might have been doing otherwise. For instance, there were times when Sufi and I cancelled interviews because she was overwhelmed with work, and times when children did not feel like having conversations about their work even when we had planned to do so. In all research contexts, I always shared the

reasons for my presence and actions so that participants knew why I was there and what I was doing. I also shared aspects of personal and professional life that might have helped contextualize my interest in aspects of their life.

Collaborative decision-making and data generation in the classroom was part of respectful research practices. Conducting EDR involved iterative discussions, from the topics of projects to specific ways to invite families to an end-of-year photo exhibition. A commitment to flexible processes meant sharing transcripts with those I interviewed and being open to removing sensitive information from those documents; accepting a child's "no" and taking notes rather than audio recording; and understanding the various stressors and priorities of people's lives and offering time, space, and resources.

3.2.3 Reciprocity

I chose my research topic and methodology to engage pedagogically with the diverse communities in classrooms and to generate practical and usable knowledge that was activated by listening to and working with families, teachers, and children. Yet, some of my contributions to those involved in my research was in activities alongside my research time with them. Over the course of the school year, I was present in the classroom with Sufi, supporting classroom needs – from sharpening pencils and photocopying final class assignments, to regularly supporting a few children to focus. We also shared many long conversations about the children and while those were helpful to my research, Sufi revealed that these chats helped her reflect on her practices. We also attended a conference together to present some aspects of the research and kept in touch about the study through reflections and discussions.

While the children offered so much of their love and shared about their lives without reciprocal expectations, they were able to tell me things that they felt unable to share with their

teacher. Though “emergent listening,” to allow for untold stories to emerge (Davies, 2017), I was privileged with information about recess skirmishes, classroom gossip and struggles, and asked for support on managing some of these issues. Of course, the power differential inherent in these interactions is not lost on me; however, I believe I was able to offer some elements of care and mindfulness during these conversations. Additionally, the focal family (described in the next section) needed support and apart from the bags of vegetables that the child often requested, I was able to facilitate resources for job hunting, help with translating for interactions with the police and insurance company, and encourage community engagement and skill development.

3.2.4 Responsibility

The ethics and responsibility of conducting research with young children is a complex area (Bodén, 2021; Rogers et al., 2016) and I elaborate later about some of these conundrums. Many organizations (including schools) have their own ethical guidelines for research, but the children and I had many conversations about the nature of research, what this work will mean for them to understand the parameters of their participation, including assent (Rogers & Labadie, 2018), purpose and procedures, ways the work will be used (Yoon & Templeton, 2019), and right to withdraw (Bruzzese & Fisher, 2003) and retrospective views on participation (Pinter & Zandian, 2015). In addition, children were always provided chances to ask questions and discuss what was being asked of them, and personally agree to let their words and work become part of research reporting. For instance, before presenting on some of their drawings for a conference, I checked in with the class and seven out of 20 declined to have their work be part of a “conference at UBC” despite having provided assent at the time of the drawing project. This conversation further facilitated their learnings about the research processes.

Initial conversations with the teacher included clarifying expectations around data collection, time and project management, and logistical details for this research to function responsibly with the needs of the class and the school. Having a focus on procedures and strategies for ethical decision making and a sense of credibility and sincerity (Tracy, 2020) was helpful, but so was having a sense of camaraderie and trust. Two times over the course of the year, we together contacted the Ministry of Child and Family Development for services related to child welfare regarding what some children had revealed to me. Many stories have not been included in this dissertation because I choose to privilege relationships, even though these stories might be important for shaping and sharing context towards learning. The unpredictability and fragility of some of the children's lives made me reflect on research and the competing rights it collides against, such as the right of the public to know versus the right to privacy. I appreciate William's (2010) notion of contrasting "can we do ethical research?" from a methodological stance with the more human "can we be ethical researchers?" (p. 259).

3.2.5 Reflexivity

The purpose of reflexivity is not to increase the validity or to examine the researcher identity; rather, conversely, its purpose is to deconstruct the authority of the researcher (Macbeth, 2001; Pillow, 2003, 2010). Tracy (2020) states self-reflexivity "is an honest and authentic awareness of one's own identity and research approach, and an attitude of respect for participants, audience members, and other research stakeholders" (p. 272). Reflexivity as a methodological practice raises critical questions related to the problematics of doing research – issues of power, voice, representation, researcher and researched subjectivities, and process.

Reflexivity helps us "see what is unthought by helping us to see what at other times is invisible" (Pillow, 2010, p. 274). Recognizing my subjective influences and preferences in this

study helped interrogate what I was seeing. For instance, because I am drawn to visual representations, my bias in terms of modality has been towards the visual, including types of literacy practices, methodologies, and analysis. Consequently, this meant I paid less attention to other modes, like kinesthetic ways of meaning making. As the research progressed, I emphasized certain interactions, often related to socioemotional aspects of children's lives, allowing my preferences and identities to foreground what I was seeing and thinking. These preferences are often prominent in my reflexive notes – as markers of questions that could have been asked, as directions that could have been pursued. I include details of some of these as reflective notes and sometimes as art, to take part in the work of destabilization (Berger, 2015; Rose, 2013).

To extend the conversation around reflexivity, I participated in seminars and conferences related to varied methodological issues in research. Importantly, I followed recommendations from scholars of giving time to interrupt, elongate, and hence learn the reflexive research process. In checking in with participants through the course of the study, keeping detailed introspective logs of feelings and choices, I was practicing a feminist ethics of care by prioritizing caring relationships as central (Langford, 2019) and considering reflexivity an important part in the process of being human in research.

3.3 Research context and participants

3.3.1 The school

To conduct this study with its emphasis on diversity in various forms – in communicative repertoires, sociocultural aspects, and pedagogical styles – I sought a school that included families with a range of socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. At the time of the study, the school had 490 students and was situated in a working-class neighbourhood (EDI, 2019) in a large city in western Canada, with families from China, Egypt, Japan, India, Nigeria,

Philippines, Sri Lanka, Uganda, and Vietnam. About 34% of the students were categorized as EAL learners, 5% of the students were identified as having special educational needs, and approximately 1% of students were Indigenous. The school plan and school staff emphasized that students had varying levels of support at home and required different levels of support at school with academics and their social emotional needs. In the neighbourhood of the focal school, 42% of the children were categorized as being “vulnerable,” and almost 70% of the families in the neighbourhood spoke a language other than English as their mother tongue, and many resided in low-income housing. However, the staff was aware of the types of complex issues the children faced and there was a feeling of a shared sense of purpose among the teachers who seemed to genuinely care about the children they taught.

3.3.2 The participating teacher

I met Sufi (self-selected pseudonym) when presenting my research proposal to the school staff. Prior to the beginning of the study, I had early conversations and established mutual interest and volunteered in her class once a week for six months. Sufi had been obligated as a child to move with her family from Iran to the UK, the US, and finally to Canada. She learnt English at age 11 and had a personal understanding of the challenges of learning a new language in a new country. She has an undergraduate degree in political science, and a law degree, though she did not enjoy practicing law and went on to get a B.Ed. After teaching for about ten years, she also gained a master’s degree in Education from UBC. Her Master’s thesis included personal narratives, an acknowledgment of personal ideologies and subjectivities, and inquiries into ways of living, teaching, and learning well with each other. Sufi’s interest in meaning making in multiple ways to engender storied connections was particularly significant to this study.

We hit it off at once sharing jokes like “My Master’s is collecting dust somewhere. But oh, it’s on the internet, so I guess it’s collecting a web” (Interview, November 15, 2017). Through the study, we shared humour, enjoyed discussing politics and feminism, and shared notes on good places to eat out. A self-proclaimed lover of learning and universities, she said she would love to go back to study for a PhD someday. Significant to my research was Sufi’s interest in offering children a voice in the classroom, “because people do say ‘no’ to children a lot,” (Interview, November 15, 2017). However, her instinct to offer them a choice seemed to compete with her need to “get things done in the classroom,” often because of time pressure during the school day. There were many days when she and other teachers in the school did not get a break because they had to confer with the school counsellor about a student or call a parent. Sufi acknowledged that with the press of time, she needed “more patience. Patience. Patience, which sometimes is there and sometimes it isn’t!” Despite this perception, I noticed that she encouraged discussion and group work, involved the children in many decisions, and embraced the collaborations and conversations intrinsic to this study – all of which not only took more time and effort but also demonstrated a respect for children’s voices. Further descriptions of her literacy practices and perspectives are discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

3.3.3 The classroom

The class had eight children who were categorized as EAL learners (see Table 2.1) and of the 22 students in the class, only one child was from a monolingual English-speaking home. While I focused on only the emergent bilinguals/EAL learners for this research, all the children in the class participated in the year-long study. During the third week of school (mid-September) at an open house in the Grade 2/3 classroom, I introduced myself to visiting families and shared letters and consent forms (see Appendices A & B) inviting children and their families to

participate in the study. These letters and forms had also been sent home with the children earlier that day after we had discussed their participation in the study in class. While the children had many questions, all of them enthusiastically assented to participate in the in-class portion of the study. Most of the families responded positively to the invitation within the first few days, and the others sent in their permission after a reminder from Sufi in the children's daily agenda.

3.3.4 The focal child and family

After I spent some time in the class getting to know the group, I explained the in-class and home components of the study to all the children and invited them to participate. I had previously outlined, with Sufi, some criteria for selecting the focal child/ren, including: a) EAL learners, as categorized by the school board; b) children identified by the classroom teacher and me as possible focal candidates; c) children who were emergent bilinguals using home languages other than English (possibly those whose home language is Hindi or Tamil, languages in which I am fluent); and d) those who consent to participate in the study.

After a few weeks, there were two emergent bilinguals in the class that Sufi and I identified as being ideal as focal participants – Pari (pseudonym), whose home language was Hindi, and Anh (pseudonym), whose home languages were Jrai and Vietnamese. When invited to participate, they were eager for me to visit their homes. I offered each family a \$100 gift card as a token of gratitude for their participation, and that could have been an added motivation. Unfortunately, however, in the end I was only able to visit Anh's home and to include him as a focal participant. Pari's family was going through many challenges making it difficult to research in her home; however, I include details from conversations with Pari in Hindi and discussion of her communicative repertoires in Chapter 6. I initially planned to interview both the adults in

these families, but, as detailed in the limitations in Chapter 7, was only able to chat informally during home visits with one parent because of various complexities.

Anh, the focal child, was eight years old, designated as a refugee by the school district and as an EAL student. He used Vietnamese, Jrai, and English at home with his single mother. I observed twice a week in his classroom, the playgrounds during recess and lunch, the resource room where he received additional English support two times a week, and at his home twice a month. In Chapter 4, I write about his home context and the types of agency Anh displays towards his literacies learning. Though the teachers considered him a “few grade levels below” the grade level expectations for reading, writing, and comprehension, both Sufi and his resource teacher considered him a bright student.

3.4 Research strategies

In this section, I explain the methodology of education design research (EDR) used in this study. Then, I highlight how research methodologies and considerations for working with children connect with EDR and underpin the ethical values I presented.

3.4.1 Education Design Research

Educational design research (EDR) is a way to link research and practice in the real world together with participants in the research (Akker et al., 2006; Kelly, 2006; McKenney & Reeves, 2019; Reinking & Bradley, 2008). Like action research, the argument for EDR stems from “a desire to *increase the relevance* of research for education policy and practice” (Akker et al., 2006, p. 3, emphasis in original). Educational design researchers draw from theory and literature to develop learning designs and document the process of adapting them in context. The goal is not to prove an idea or theory, but to document the choices that lead to a design, and ultimately to reconstruct and articulate the elements of what worked well to produce relevant

information for practice and policy decisions. While this is an emerging methodology, characterized by a range of terminology and a variety of ways in which it is operationalized, the following points outline some features of this research process. EDR is: theoretically oriented, interventionist, collaborative, responsively grounded, and iterative (McKenney & Reeves, 2019).

1. In this research process, *theoretical understandings* are used to frame not only the research but also the design to address real problems, in turn leading to possible theoretical and practical understanding and consideration of implications for specific dimensions of theory.
2. While the term “*interventionist*” is used to broadly encompass different solutions that may be designed, EDR starts with the identification of a problem, in need of inquiry and innovative options. Rather than use the language of “intervention,” I chose to follow Cooperrider and Whitney (2000) in their philosophy that “inquiry is intervention” (p.18) and explore the possibilities that questions bring to changemaking rather considering an intervention into the classroom space. Through new practices or designs from these inquiries (henceforth, I will use the term *design* to refer to this aspect of the methodology to highlight the conscious choices made in the process of the study), researchers engage in developing creative solutions, informed by both existing knowledge from their own understandings and from the knowledge of participants.
3. The research process is conducted in *collaboration* with a range of actors connected to the context of the research, including the ways in which participants respond to the design in process. Starting with the identification and exploration of the issue, the knowledge, instincts, and experience of the research participants are valued and included as inherent to the research. Design and analysis are carried out jointly with participants, with particularly strong involvement from the educator who is implementing the design.

4. The emerging designs adjust direction based on the experiences from the real world setting in the process of research, making the process *responsively grounded*. Since it is a process with the express purpose of exploring the complexities of the real world, it needs to respond appropriately to the complexities of teaching and learning environments and systems that students and teachers inhabit.
5. The insights and designs of EDR evolve over time through *multiple iterations* of development and refinement. Some core processes in the iterative design include Analysis and Exploration (focused on needs and context), Design and Construction (focused on design development and formation), and Evaluation and Reflection (focused on new learnings) (see Figure 2.1 for how these processes map onto Chapters 4-6). These iterative processes more likely lead to elaborated understanding rather than proving or disproving existing ones.

EDR is suited to research questions that focus on how to best support the learning process by exploring what is possible. The underlying questions behind EDR are often, “what alternatives are there to current educational practices?” and “how can these alternatives be established and sustained?” (Edelson, 2006, p. 103). It presents an open-ended approach where researchers specify theme areas and ask practitioners if those are areas they want to improve. Personally, an appealing feature of EDR is that it seeks the collaborative designing of solutions to problems of practice and that the goals and methods are rooted in the complex variation of the real world. EDR is conducted to understand and foster meaning-making and it sees this process as necessarily historical, cultural, and social and thus does not seek to randomize away these influences. As McKenney and Reeves (2019) say, “Real change can come when we focus not only on what and how things can be done, but when we also work to understand why” (p. 1).

3.4.1.1 Adaptation to EDR: Appreciative instructional design

While EDR suits this study well because of its emphasis on collaborative and iterative processes, the needs of my participants, the children, their families, and the classroom teacher, required flexibility in the research processes to allow for greater flow and trustful relationships (Keefe, 2018). Also, some traditional versions of EDR have been criticized for focusing on the gap between current and desired goals and instruction that is designed for that gap from a deficit perspective.

In contrast, this study engaged with aspects of Appreciative Instructional Design (AiD) to focus on what “gives ‘life’ to the system” (Norum, 2008, p. 426) – in this case, children’s communicative repertoires, agency, and relationships. As opposed to simply problem solving, AiD begins with a search for the best of “what is” (rather than only looking for exactly what is wrong or what needs to be “fixed”) and then moves to “what might be” by creating resources to nurture that vision from a positive space. The belief is that a system can be reconstructed by changing the stories that are being told from deficit-based to ones that are more hopeful and affirmative to support changemaking. I have drawn on these principles of AiD when I need to refocus the research on generative aspects of the systems and people I am working within. This was particularly useful in allowing me to focus on valuing individual stories, strengths, and resources, recognize the role of systems in changemaking, and helping me to be collaborative rather than evaluative.

3.4.2 Researching children, researching with children

Adults cannot fully understand the worlds of children, and so need children to explain their perspectives (Christensen & James, 2017), and the role of the researcher is to enable this process, together with the children, by opening opportunities for involving children in the

research. A central goal of research with children is to surface children's ways of being *as* knowledge and "in listening to children, we forefront the importance of childhood in and of itself" (Yoon & Templeton, 2018, p. 57) rather than through adult biases. Many childhood researchers have examined the relationship between children's real participation in research and listening to and hearing their voices, and on methodologies of researching *with* rather than *on* children (Clark, 2011; Clark & Moss, 2001; Dockett & Perry, 2005; Rogers & Labadie, 2018).

Despite critical childhood frameworks (see Harcourt, 2011; James & Prout, 2014) that positions children as active agents in their own lives, listening to and working with children can be extremely complex (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005; Davies, 2017). The ethical imbalance deeply entrenched in education research with children was explained by Shanahan (2007) who suggested that "... children may have agency, but adults still monopolize power ... children may have voices, but adults control the conversation" (p. 415). It is imperative to consider critically, as McTavish et al. (2012) suggest, whether these voices represent the authentic or the "assumed" voices of children, constructed often without well considered intention by "adult others." Although there is no way to eliminate the power differential between the adult researcher and the child being researched (l'Anson, 2013; Davies, 2016), there are ways to acknowledge the gap between the two (Nutbrown, 2011). The following ideas outline some ways in which methodological and ethical considerations in childhood research were brought into synergy with EDR for my research.

3.4.2.1 Acknowledging complexity and complications

What is salient for research with children is a conscious acknowledgement of, rather than "glossing over," the issues of power (Sumsion, 2003, p. 7). Dumas and Nelson (2016) note:

In so many ways, adults determine the boundaries of children's social worlds . . .

Recognizing children as social beings should lead us to shift our scholarly analysis, our politics, and our practice in ways that respond to children's rights and interests and to listen to what children can teach us about being a child in the world. (p. 33)

To do this recognition, I engaged in reflexive practices, including maintaining a journal. These offered perspectives and critical self-reflection, helped clarify choices and constraints as the study progressed, and pointed to my adult-determined intentions in the research. I was also deliberately concerned with children as reflexive participants in the research process, as people who reflected upon their experiences and practices in their everyday lives, and about their interactions with me. In this way, the children not only participated but as also actively interpreted, analyzed, shaped, and complicated the research process (Connolly, 2017). Because EDR can be cyclical and iterative, acknowledging such complexity permitted me to pursue new directions within the research.

3.4.2.2 Participant-friendly methods

The participatory nature of both EDR and researching with children prioritize respectful relationships, trust building, shared responsibility, and responsiveness, making for synergy between the two. Childhood researchers argue that what is important is that the methods chosen for a piece of research should be appropriate for the people involved in the study, for its social and cultural context, and for the kinds of research questions that are being posed (Christensen & James, 2017). Researchers need to adopt practices that resonate with children's cultures and lives, making it "participant friendly" rather than just child friendly (Fraser, 2004), with a focus on the particularities of the cultures of communication that are established between adult researchers and child participants. In my research, this comprised creating "frameworks for listening" to children's stories, including through photography, drawings, and talking with

children, and ways to listen for what is left untold (Davies, 2016; Yoon & Templeton, 2019). More fundamentally, I also gained an understanding of children's perspectives by forming long-term relationships of trust with them through many conversations in the year-long research process and remaining in touch afterwards as well. Additionally, by being sensitive to the affordances and constraints of different modalities for different children, this study engaged with processes that were responsive to children in the classroom beyond finding an appropriate method to generate data (Berson et al., 2019; Yoon, 2018).

3.4.2.3 Significance of context and relationality

Another aspect of working respectfully with children involves efforts to understand the meaning of children's representations and practices in context, and to ground the research in the assumption that our interpretation of these is constructed within that context (Luttrell, 2016; Yoon, 2018). A key question for researchers is determining which context to include and to remember that every context has a history of discourse practices, chained together in particular ways. My interest in children's identities and lifeworlds, in feminist ethics of care, and the relational character of children's social lives, foreground context and relationality as crucial for how this research unfolded and was interpreted. By acknowledging both the context of the meaning making and my own subjective contexts, I recognize the challenge of interpreting meanings from children but also highlight relationships as central to those attempts. Due to the importance of context to EDR, there is a significant alignment between the ways in which complexity of context is inherently considered.

3.4.2.4 Positionalities and participation

Since this study was conducted in a classroom setting, collaboratively with the teacher and the students in the class, considerations of positionalities and participation become

particularly significant. Literacy researchers might be members of the communities they study, either as classroom teachers or teachers turned-university researchers connected to classrooms as sites of learning. While the potential risks for children who participate in literacy research in schools are low, the ethical boundaries are perhaps less clear-cut. If research is going to influence teaching practice, then the positionalities and participation of researchers and participants must be taken very seriously. As Bodén (2021) reminds us, we need to consider not only our ethical positions to strengthen a research project but also how children in research are positioned in relation to “prepositions like *on, to, with, for and by*” (p. 5, original emphasis) as social actors and subjects of inquiry (as in, research *by* children, research *with* children etc.), and the ethical spaces that underpin these positionings. Since EDR is responsively grounded, it aligns with the idea of participants having a say in how the research unfolds and their positionalities within it. For instance, I discussed ongoing assent, consent, and processes of the research with the children, foregrounded their choices when negotiating participation, and sought “more nuanced accounts of children’s worlds which reflect[ed] both the messiness and complexity of their lives in general and their participation in research in particular” (Spyrou, 2018, p. 8).

3.5 Methods of data generation

Data were generated for this study from September 2017 – August 2018 in the classroom, school yard, staff room, school common areas, and home of the focal child. I used non-linear, visual, and multimodal methods with an intent to be inclusive of the full range of all children’s communicative repertoires. With adult participants, I included semi-structured interviews, observations, and note-taking to support and challenge my understandings. While I outline the data generation in this section, I elaborate on specifics within Chapters 4, 5, and 6. In Table 3.1, I present my data generation sources and procedures, before describing them in detail.

Table 3.1: Data sources, procedures, and frequency

Data sources	Procedures	Frequency
Observations and field notes – in classroom	Field notes Researcher notes Reflexive journal Audio recordings Photographs Artifact collection Collaborative conversations with Sufi	2-4hrs per day 2-3 times per week Through the year
Observations and field notes – in Anh’s home	Field notes Researcher notes Reflexive journal Audio recordings Photographs	2-3hrs 2 times per month 8 months
Nature /outdoor drawings and conversations [<i>Looking Closely</i> project]	Children’s drawings (drafts and final versions) Written narratives in English (drafts and final versions) Field notes Researcher notes Reflexive journal Audio recordings of discussions Photographs	2-4hrs per day 3 weeks
Photographs and multilingual narratives [<i>Something or Someone I love</i> project]	Children’s photos (drafts and final versions) Children’s drawings (drafts and final versions) Written narrative in English (drafts and final versions) Written narrative in multiple languages Slide deck of photo/drawing presentations Slides of photo workshops Field notes Researcher notes Reflexive journal Audio recordings of discussions Photographs	2-4hrs per day 2-3 times per week 6 months (Jan – June)
Research conversations with children	Audio recordings Researcher notes Reflexive journal	10 to 25 minute chats about each child’s drawing, photographs, and research processes

		6 months (Jan – June)
Class discussions with children	Audio recordings Researcher notes Reflexive journal Photographs	10-45 minute group discussions related to various in-class projects, choices, decision making, and feedbacking Through the year
Semi-structured interviews with Sufi, school principal, and resource teacher	Audio recordings Researcher notes Reflexive journal Interview protocols and transcriptions	1-1.5 hrs 1-2 times in the year
Artefact collection	Drawing and writing journals Toys and photos that children brought from home School records Researcher notes Reflexive journal Photographs Parent newsletter	Through the year
Researcher notes and Reflexive journal	Audio recordings Photographs, drawings, interviews Observations and field notes Artefacts Discussions and research conversations	Through the year

3.5.1 Observations and field notes at school

I took extensive field notes on children’s communicative repertoires during and after observations in the home or school space to contextualize the setting, the people, and interactions, and details that bring stories to life (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). I also wrote down further ideas and thoughts and questions, often processing the “raw” data while sitting in my car after a school visit, expanding my notes with more details. Later, at my computer, I typed and converted the field notes into short narratives, depending on what occurred during the observation. As part of the iterative research process, these narratives were the times when I

often formulated further questions, engaged in reflexive journaling, and prepared follow-up ideas with various participants or contexts. Observations in the school spaces for two or three hours occurred two times a week at the start of the research, and three times a week later in the year. These spanned the entire school day, including recess and lunchtime.

3.5.2 Nature/outdoor drawings and conversations

After observing that the children and Sufi were interested in creative projects combined with “traditional” literacies, I brought up the idea of drawing as a means of exploring emergent bilinguals’ communicative repertoires. Mid-way through the school year, I had invited a photographer friend to visit the class, and she had permitted me to show some of her nature drawings to the children. Inspired by this, the class drew objects from their school yard or an element from nature with as much detail as possible, and some wrote narrative pieces explaining their choices. They also described them to me or a small group of their peers in brief research conversations (which turned into a data set that I describe below). While all the children in the class participated in this process, I focused only on the emergent bilinguals’ representations for this study. I explore all these aspects of the *Looking Closely* project at length in Chapter 5.

3.5.3 Photographs and multilingual narratives

Using the iterative processes of EDR – including classroom observations, group discussions, and the *Looking Closely* project – the children, Sufi, and I jointly decided that a photos/drawings on the theme *Something or Someone I love* would be their final inquiry project. It was inspired by Photovoice (Blackman & Fairey, 2007; Palibroda, et al. 2009), Literacy Through Photography (Ewald et al., 2011) and elements from the Collaborative Seeing approach (Fontaine & Luttrell, 2015). This project utilized an iterative and collaborative approach combining visuals and artefacts from home and narratives in multiple languages, where

meanings were co-constructed by the participants through discussion. I presented a workshop on photography and invited a photographer friend (mentioned earlier) to share her work before the children took their photos at home. After sharing and discussion, the children constructed multilingual narratives to match. Again, while the whole class participated in this work, my focus was on the emergent bilinguals' multilingual practices. Chapter 6 presents detailed description of data generation for and analysis of this project.

3.5.4 Research conversations with children

Through the research process, I listened, clarified, supported, and encouraged children to ensure that they understood and enjoyed the research. Emergent bilinguals in the class participated in “research conversations” during activities in class. These conversations were audio recorded when we worked one-on-one on editing their photos for the final photo gallery. These informal spontaneous conversations were helpful in establishing their skills and interests, and understandings about the process. Because these were conducted in the classroom, other children would drop in and out of the conversation, drawn by a curiosity to see what we were working on and talking about. These “interruptions” from their classmates and the fact that we were in a sought-after spot in the classroom and away from the teacher’s desk, I believe, offered informality to the conversation, encouraging the children to speak unreservedly. While we spoke about the photos and their specific design choices, these chats afforded an interactional space where unanticipated statements emerged according to the children’s priorities (Schwartz & Sharpe, 2010) and relatively “unimportant” moments offered insight.

Having gained consent from all the families and assent from all the children, other in-class informal research conversations were also recorded related to collaborative decision-making about their work, when the children were discussing and sharing their work with me or

their peers, individually or in groups. These conversations helped me to learn experiences and personal stories, existing relationships that support them, resources available, constraints and issues. I often requested they clarify my understandings and invited them to ask questions of each other when comparing and sharing work as they engaged in analysis and reflection about their photos and drawings. At times, classroom recordings were difficult to decipher because of background noise and competing conversations. In such cases, my observation notes served to preserve the children's insights, as well as my own thoughts. Research conversations and group discussions – while not being interviews – provided more open-ended reflection on both the process and products of students' work.

3.5.5 Semi-structured interviews with adults

I conducted interviews with the principal and the resource teacher, Ms. N, to explore: the values, concepts, and strategies that they bring to their practice, the principles that guide their pedagogical decision-making, and reflections on opportunities for individual and systemic growth and change. Even though we shared many informal conversations over the course of our planning processes, I formally interviewed Sufi two times over the course of the year (once earlier and once at the end of the year). I introduced the interviews to the participants as conversations and viewed the interviews as co-constructed dialogues where both conversants respectfully learn from each other and generate knowledge with context (Edwards & Holland, 2020). Interview questions are included in Appendix C.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted in the school in a private room, at times that were convenient to those participating and I shared my interview protocol with them so that they had a sense of the nature of the conversations ahead of time. Each interview lasted about an hour and was audio-recorded and transcribed. I also shared the transcriptions with my

interviewees to get a sense of whether they felt comfortable with the conversation as it was recorded and if they needed another chance to reflect on their ideas. Additionally, I kept a journal reflecting on my thoughts about these interviews.

3.5.6 Home visits with focal child

The home visits were approximately two hours long, about two times per month for about six months. During these visits, I acted as a participant-observer (however, as mentioned, there were many times when the interactions engendered other roles and expectations of me) to explore and document some of Anh's out-of-school communicative repertoires and to have conversations with him and his mother. They also were an opportunity to offer support and reciprocity to the family. Along with notes of informal conversations, with their permission, I took field notes, photographs of materials, artifacts or multimodal work. I wrote reflective notes immediately following the visits to record my learnings, perspectives, and challenges. These generated much of the data for Chapter 4.

3.5.7 Artefact collection

As Pahl and Rowsell (2010) attest, every artefact tells a story. Beginning with the early classroom and home visits and continuing throughout the study, artefacts were collected as photographs or original pieces to develop an ongoing understanding of the emergent bilinguals' communicative resources. The multilingual narrative pieces and writing accompanying the *Looking Closely* (Chapter 5) and *Something or Someone I love* (Chapter 6) projects were a prominent set of artefacts that provided opportunities for analysis. For these projects, children also made choices about the artefacts (toys, photos from home, etc.) and their associated stories to bring to school and I took photos of whichever artefacts they chose to share with the class. Some other artefacts I collected included school records, emergent bilinguals' writing and

drawing journals, their drawings and notes at home and school, teachers' lesson ideas, parent newsletters, and photos from home visits. With some artefacts (e.g., artwork, writing samples), Sufi and the students shared their original copies with me, and photocopies or pictures were collected with permission.

3.5.8 Researcher notes and reflexive journal

The “messy work” (Gunaratnam, 2003, p. 104) involved in qualitative research demands that reflexive journaling be used throughout the research process and it is particularly useful during the processes of data generation. I did as Gerstl-Pepin and Patrizio (2009) suggest in using the metaphor of Dumbledore’s Pensieve from JK Rowling’s Harry Potter wizarding series to record experiences and dilemmas, and to view them from different perspectives. (Wizards collect memories of events in the Pensieve and use this device to witness events again for further contemplation.) This type of looking back and looking forward through the reflexive journal afforded deeper reflection on examining systemic differences.

3.6 Data analysis

Given the multiple sources and types of data, during analysis I made connections between data sets (listed above), with a focus on analysis being iterative, recursive, and abductive to offer opportunity for unexpected findings (Agar, 1996). Both my analysis and interpretation can be broadly described as abductive. Rather than only induction (finding new cases of existing theories) or deduction (testing an existing theory with new observations), abductive analysis refers to ways to combine and consider theory-driven analysis and new explorations through unanticipated directions and surprising observations (Agar, 1996; Agar, 2010). Abductive analysis has “some characteristics of both induction and deduction, but it is important to keep in mind neither formally...nor informally is any simple ‘mix’ of these” (Alvesson & Skoldberg,

2018, p. 4). The research process alternates between theory and empirical facts so that both are reinterpreted in each other's light, and abductive analysis processes involve researchers' immersion into and deliberate turning away from the task of scrutinizing evidence and to be open to possibilities. One instance of this type of analysis (elaborated in Chapter 6), is a group of emergent bilinguals' conversation about their names and various accents in which these were pronounced at school and at home. This unexpected discussion led me from translanguaging theory, to thinking about (mis)pronunciations of my own children's names, further to a Bollywood movie (titled *Hindi Medium*) where English accents and social class were explored. I then remembered a line from a poet: "it's impossible to speak wrong in a poem" (Velasquez, 2021), that connected me to research on perceptions of racialized accents, and finally to understandings of how children uptake or resist normative discourses.

Further, Brinkmann (2014) explains that both induction and deduction address the relationship between data and theory; however, "abduction is a form of reasoning that is concerned with the relationship between *situation* and *inquiry*" (emphasis in original, p. 722). This is consistent with a sociocultural view that the researcher is in the world, as the research is part of the continuity of the situation: "there is . . . no hard and fast line between life, research, theory, and methods" (p. 722). This way, abductive analysis brings methodology and practice closer together with an emphasis on personal reflection and connections.

In the next segments, I describe how I prepared for and carried out more specific analysis with interview, conversational, and visual data.

3.6.1 Transcription and analysis of digital audio recordings

I transcribed all interviews because they were critical to understandings about classroom policies and systemic issues. These served as ways of confirming, nuancing, and/or challenging my interpretations of students' practices and engagement in this inquiry.

The sheer number of informal research conversations with children, recordings of small group and class discussions, and home visit conversations over the course of the year necessitated that I transcribe these more selectively. Following Kaufmann's (2011) advice to listen, even multiple times, to interview recordings to holistically and comprehensively unpack meaning, I listened to these digital audio recordings as a soundtrack for my reflection and analysis and to decide what I would transcribe. While listening, I tagged various points of recordings (related to languages, literacies, communicative repertoires, lifeworlds, design choices, relationships, surprising directions) and jotted down my thoughts so that I could return to those specific points. These notes in conjunction with my notes from the actual meetings, field observation notes, and researcher reflexive journals were gathered as preliminary analysis – and complement the analysis of visual data, which will be discussed.

As I processed and analyzed the conversational data, I organized the corpus into file folders digitally by participant. As the research progressed, I read scholarly work to help my reflections, and any further questions that emerged guided the work as well and contributed to the analysis. During further stages of analysis, I began to think more deeply about the patterns and connections I was discovering in the data, and to determine if further data collection and/or re-analysis was necessary. The research questions themselves provided some initial etic themes (or categories, codes, units, as various methodologists have labelled them, see Saldaña, 2013; Tracy, 2020) that shaped the work at all stages.

During further analysis, I uploaded my files to Atlas.ti – a visual qualitative data analysis software program that assists in the coding of data – to organize my codes throughout the process. However, I balanced my analysis on this software with more traditional coding on sticky notes and colour-coded digital documents as well. The steps involved were:

1. My initial coding was line-by-line, including my highlighted notes from the classroom audio, field notes from home and school, and transcripts of interviews. Placed alongside my observations and reflective notes, the interviews were analyzed into themes and codes. I read through the transcripts and my own notes multiple times and with each reading I highlighted themes that recurred across the sets and aspects that stood out.
2. Then I engaged in more focused coding, by creating broader, more conceptual categories around the initial codes, and by making connections with other research and theories at the same time. At this point, I also included the visual data and my initial codes related to those. This process was helpful to group thematic categories and outliers, including my wonderings and questions within associated notes related to communicative repertoires. Part of this stage of focused coding also involved organizing initial codes according to which research question they related to. This step was important since I had a copious amount of data and needed to decide which pieces of data were consequential directly and which were extraneous to the core areas of inquiry of this study.
3. Next, I generated theoretical codes in the form of memos by looking for relationships between the focused codes and emergent meaning-making from my journals. Memos – either written or diagrammed (Buckley & Waring, 2013) – are an important step in analyzing data and the coding to start constructing deeper and broader codes. This step was important to connect the data and the processes with the values that underpin my research as

being relational, flexible, and process-driven. These memos helped me understand what the data indicated and the relationships that bound the data sets but ensured I was not fixing data into pre-existing categories.

4. Finally, I looked across the data with my reflexive notes to engage with my subjectivities. I made connections with personal experiences, conversations, poetry, art, books, movies, music, and shows across languages (see Brown, 2019). Referring to these reflexive notes helped to ground the data while being aware of myself as the primary research tool.

3.6.2 Visual data analysis

Visual methodologies enable participants “to tell their stories in modes beyond language” (Kendrick, 2016, p. 101) and visual data have what Banks (2001) has described as internal and external narratives of meaning. In this case, the content of the visual artefacts – *Looking Closely* project drawings, photographs from home, photos and drawings at school, artwork in school drawing journals, artwork for school projects – constituted the internal narrative or valuable stories from children’s lifeworlds. The context, processes, and intentions that resulted in the creation of the artifacts constitute the external narrative or stories towards children’s capacities. Freeman and Mathison (2009) underscore that in working with child-generated data, “paying attention to both the internal and external narratives strengthen the analytical reach.” (p.148).

Using an adaptation of Rose’s (2016) conceptualization of visual representation, I analyzed children’s creations using a culturally sensitive and critical approach to multimodal analysis. While Banks (2001) focuses on the narratives of creation, for the purposes of analysis Rose’s method engages with the agency of the image, the cultural and social practices around viewing, and the perspectives of various audiences. Rose (2016) focuses on how meaning is made in four sites: by *producers* (the people and equipment involved in making the text), *texts*

(the photos, drawings, other images), *movement* (technologies and processes that could transport and change texts), and *audiences* (anyone who looks at the text).

Rose (2016) associates these four sites of meaning making with three interconnected modalities: the social, the compositional, and the technological. The organization of social institutions, social difference, and social subjectivities informs the *social modality*; visual codes, strategies, and conventions inform the *compositional modality*; and the equipment and technologies used in producing and/enhancing the image point to the *technological register*. This methodology considers the intersections across the three modalities and four sites of meaning-making (production, image, circulation, and audiencing) in relation to the uses and meanings of images. Meaning-making progresses from understanding the particular social and cultural circumstances of the site of production, to the site of the image itself, to the way the image moves across and between various technologies and contexts, and then to the site of audiencing, involving the ways of seeing and the kinds of knowledge audiences – including the researcher – bring to the viewing. I kept these various sites and modalities in mind when the children and I were generating and analyzing visual data.

Students produced their creative multimodal projects in the context of an embedded classroom collaboration with their peers, teacher, and me. With the *Looking Closely* drawings and photos/drawings of *Something or Someone I love*, the students were able to share, discuss, and perform preliminary analysis in small groups or guided research conversations with me. They discussed the intentions and meanings that they ascribed to their drawings and photos, as well as their reflections on their creative process and their feelings about their creative productions, all of which offered social, compositional, and technological contexts for visual analysis. Specific details the data analysis processes with children are in Chapters 5 and 6.

As I listened to conversations, I made notes in my journal whenever possible (without disrupting the flow of our research conversations) while considering Rose's (2016) sites of meaning making. I worked on thematic categories that emerged from initial conversations and children's own analysis. Subsequently, while re-listening to audio recordings, I placed sticky notes copies of students' artefacts to gather the ideas and the artefact alongside one another. I followed Einarsdottir's (2005) advice to look at images "from many different angles and in many different ways" (p. 538) since a photograph is unable to point to anything other than itself. I also highlighted the ways in which visual and linguistic data (both oral and written) complemented one another in the analysis.

I treated the process of writing reflexive notes and transcriptions as part of the production site of analysis. Since the camera is "an already troubled material" (Kind, 2013, p. 427) in that it can be deployed to produce the other, I followed Rose's emphasis that the reflexive researcher "considers [their] own ways of looking at images" (Rose, 2012, p. 16). In addition, while Rose's (2016) process appears to be neatly segmented into four sites of meaning making, Luttrell (2013, 2016) notes the challenges of treating analyses as though they are in silos. She writes, "these sites are interwoven through histories, ideologies, politics, and theories that guide people's use of cameras, the pictures they take, the meanings these images hold, and the experiences that bring particular photographs to life" (p. 172). The challenge, then, is to work with an awareness of the multiple, context-specific meanings and stories that an image evokes from the photographer and its viewers across audiencing opportunities.

3.7 Methods of validation and evaluation

Criteria for evaluation of studies include credibility, originality, and interpretation. This section details the ways that methods of evaluation and validation were understood in this study.

3.7.1 Credibility: through time, relationships, and “messiness”

Thick description, member-checking, triangulation, and systematic analysis support the credibility of EDR (McKenney & Reeves, 2019; Reinking & Bradley, 2008). The limitations of triangulation have been discussed mainly in terms of the overwhelming organizational task it can present to the qualitative researcher who may have an abundance of data from many sources (Duff, 2008). By contrast, the use of crystallization alongside triangulation has been presented to use multiple data points “even when they do not converge” (Tracy, 2020, p. 276). The idea of crystallization foregrounds the nuanced realities that are often present in qualitative research, and invites researchers “to construct a multi-faceted, more complicated, and therefore more credible picture of the context” (Tracy, 2020, p. 276).

Credibility for a research project can also be supported by length of time in the field. With time, the researcher can observe and map patterns and divergences in the field and with building relationships with participants. While this study was not an ethnography, I employed many of the data collection and analyses procedures found typically in ethnographic research, including time in the field and member-checking. The focus on collaboration and relationality within this research offers a credibility built over time to with child and adult participants, including concerns about living well with others as central to the inquiry (Clandinin et al., 2018).

Finally, as mentioned earlier, ethical considerations and focus on reflexivity offer another avenue for engaging with multifaceted contexts and systems towards credibility. As Law (2004) reminds us, lives and processes are messy and “complex because they *necessarily exceed our capacity to know them.*” (p. 6; italics in original). The “messiness” of research complicates the research process but also humanize them by making them more fluid and realistic (including, for instance, the ways in which writing with not-Latin scripts like Hindi and Tamil alongside with

English causes uneven line spacing in this dissertation).

3.7.2 Interpretation: through assembling, reflection, and writing

While we strive to make sense of the world, qualitative research is “endlessly creative and interpretative” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 34) and researchers construct the findings with our own intentions and subjectivities. In this case, the study was assembled with selected bits of data from field visits, observations, conversations and discussions with children and adults at the school and homes, photos and drawings, experiences with data analysis, and personal reflections and dilemmas. I then re-assembled these pieces of data through thinking about patterns, conversations with advisors and peers, presenting emergent ideas at conferences, and reading more literature. As part of the analytical process, I shared some observations with participants (children and adults) who offered informal support or clarification of those reflections. Their comments served as member reflections (Tracy, 2020), helping enhance my confidence in the validity of my interpretations. Finally, I analyzed abductively with a back and forth “creative inferential process” (Tavory & Timmermans, 2014, p. 5) between these pieces of research evidence, considerations of theory, and personal understandings towards assembling stories of my participants. To assist in this assembling and reflection, I created art, some of which are (and many that are not) included in this dissertation.

The processes of writing, editing, and revising re-created salient ideas into a coherent accessible public text, giving it certain motivations and directions. These processes center language, writing, and interpretation within the research enterprise. As Visweswaran (1994) reminds us, the role of researchers involves making journeys to new worlds and to new relationships and learning how to represent in written form the understandings as result of these experiences. Storytellers and writers are concerned with the question of how to endow

experience with meaning. For me, the writing of this work has been recursive and generative – grappling with the power, possibilities, and vulnerabilities associated with telling other’s stories, and engaging in the writing with the belief that this sharing might initiate some change while dealing with the discomfort that structural inequities might be indifferent to sharing of this nature. While I tell the stories of others, the interpretations offered here including the emotional, the pragmatic, and the scholarly are mine.

3.7.3 Originality: through adaptations and emergent design

EDR works in the “context of discovery” rather than in the “context of verification” (Schickore & Steinle, 2002). Rather than attempt to isolate variables or achieve replicability, this type of research strives for ecological validity through thick description (Geertz, 1973), including the inclusion of descriptive details about the process, and strategies that seemed to work well for students and teachers, and limitations as well. Exact replicability is not possible or desirable as teachers will need to adjust designs in response to their own observations and contexts (Reinking & Bradley, 2008). Instead, I focus on creating adaptations rather than to arrive at a fixed model or practice with Saldaña’s (2014) three questions to explore multiple possibilities: “What is possible? What is plausible? What is preferable?” (p. 25).

Methodologically, the pedagogical designs were generative because as each set of EDR processes unfolded, the collaboration with the teacher and the students in the class expanded its dimensions. The new dimensions were taken up by Sufi and the children in ways that authentically engaged with their interests and inquiries, leading to further changes in the design. It was emergent research in that none of us knew what our collaboration would yield; we simply shared a desire to explore what could happen if we tried new designs, trusted in our relationships, and committed to listening to what we had to share.

3.8 Chapter summary

In this chapter, I detailed the methodology of my study. At the outset, I discussed my positionality and outlined some ethical considerations crucial to the relationships that are at the heart of the research process. Following that, I described the research context of the school, the classroom, and the participants. Then I outlined my research strategies including EDR, with the influence of appreciative design elements. In addition, I described the value and complexities of researching with children. Finally, I included the various types and methods of data generation and analysis. I concluded with a section on methods of validation and evaluation by outlining how these touch on criteria for credibility, interpretation, and originality. In the next chapter, I discuss findings related to the home literacies and communicative repertoires of the focal child, Anh.

Chapter 4: Navigating languages and literacies at home in a superdiverse life

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present Anh's story to underscore how an emergent bilingual's school literacies may appear to lag behind his peers while in reality he was performing complex and "invisible" multiliterate work in the home. This chapter responds to the first research question about the types of multimodal and multilingual communicative repertoires and identities that emergent bilinguals bring with them to school. In this chapter, I seek to present a foundation for the multimodal and multilingual pedagogical design that unfolded in the classroom, while also highlighting the reflective processes of analysis and exploration that scaffolded the design. As outlined in Chapter 2, this chapter maps onto the Analysis and Exploratory processes in EDR since the iterative processes of conducting literature reviews, home and classroom visits, and conversations with Sufi, were important to this study. By offering perspectives from one child's lifeworld, it presented some possible directions and initial orientation for inquiries and projects, in combination with what I observed in the classroom.

After presenting the purpose for this individual study, I use the perspectives of multiliteracies, translanguaging, and superdiversity to frame the topics in this chapter. Then, I review literature in the areas of home literacies related to refugee families and cultural brokering by children. I use these as a foundation to explore two themes: Anh's agentic literacies with drawing, orality, and popular culture in a home context with minimal traditional literacies; and his translanguaging and brokering practices that he uses to mediate complex situations. While his home literacies at times complicate his relationship with school-based literacies, I discuss how powerful these practices are for his own learning and argue that dominant models of school literacy practices often do not recognize these day-to-day literacy practices of young emergent

bilinguals. I conclude with some implications for educators to consider when working with multilingual refugee-background children like Anh.

4.2 Purpose and background

Canada celebrates itself as a country that is “welcoming [to] people from around the world and stands up for the most vulnerable” (Ministry of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship, 2018, p. 5). As of mid-2018, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees placed the number of refugees and those in refugee-like situations in Canada at 177,743 and the numbers of displaced peoples continues to grow (UNHCR Mid-Year Trends, 2018).

Additionally, in 2017-18, international migration accounted for 80% of population growth in Canada and a large portion of economic immigrants settled around Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal.

However, broad classifications and generalizations of terms obscure internal diversity within the categories of immigrants and refugees. The range of experiences, ages, genders, educational levels, nationalities, and other factors is vast, even within the description offered by government agencies, let alone the social and economic opportunities these classifications offer and the ways they are experienced by (im)migrants (Ministry of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship, 2018). Given this gamut of experiences and identities, the more we become aware of learner and family differences in terms of demographic, material, corporeal, and symbolic diversity, the more apparent the complexity becomes. This aspect becomes important especially since many current education policies and instructional practices for emergent bilinguals have been designed to apply generally to all school-age ELLs, regardless of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds or current circumstances (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Bartlett et al., 2017).

Exploring this need for understanding complexity, I detail the case of eight-year old Anh and his mother in order to highlight his literacy practices (Street, 1994, 2006), and to expand and complicate knowledge related to home language and literacies environments. While examining Anh's communicative repertoires and identities, I also point to the systemic issues in his life, including socioeconomic status (SES), and how those intricacies might impact his literacies and learning. As Law and Mol (2008) suggest, rather than arrive at an all-knowing analysis of Anh's experience, I intend to explore how different dimensions of Anh's home life interface with each other and how he takes up these opportunities.

4.3 Theoretical frameworks

This chapter is framed within interrelated sociocultural theoretical perspectives. I draw on multiliteracies (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009) and translanguaging (García, 2009) from a critical perspective, and attend to understandings of superdiversity (Blommaert, 2015; Vertovec, 2007) as an orientation to multifaceted conceptualizations of how individuals and communities function in our extremely diverse societies.

4.3.1 Multiliteracies and translanguaging perspectives

As emphasized in Chapter 2, the orientation of multiliteracies (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, 2015), offered a culturally sensitive view of literacies as the means and modes of its practice vary from one context to another. Informed by political pedagogies of literacy, a social and political goal of multiliteracies was to situate students as active designers of their social futures and to design learning environments that accommodate diverse meaning making (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015; Cummins & Early, 2011, 2015; Early et al., 2015; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). However, there have also been critiques of the uptake of linguistic diversity (Early & Kendrick, 2017) and understandings of "social futures" (Garcia et al., 2018; Luke, 2018) relating

to how practices and tools of new media and digital technologies have not inherently altered inequality for communities. These critiques, which are reflected in the stories from Anh's life, point to structural injustices related to equity and access manifested by economic, civic, and cultural conditions related to languages and perceptions of use in different contexts (see Burnett & Merchant, 2017; Darvin, 2018; Rogers et al., 2018), making it even harder for those on the margins to be heard.

This study highlights translanguaging, where multilinguals access different linguistic features or various aspects of different languages in order to maximize communicative potential depending on audience and purpose (García & Wei, 2014; García & Otheguy, 2020). A translanguaging focus is particularly helpful in studying “linguistic innovation and change initiated by bilingual and multilingual language users in complex contact situations” (Wei, 2020, p. 246). Once such, is cultural and linguistic brokering that is part of some people's innovative translanguaging practices. These types of brokering involve using the knowledge of two or more languages and cultures to make meaning to speak, read, write, listen, navigate contexts, and do things for themselves and others (Orellana et al., 2014), like Anh does.

4.3.2 Superdiversity

I harness ideas from the notion of superdiversity to work with the multidimensional complexities of Anh's life. The conception of superdiversity emerged at a point when concepts such as diversity, multiculturalism, integration, and assimilation were found to be limited in their power to explain the complexity of contemporary Western societies (Blommaert, 2015; Meissner & Vertovec, 2015). The vast range of motivations, pressures, and the multiple processes for people to migrate from one place to another made it imperative to complicate essentialist group descriptions and simplistic narratives of migration and diversity. Superdiversity is “an

ideological orientation to difference” (Blackledge et al., 2018, p. xxvi), which accepts that “what makes diversity useful also makes it limited” (Ahmed, 2007, p. 235). More than merely describing the complications and diversification of diversity, superdiversity offers the potential for nuanced stories on transformations and complexity in changing cultural worlds.

From this view, normative expectations and explanatory accounts of communicative practices become complicated by the emergence of rapid social change, linguistic fluidity, and new media and technologies. From a critical perspective of superdiversity, meaning making within complex systems is subject to change, re-interpretation, and re-creation (Blommaert, 2015). As with translanguaging, the emphasis on fluidity of meaning making that characterizes language in superdiverse contexts permits us to observe “norms being manufactured, interrogated, or altered” (Blommaert & Rampton, 2016, p. 30).

4.4 Related Literature

In this section, I describe studies in two related areas: (1) home literacy practices in families from refugee backgrounds, and (2) cultural brokering by children from immigrant and refugee backgrounds.

4.4.1 Home literacy practices in families from refugee background

Immigrant- and refugee-background families, like Anh’s, come into the school environment with home cultures, languages, learning styles, beliefs, and norms that might vary significantly from school expectations (BC Ministry of Education, 2015), and many face the burden of financial, social, and emotional vulnerability in daily situations. In this section, I examine studies of literacies practices in the homes of families from refugee backgrounds.

In their study detailing the home literacy practices of three Sudanese refugee-background families and their young children in the US, Perry and Moses (2011) revealed that interacting

with the television was beneficial for keeping the families connected with Sudanese culture, understanding US culture, and for their English language learning. As children and adults watched programming created for their age groups (like Sesame Street), television enhanced their learning, provided enjoyment, and also offered ways of connection to their homeland. From the perspective of English learning for the children, the TV shows aided the acquisition of new vocabulary words and ideas and also guided their book choices and interactions with literacy, including writing at home. Rather than detracting from children's and adults' learning, as is commonly perceived, these shows became one of their "funds of knowledge" (Gonzalez et al., 2005). The authors recommended that TV can be powerful for learning about language, literacies, and the culture of the host country for both adults and children.

Parents, in a study by Singh et al. (2015), also used television and computers as sources for education and entertainment, whenever they had access to them. This ethnographic study reported on an intergenerational family literacy program, "Storycircles," with an aim to understand the literacy practices of refugee-background families and their responses to the program. While the program was the focus, the authors' interviews with the Karen-speaking refugees-background families revealed the significance of oral traditions – songs, counting, religious and folklore stories – in the community. While many families were unfamiliar with the idea of storybook reading outside of school, most were very engaged in the education of their children in the US and hoped at the same time to retain their native language and culture as well. To overcome a limitation posed by a shortage of bilingual books, the program teacher taught the families how to do "picture walks," essentially talking about the pictures in their home language which helped families become familiar with the early literacy pedagogy of American schools and its emphasis on shared book reading.

Fredrich's (2016) research with Karen-speaking refugee families of pre-school children in Canada identified that rather than abandoning traditional learning practices, the parents drew from culturally-specific participant structures in their interactions with their children at home and in a bilingual family literacy program. Parents participated alongside their children as peers in play, engaged in bilingual Karen-English conversation and book-reading, and learned from the practices of the literacy program. At other times, they included practices that were specific to their experiences, like Karen music and spirituality, asked their children known-answer questions in Karen, and modelled many literacy practices with little direct conversation. However, literacy learning practices within their home involved the children engaging in school-like events in English on their own or with older siblings, friends, and relatives, and in bilingual rote learning events with a parent. Friedrich suggested that by modelling dual language use and reading more consistently, parents and children may come to understand the value of both languages.

Karen-speaking participants in Quadros and Sarroub's (2016) study also re-positioned their language and literacy education away from traditional ways of learning. This study revealed that Karen-speaking refugee women placed a high value on education in their new country of residence because it garnered high social status and better jobs; they felt that exclusion from school denies not only education but also friendships. Hence, the women believed that "in order to socialize their children into becoming literate in their American setting, they themselves must become literate and learned" (p. 29). They memorized vocabulary words for speech, used oral language to practice reading and writing – both common practices in their home country – and used the computer to look for jobs and information. While traditionally, Karen parents might not have engaged with their children at the "academic knowledge level," some parents in this study learned to work with their children differently from before, like the parents in other studies

reviewed. These behaviours are significant since they differ from the mother in my study who did not engage with academic literacies, as will be discussed.

Like the Karen parents, orality and storytelling played an important role in Perry's (2008) study of Sudanese orphaned youth, often referred to as the "Lost Boys of Sudan." The study followed three youth as they adjusted to living in the US while transforming traditional practices of storytelling to reveal larger issues related to literacy, identity and community. Storytelling had played an important role in the native cultures of these youth for learning about various things including family, community, history, culture, and customs. In their new context, the youth practiced transformed storytelling, taking the place of elders and using new media to share stories with the world. Since the purpose, audience, and medium often differed in important ways from those of traditional stories the youth had encountered or enacted beforehand, there was transformation and intention in their storytelling. Perry found that storytelling was a powerful literacy practice for these youth since it gave them authentic reasons to engage with reading and writing in English, providing a key to improving both their personal lives and the collective future of Sudan.

Sadiq's (2018) study with an Afghani refugee-background family was about how visits to a local children's museum provided the family with support for learning and enacting literacy practices. Museum exhibits became multimodal sites of learning where images, sounds, and words together contributed to meaning-making for the whole family, including understanding a new culture, English language learning, or practical matters like kindergarten registration. The museum also provided resources like books and an authentic environment to engage with print literacy for a family whose home literacies – mostly oral literacies and Quran memorization – might make them appear illiterate if the definition of literacy was constrained to merely reading

and writing. Sadiq's study, while considering museums' role in the lives of this family, highlighted the significance of orality and non-normative home literacies in refugee-background families.

To sum up, the resounding understanding is that school-based ways of meaning making were often skills that families from refugee-backgrounds were eager to learn specifically along with a new language in a new and complex cultural context. While the emphasis was often on valuing "Western" education and school-based ways of learning, the family practices were frequently centered around other resources – like television, songs, rote learning, storytelling and orality – to prepare for school success and preserve aspects of their identities.

4.4.2 Complex meaning making by children through brokering/translanguaging

Another out-of-school literacy practice among refugee- and immigrant-background families and communities – and a particular manifestation of translanguaging practice – is the idea of brokering by children when they function as experts as they infer, express, and transmit meaning for their parents and families (Orellana & Garcia, 2014). The following studies address this aspect of meaning making with children brokering in many forms.

A study by Hall and Sham (2007) on language and literacy brokering, conducted with adolescents, emphasized that along with the translation and interpretation, "a language brokering event often involves a child handling complex social relationships" (p. 18). This study followed a group of children living in the UK as they returned from school and participated in their families' Chinese food take-away trade, including food preparation, supporting daily operations and sales. The authors highlighted the finding that compared to children growing up in "mainstream language families" where parents guide and support children's interactions with the outside world, many of the Chinese children in this study dealt with a complicated range of legal, health

and administrative issues, exercising high levels of cognitive and social responsibility.

Recognizing that these children were taking part in “invisible” work (Morrow, 1995), the authors concluded that schools and social agencies would benefit from recognizing the capacities and associated stressors with this crucial responsibility.

Orellana et al. (2003) focused on how the adolescents in their study explained and paraphrased for others to accomplish social goals. These youth, who were the “designated translators” of English and Spanish for their families did this work daily, in various genres and contexts including: forms, labels, news, guides and manuals, advertisements, course materials, legal and state official letters, financial and medical documents. For instance, one of the participants, translated a school letter about student dress code regulations (e.g. “Girls will not wear tops that exposes midriffs”) that needed him to translate across languages, gendered expectations, and cultures of school and home. While the goals of these translations were often pragmatic – to figure out the meaning of the text and discern what bearing it has on family members’ lives – and differed from the paraphrasing that occurred in schools, they positioned children in agentive (and at times challenging) positions, rather than as passive receivers of readings. The authors stated that these children are extremely literate because they expertly negotiate and interpret texts and contexts in their lives, and that “being literate in our modern social world requires the ability to navigate multiple literacies” (p. 32). These aspects of shifting power, agency, and multilingual practice hold significance for this present chapter and Anh’s various home literacies.

Perry’s (2009) work with young children acting as literacy brokers who “bridge linguistic, cultural, and textual divides for others” (p. 256) offered another glimpse into the multifaceted tasks involved in literacy brokering. Brokering was not merely a matter of

translation from one language to another but involved providing knowledge about the purposes for, uses of, and textual features of specific written genres. For instance, one finding was that despite their status as emerging readers and writers, children in this study demonstrated awareness of the purpose of various texts sent home from school and how these were used to accomplish social goals like attending a field trip, filling up forms, getting a yearbook, or academic goals like doing homework or figuring out word puzzles. Literacy brokering allowed these children to support their parents as they simultaneously gained important literacy knowledge themselves. Despite dealing with only traditional print and textual understandings of literacy, this study highlighted that the specific expectations of texts further complicate understandings in immigrant- and refugee-background families' literacy practices.

In all these studies of brokering, children naturally draw on their multilingual toolkits to mediate understanding. But, while older children might perform other literacy brokering tasks, young children emerging in their literacy skills might offer a different understanding of what their early development in this multiliterate practice might mean for various types of literacies processes - this present study contributes insight in this area. In seeking to complicate and differentiate practices in Anh's home, I am hoping this chapter responds to a call to interpret findings in brokering research in more complex and nuanced ways (Orellana, 2017).

4.5 Methods: Participants and context

This study focuses on Anh and his mother, living in a diverse neighborhood in a large western Canadian city. Anh was a focal child in a year-long doctoral study exploring communicative repertoires of young emergent bilinguals. As outlined in Chapter 3, I used educational design research methodology (McKenney & Reeves, 2019) and worked collaboratively with the children and the classroom teacher in their urban Grade 2/3 classroom.

An aim of this research is to value emergent bilinguals' communicative repertoires and connect research with practice through investigating ways to include multilingual and multimodal approaches to the classroom. Anh was one of the eight children categorized as EAL learners in his class. While this chapter focuses on the literacies within his home, in the following paragraphs I offer a brief description of the other spaces where I engaged with Anh to present a composite snapshot. I will also introduce his mother (who preferred to be called "Anh's mother" for this study) and some home contexts.

4.5.1 Anh at school

A wiry, strong child with bright eyes, Anh was slightly shorter than many of his classmates but never short on energy – except when he sat in his seat at the front of the class. Regular classroom work in his classroom with desks arranged in rows seemed to box him into silence. A typical English Language Arts class included activities like silent reading, read-alouds by the teacher, reading, and writing for specific topics they were working on (provinces of Canada, life cycles of a butterfly, water cycle, etc.), weekly iPad use for games and school research, and occasional spelling tests. At most of these times, Anh slumped on his seat, his hands holding his head or twisting a stubby chewed up pencil over and over. While he never raised his hand to respond to questions, he often whispered to his friends excitedly if he knew the answer or had something to say. Sufi, his teacher, gave him and another EAL learner "easier work" (Field notes, Oct 2017) for reading and writing but that only seemed to make it harder for Anh because it appeared to draw attention to him when he would rather be unseen. For instance, when copying vocabulary words from the board, some classmates would specifically point to the letters with stars by their side (a notation used by the teacher for the EAL learners) and say "Anh, you're lucky, you only have to write 10, we have 15..." Sufi offered him shorter pieces of

work, lots of group work, but, despite being understanding, because of time-related issues, she was unable to offer him much one-on-one support, and he rarely reached out to her for help in the classroom, preferring to ask me or his friends instead.

Group work with his friends perked him up and he became chatty (as will be described later). He giggled quietly when Sufi read out funny chapter books to the class and sat up front on the carpet to get a good look at the illustrations but never volunteered his opinions on topics in a large group. He liked to draw (again, more about that further) and did not like to write. A slim, yellow alphabet chart with lower and uppercase letters was attached to the top of his desk, and he enjoyed tracing his fingers across it to match the letters he saw on his worksheets and books. But having the chart did not make it easier to write responses and stories, or figure out spelling or sound out words. He felt he often got stuck and would ask me to sound words out for him, and once he regained confidence, was able to go ahead with reading and writing but wanted to be finished as quickly as possible.

Anh and another child in the class together visited the resource teacher, Ms. N, who helped them with direct English instruction, two or three times a week because they were considered “a few grades below” (Field notes, Oct 2017) in their English literacy. He anticipated seeing her friendly face through the glass wall and looked forward to her calling him and the other child out – they uttered a fist-pumped “yes!” – and left the classroom joyously. Anh’s quiet classroom personality shifted when he was downstairs in the resource room. There, Anh literally bounced in his seat, competed cleverly in the word games, and appeared to enjoy his lessons, humming various tunes as he practiced writing. Ms. N had many years of experience working with EAL learners and spent some time talking with the two boys about their interests and their school day, making her a special favourite to whom they loudly complained with stories from

recess and classroom work being “too hard, too boring” (Field notes, February 2018). Ms. N considered her careful scaffolding both a process and a structure, weaving together levels of comfort and confidence with new knowledge within the two boys’ zones of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). They played and wrote on the whiteboard and read levelled texts at their skill level, which built their confidence and helped them work on specific literacy skills. The characters that the two boys read about in the texts made their way back to the classroom when they would sit together to do some writing.

Again, Anh’s energy was different when playing soccer at the playground – where he was a sought-after striker whose running and footwork always won him high-fives from his schoolmates. The children would form informal teams and Anh was almost always among the first few picks, contributing to the team with gusto, and running up to the office for bandages for friends who became injured on the gravelly soccer field. His good cheer and friendliness travelled with him while waiting in line to come in for lunch, which was often a great place to practice the “floss”, a dance move made popular by the videogame Fortnite, or share YouTube finds related to games the children played. When children shared snacks in the line, he always looked thrilled and took the effort to say “yum, thanks” with a little hop of excitement. Back in the classroom at his desk, he again took on a more subdued tone, often stopping to doodle and collapse in his seat with his head in his hands when asked to write something.

4.5.2 The home context

In the early days of my research, I had only visited Anh’s home a few times and always wondered about his access to technology. He said he watched a lot of YouTube at home but also said at other times that his mother did not always have the money to buy them dinner or clothes and shoes. His mother’s phone, too, appeared expensive for someone who worked in seasonal

farming and daily labour jobs. I was initially puzzled by the conflicting information between access to the types of technology and lack of access to a necessity as basic as food, until I later understood how important the device was for the whole family. While they used the landlord's internet connection, the phone was the only way for her to connect with the agent who organized her jobs and her work group to know where to go for work that week, to chat with her Vietnamese friends, to listen to music, and watch shows. For Anh, her phone was the only device he used to watch YouTube videos, follow Jake Paul – a YouTube star that many children in his class were fascinated with, play games on apps and figure out game strategies, pick up new English phrases, and look up Pokémon figures to draw. It was the one device that mediated many diverse literacy events in his and his mother's home life.

Situated in a residential street right across from a busy commercial road, their rented space was in the basement of a two-storey townhouse owned by a family from China. The access to their unit was from a side gate that led to the backyard, where I often saw clothes drying in the sun alongside pop cans on the dried-out patchy grass. A few steps from this backyard led down from the back garden to their apartment door. Invariably, a large cardboard box or two filled with empty bottles of alcohol was tucked under the stairs, besides newspapers, dried leaves, and shoes that had become too small for Anh. They shopped for clothes, shoes, and other household things at a thrift store situated a minute's walk from their place, and so dropping off those shoes was on his mother's task list, but she never did it, Anh said. I asked him about the bottles and he said that his father drank a lot.

Anh's mom had a partner whom Anh referred to as "Dad," whenever needed at school. Anh appeared to share a tentative relationship with him because his presence was unpredictable. This man was also from Vietnam and worked as a labourer, doing odd jobs related to servicing

cars. He had been in Vancouver longer than Anh's mother, and sounded comparatively more confident in English. It was unclear what had happened to Anh's biological father but this partner stayed with them occasionally, though he was rarely present when I visited the home.

4.5.3 Anh's mother

Anh's mother was from the mountains in the northern provinces of Vietnam where many Indigenous groups live (Vu, 2020) and spoke an ethnic minority dialect, Jrai. She had a basic understanding of Vietnamese but did not speak it very well, having grown up away from urban areas. Vietnam is home to 54 different ethnic or Indigenous groups and each group speaks its first language but since Vietnamese is the official language most people learn it (Nguyen, 2019; Vu, 2020). Anh's mother had a sort of lisp that made it difficult for others to understand her when speaking Jrai and her halting Vietnamese. When her partner's friends visited, they often switched to Vietnamese and Anh commented that, "she doesn't speak it too well" (likely having heard it mentioned by others). Her specialized dialect and her particular difficulty in adapting to new situations, as will be discussed later, made their situation more vulnerable. Anh had varying degrees of competence with Jrai and Vietnamese.

Anh's mother came to Canada eight years ago as a refugee. She did not understand my English when I asked her where they had lived earlier, or "maybe she doesn't remember" said Anh, who was translating for me. Standing a little less than five feet tall, she had a wide face and a smile that was just as wide. Her comfortable clothes and shoes spoke of days working on her feet – scaling fish for the market, picking berries and packing herbs in boxes in summer – for long hours. She worked with a group of women who spoke Vietnamese, and who all worked as seasonal labourers for an agent who got them the jobs. Usually, he would call them weekly to let

them know what and where the next week's work was to be, or they would call each other to pass the information along.

Someone who she called “sister” was part of this phone group. While Anh said they were “not really sisters,” he referred to her children as his cousins when talking about them with his friends at school. This concept sounded familiar to me as my children call many of our Indian friends “**மாமி**” and “**மாமா**” (aunty and uncle) and their children “**அக்கா**” and “**அண்ணா**” (older sister and brother). Anh and his “cousins” spent weekends and summer vacations with each other – watching TV, playing video games, and eating lunch together while their mothers worked. Some days they would all take the bus and go to the mall, which was one of Anh's favourite thing to do because they got a chance to sit at the back of the bus with each other, eat lunch at McDonald's in the food court, and come back home late, tired, and happy. When they could, he also loved to shop at the thrift store and eagerly showed me the too-large sweaters and sneakers his mother had bought him in lieu of the too-small clothes he often sported to school.

It was unclear to me whether Anh's mother had been to school in Vietnam but she said she was unable to read or write very well in any language. The school translator and other sources pointed out that many Indigenous groups from Vietnam did not traditionally engage much with institutions such as schools (UNDP, 2018; Vu, 2020). Sufi had observed that she appeared to have a sense of unease about formal schooling and did not display too much interest in Anh's school work, in the way some refugee families are perceived as being “disinterested” in mainstream school learning (Ridley et al., 2019; Singh et al., 2015). Early on, Sufi was concerned that Anh's mother did not attend any meetings or sign any forms and I had to remind her that she did not understand any English and needed a translator. I would have appreciated engaging with Anh's mother about her life and educational experiences to understand her ways

of thinking about formal schooling and knowledge making. This aspect is a limitation of this study that I could not overcome since this history was not something that she was comfortable having a conversation about for a variety of her own reasons. However, this reluctance forms an important part of this study's perspective on the paucity of school-based literacies in their household and why thinking about and working from an understanding of multiliteracies and superdiversity becomes crucial within such contexts.

4.6 Data generation and analysis

As discussed in Chapter 3, data for the dissertation study were collected over a year but I visited Anh's home for about six months of that period. Data include photographs and field notes from hour-long home visits, and audio recordings of informal free-flowing conversations with Anh and his mother.

During many of the home visits, Anh would act as a cultural and language broker, connecting me, his mother, and his school and home life. On the way back from visiting their home, I invariably compared Anh's home life with that of my children (my daughter was three and my son was nine years old at the time). While they too attended school as multilingual students, the differences in their social class, languages, school experiences, and access to resources and literacies always moved me and was a reminder of our privilege. At the same time, I connected with Anh's mother as an immigrant and as a mother, and felt the need to bring their family food and to check in often. The reflexive associations helped to anchor the research in human relationships and to generatively negotiate "the space between the hyphens" of various researcher positions (Fine, 1994).

4.7 Findings

In this section, I offer a detailed description and analysis of two themes that emerged as I considered the question of how Anh's home context offers insight, and complexity, to our understanding of his literacies. The first theme points to Anh's agentive learning within a context where his out-of-school literacies look very different from school literacies. The second theme draws on brokering and translanguaging as unrecognized but powerful skills within the context of this young child's life.

4.7.1 Literacies in the home: The things he is able to do in the world to learn

Working from a multiliteracies perspective involves a careful process of choosing to work with "knowledge processes" – the things that children are able to do in the world in order to learn and to know (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015; Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). With this view, this thematic section draws attention to the agentive learning Anh organizes and the types of knowledges he brings with him to imagine new identities and possibilities for himself (Appadurai, 1996; Bhabha, 1994; Darvin & Norton, 2015; Norton & Toohey, 2011). To place this in context, however, this section begins by highlighting some nuanced complexities in Anh's home life that complicate his relationship with traditional literacies.

4.7.1.1 "There is nothing to read here": the complexity of traditional literacies

While Anh was well-versed in negotiating multiple forms of literacies for his own purposes, be they for fun or finding information, opportunities for traditional school-based literacies within the house were minimal. Apart from the stack of newspapers piled on the side of the living room floor that were sometimes used in lieu of carpets for the tiled floor, I did not see any traditional print materials – books, magazines, etc. in the house; no pamphlets from pizza restaurants, leaflets from phone or internet companies, free local publications in any language –

all of these being varieties of free print materials that make their way into the mailbox at my apartment, and into many of the low-SES homes that Purcell-Gates (1995) observed. However, it is possible that these materials were delivered to the main townhouse and not to Anh's basement home.

When I asked Anh about reading materials in his home, he shrugged and said in a matter-of-fact tone, "There is nothing to read here. My mom doesn't buy them because she thinks they are too much money for them." His eyes lit up, however, when I pointed to the heap of newspapers on the floor. His mother though stopped him from touching the newspapers and he translated her Vietnamese as, "No, no, that's for the fish," explaining that she was reserving the newspapers to take to her workplace – they were shelling fish that week – and she felt that "the newspapers she had picked up from near bus stops belonged to the family and were not for him." At the same time, when Anh had read out "salt," "sugar," "rice," and other words from items on the kitchen shelf, his mother had looked pleased and proud with his growing reading confidence in English. Unlike many of the parents in the studies reviewed, it appeared that she was not associating his slowly growing confidence in English with access to materials in the home or normative school-based practices but to simply to learning at school.

Upon Sufi's and Ms. N's suggestion, in an effort to offer him access to some traditional literacy resources, I offered to take Anh to the public library close to their home so that he could borrow materials when he felt like it, but his mother was unsure about the whole idea and about getting the library card.

Mom: I don't know, long time. So, I don't know password, I don't know. *Bạn đã từng có một thẻ. Tôi không biết nó ở đâu bây giờ.*

Anh: She said I used to have one earlier. She doesn't know where mine is.

HR: It'll be nice to get you a library card, right? Then you can go by yourself to the library and get lots of books. You remember how you used to read all those books with Ms. N? Like the "Taco, the dog"

Anh: Taco andI don't know, I only know Taco.

HR: Did you like those books with Ms. N?

Anh: Yeah. Some of them were long so I couldn't finish it all! (with a proud smile)

Anh started making gleeful plans about the number of books he would bring, and seeing his obvious excitement, his mother searched for a while and found their old library card. However, when we realized it had expired, she was distressed that they would be in trouble and was anxious about having forgotten the password. It took a few minutes to convince her that the process would not get them in trouble.

HR: You want some Vietnamese books? For you?

Mom: No. I don't know. *Tôi không biết đọc.*

Anh: She doesn't know how to read.

HR: Not in Vietnamese?

Mom: No, don't want.

HR: Some Vietnamese DVDs? Is there something that can play it?

Anh: No, only TV

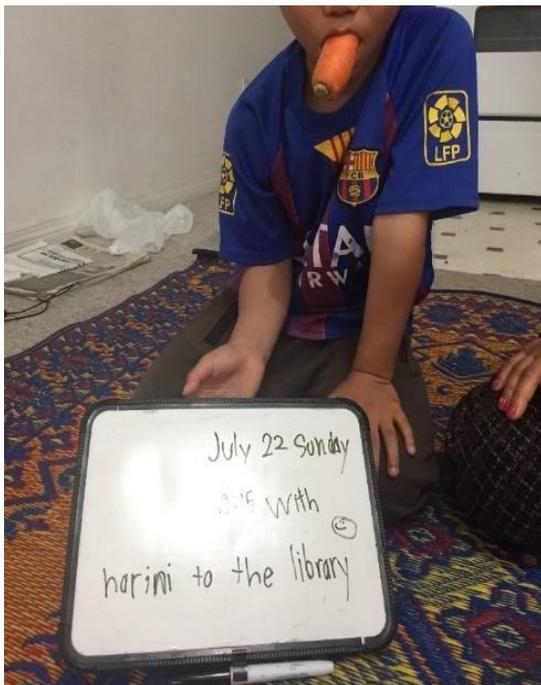
HR: OK, books for him.

Anh: Yes! I'll take all of them!

His obvious enthusiasm for going to the library was diametrically opposed to his mother's apprehension about it. It was unclear whether that had to do with her uncertainty about institutions in general, her linguistic skills, or her apprehension about the process. Upon reflection, my request for accompanying Anh to the library might have been a cause for stress as well, even though it was prompted by previous conversations with his teachers.

I had asked him if there were any books or papers in the house to draw or write anything down – phone numbers, lists, reminders are the ones that sprung to my mind. He had a pencil, sharpened to about three-inches long but that remained unused in his bag, which was usually tossed in the corner of the room until it was time for school. He searched in the bedroom for a little while and brought a six-by-eight-inch whiteboard (Figure 4.1) that he said they sometimes used, “when we know where the pen is, that is...”. After many days of searching, Anh found the pen and since that time used to write down carefully the dates and times that we decided for my next home visits. Since his mother did not read or write, there were no other traditional writing materials in the house, again, different from many other studies of refugee-background families (Quadros & Sarroub, 2016; Singh et al., 2015).

Figure 4.1: Whiteboard writing by Anh



Writing on the whiteboard was one of the few traditional literacies I observed in the house, when the marker was available. However, Anh carefully wrote down the dates and times of my home visits and reminded his mother of them. In his mouth is a carrot from a bag of vegetables that he had requested when I asked him what he would like me to bring him when I visited his home.

As mentioned, many scholars (Anderson et al., 2016; Delpit, 1992; Dyson, 2004, 2016; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Heath, 1983; McTavish, 2014) have pointed out that children from non-mainstream backgrounds often do not have the socialization into the routines, practices, dispositions, and concepts of traditional classroom literacy. Additionally, the frequency of literacy events in children's homes and the types of texts used there make a difference in how these school-based practices are taken up (Purcell-Gates, 1995; Purcell-Gates et al., 2004). In Anh's case, lack of both the literacy socialization and frequency of literacy events appeared to be constraints to his traditional literacy development. However, both Anh and his mother independently viewed content on YouTube, but they did so on their own terms and usually never for school, work, or with any institutional agenda. Anh's agency manifested in being able to harness these out-of-school literacies for his learning and social needs.

4.7.1.2 From marshmallow to Marshmello: making YouTube connections

Anh frequently harnessed his strong skills in sketching and drawing as a multimodal communicative practice to make meaning and connections. When I first visited his home, I had taken him a sketch book and a set of markers, which he received with much joy: "This is the first book someone has given me!" he said smiling, before getting confidently started on what would become page after page of intricate ninja drawings (Figure 4.2). I couldn't help but be reminded of my son, who could spend hours, sprawled on the floor, drawing Pokémon characters, in the same way Anh did. Anh confirmed that he had learned to draw ninjas from YouTube tutorials and used a specific channel to learn Pokémon art, different cartoons, and other characters of interest to him. On his mother's phone, he also watched videos of people using guns to give him ideas for drawing different types of guns (Figure 4.3). (His mother did not appear to consider these videos problematic.). Since he included many details, these gun drawings were a favourite

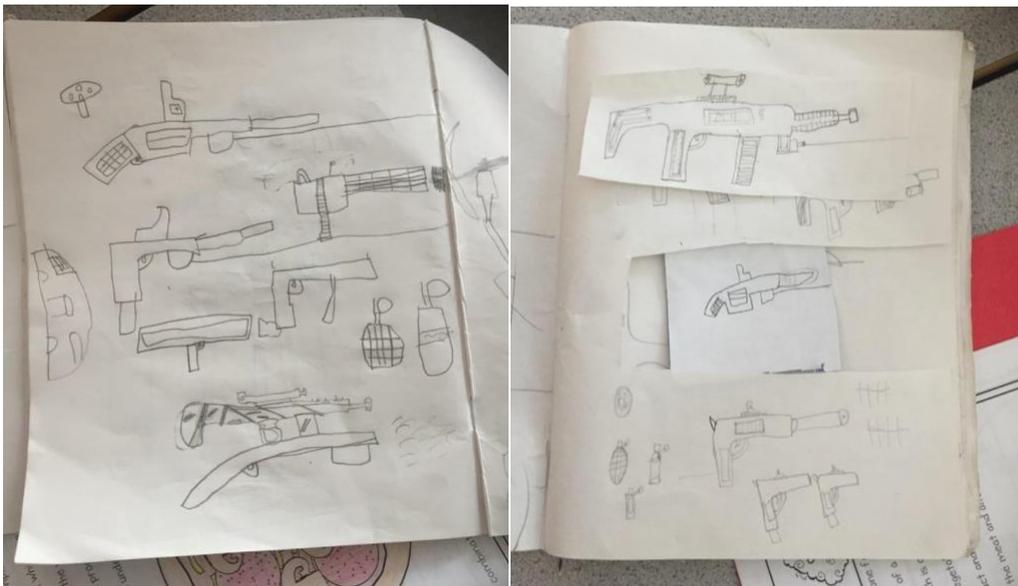
with his friends, though they were not permitted in school drawing books and had to be sneaked into the end pages of the journal, making them even more coveted.

Figure 4.2: Anh's ninja drawing



Anh loved drawing and used specific YouTube tutorials and channels to learn and practice specific characters from Pokémon and video games. Here he was excitedly practicing ninja drawings in the book that I had brought him the first time I visited his home.

Figure 4.3: Anh's gun drawings



Intricate and detailed drawings of various types of guns inspired by YouTube watching drawn by Anh on many of the end pages of his school drawing journal. Since the children were not permitted to draw guns at school, these had to be hidden in back pages.

Even though schoolwork and school-related literacies did not make their way into the household very much, Anh *brought to school* many ideas and learnings from his interactions with digital media and popular culture at home (Dyson, 2003, 2016; Marsh, 2008; Marsh & Millard, 2006). When he went to his cousin's house, they would draw together, watch movies and videos about gaming, play video games and outdoor games like soccer and hide-and-seek. These moments of connection with his cousins were something Anh valued, though neither he nor the families considered these activities as contributing to his literacies or his skills in communication. However, inspired by these times with his cousins, he spent enormous amounts of time at school breaks sharing knowledge of video games, even if he did not himself own any.

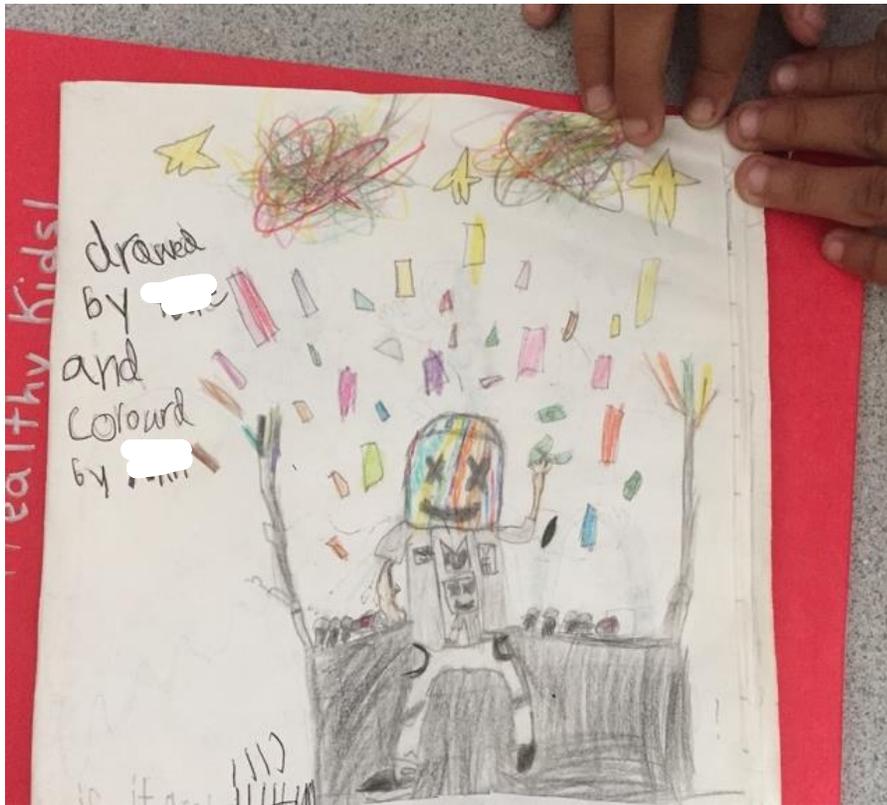
The knowledge gained from YouTube in conjunction with the orality that was predominant in Anh's household supported his school interactions and expressions, serving to maintain Anh as a valuable member in his class. Much of his mother's meaning making was through conversation – with her friends, her work agent, the school translator, for instance – and orality was a literacy which Anh used to mediate his experience in school. Orality is not often a literacy that is valorized or valued within mainstream school contexts (see Mui & Anderson, 2008; Dyson, 2016; Souto-Manning, 2009). Yet, almost unrestricted access to YouTube at home supplied him with a diversity of interesting information and, during interactions with friends, Anh would draw on these: the Star Wars movies he saw with his cousins, the Vietnamese songs his mother listened to on her phone, rap songs and YouTube influencers, videos he used to practice dance moves and that gave him gaming tips, to name just a few. While he was normally quiet when Sufi was teaching or asking questions, during group work, Anh used singing, rapping, and phrases like “you dead man”, “we done, done, done, dude”, “Take the L, man” from Fortnite, to make engaging conversation and connections between his lifeworlds.

An instance of this was when the class was discussing the Canada Food Guide and the children were working in small groups to write down lists for each food group. Anh was unable to contribute to writing the list in English and started doodling in his journal, talking about marshmallows. Only a few minutes later did I realize that the children had moved from talking about the food item to talking about Marshmello, a musician and DJ, popular on YouTube for publishing remixes online. While the group worked on writing the food list, Anh shared about DJ Marshmello who wears a custom white helmet resembling a marshmallow, for public appearances and in his music videos. As the children worked and talked, they commented on Anh's drawing of Marshmello (Figure 4.4) and took turns colouring it. Anh's creative connection between the name of the food and the DJ, his ability to share interesting facts orally, and his detailed drawing of the musician are aspects of his communicative repertoire. Despite his not being able to actively contribute school-specific reading and writing skills to group work, his classmates invariably wanted to be around Anh because he brought entertainment to "boring lessons" (Field notes from classroom discussion, Jan 2018.)

Researchers (Au, 1980; Dyson, 2003; Heath, 1983; Marsh & Millard, 2006) have long documented the diverse and creative ways in which young children draw from popular culture and their lived experiences. Yet digital and popular culture is usually not considered appropriate for school and is often not appreciated as a resource, ideas often shaped by notions of class and social, cultural, and economic capital (Bourdieu, 1991). This issue of perceived suitability has impact especially for young students (Marsh, 2016; Sefton-Green, et al., 2016), even though many immigrants and refugees gain new cultural knowledge, including language, expressions, beliefs, values, attitudes, expectations, and behavioral norms from TV-viewing and digital contexts. Digital culture and YouTube appeared to shape Anh's communicative practices, with

Anh designing relationships for himself using language, ideas, tunes, and cultural references from the digital resources he brought from home.

Figure 4.4: Marshmello, the YouTube musician



Anh described and drew a detailed celebratory drawing of Marshmello, the musician, DJ, and YouTube star. The details in this drawing superbly match with public pictures of Marshmello, where he always sports a helmet with black Xs for eyes and a wide smile, like the figure here. Anh drew this picture and the children coloured it together as they talked about food groups and Marshmello. The question “Is it good?” was written at the left bottom of the page and then erased by the end of the drawing session.

4.7.2 Brokering as a multidimensional translanguaging practice

The second theme that this chapter explores is related to Anh’s linguistic and cultural brokering with his mother and me within his home context. Here, I have interpreted these practices as two types of experiences related to brokering undertaken by Anh – mediating and guiding conversations, while also engaging with his own agency and resistance.

4.7.2.1 Mediating and guiding conversations

As Orellanna and García (2014) emphasized, children mediate many aspects of a relationship between the two or more speakers when brokering in dynamic social events. Anh, for instance, would not only translate many sentences and words for his mother and me during our meetings at their home but he would also contextualize them for us by prefacing with more information. In one of our meetings, I was inquiring how early his mother needed to go to work since I had seen Anh sitting near the school office as early as 8:00 am, despite school beginning at 9:00am.

HR: What time in the morning do you usually leave?

Mom: *bây*

Anh: Seven

HR: She drops you?

Anh: Yeah. Sometimes she goes early to school, like seven.

HR: She goes to English school?

Anh: No, she doesn't go to English school anymore. She drops me and then goes to work.

Mom: Morning Anh go to school (*in English*)

In the above exchange, Anh not only explained what his mother said in Vietnamese but also elucidated what she said by elaborating that “she goes to school early.” When I misunderstood that to mean that she goes to English school (something she had mentioned she wanted to do) in the morning, he further clarified that she would drop him at school and then go to work. Not only did he have to understand both adults’ perspectives in this exchange, he also had to take into account what each of us might know about the other’s circumstances to add details to clarify.

In other exchanges, he operated as a guide for the amount of cultural information his mother was able to communicate when responding to others. For instance, when I was asking her how long the family had been in Vancouver, it initially appeared that she was finding it difficult to calculate, despite Anh's attempt to support her arithmetic.

HR: How long has it been since you came to Canada?

Mom: hmmm...?

HR: Um, how long has it been since you came from Vietnam?

Mom: Two years, four years - since you came to Canada? *bốn năm sáu năm*

Anh: *Four years? six years?* She doesn't know.

HR: Hmm. You were born here? Or there?

Anh: Here. So, at least 8 years she's been here, yes!

In the above conversation, Anh's mother repeated my original question to herself "since you came to Canada?" in an attempt to help with the calculation. When Anh realized that the math did not quite add up, he attempted to ease her difficulty by quickly saying that "she doesn't know." The School Board's Settlement Workers in School (SWIS) support person who was also the translator for the family said that they did not have clear birth records for Anh, and his mother had guessed that he was around two or three when they arrived in Canada. Many cultures do not calculate age hierarchically or chronologically (see Fiske, 2017) as is often common in the West, and Indigenous groups in Vietnam are among those groups where there is fluidity (Vu, 2020). Nevertheless, in this conversation Anh was eager to support his mother with the age calculation and to find a resolution of sorts. In this transcultural exchange, Anh was balancing how I might perceive his mother's not knowing her own child's age with a need to respond to my seemingly simple yet culturally complex question.

The guidance that he offered his mother also included a sense of responsibility for her to understand expectations when it came to supporting him at school. For example, at the end of the school year, as part of the larger study, the children had invited their families to an exhibition of their photographs, drawings, and writing. Anh's mother was initially unsure of making it since she was going to be at work at the time, but he ensured that she called her workplace and asked for some time off. "I reminded her many times in the morning to leave work early," he confided as he paced the corridor outside the classroom that afternoon waiting for her to arrive. His relief and joy at finally seeing her almost outshone his pride at the excellent work (Figure 4.5) he contributed to the gallery that day.

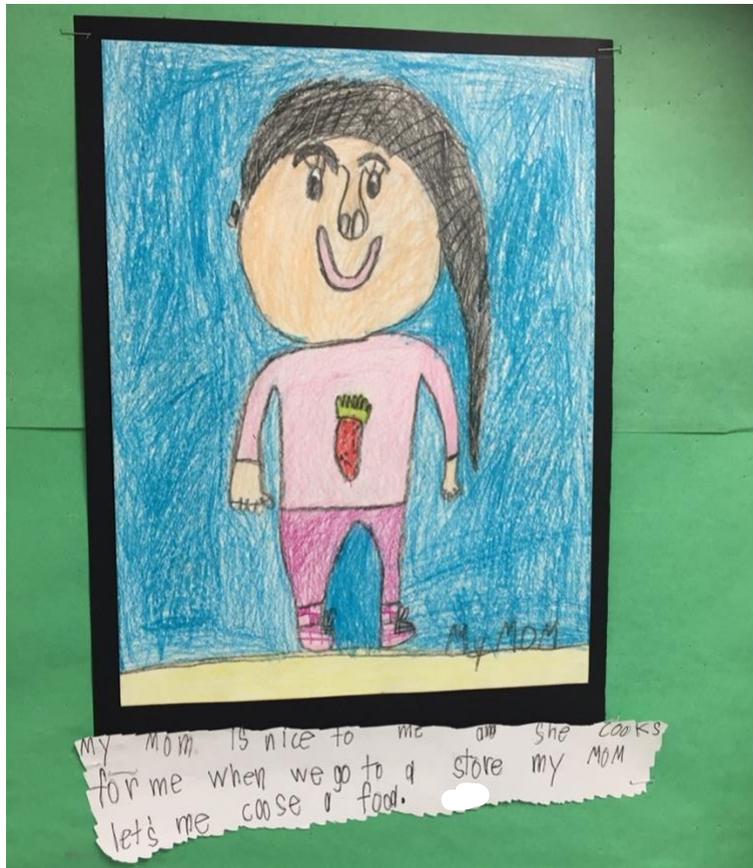
There were other small instances like these – when she struggled with being unable to connect to the landlord's internet connection; misunderstood directions when going from classroom to the school office where we were scheduled to meet before walking to their place; needed cultural and English support with talking on the phone with a health insurance issue or with his teacher – when Anh assumed the role of guide to support his mother. Like many of the children in the other brokering studies, Anh exercised high levels of cognitive and social responsibility and a high degree of expertise in negotiation and communication. As Orellana (2001) said, children like Anh engage with "the complex demands of modern life matters for their families' well-being" (p. 378) and the communicative skills exhibited in negotiating these demands are acts of agentive learning and identity representation.

4.7.2.2 Agency and resistance in brokering

Another agentive aspect of Anh's literacies stems from his selective brokering practices, and his strategic use of English. Translanguaging practices by children include adjusting their language for different speakers, revoicing across languages to repeat and clarify, organizing and

representing knowledge and understanding to maximize communicative potential (Garcia, 2009; Gort, 2012; Orellana & Rodriguez-Minkoff, 2016). As outlined, Anh performed cultural brokering many times, but he also used his translanguaging practices to manage the complication of balancing various needs. While he moved fluidly between languages, there were times when

Figure 4.5: Anh's drawing of his mother



Anh's drawing and narrative of his mother for the art exhibition at school on the theme of "Something/Someone I love." The strawberry shirt, pink pants and hair style were typical of her style. More details on the process of creating these drawings and the art gallery are described in Chapter 6.

Anh seemed to prefer English in conversations with his mother, despite knowing that she might not understand everything he said.

HR: When your mom works...can you ask her if she works with people who speak Vietnamese or does she have to speak English at work?

Anh: No, she has to speak Vietnamese.

HR: She can speak Vietnamese, right?

Anh: Yeah. She doesn't have to speak English. Because none of them speak English.

HR: Where is the store, is it far away or close by?

Anh: *cửa hàng close hay far?* (using "close" or "far" in English)

Mom: *không gần hay xa*

Anh: (giggling) I think she was saying something

HR: You should translate for your mom! (laughing)

Anh: I'm trying to! (laughing) But I can't.

Working with the knowledge that his mother probably understood the context of our conversation and with the confidence that she knew the words "close" and "far," Anh mixed in English to the Vietnamese sentence. He engaged in this translanguaging practice of mixing in English words quite often – either out of contextual convenience or because he did not know the words in Vietnamese, which he admitted to at times like in the above exchange – especially when his mother mumbled or spoke too quickly for him to grasp.

At other times, and quite possibly because he was (understandably) tired of the hard work of brokering for me, he would switch to simply repeating my question to her in English, like in the conversation below about the types of songs his mother listens to.

Anh: She listens to...I don't know.

HR: Does she listen to songs?

Anh: Mom, you listen to songs?

HR: Ah Anh, ask her in Vietnamese please...

Anh: I *am*!

HR: "You listen to songs" is in Vietnamese? Even I can understand that!

Mom: (Laughs)

HR: Anh, you're good at speaking it!

Anh: (silence)

Though he would listen and dance along to the songs she played, Anh felt that he did not know the songs she listened to on her device. None of his friends listened to Vietnamese songs and he had said earlier that he had not wanted to learn the words of the songs in Vietnamese despite knowing that it would help him enjoy the song more and bring his mother joy. With his silence in responding to my last statement, he also offered some tentativeness about my idea that he was a capable speaker of Vietnamese even though I had seen him work on complex translanguaging for his mother over the phone. It might also be that he was becoming socialized into the “hierarchical notions of language” (Dyson, 2004, p. 213) that exist in schools, where English is more powerful than any other language and raciolinguistic ideologies are prominent (Flores & Rosa, 2015). In retrospect, I feel it was not entirely respectful to have said “even I can understand that” as a joke because he was working so hard to navigate multiple literacies and needs, while maintaining his own agency and independence.

While Anh was generally enthusiastic and helpful in my conversations with his mother, there were times when he decided to stop participating in the brokering altogether. I discuss these as agentive acts of resistance where Anh blocked conversation because of wanting to not engage with certain topics any further or a justifiable tiredness from brokering for two adults. Like some of the children in Hall and Sham’s (2007) study, who wished they could walk away from constantly explaining their parents to the world, Anh said he felt it was “too tough” to explain. Being an eight-year-old having to support and clarify his mother’s linguistic capacities and her cultural understandings must have been challenging.

An instance that springs to mind occurred during a visit when his mother asked him something, pointed to me, and he shook his head a few times.

HR: She wants to ask me something?

Anh: mmm...

HR: Yeah?

Mom: *cô ấy có thể ở đây không?*

Anh: (Shakes his head.)

HR: You don't want to ask me what she's asking

A: I don't know what she's saying.

Mom: (Laughing)

After a few moments of her gesturing, I realized his mother was trying to say something to me and that Anh was feeling embarrassed. Wondering if I was not welcome anymore and wanting to know if she would like me to leave, I pressed Anh for a further explanation.

HR: Should I leave? Try to translate for me Anh, please you can do it!

Anh: Hmm...I think she wants you to babysit me...

HR: Ohhh

Anh: Because...for no reason. Because you are here...

HR: Sure. Would you like that?

Anh: Not babysit! That's not, like, what you do.

In this case, the resistance to brokering during this conversation came from his own understanding that I was at his house as an educator-researcher, even though I was fine with the idea of “babysitting” and had taken care of him at his home in other instances. While his mother’s understanding of my role might have been different, his resistance to brokering this conversation spoke to his depth of cultural competence and situationally-positioned knowledge, and understandings about his own and others’ needs.

4.8 Discussion

Viewing Anh’s meaning-making practices from the multiliteracies perspective of transformation allows us to envision him with a type of access to his chosen lifeworlds. Also,

viewing their family situation through a superdiversity framework allows practices and perspectives to be not so much about what is “normal” and who might be “the other” but about multiple repertoires depending on context (Vertovec, 2010). With these two frames in mind, I discuss two balancing/analogous factors – on one hand, there are Anh’s agentic multiliterate practices; and on the other, the structural inequalities in his life that constrain his practices.

4.8.1 Agentive multiliterate practices

While many of the reviewed studies involved adolescent children, eight-year-old Anh’s attempts at reading the word and the world (Freire & Macedo, 1987) makes his efforts particularly significant as he is an emergent bilingual and also emerging in his literacies. Anh focused on making meaning for himself echoing the multiliteracies idea of use and transformation of literacies related to personal goals and identities. By using multimodal repertoires including drawing and orality in lieu of the traditional literacy resources he lacks in his home, he balances many diverse ways of learning and expresses more complex facets of his life and identities, especially experiences that might not be easy to explain in words (Johnson & Kendrick, 2017). The orientation to multiliteracies also manifests in his ample use of digital media and YouTube to access information, and with which to build relationships with peers. His interest in popular culture helped him design processes that permitted his interests and identities to be valued. By focusing on the things that he wants to do in the world to know and on “the everyday stuff of the world” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015, p. 17), he manages his complex home situation to his advantage.

Related to the multiliteracies idea of full social participation in the real world, the depth of cultural competency, emotional effort, and prosocial skills Anh displayed during his translanguaging and brokering during my home visits reflects knowledge and sensitivity (Bauer,

2010; García Sanchez, 2012; Guan et al., 2014; Guo, 2014; Lucas 2014; Martinez et al. 2009; Morales et al. 2012; Trickett & Jones, 2007). These skills are realized and practiced in, for instance, Anh's consistently recognizing that his mother and I have only partial information about each other's lives and ways of thinking, and understanding where his own agency lies in this process of brokering. These ways of thinking about audience, purpose, and intentions in meaning-making transfer from translanguaging and brokering to literacies. Anh's communicative repertoire supports his shifting fluidly between languages (English, Jrai, and Vietnamese), modes (oral, visual, written, and kinesthetic), contexts (home and school), various people (his mother, friends, teacher, and me), and needs (his own and various others). By thus cultivating linguistic, multimodal, social, and cultural skills, his practice of agentic translanguaging becomes an inherently multiliterate practice for Anh.

4.8.2 Scarcity of school-recognized resources

With this focus on agency, however, it becomes critical to understand how structures and ideologies enable and constrain choices, especially for young children like Anh. While the findings here might appear to conform to the stereotype that families from refugee-backgrounds do not participate in school-based literacies and activities, this study attends to the call for nuanced research, with considerations of power, access, and equity.

Scholars (Bus et al., 2000; Neuman, 1996; Sawyer et al., 2018) have pointed to the need for awareness that not all adults have the same level of proficiency or interest in traditional literacies. Even while some families integrate ways of meaning-making between home and school, some others find it much more challenging, and these contradictions in ways of knowing and being complicate literacies for young children negotiating mainstream classroom pedagogies (Global Conversations in Literacy Research, 2014; Kelly et al., 2008; Flores, 2019). SES has

also been closely associated with differences in the home literacies practices and that the challenging circumstances associated with living in or near poverty enact a powerful influence on parenting and home learning (Foster et al, 2005; Lareau, 2011). Luke's (2018) caution about the vulnerabilities of those marginalized by new economic, cultural, civic, and media conditions combined with Flores' (2019) reminder about the pervasive effects of race and ethnicity in schooling are re-emphasized in Anh's home context.

In Anh's case, vulnerability also stemmed from a systemic poverty of school-recognized resources within the home (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Luke, 2015). This challenge manifested with simple things like the always-lost whiteboard markers (among the few visible traditional literacy resources in the home) or the lack of literacy materials, to more complex aspects like his mother's inability to read and write in any language or her limited participation in traditional literacies, schooling, and institutions. There is a strong positive relationship between ample print access, literacy engagement, and literacy achievement in schools (Cummins et al., 2015; Nakanishi, 2015; Mol & Bus, 2011; Purcell-Gates et al., 2011a) and these were minimal in Anh's case. This scarcity of school-recognized resources and poverty of opportunities is, unfortunately, often taken up in society to mean that families are somehow "deficient" (Anderson et al., 2005), as was the case with Anh and his mother.

While Anh made up for these issues by agentively navigating other literacies, his school-based literacy was assessed as below others in his class. Anh's abilities in translanguaging, multidimensional literacies, and cultural brokering were unrecognized by teachers since these practices are often invisible to mainstream educational systems. While his mother appreciated his abilities to broker information and cultural knowledge during conversations, I am unsure if she offered validation for the complexity of the effort. To emphasize, this lack of validation is not to

indict his mother but evidence of the ways that young child brokers' intricate work often goes unrecognized within the home and in public spheres.

4.9 Implications, reflections, and conclusions

This study aims to contribute to the growing body of knowledge about young emergent bilinguals from refugee backgrounds, and the complexity of language and literacies learning trajectories within homes and communities. Themes centered on Anh's agentic learning within a home context where traditional literacies are minimal; and on his brokering and translanguaging as unrecognized but powerful skills. I offer some implications for educators and researchers with the intention of research as generating resources to think with rather than truths to be transmitted (Burnett, 2017).

The range out-of-school literacies displayed by Anh in the home, including multimodal and multilingual resources, offer imperatives for educators to engage these skills by designing pedagogies that encourage a full use of students' communicative repertoires, for not only emergent bilinguals but other students in the class as well. While some educators participate in these interests, including popular culture and digital tools, many still feel the need to conform to more traditional and normative practices (Marsh, 2015). Instead, we can critically embrace these experiences to design processes for students to become more personally engaged in their learning (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015; De Costa, 2010; Stewart, 2015).

Another implication centers on the educators recognizing complex cultural factors rather than making assumptions about refugees and emergent bilinguals as a unitary group (Brown, 2016; Dwyer & McCloskey, 2013; Stewart, 2015). When we are able to take into account that a family's hesitation, as with Anh's mother, in interacting with institutions and participating in school-based practices may come from cultural differences in perception, linguistic issues,

personal complexities, or systemic issues, we may be able to better support them. As Anderson and Morrison (2011) remind, we need to be not only “kid-watchers” but also “family-watchers.”

It also becomes our responsibility to listen to these family stories and recognize the enormous capacities that students like Anh display when brokering. Child language brokering has been largely invisible until more recently (Alvarez, 2017; Hall & Guéry, 2010; Orellana & Garcia, 2014). Solberg (1990) used the perspective of children growing and shrinking as conversations take place, suggesting that “for some children social age can exceed chronological age” (Hall & Guéry, 2010, p. 41). This chapter adds to the line of thinking that brokering is saturated with conflicting authorities and possible anxieties, and there is much for us to consider about the interchanging roles that children play as they operate at a higher level than required in their school-based activities, including systemic ways to better reach and support such children and families.

Some further questions that supported the EDR processes and generated directions for this study related to bridging the home and the classroom included: How may we begin to better recognize the translanguaging and multiliteracies that happen in the home as building blocks to cultivating linguistic, literacy, social, emotional, and cognitive skills for their own worth, and also as skills that are transferable to the classroom? And, as Orellana (2017) asks in her review on brokering, how might such practices shape the learning of monolingual children and brokers themselves? Questions about the age of the young children participating in multiliterate practices: what counts as literacies for these children and how might emerging multilingual practices impact these understandings? How might the more communal understandings of literacy – where expertise and knowledge are less of an individual accomplishment, and instead distributed more equitably among all participants, like during brokering – be harnessed in a

classroom for increased flexibility, collaboration and learning? (Nykiel-Herbert, 2010; Quadros & Sarroub, 2016).

Finally, in some contexts, simultaneously teaching and supporting families about mainstream literacies practices while maintaining existing home cultures and languages becomes important to improve confidence (Anderson & Morrison, 2011; Singh et al., 2015, Reyes & Torres, 2007). For instance, educators can draw on emergent bilinguals' oral language strengths at school and offer support to families on harnessing these language skills at home. At times, explicit teaching might be needed for students whose community lives are distant from the discourses of academic literacies (Purcell-Gates et al., 2011a) and at other times these discourses need active pedagogical critiquing (Flores & Rosa, 2015). By connecting relationships at home and school, we can integrate the learnings that happen in children's lifeworlds, design programs that support them, and move from compassion to action.

4.10 Chapter summary

This chapter presented Anh's story in response to the first research question about the range of communicative repertoires that students bring with them to school. The perspectives in this article highlighted the diverse ways in which children from immigrant and refugee backgrounds take up new opportunities and explore ways in which their different lifeworlds interface with each other. It also acknowledged systemic issues that constrain children and families in particular ways. This chapter accentuated the need for pedagogies and policies that value the things that children do to learn and connect with others. It links with the others in this dissertation with its emphasis on placing relationships at the center of the work - relationships that formed the heart of the collaborative project described in the next chapter on *Looking closely* at children's drawings in the classroom.

Chapter 5: Looking closely at words and worlds: emergent bilinguals making meaning through drawing and talking

5.1 Introduction

While language-based ways of learning have long dominated the spectrum of practices used in classrooms, children bring with them a range of skills for visual meaning-making, including drawing, the focus of this chapter. Here, I seek to surface the possibilities that unfold for our understandings of emergent bilinguals' capacities when we choose to look closely at their drawings, their conversations around those, and their enhanced meaning making through juxtaposing multiple semiotic resources. This chapter responds to key aspects of my two research questions – first, to investigate the multimodal communicative repertoires and identities of emergent bilinguals; second, to explore how these may be valued through rethinking pedagogies and inviting children's lifeworlds into classrooms. As outlined in Chapter 2, this chapter maps onto Design and Construction processes of EDR (See Figure 2.1) with its focus on classroom-specific needs and collaboration to generate processes. Through this chapter, I lay the foundation for understanding the types of learning designs that can be created and enacted within this classroom (see Chapter 6), after reflecting on existing research and theory.

This chapter uses specific stories from all eight emergent bilinguals in the classroom (See Table 2.1) where I was conducting my dissertation research. While all the children in the class participated, here I only discuss the work of the emergent bilinguals. In the *Looking Closely* project (titled by the children), inspired by a presentation on visual techniques and ensuing conversations, children drew objects from their school yard, discussed their drawings with their friends, and some wrote narrative pieces to further describe their pictures. I present themes

relating to the how drawing and talking permitted them to make meaning in new ways, express aspects of their emotional lives, and to belong anew within their classroom. Re-configuring Freire's (1972) renowned conception to unpack these themes, I discuss how looking closely at the words and the worlds of the children permits us to understand capacities and listen to their nuanced stories, allowing us to look at them as children with specific interests, characteristics, and challenges. I conclude with some implications for educators and researchers.

5.2 Purpose and background: Why drawing?

Language is just one of the communicative resources through which we make meaning (Jewitt, 2008; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001) and it is impossible to understand how we learn and what we mean with language(s) unless we attend to other modal resources as well (Early et al., 2015; Yamada-Rice, 2015). By looking closely at emergent bilinguals' pictures, words, and conversations, I hope to explore the "accretive layers of literacy practices" (Kendrick, 2015, p. 619) that they engage in towards learning, communication, and relationships.

In alignment with EDR's reflective processes, this chapter's focus on drawing connects with learnings from Anh's communicative repertoires at home (Chapter 4). Many of the other children in this class also enjoyed drawing and had an extensive repertoire of drawing skills. Further, almost as soon as children began drawing, they began talking about their work and these comments became infused in the drawing itself ("Ooo...I like the colour you used for this tree bark!" "Do you think this ant looks big?"). In this chapter, I pay attention to children's drawings and the value it has for understanding literacies more broadly, especially for emergent bilinguals.

Although there is a "visual turn" (Kendrick & Rowsell, 2014) in education research, drawings are largely overlooked in favour of the digital as a visual method in classrooms. Unlike other technology-dependent visual methods that need access to phones, cameras, tablets, or other

digital devices, which have equity-related issues (Darvin, 2018; Rogers et al., 2018), drawing is a simple, accessible practice. While digital techniques bring their own excellent affordances (and many include drawing-related applications) (see Borg, 2019), the inclusion of paper-and-pencil drawing, offer the advantages of versatility, inexpensive application, and easy adaptability to various contexts. Depending on their family contexts, many children are often familiar with drawing and do not need particular coaching. Lastly, due to its non-textual nature, drawing offers equal footing to all participants including emergent bilinguals to engage with framing their ideas in a personally relevant manner.

Additionally, drawing remain a relatively understudied tool in education research (D'Warte, 2021; Reavey, 2011) while many studies exist on children's drawings in clinical psychology, art education, and child development. What is also lacking, from an academic perspective, is an attempt to build bridges between drawing and other frameworks for collaborative learning, especially in a school context. Using drawing to investigate what children know and want to share permits a fuller range of embedding sensory modes and feelings and representing human experience in learning (Kress, 2000; Kendrick & Rowsell, 2014).

5.3 Theoretical frames

Given the focus of this chapter on drawing and accompanying talk and writing, two theoretical frames underpin this work – multimodality and sociocultural perspectives on learning.

5.3.1 Multimodality: as representation across and through modes

As described in Chapter 2, multimodal perspectives recognizes that children use signs (e.g., drawings, speech, photos, actions, sounds, objects) to communicate within a social context (Jewitt, 2008; Kress, 1997). These signs are especially important for children learning to use language to represent their understanding of the world. Being literate involves an ability to

navigate, interpret, and use multiple modes (Adami, 2016; Adami & Kress, 2014). Each mode has affordances and constraints; the visual mode can represent a more holistic and symbolic representation of ideas without the dependence on a temporal continuum, as would be necessary for oral and written language (Kress, 2004).

The notion of *transmodal semiosis*, the multiplicative effect of the processing of modes (Lemke, 1998; Newfield, 2015), is an important part of multimodality. As a set of modes are taken up during communication and representation, an understanding of transmodal semiosis supports the multiple translations and transformations that are involved in shifting across modes in a chain of meaning making. For instance, the drawing, talking, collaborating, thinking, and feeling described in this chapter align with the dynamic shift in modes. With each shift in mode, meaning is enhanced, changed, and personalized. Even as modes combine to generate new meanings, each is understood differently within social and cultural contexts. Through the visual mode that is the focus of this chapter, emergent bilinguals gain new conceptual ideas, design and articulate understandings – personal and academic – and gain and express new learning (D'warte, 2021; Sidelnick & Svoboda, 2000).

5.3.2 Sociocultural perspectives on learning: children as creative social actors

The focus on the cultural and social shaping of resources or modes used for making meaning situates multimodality closely alongside a sociocultural framework (Kendrick, 2016; van Leeuwen, 2015). Literacies practices are the dynamic ways in which literacy is carried out social groups but these practices can change over time (Heath, 1983; Pennycook, 2010).

Considering change within and across literacies practices offers us ways of thinking about how pedagogies can adapt to children's classroom practices. Relatedly, representation and communication are never ideologically neutral (Johnson & Kress, 2003; Lemke, 1990) and are

valued differently in different contexts. This valuing shapes what and how children draw, talk, write, and learn, how their work is received, and how they are positioned. Societal and educational discourses have implications for not only what it means to be literate, but also for emergent bilinguals' sense of self.

Drawing is a word that can describe both the product and the process. Cox and Cox (2014) emphasize that children's talk and drawing interact and transform each other. Therefore, there is the potential for drawing to be a "constructive process of thinking in action," rather than only an ability to make references to specific ideas and objects (Cox, 2005, p. 123). There is also an acknowledgment that like other texts, visuals can be created and interpreted in diverse ways without presupposing that there is an absolute 'truth' embedded in a child's drawing. Stanczak (2007) notes that: "the meaning of images resides most significantly in the ways that participants interpret those images, rather than as some inherent property of the images themselves" (p. 11). This view regards drawings as an effective means for children to explore and communicate their understandings, particularly when attention is paid, as in this study, to the context of the drawings and the narratives that develop around the drawings.

With these two theoretical frames, I focus on the choices children intentionally make with marks, colours, and materials, coupled with talk and explanatory narrative writing. These offer insight into how children participate in activities and about their stories and capacities (Dyson, 2016; Kervin & Mantei, 2015; Pahl & Rowsell, 2010), transforming them from "mark makers to meaning makers" (Papandreou, 2014, p. 97).

5.4 Review of literature

Vygotsky (1978) maintained that drawings are among children's earliest representations of experience and stimulate their narrative impulse to create stories. In the following sections, I

look at previous education research in the areas of: (1) Drawing as meaning making in classrooms; and (2) Emergent bilinguals and drawings to express a sense of self.

5.4.1 Drawing as meaning making in classrooms

As children move through school, their interest and engagement in drawing tends to decline in general, possibly because school contexts traditionally view drawing as a time-filler activity (Anning, 2003; Richards, 2003). Considerations of materials, spaces, and interactions with others – children and adults – impact drawing as a way of meaning making in schools. The following studies look at drawing as a pedagogical resource for literacy learning, thinking, feeling, and communication (Wetton & McWhirter, 1998).

Kendrick and McKay's (2004/2016) in-school study explored young children's drawings about reading and writing as to understand their perceptions of literacy across the various contexts of their lives. After an open-ended discussion about literacy inside and outside of school, the children drew pictures of reading and writing. The authors found that children were able to harness conceptual and creative powers of drawing to powerfully describe their literate understandings across different contexts. The drawings enabled children to bring in drama, music, family ties, emotions, spaces, friendships, and future identities surrounding literacy. Because many of these children were just beginning to articulate their language and literacy experiences through school-assigned language tasks, these images afforded a way to interrogate the privileged position occupied by language within schools.

Working with a similar idea in Australian primary schools, Baroutsis et al. (2017) focused on children's drawings of the practices of learning to write. They analyzed drawings and associated audio recordings to the prompt, "Can you draw a picture of yourself learning to write or writing?" The authors stated that most children represented writing as an enjoyable activity;

however, writing also prompted emotional responses when not experiencing success. Children's identities were influenced by their relationships with others, yet most did not include collaborative writing practices in their drawings. At times, their representations expressed the materials of writing from a perspective that miniaturized the writer, "evoking the possibility that some children perceive writing is an enormous task" (p. 191) – as was the case with some emergent bilinguals in the current study.

Considering the pedagogical potential that drawing offers for promoting children's visual literacy skills, Hopperstad (2010) reported on a study with 35, six-year-olds in Norwegian schools. The author invited children to draw in response to texts (e.g., folk tales, Bible stories), specific topics (e.g., moving to a new school building), and experiences (e.g., winter break, Easter). To analyze the drawings, she used Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) notion of visual 'grammar' related to types of meanings made in images: *ideational meaning* (what an image says about a given phenomenon or an idea), *interpersonal meaning* (how an image interacts with the viewer), and *textual meaning* (how an image's components work to convey meaning through colour, size, perspective, etc.). She suggested that the children seemed to have been driven by: an interest in facts, an interest in events, and an aesthetic interest – highlighting the capacities of drawing as a distinctive form of literacy to activate children's in-school meaning making.

Hsieh and Tsai's (2012) study asked 10-year-olds' in Taiwan to draw their responses to "What is learning?" and "What is it like when you are learning something?" Many of the students drew stereotypical scenes: sitting at a desk, listening to lectures, taking notes, etc., which were consistent with their experiences of school cultures in Taiwan. However, some also portrayed negative experiences with teachers screaming at students who had tears running down their faces. These drawings depicting strong negative reactions were particularly telling,

especially given the formality of schools in Taiwan. The authors discussed that the feelings depicted in these drawings could be an indicator for teachers to consider their pedagogical behaviours along with the intense performance expectations placed on children.

Siegel (2012) investigated the interactions between social justice and assessment in school in her study of multimodality and literacy. Siegel pondered the question of “time for multimodality in schools” (p. 675), considering multimodal designs and how these might serve as an assessment practice. Using examples of fourth-grade students’ drawings of interpretations of stories or nonfiction articles, she exemplified the possibility of reflective talk – talk about how and what the multimodal designs mean – as one way to address the complexity of assessment. What children chose to include and exclude were discovered to be explicit multimodal choices. For instance, children revealed feelings and decisions in choosing between turquoise or purple to imply luxury. The reflective conversations were as much a part of the assessment of children’s understandings as were the drawings themselves.

Drawing studies also relate to how children express their emotional stories, giving us a chance to look closely at their lives, feelings, and relationships. Some relate to expressions of aesthetic experiences (Kinnueun & Einarsdottir, 2013), foods in their lunchboxes (Dryden et al. 2010), or career aspirations (Chambers et al., 2018). Other studies relate to experiences of fear, violation, pain and loss around sexuality and sexualized violence in South Africa (Stein, 2008); socio-affective expression when discussing the complex discourses around, HIV/AIDS in Uganda (Becker-Zayas et al., 2018); inquiries around concepts of death (Murriss & Thompson, 2016); and experiences of caste-based hierarchies in rural India (Literat, 2013). In these studies, the visual mode presented possibilities for representation about the arc of human experience by “drawing the unsayable” (Stein, 2008, p. 75). As with other studies reviewed, these drawing

offered original ways to describe learnings and personally relevant aspects of children's lives.

5.4.2 Emergent bilinguals and drawings to express sense of self

Another strand of literature reviewed bring together multilingual and marginalized students together with the agenda of valuing a diversity of communicative repertoires. These present an option for emergent bilinguals' voices to be heard within mainstream classrooms and to see who they are in a different way.

Cummins and Early (2011) conceptualized the creation of identity texts as a powerful pedagogical tool for teachers to “promote equity for marginalized students” (p. 7). The authors drew attention to the crucial connections between identities and literacies by working collaboratively with teachers to broaden conceptions of literacy beyond linear print-based reading and writing skills in the mainstream language. For instance, two of the teachers designed a multi-stage project in which multilingual students collaborated on dual-language stories (for instance Tamil and English, and Punjabi and English) and created drawings for their work. When students invest their identities in the creation of multimodal texts, these texts “holds a mirror up to students in which their identities are reflected back in a positive light” (p. 3). While identity texts speak to the creation of a pedagogical space – considering how teachers might support multilingual students, I conceptualize the drawings in this study as part of children's communicative repertoires – focusing how children share their stories through drawings, needing us to look closely and reflect them back in positive light.

Stille and Prasad (2015) found that students used their communicative resources to articulate engaging personal narratives. They curated, *Imaginings*, an exhibition of student- and teacher-created identity texts produced when teachers with artists, created spaces within their classrooms for emergent bilinguals to draw upon their life experiences and linguistic resources.

Based on interviews with students and teachers, the authors concluded that language pedagogy in schools can be invigorated by an approach that emphasizes students' identities as evolving plurilingual subjects with voice and agency.

Similarly, Prasad (2018) focused on analyzing children's language representations through the medium of drawing. Children were asked to draw a sequence of reflexive drawings of a monolingual, a bilingual, and a plurilingual individual, as well as themselves. After students discussed the work with each other, she analyzed the representations to look for visual metaphors and children's representations of self. Prasad concluded that the drawings permitted an understanding of plurilingualism as communicative competence and an identity that permitted many ways of being. Prasad pointed to the inherent capacity of the visual to generate understandings about children's communicative resources in creative ways.

Individuals see themselves reflected in images in a way they may not see themselves reflected in words (Kendrick, 2016). This study adds to research that deals with the power of the visual to reflect identities, while offering perspectives of young emergent bilinguals' communicative repertoires as they grow within the schooling system. And, different from many of the studies where children drew in response to particular prompts, this study uses data generated through naturalistic in-class drawing activities. It responds to a broader call to focus on the role of the visual in communicative practices, rather than framing studies of the visual on a need to understand literacy (Yamada-Rice, 2015). With these ideas, next I outline the context in which data were generated for this study.

5.5 Contexts: teacher and in-class projects

In this section, I introduce Sufi's perspectives on literacies that are pertinent to this study. I also present descriptions of two in-class drawing projects, which are relevant to the study because they offer rich perspectives on the emergent bilinguals' capacities.

5.5.1 Sufi's perspectives on literacies

Sufi's understandings of literacies centered around meaning making as connections between ideas, with an emphasis on critical thinking that was interwoven into the lessons and into topics. She worked hard to bridge curricular needs with her own interests in developing lifelong skills like respectful participation, clear communication, and learning to learn. Her literacy lessons usually revolved around traditional print-based resources like books, occasional school iPad use, and writing in journals on lesson topics. She also believed that learning needed to be fun and never missed daily read-alouds from funny chapter books, like *Junie B. Jones* (Park, 1992). Her read-alouds brought the class together on the carpet, with many of the emergent bilinguals sitting close to her, listening carefully, enjoying her reading, and learning language in context. Though she did not appear to particularly focus on emergent bilinguals during multimodal activities, she was eager to engage with arts. She said:

I've always been interested in art. [...] I usually have an art component to lessons where they either make their own, you know, in the same manner as the illustrations in a book. If they're writing a story that sort of follows from a story we've read, then sometimes they use illustrations to just show the flow of the story. Yeah, it's just instinctive, I think, you know, and it's definitely instinctive with them. (Interview, November 15, 2017)

Some of the drawings that the class worked on through the year were significant for meaning making through the visual. Two in-class assignments that stand out as those that offer drawing and associated narratives are described next, followed by context for the *Looking Closely* project.

5.5.2 In-class drawing projects

One of the monthly assignments that the children worked on was a compilation called the *Dictionary of Feelings*. These Dictionaries gathered children's stories, words, and pictures associated with specific feelings. Each month, depending on a book they read, a topic they discussed, or a predominant feeling evoked from some classroom behaviour, Sufi would assign a feeling for recording into the *Dictionary* – helpful, excited, happy, sad, calm, angry, proud, loved, lonely, jealous, nervous. In response, the children drew an incident from their lives that reflected that feeling and wrote a paragraph to explain the associated story. Some children in the class wrote long narratives describing aspects of their lives. However, of significance to this study is the fact that almost all emergent bilinguals drew detailed drawings to depict their stories, even when not writing very much.

The second assignment that is of interest to this study is related to a book that the children read titled, *Twelve Terrible Things* (Kelley, 2008). The book takes many childhood fears and anxieties and exaggerates them through illustrations drawn from the perspective of the child. For instance, a scoop of ice cream falling off a cone, a visit to the dentist, a brother's smelly socks, a mean-looking birthday clown – terrible things made to look dramatic or intimidating. The words on the page are limited allowing the full-page color illustrations to do the talking. Inspired by this book, the class created their own books titled *Three Terrible Things* in a style like the original – with only one word on a page and illustrations meant to describe the story of a terrible time experienced by the author. Along with the socioemotional understandings that

emerged, this book offered space for emergent bilinguals to work on equal footing with the other children, especially when it came to choices about story and drawings.

5.5.3 How the *Looking Closely* project unfolded

A set of data that inspired this chapter is from the *Looking Closely* project. In line with the non-linear processes of EDR, we were engaging in group conversations about the types of projects the children would like to be involved in that might bring some of their interests from home to school. Upon hearing their excitement about trying photography as a method, I invited a photographer friend, Saori Ogura, to visit the class to share some of her photos. Since she was interested in preserving Indigenous knowledge and native species of plants across the world, she had a large collection of detailed nature drawings (Ogura, 2014) that we shared with the class.

The children became enthralled with the up-close perspective of Saori's drawings and began discussing aspects like, "she must really like drawing lines to draw so many on that tree bark"; "her nose must have been an inch from the tree to draw that leaf?"; "how long did it take to make that type of wheat drawing?" In response to these types of inquiries, we created the *Looking Closely* project. Since EDR is a responsively-grounded process, we did not have plans for how this process was to unfold – Sufi was hoping for some pieces of writing to accompany the drawings; I was seeking insights into capacities of emergent bilinguals; and, the children were curious to look closely.

5.6 Data generation and analysis

As detailed in Chapter 3, we took clip pads, pencils, erasers, and paper out to the school yard adjacent to their classroom one sunny afternoon. Some children walked around for a while and others settled quickly to what they would sketch. Some chose movable objects like pebbles, leaves, and twigs while others chose benches, basketball hoops, and tree trunks. After the initial

sketching over a period of 40 minutes, those that chose movable objects brought them inside and others took photos of their chosen objects on the school iPads. Over the next week, after I led whole class conversations about drawing techniques and preferences, the children refined their drawings. By talking in small groups, they clarified their stylistic and colour choices, commended and critiqued each other's work, and asked questions that encouraged thinking about their choices. Though focusing primarily on the emergent bilinguals in the class, I supported the creative process by encouraging the groups to pay attention to details. The children copied their final work onto thick cardstock, coloured, and outlined their work. Most wrote narrative pieces explaining their choices. I audio recorded conversations and took photographs and notes.

The three sets of drawings (*Looking Closely* project, *Dictionary of Feelings*, and *Three Terrible Things*), associated pieces of writing, and related conversations with children formed the data for this chapter. Table 2.1 lists the eight emergent bilinguals who were the focus of this study and I include data related to all of them in this chapter.

5.6.1 Analysis by producers and audiences

As outlined in Chapter 3, I analyzed conversations and images to complement each other, using abductive analysis (Agar, 2010). I employed a modified version of Rose's (2016) visual analysis that considers contextual factors in relation to the creation, uses, audiences, and meanings of multimodal data. The focus of my analysis was not on children's visual accuracy in relation to the objects they were depicting (though many examples stand out for their skillful inclusion of visually appealing details). Rather it recognizes the representational potential of children's drawings while privileging their ideas and conversations - participating with an emergent listening stance (Davies, 2017), to understand their choices and value what they know, see, experience, and reflect (Prasad, 2018). By explaining their intentions and presenting

feedback, the children participated in preliminary analysis. Importantly, children's interactions with each other changed how they composed, explained, modified, and analyzed their texts – drawn, spoken, and written – and these interactions were crucial in transmodal semiosis. With these analytical aspects in mind, I present some findings in the next section.

5.7 Findings

In this section, I describe themes that I identified as I considered the question of how young emergent bilinguals' drawing and associated talk build on each other and elevate learning. The three themes are: (1) new ways of looking – relating to the children's capacities to read, draw, and communicate in new ways in the classroom; (2) new ways of representing - relating to how drawings permitted children to express aspects of their emotional lives; (3) new ways of belonging – relating to ways in which drawing and talking permitted them to position themselves differently in their classrooms. The repetition of “new ways” is intentional, to point to these practices as transformative for emergent bilinguals when done consciously and repeatedly. Their stories in the following sections are unfinished and fragmentary (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2018) but they provide a reflection of a textured and nuanced reality.

5.7.1 New ways of looking

In this thematic segment, I offer instances from the *Looking Closely* project to provide insight into the emergent bilinguals' engagement with new ways of reading, talking, and writing. By virtue of the meticulous reading of their chosen objects, these children were able to construct new ideas and new representations that spoke to their communicative repertoires.

By looking closely at an everyday object like a bench in the yard, May was able to bring in expansive ways of reading and extensive representation. May was the youngest child in the class and was often reminded of it by the other children when lining up or grouping for activities.

When she went out to the yard to choose an object for the *Looking Closely* project, she sat quietly on a bench and observed the others running around before they settled to draw. Not getting up from her position, she began drawing the horizontal lines that formed a bird's eye perspective of the bench she was sitting at (Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: A bench by May



This is a bench. I drew this close up because I wanted to add a lot of detail and I wanted to draw some texture. I drew a bench because I like how benches have a lot of detail and that it has lots of texture. I like how benches have different shades of brown and not just plain brown. Benches also have patterns the pattern is brown for the bench and white for the gaps so its brown, white, brown, white, brown, white. It also looks like pattern strips on a shirt and its kind of the shade of a llamas fur

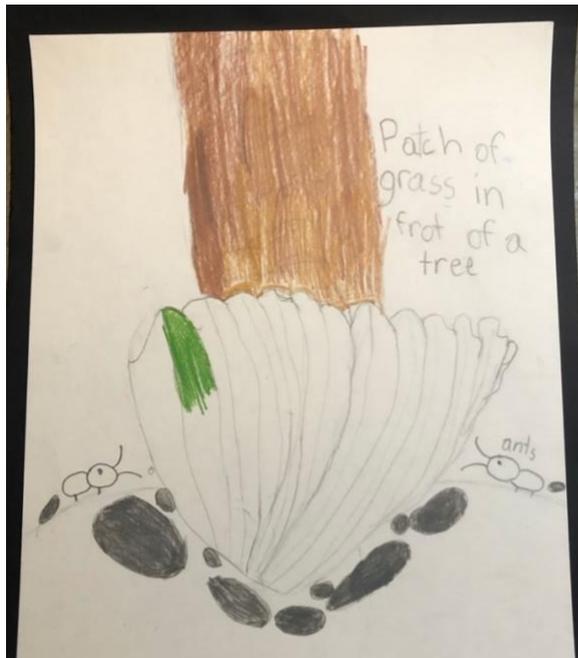
In May's case, her looking closely for the purposes of drawing the bench gave her a concrete step towards new ideas for communicating with her classmates. In embracing a new perspective of seeing the bench, May was also able to be bolder in her spoken and written text to present the bench to her friends as "not just plain" but with a lot of distinctive details and characteristics.

In the first meeting with her group, May was hesitant to show her work but quietly pointed out the difference between the textures of the brown wooden slats and the green grass below. Someone in the group suggested that she make it obvious that her picture was a bench since the page “only had lines on it,” and so May included the three screws at the top of the drawing holding the pieces together. During the discussion, May used vocabulary about various aspects of images, and her writing includes many of these details of the bench - shades of colour, aspects of texture, and comparisons like “stripes on a shirt”, “llama’s fur.” For her, the strength of the drawing was in the details, the little patterns that make it distinctive, and that was what she chose to talk and write about. Especially endearing in her writing is the inclusion of two emoji like characters atop “not just plain” – making that phrase stand out. Scholars (Dyson, 1986; Kendrick & McKay, 2004; Wright, 2007) have pointed to how reading visual text gives children a step towards new ideas. May, by embracing new ways of looking, was able to be bolder in her spoken and written text to present her work as “not just plain” or “only lines.”

Pari, who enjoyed art, was excited about the *Looking Closely* process. She liked having conversations with me in Hindi and said she enjoyed the project because she “could draw the yard where we played everyday and look to see what we liked.” (See Figure 5.2)

Pari’s drawing portrayed an intimate perspective of one of her favourite trees in the yard. This tree was the designated spot she and her friends often gathered at recess or lunch before heading off to play. They shared stories and snacks, and showed each other their new earrings and toys, and occasionally fought and cried. The highlight of school for Pari was time together with friends.

Figure 5.2: Pari's ants and patch of grass



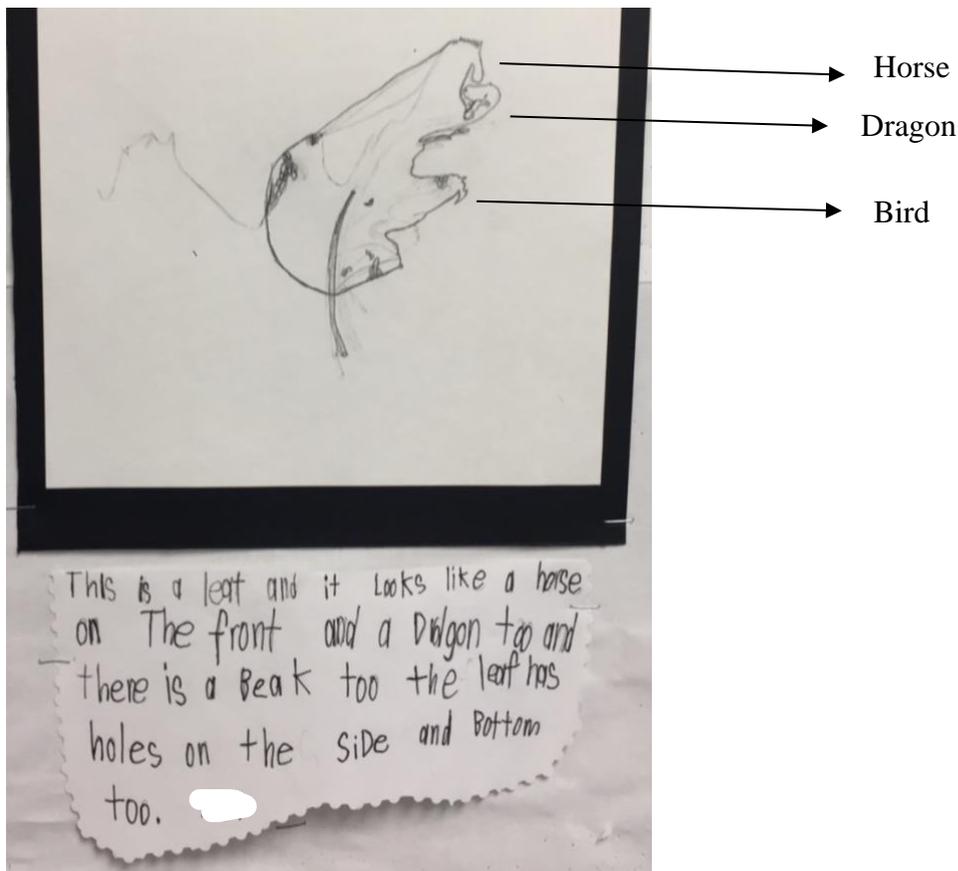
“The ants are, like us, meeting at the tree...” said Pari. By looking closely and talking about her drawing, Pari re-constructed a space of friendship and comfort within the patch of grass under the tree that brought friends together.

As she discussed this piece with her small group, they suggested that she give the picture a title because they were unsure “what the grass was holding up” – to some of them, it appeared that the ants were lifting up the grass, that was in turn holding the tree. Pari, however, explained the story of the special tree, her “close-up perspective,” and that “the ants are, like us, meeting at the tree.” In her drawing, the focus is on the two ants and on the patch of soft grass carefully surrounded by rocks. The large tree is almost an afterthought; we only get to see a small portion of its trunk in the background. What is fascinating is Pari’s explanation of the patch of grass as the ants’ space, and her reading of the ants as being like the children. The children and the ants gathered at the tree and made a life around it, in a way. While it is unclear whether Pari intended this drawing to be a metaphor for her school experience, a more expansive way of thinking offered by her comment that the ants are like her friends allows us to “draw into existence”

(Literat, 2013, p.88) a more complex understanding of her work. Pari chose not to write a narrative about this piece; but in the drawing and her explanation, she re-constructed a space of friendship and comfort. The unremarkable in Pari's drawing of a little patch of grass becomes the remarkable (Mavers, 2011) in its capacity to make visible her ideas and feelings.

The extension of meaning through observing and representing through drawing was perceptible for Anh. He chose a leaf to draw for the *Looking Closely* project (Figure 5.3) and worked quietly on it for a long time.

Figure 5.3: Anh's changing leaf



By looking closely and spending careful time on the drawing of his leaf, Anh generated an original narrative through the visual that bridged to the written. Marked here are where he pointed to the horse, dragon and bird on the leaf.

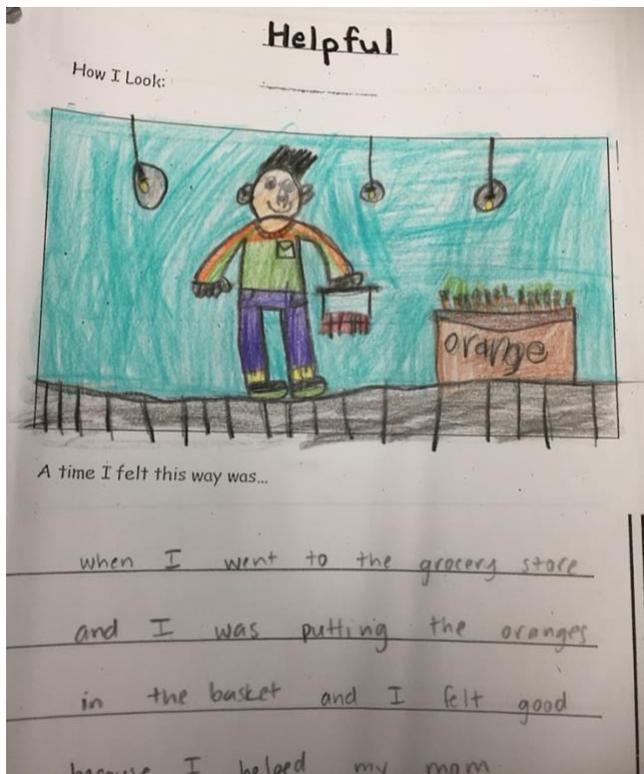
Since drawing was something he enjoyed very much already, he began working on it quickly, starting with a soft outline and then adding the details of the leaf. Over the few days that the class worked on the drawing for this project, Anh's leaf (that he brought into the classroom) began drying and changing shape so he adjusted the edges of the drawing to match the altering original. When he brought this idea of change to the group, I gently guided them to talk about reworking and repeating, both how frustrating it could feel and the ways in which it could improve work. We had been discussing how he might write about the leaf – “it's just a leaf,” he'd said, indifferently. When I requested that he look closely, he squinted at his drawing, and began speaking: “I can see a horse, and a dragon talking, and a bird whose beak has poked holes in the leaf....” The other children were excited to hear this and gathered around his drawing, while he pointed out the various sections of the leaf where he envisioned these creatures (marked on Figure 5.3). These elements of the imaginative were ordinary to Anh, who enjoyed intricately drawing fantastic creatures, ninjas, and guns from YouTube tutorials. After, he quickly wrote a short piece, stopping only to ask for the spelling of dragon. His teacher, Sufi said he was “glowing with joy” when he showed her the drawing and the writing; Ms. N, his resource teacher, who had seen him barely writing a sentence at the start of the year said, “I can see confidence in his being able to put pen to paper.” Significantly, his friends were impressed – not only by his drawing and writing but also by his imaginative perceptiveness in discovering the outlines of the creatures in the leaf. By looking closely, by reworking, and spending careful time on the drawing, Anh reimagined what was a “just a leaf” into a confident, artistic, visual story.

5.7.2 New ways of representing

Most of the instances in this segment are from the *Dictionary of Feelings* and the *Three Terrible Things* projects described earlier, and include stories that speak to how the emergent bilinguals used their drawings to express complex emotions.

With the *Dictionary of Feelings*, most students focused on writing their story (A time I felt this way was...) first and then going ahead to draw themselves (How I look...) experiencing the particular emotion. Anh, on the other hand, had the chance to think about his story and draw it on the sheet before the resource teacher or classroom teacher scribed his story in the *Dictionary*. At times, the teachers discussed the meaning of more complex emotions (like jealousy or nervousness) before he sat down to draw. Invariably, Anh included many rich details in his drawings in the *Dictionary*. Figure 5.4 is from the “Helpful” feelings page.

Figure 5.4: Anh and the oranges



Anh's story of helping his mom finding oranges in a "fancy" grocery store. While the scribed words convey the basics of the story, the drawing depicted not only details but also captured his emotions around the incident in an illustrative way.

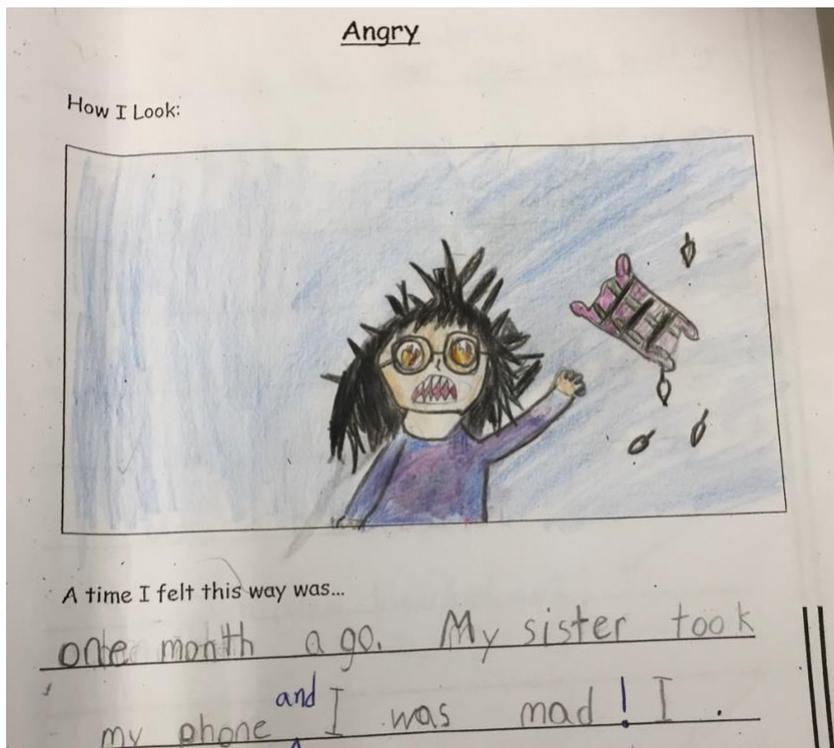
Anh's drawing depicted a detailed story in the way many of the other children's writing did. When describing this drawing to me, he said that he had been to a "fancy store" – hence the glowing lights hanging above him, the gorgeous turquoise background, and the shiny tiles – and that his mother had not known where the oranges were. He had helped her locate the oranges and found a basket to collect them in. His labelling the cart of the fruits "orange," in the picture, not only identifies the oranges for the audience but also marks his role in the story – as the one who identifies, helps, and gathers. As discussed in Chapter 4, he plays a strongly supportive role within his family unit and correspondingly, in the drawing, he is colourful and positive, standing tall and smiling widely because, as he writes, he "felt good because I helped my mom." While the scribed words convey the basics of the story, the drawing depicted not only nuances from his story but also his emotions.

Another instance of communicating emotion through drawing, was from Nicole, a friendly child who enjoyed school and needed support only with English writing. In general, she took a long time to compose sentences, but when with her friends, she used descriptive voices in her quiet storytelling ("in case Ms. S catches us!"), which made her a favourite table partner. Figure 5.5 is from her *Dictionary of Feelings* describing a time when she felt angry.

The drawing expresses the depth of her emotion much more intensely than the two lines she wrote about how angry she got when her sister took her phone. Using graphic allusions to the comics she read and the cartoons she saw, Nicole conveys to us the extent of her rage – the spikey hair standing on edge, the raging fires in her eyes, her open mouth screaming in frustration with its sharp pointy teeth, and the strong raised arm with a closed fist punching a

pillow. There are aspects of balance through the drawing that display her proficiency as a skilled artist and communicator – with the patterns of her upraised hair mirroring those of her spikey teeth and the flames in her eyes; the curved softness of the falling feathers from the pillow reflecting her unshed tears at the perceived injustice of the moment (“I was close to crying. It was not fair that my sis took the phone and when she gave it back it had only 1% in it!” she said when describing this moment). Nicole was considered a well-spoken, easy-going student by her teachers and was expected to be a model older child in her family. I interpret this depiction of her rage as a way of raising her voice and showing another aspect of herself that did not conform to her usual identity. Socioemotional learning was the impetus for the *Dictionary of Feelings* project and Nicole’s expression of her emotion was a significant learning.

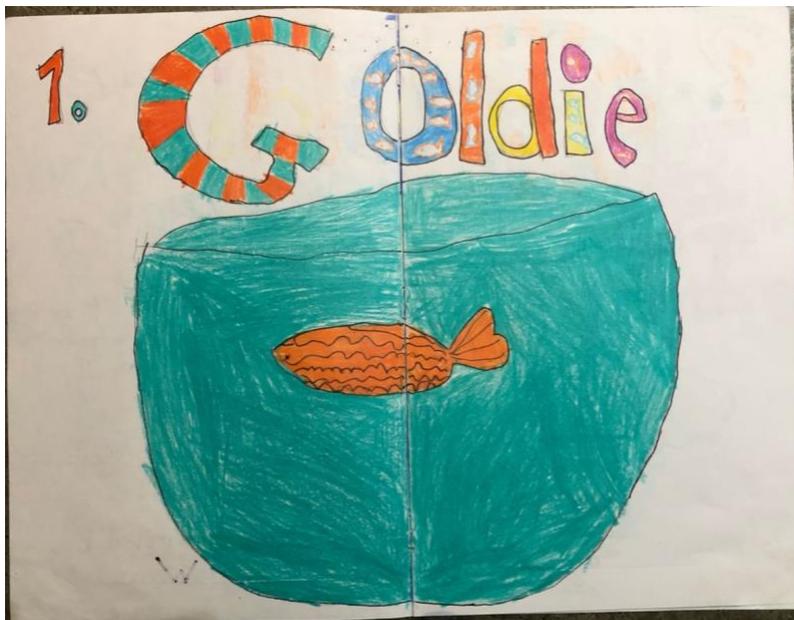
Figure 5.5: Angry Nicole



Nicole conveys to us the extent of her rage with her an illustration inspired by comic books and cartoons, filled with spikes, upward motions, and intensity. Her short piece of writing appears much milder in comparison, speaking to the power of her drawing to convey the depth of her emotion.

Drawing to convey emotional meaning making was highlighted especially with the *Three Terrible Things* book. Kimi enjoyed the book creation assignment because she felt that she had a model to work from (the original *Twelve Terrible Things* book) and could focus on the drawings (“I like that we can draw and colour our story, do the same thing as the book”). For instance, her work (Figure 5.6) is in response to a page in the original book about a goldfish that is flushed down the toilet after it died.

Figure 5.6: Kimi's dead pet



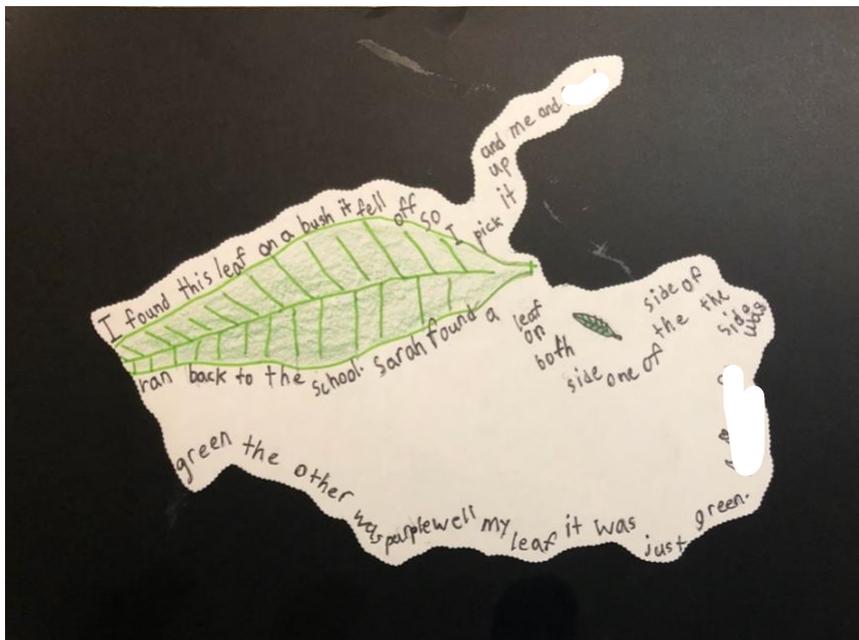
Kimi places her dead fish front and center, highlighting the thing that was most terrible for her. With this reframing and critiquing, the loss of the pet rather than the flushing down the toilet, as in the original book, becomes Kimi's 'terrible thing.'

Kimi drew her own version of the page, but shifted the ‘terrible thing’ to a personal narrative that suits her. In our conversation, she quietly said she hated the thought that the pet was simply discarded in the toilet. By drawing the dead goldfish in its bowl, belly up with high contrast colouring, she re-positions the cruel act of flushing away the pet to focus instead on the creature that died, placing it literally front and center. The multicoloured writing with fish patterns in the letters again reiterates her emphasis on the pet. With this reframing, the loss of the

pet rather than the flushing down the toilet becomes Kimi's 'terrible thing,' placing her in a caring and agentic position instead of being a passive observer of what she thought was a doubly sad situation. By restructuring the 'terrible thing' in her drawing, she carefully voices her emotional choice and her critique of the original, unlike any of the other children. This simultaneous constructing and critiquing through the visual presented a courageous new way for a relatively quiet child to participate in reader response made possible by the intersection of the visual, oral, and emotional.

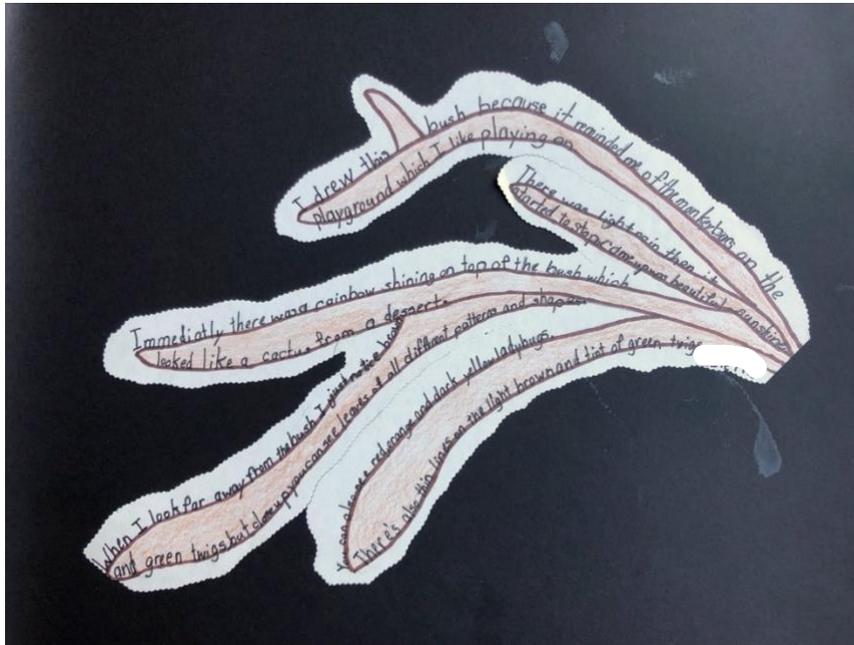
Similarly, Nicole (the child in the angry feelings example) reframed another child's idea from the *Looking Closely* project and made it her own. Stella, a strong writer in the class, had drawn a bush with wavy stalks, cut it out along its edge, and then wrote an almost poetic narrative along the finger-like rippling outline of her inventive piece. Nicole had been sitting with Stella and found this "so beautiful" that she decided to copy her (Figure 5.7), after seeking Stella's permission.

Figure 5.7: Nicole's wavy leaf



For Nicole, the highlight was working alongside friends, comparing leaves, running back to work together, and writing along the squiggly margins. Her writing and drawing are motivated by her connection with her two friends who inspired this piece.

Figure 5.8: Stella's wavy leaf



Stella was a strong writer in the class, had drawn this bush with wavy stalks, cut it out along its edge, and then wrote the poetic narrative along the finger-like rippling outline of her inventive piece. Nicole found this drawing and writing “so beautiful” she decided to copy it.

While Nicole’s drawing of a leaf did not necessarily match the tendril-like stalks of Stella’s bush drawing, she was moved from an emotionally responsive space of wanting to collaboratively create and emulate the idea of writing along the margins. Here, her writing does not describe the leaf or any personal associations with it, like many of the others in *Looking Closely*. Instead, the writing focused on making the words flow along the edges and on the process of finding the leaf with a friend, Sarah. In her drawing, she includes two leaves – presumably the smaller one is her friend Sarah’s – without many intricate details, unlike most of her other drawings. The tip of her leaf has been cut off, pointing to her focus on using “the squiggly scissors,” making unusually shaped edges, and writing along the margins. While

Stella's original composition (Figure 5.8) inspired Nicole to create this piece, she was motivated equally by the emotion of a collaborative connection with both friends as she was by aesthetic appreciation. By literally writing on the margins, she de-emphasised the words and accentuated instead the significance that connections play in her life. Despite borrowing ideas for their models from others, Nicole and Kimi used their drawings to express emotions and offer personalization; this visual recontextualizing is a relational and creative practice in itself, as I will elaborate in the discussion.

5.7.3 New ways of belonging

The stories in this segment are about how their representations support emergent bilinguals' sense of belonging, or not, within the larger classroom. I explore how their drawings support children to belong anew in the print-based academic space of the classroom where they might have otherwise felt in the margins (Cummins et al., 2015; Early & Marshall, 2008).

Sarah, was a strong leader in the social space of the classroom and brought a sense of camaraderie with her toothy smile and inclusive attitude to friendships; sadly, she had internalized a deficit perspective and told me she was "not smart." Sarah had chosen a leaf (see Figure 5.9) for her project and explored it well before writing about it, "because writing is ugh." She put the leaf to her cheek to feel its texture, ran her fingers along its ridges, held it up against the light, and walked around looking at other people's objects and initial sketches before beginning any work on her own. After the first draft of her drawing, she decided to do it over again, saying, "it's too small for my details." When she met with her group, she had not finished her drawing but shared the leaf with them. Together they came up with ideas for how she might write about it, for instance, by comparing it with a maple leaf for shape or with an eraser for size. Her drawing and writing are rich in colour, texture, and details like "the lines aren't straight the

lines are cricked,” that emerged from her intricate reading of the leaf and her conversation with the group. I appreciated her highlighting of contrasting and deceptive appearances in her writing – “looks like a maple leaf but it’s not”, “looks rough but it’s soft” – and through her drawing – where the small leaf is depicted as large as the page, and the lines look like a brick wall but are uneven. Sarah giggled when I complimented her about depicting these divergences saying, “it’s easier to write after talking.” By enabling all her senses and her openness to collaboration, Sarah demonstrated a new way of being “smart” and belonging in the classroom that did not depend solely on reading print or writing independently.

Figure 5.9: Sarah's big leaf drawing



I chose this leaf because I noticed the back was purple and it looks like a maple leaf but it's not, that is why I chose this leaf. It's very small as small as a eraser. The leaf has a lot of spikes and lots of details because the lines aren't straight the lines are cricked. It looks rough but it's soft.

The conversation with her group supported Sarah's writing as much as her intricate examination of the leaf itself. By enabling all her senses in looking and harnessing her collaborative instincts, she demonstrated a way of participating and learning that did not depend solely on reading print or writing independently.

Anh did not enjoy print-based aspects of classroom learning but brought strong visual and oral competencies to his school interactions and expression (see Chapter 4). The instance here relates to when he was working with three others to write a description of a butterfly release as the culminating activity of a butterfly life cycle project. Anh was initially bored with the writing and the group, sympathizing with his inability to write, were letting him sit aside.

Anh: I want to **leave**

Other student: Because he can't really do *anything*...

HR: Oh, why can't he do anything?

Other student: No, like right *now*...like there's nothing for him to do right now...*for him*

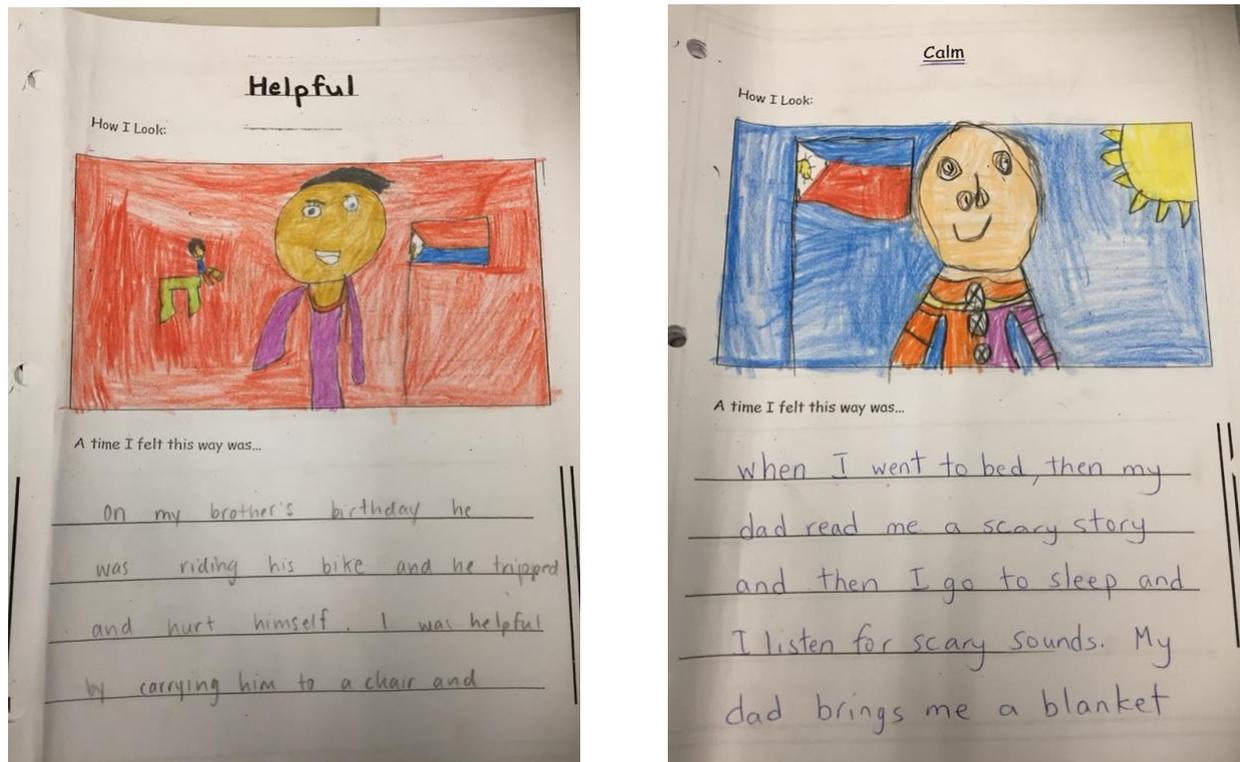
HR: You mean in this project?

Other student: Yeah, for him...

This interaction occurred after Anh had asked to leave the group a few times. However, after this conversation, I suggested that the group consider ideas orally before writing. During discussion, Anh remembered many details about the day, drew a textured sketch about how the cocoons looked (he declined to share the drawing with me), and established details about why they released the butterflies in small groups. He remembered words like “nectar” and used “freely” and “floating” to describe the feeling when the butterflies had flown away. The group worked cohesively through the class time, with one of them being a scribe while the other three offered suggestions. Instead of leaving the group as he had originally wanted, a chance for everyone to look anew presented Anh a space where his strengths of drawing and orality were valued and in turn offered him a space of belonging.

An instance when belonging was perceived differently was in Jordan's representation of himself in his *Dictionary of Feelings*. He was extremely proud of his Filipino origins and brought it up often when telling stories, sharing about his family life with his brothers, or even when complaining about playground injustices - "It's because I'm Filipino!" he protested one day, when the ball was never being passed to him during soccer. Jordan's *Dictionary of Feeling* was scribed by the teacher, and despite not being interested in detailed drawings Jordan succeeded in referring to his strong Filipino identity by including the flag of the Philippines alongside himself in many of the drawings (Figure 5.10).

Figure 5.10: Jordan's Philippines flag



With these two drawings, Jordan represented himself as proudly Filipino. The colours and details of the flag stand out, as does his understanding of his Filipino identity, despite having no overt connection to the story he was sharing (scribed here by his teacher).

The drawings for "Helpful" and "Calm" stand out in particular – in both, he is in the center of the drawing, smiling widely with the flag of the Philippines waving behind him. None

of the other children had included flags in their drawings, nor was the flag involved in any aspect of the story. However, with these drawings he literally and proudly flags his identity, creating a space that is markedly Filipino – with attention to the flag’s colours and patterns, his broad smile, and the bright sunshine. He did not particularly see himself as part of this classroom, and did not seem to identify with his classmates, his school, or with Canada much. The significance in these texts lies in both what is visible – the flags, his memories associated with them, and what is omitted – his friends in school or any connection with life outside his immediate family. These subtle aspects spoke of Jordan’s stories of unbelonging in the world of the classroom almost as clearly as when he shared those feelings with me.

For all the children in the class, drawing and talking together offered ways to bring their stories into the classroom space. However, for emergent bilinguals, the drawings presented a way in which they could do so with confidence and control over visual resources with equal ease as the others, and without depending only on language. In the following section, I present a discussion that ties together the three themes presented here.

5.8 Discussion

The range of collaborative, creative constructions described align with socio-constructivist learning and understandings of transmodal semiosis as practices build productively on each other. To discuss these ideas, I am re-purposing Freire’s (1972) conception of reading the word and the world to focus on two interrelated aspects that emerge from his oft-cited idea.

Reading the world always precedes reading the word, and reading the word implies continually reading the world. As I suggested earlier, this movement from the world to the word and from the word to the world is always present; even the spoken word flows from our reading of the world. In a way, however, we can go further, and say that reading

the word is not preceded merely by reading the world, but by a certain form of *writing* it or *re-writing* it, that is, of transforming it by means of conscious practical work. For me, this dynamic movement is central to the literacy process. (p.10)

Freire proposes that literacy involves a dynamic relationship between literacies and contexts. The interplay between words and worlds is a process concerned with readers as agentive meaning makers within a cultural context. Taking up this stance, I suggest that our looking closely at emergent bilinguals' repertoires within a classroom space permits a more equitable view of literacy. Inspired by Freire's words and the children's titling of their drawing project, I discuss two aspects: (1) Looking closely at the word – related to children's literacies and creative agency; and (2) Looking closely at the world – related to how examining children's drawing and talking permits us ways of "re-writing" their academic worlds.

5.8.1 Looking closely at the word

In this segment, I argue that drawing and talking may be perceived as pedagogical ways in which children's capacities and creative agency can be valued in the classroom rather than depending only on print-based literacies. Transmodal moments became spaces of powerful learning as the generative effects of moving across modes supported children in making creative connections, "re-sourcing resources" (Stein, 2000, p. 336), and reconceiving their learning.

Anh's intricate leaf drawing, and his imaginative oral story about the horse and the dragon in his drying leaf helped him make creative connections to his writing about the leaf and also with his peers, who were impressed by his storytelling. The multimodal process created a semiotic chain towards thinking creatively. Similarly, for Pari, who was able to create an oral narrative about the ants based on her drawing and her personal association with the tree. Again, the articulation around her drawing helped her clarify the creative perspective and intentions of

her drawing. For May, who drew the bench, the group discussion of her drawing and in-class conversations about visual meaning making helped her generate creative connections and descriptive details for her writing.

Sarah, Kimi, and Nicole worked on re-sourcing resources by “borrowing” and using their communicative repertoires in new contexts to offer new meanings. Sarah, the “not smart” child who drew a leaf, gathered her ideas for writing from her group and wrote herself into the academic space of the classroom. She harnessed her personal strengths and collaborative instincts towards creating in new ways. Re-sourcing also took place with Kimi’s fish drawing – whose idea came from the book they were reading, and Nicole’s leaf writing on the margins – inspired by her friend’s innovative piece. While individual and original production are often most valued within Western educational systems, the creative processes that accompany the idea of “borrowing”, “copying”, and “remixing” can transform language, texts, and practices as they are re-purposed (Collier, 2018; Mavers, 2011; Pennycook, 2010). This type of circulation and repetition of words and images is an act of creative experimentation that supports, especially for young emergent bilinguals, a connection to how and what they want to voice (Bakhtin, 1981), and to being and becoming in the classroom space.

With each object they looked closely at and each drawing they discussed, the children creatively reconceived what reading and writing look like. Their agentive participation in the process of drawing and conversing about the drawings (as a product) afforded original ways of being in the classroom. In utilizing the visual mode, children can “show” their experiences (Kress, 2003), and in speaking about it, they can “tell” about their practices and intentions, creating a powerful process for engaging their full communicative repertoires. By looking

closely, the children performed meaning-making across and through different modes, and for our part, by looking closely we can see it as a way to value their strengths and learning capacities.

5.8.2 Looking closely at the world

Looking closely at their multimodal literacies also gives us a chance to learn about children's worlds and their world-making (Kendrick & McKay, 2009; Mitchell, 2006). I suggest that an acknowledgment of emergent bilinguals' communicative repertoires gives us a way to look carefully and listen closely for their stories within the academic world of the classroom.

Drawings and conversations offered the space for children's nuanced representations of their emotional and social worlds without necessarily always knowing the vocabulary to express those ideas. Kimi's depiction of the dead fish in the bowl makes for a powerful critique through her poignant explanation. Nicole's comic-inspired drawing of her rage shows emotional depth and communication of unsayable emotions through the visual (Stein, 2008; Hsieh & Tsai, 2012). These children were performing close readings and offering responses as one might have with a written report. Instances of relationality were significant emotional moments facilitated by drawing as well. These ways of belonging in the academic world were not common for these children but looking closely permitted a reconfiguration of their social position for themselves, the teacher, and peers. In contrast, Jordan's stories and his inclusion of the flag of the Philippines, framed his unbelonging with the academic world of the classroom.

Considering orality as resource within the academic world of the classroom, repositioned emergent bilingual voices from the margins into spaces of belonging. Rather than considering their talkativeness during tasks a habit they need to outgrow (as many children wrote in their year-end self-assessments), the instances here highlight how encouraging productive conversations on individual or group projects presents a viable opportunity to include

marginalized voices – like Anh’s during the butterfly project. Emergent bilinguals participated as experts, and their interpretations and feelings were validated and lauded by their classmates. The time, attention, and care that they spent on the discussions showed their agency and interest in these processes. Of course, while “reading and writing float on a sea of talk” (Britton, 1970, p. 164), not all children might engage in conversation, making multimodal literacies crucial to offering diverse pathways for bridging worlds.

Another way to reconsider classroom worlds comes from taking drawing seriously as a practice. By valuing their visual representations as offering rich details and personal meaning – like May’s drawing of the bench as a way to offer herself a stronger voice, or Anh’s drawing of the oranges that speaks to the story of he supports his mother – in the way writing might, we offer ourselves and children new ways of viewing their capacities. Drawing, like writing, is a practice that can be learned (Edwards, 2012), and, like writing, some prefer it. However, the ways in which drawing is perceived within the classroom (work/not work, creative/not creative), and whether teachers emphasize the process or the product of drawing (time filler/meaning making/creative project) impacts the work (Marchese, 2020; Richards, 2003). Conversations about visual choices (in terms of colour, texture, perspective etc.), representative choices (in terms of materials, techniques, purpose, audience), and learning how meaning is made with the visual further supports children in presenting a more nuanced depiction of their stories.

5.9 Implications and reflections

Due to its intrinsically playful nature and its lack of dependence on print, creating images and talking about the drawings becomes a generative and empowering set of transmodal semiotic resources for emergent bilinguals to communicate their learning and stories. Here, I offer some implications and reflections related to these processes for teachers and researchers.

The stories here make me wonder about the meaning making value of “old” technologies like drawing and talking from an equity perspective, even with the capacities of new technologies that challenge and enhance classroom pedagogies. The democratizing and accessible power of drawing makes it a realistic everyday practice of sorts, especially depending on the context of classrooms (Dewey, 1934; Degarrod, 2016). When working with marginalized populations, visual and participatory pedagogies “fundamentally challenges the hierarchy of knowledge production and changes the relationship of knowledge producers to knowledge consumers” (Morrell, 2006, p. 3). Perhaps by offering strategies for educators to integrate visual techniques into lessons and for appreciating the generative potential of these practices, we can embrace the ambiguity, innovation, and equitable learning they bring. (D’warte, 2021; van Leeuwen, 2015; Yamada-Rice, 2015). A related connection from the perspective of EDR is that these drawing practices – iteratively constructed through rounds of conversations, after reflecting on existing research, and considering children’s and teachers’ interests – can present types of pedagogical designs that can be realistically enacted within classrooms.

Pedagogical implications also relate to understanding of Harste et al.’s (1984) “border skirmishes between art and writing” (p. 65) when certain modes like print continue to be valued differently in the classroom when compared to the modes like drawing and talking. Paying attention to transmodal semiosis might enable us to examine affordance of different modes, how meaning is made as modes of literacy change, and to reflect on teachers’ and students’ modal preferences and communicative repertoires. While multimodal assessment is a tricky issue due to a focus on process and on the diversity of available modes, paying attention to resourcefulness, bridging across modes, risk-taking and participation in the process have been suggested as possible criteria (Grabin, 2019; Reed, 2014).

From a critical perspective, I remind myself that multimodality is not impervious to the reflexive relationship between power and the design of meanings (Siegel, 2012). Some questions that linger are: How do children decide what to draw, and how do these choices impact their work? Who gets to talk louder, who gets to show their work first, whose ideas receive attention? Why did they get excited about this project in the first place, why did they want to create and share? What aspects of their meaning making am I missing as I audience the work (Rose, 2016), what conception of image do I analyze the work from (Kendrick, 2016), which of their stories do I see my stories reflected in and why? While classroom teachers might not always have the time to engage in such reflection, pedagogically creative practices that naturally highlight choices, processes, and collaboration generate such reflexive questions.

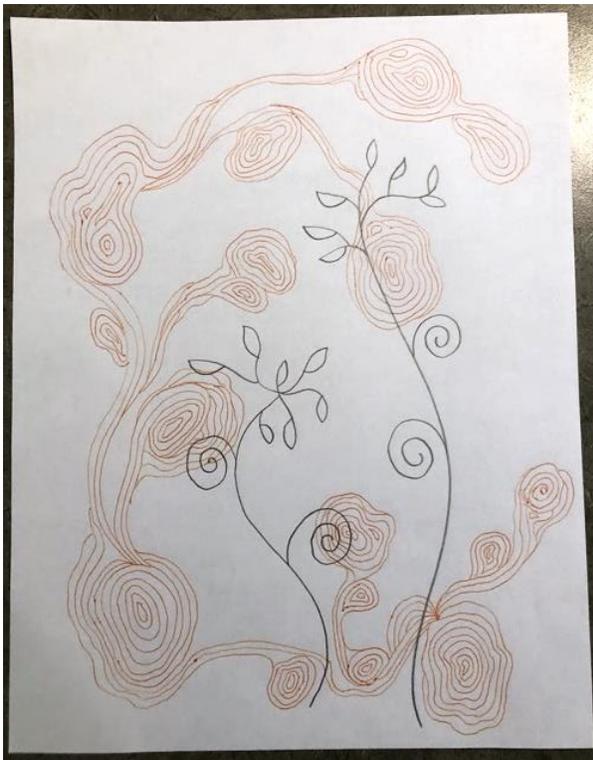
Despite this questioning, I agree with Hurdley et al. (2017) to consider drawing as “radically multimodal” not only from the perspective of inclusion beyond language, but also the imaginative time and space it offers for “making slowly” (p. 749). In looking closely and creating, line by line, we engage with our capacities in more careful and creative ways. Our representations and understandings can change, like Anh’s changing leaf. With the ability to erase and re-create comes the capacity to re-imagine a feeling, a moment, the details of a lesson, and re-present with new knowledge. When we look closely and share our perspectives (as I had to with Figure 5.11), we understand our different ways of thinking and doing, and value our common ways of being.

5.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the drawings and associated talk of the eight emergent bilinguals in the classroom to highlight nuanced stories of their learning and being. The interaction between creating drawing, talking about the pictures, and writing narratives became a generative set of

processes for emergent bilinguals to communicate ideas and stories. By looking closely at their communicative repertoires, collaborative processes, and ways to value these pedagogically, this chapter highlighted how emergent bilinguals may be positioned as capable learners. As with the other chapters in this dissertation, my interpretations place relationships and stories at the center. The next chapter focuses on multilingual practices of emergent bilinguals from the particular context of this classroom.

Figure 5.11: Harini's looking closely drawing



I worked on this piece (photo taken by a child in the class) alongside the children, when I was not supporting them. The children had a lot of questions for me about the piece and I explained it to them as my way of looking closely at interconnectedness. The stylized shoots and leaves were a quick attempt to capture an element of the outdoors – I didn't actually have a model plant to begin with since I was walking around a lot in the yard. The orange spirals evolved once we were back in the classroom, almost instinctively as a contextual overlay on the leaves, as I was listening to conversations and group interactions. I think these represent for me the complexity and beauty of looking closely at the many children in the classroom, at overlapping and related contexts, interdependent relationships and systems.

Chapter 6: “Can I speak that यहाँ पे (here)?”: Reframing emergent bilinguals’ competencies through photos, drawings, and translanguaging in the classroom

6.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on emergent bilinguals’ multilingual and multimodal practices and on designing pedagogical practices to accommodate and value their communicative repertoires. Through a collaborative multilingual photography project, *Something or Someone I love* (titled by the children), designed to invite use of home languages, I sought to surface and disrupt “hierarchical notions of language” (Dyson, 2004, p. 213) with careful attention to children’s practices. By doing so, I responded to both my research questions: What are the multimodal and multilingual communicative repertoires and identities that emergent bilinguals in a Grade 2/3 classroom bring with them? How can these communicative repertoires and identities be valued towards transforming pedagogical practices and inviting children’s lifeworlds into classrooms? I identified themes from before, during, and after the photo project about systemic issues related to the inclusion of multiple languages, and how multilingual and multimodal practices worked reciprocally to resist these issues and validate emergent bilinguals’ identities.

Chapter 5 discussed how multimodality offers the power to elevate meaning as children moved between and across semiotic modes of drawing, talking, and writing. In a similar approach, this chapter’s focus on language offers a connection between children’s multimodal and multilingual practices to elevate meaning. As outlined in Chapter 2, this chapter, with its focus on *designing practices* specifically for this classroom through iterative processes, maps onto Evaluation and Reflection processes in EDR. Building from other EDR processes and ideas developed through the year, the designs constructed with participants became ways to understand

not only possibilities but also constraints inherent in the context. In this way, what is described in this chapter is evaluation of research on and through the introduction of new pedagogical design and practices with this classroom.

6.2 Purpose: equity for emergent bilinguals

Despite Canada's official policy on multiculturalism, scholars (e.g., Cummins, 2018; Kubota & Bale, 2020) question equity for student learners of English. They argue that public education enables students to develop English and French, but often denies them opportunities to develop multilingual competencies that include their other languages. The 1971 Canadian policy of multiculturalism (intended to preserve cultural freedom and provide recognition of the contributions of diverse ethnic groups to Canada) omitted any significant consideration of languages other than the two official languages of the "founding" white settler groups. Haque (2012) critiqued the Official Languages Act and the Multiculturalism Act as policies that created a hierarchies through official linguistic designations – English, French, Aboriginal, and Multicultural – that justified the two Canadian official languages at the cost of all others. She argued that the broad term *Aboriginal* points to the suppression of distinct Indigenous languages and the designation *Multicultural* defines this group "only through culture while it still emerges as a category in opposition to other linguistic groups" (p. 18) – establishing that Indigenous and (im)migrant groups could have claim to their rich cultures but *not* to their languages.

The lack of clear policy direction in relation to linguistic diversity does not make languages disappear, and urban Canadian classrooms reflect this multilingual reality. Progress in promoting equitable opportunities for multilingual learners in Canadian schools has mostly been because of some teachers understanding issues related to language (Cummins, 2019b; Toohey, 2019). Otherwise, many of the languages that one in five Canadians speak most often at home

(Stats Canada, 2017) are often thought of as inhibiting official language learning while in fact multilingual pedagogies that value languages as assets are important for all students. Many practicing K-12 teachers feel unprepared to implement translanguaging pedagogies in their classrooms (Li, 2018; Moore, 2021) and are unfamiliar with goals, strategies, and efficacy of such practices. The EDR here presents a gradual and intentional process of including multilingual strategies to explore and transform practice for more equitable classrooms.

By valuing the multilingual communicative repertoires of emergent bilinguals who have been labelled as EAL learners, I seek to disrupt deficit understandings of their capacities and monolingual norms of academic success. Just as the disappearance of drawing is typically celebrated as a development in writing skills – as an indicator that the writer is ready to move on to serious words without needing the visual as support – similarly, the disappearance of home language is often celebrated as an achievement when a student is able to use English only in the classroom. However, the disappearance of both resources might be “markers of loss” (Adoniou, 2015, p. 326), in and of themselves as communicative resources and for gaining academic proficiency.

I seek to raise voices of emergent bilinguals through EDR’s methodological emphasis on collaboration, process, and relationships. Their stories reflect the ways in which young children think about language and literacies in school, and the ways that pedagogies impact understandings of their capacities (Anderson et al., 2017; McTavish, 2014). They also highlight structural constraints and ideologies that children and teachers encounter and resist to enact translanguaging practices (Flores & Rosa, 2015). In engaging with this resistance, I focus on how macro-level policies are instantiated in the micro-policies and practices of teachers and children. These contexts motivate my interest in designing practices where children can include

their communicative resources, rather than asking, “Can I speak that यहाँ पे” (here)?” as one of the children asked in a conversation.

6.3 Theoretical frames

Three interconnecting theoretical perspectives informed this work – multiliteracies, theories of identities related to emergent bilinguals, and translanguaging – and supported my considerations of emergent bilinguals’ capacities.

6.3.1 Multiliteracies

As discussed, the multiliteracies framework (NLG, 1996) reflected existing understandings of multimodality, cultural and linguistic diversity, and considerations of developing technologies and societies, to give students more equitable access to learning. To meet this challenge, the multiliteracies framework was both an “epistemology and a pedagogy of pluralism” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2000, p. 130).

However, over the years, the inclusion of cultural and linguistic diversity within the multiliteracies agenda has had less uptake in curricular and pedagogical practices (Accurso & Muzeta, 2020; Early & Kendrick, 2017). Within enactments of multiliteracies pedagogies, the multilingual was largely excluded from the multimodal (García & Kleifgen, 2019). Emergent bilinguals are often doubly disadvantaged to both learn and demonstrate their learning in English while being disadvantaged by practices and policies that do not value their linguistic repertoires. Additionally, critical scholars have argued that explicit attention is needed on issues of socioeconomic, historic, and linguistic ideologies to alter inequality for communities (Flores, 2019; García et al., 2018; Luke, 2019). This chapter responds to some of these issues.

6.3.2 Identities and emergent bilinguals

As Toohey et al. (2007) argue, “identity positions represent an important dimension of classroom practices that contributes critically to students’ evolving relationship with school communities” (p. 627). Students construct dynamic identities from past experiences, available cultural resources, and possible future selves (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Norton, 2013). These identities in turn affect not only emergent bilinguals’ relationships with their peers and teachers but also impact their learning and connections with the outside world. More recently, a disassembling of traditional time, space, and borders and the resulting understanding of superdiversity (Meissner & Vertovec, 2015) complicate the production of identities. As emergent bilinguals negotiate everyday interactions, they experience power and ideologies, and their identities are further re-shaped in these processes.

Additionally, texts are always multi-voiced, echoing and amplifying the voices and texts of the people and other texts with whom and with which connections are made (Bakhtin, 1981). As children collaboratively create texts they also create new identities, for example, as an accomplished artist, a capable speaker of Mandarin, or a loving pet owner. Some of these identities appear through glimpses of photographs or fleeting conversations, in stories that “people tell about themselves and others as a kind of ‘gel’” (McCarthy & Moje, 2011, p. 230). Other identities appear in EDR’s cyclical design processes that allow an examination of relational, performed, and contingent practices and identities.

6.3.3 Translanguaging practices

This chapter engages perspectives from translanguaging (García, 2009; García & Li, 2014) that position multilingualism as the norm and analyzes the linguistic *practices* of emergent bilinguals. As detailed in Chapter 2, translanguaging focuses on the agency of the multilingual

learner “to language in order to act and mean” (García & Otheguy, 2020, p. 28), and their abilities to draw on all their linguistic features to communicate, irrespective of their competencies in the languages. This perspective leads us to view emergent bilinguals from an asset-based perspective, rather than in terms of what they lack (Canagarajah, 2013).

Translanguaging also transcends boundaries between what has traditionally been regarded as linguistic and other non-linguistic semiotic means (Li, 2020). Since the theoretical stance of translanguaging affirms dynamic multilingual realities, it offers the potential to transform minoritized communities’ sense of self.

Translanguaging also includes an awareness that “languages are historically, politically, and ideologically defined entities” (Li, 2018, p. 19), which in turn have an impact on students, teachers, and the education systems. For instance, Flores and Rosa (2015) stress that a focus on listening subjects, i.e., on the ideologies of who is listening rather than who is speaking, supports an understanding of “how particular racialized people’s linguistic practices can be stigmatized” (p. 152). Rather than a tacit acknowledgement of the wider socio-political context that often motivates linguistic inequities (Jaspers, 2018), a raciolinguistic perspective permits a closer look at the structural constraints that limit choices differently for different individuals. In doing so, it offers a means to describe and enact resistance towards decolonizing ideologies that uphold linguistic practices (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Rosa & Flores, 2017). Further, in bridging the theoretical foundations of translanguaging to practice, Cummins (2019a) emphasizes critical awareness of languages, the role of educators as knowledge generators, the collaborative role of researchers – aspects relevant to this study.

6.4 Related Literature

All languages are learned more efficiently when students' communicative repertoires are maintained since many skills transfer cross-linguistically (Anderson et al., 2017; Cenoz & Gorter, 2011; Hornberger & Link, 2012). Below are studies in two areas: multilingual projects in Canadian classrooms; and those integrating multimodal and multilingual practices with attention to children's identities.

6.4.1 Multilingual projects in Canadian classrooms

The following projects are those where Canadian teacher-researcher teams have challenged the assumption that schools have to be English-only zones (Cummins & Persad, 2014; Dagenais, 2013). Many of these projects developed a range of classroom activities and resources for educators to promote awareness and appreciation of linguistic diversity, such as The *ÉLOPiL* project (Éveil au Langage et Ouverture à la Diversité Linguistique—Awakening to Language and Opening up to Linguistic Diversity). This project drew from earlier work of Dagenais et al (2009) in Montreal and Vancouver where children took photographs of multilingual signage in their neighbourhood, gathered artifacts such as food labels and community newspapers in different languages, and produced videos about their findings. In this process, children began to critique stereotypic representations of language diversity and interrogate the status of different languages in their own communities. The ScribJab website and iPad application also promoted students' multiliteracy skills to create and share digital multilingual stories by using text, illustrations, and audio recordings (Dagenais et al., 2017).

The Dual Language Showcase was created by educators in a Toronto's school district to demonstrate the feasibility of enabling emergent bilinguals to write stories in English and their home languages (Chow & Cummins, 2003). Over the course of 15 years, students in grades K

through 5 created dual language texts, posted on a participating school's website. The Dual Language Showcase had a significant impact on policymakers and educators by demonstrating that teachers could “successfully expand the instructional space beyond simply an English-only zone to include students' and parents' multilingual and multimodal repertoires” (Cummins, 2019a, p. 27). In the same school district, the Beyond Boundaries Project (Cummins & Persad, 2014) was spearheaded by educator, Robin Persad in a Grade 4 classroom. The project drew on a combination of students' dual language skills and a variety of digital resources to connect their cultural background to the curriculum, enhance literacies, language awareness, and sense of belonging. Writing “fractured fairytales” – reconstructed classic stories using students' familiar customs, settings, dress, and traditions and combined with words and phrases from their home languages – permitted identity-affirming learning that was critical and reflective. By *teaching through a multilingual lens* and positioning students' multilingual abilities as personal, cognitive, and academic resources for learning, this pedagogy pointed to all teachers' responsibility to provide effective instruction to emergent bilinguals rather than viewing it as the responsibility of the language specialist teacher.

Focusing on collaboration, the Dual Language Reading Project (Naqvi et al., 2012) documented the metalinguistic benefits, cultural empowerment, and learner identities that students experienced because of teachers and community members reading dual language books. The authors used the books to motivate discussion about language and cultural artefacts, and suggested that when EAL learners contributed a comment about their home language, all children learned from it. In this way, their linguistic and cultural capital became social capital within the classroom, multilingualism was positioned as normal, and diversity was embraced, as cultural artefacts were included in the classroom in oral, textual, graphic, and physical forms.

Similarly, the Multiliteracies Pedagogy project (Lotherington, 2011) involved collaborations between educators and researchers about how to translate the concept of plurilingualism to pedagogical design. Students rewrote traditional stories from a critical perspective using multimodal and multilingual forms of representation. This project documented how a multilingual community can engage in more authentic literacy activities to showcase children's language competencies, and revealed that some systemic aspects of schools, such as timetabling restrictions, present ongoing challenges to pedagogical innovation because they limit opportunities for collaboration between classroom and specialist teachers on joint multilingual initiatives.

An approach to working with children in preschool and primary grades in Toronto was modelled in Linguistically Appropriate Practice (LAP) (Chumak-Horbatsch, 2012, 2019). LAP was an educational philosophy and a set of instructional activities that focused on continuing to develop children's home languages while they learned the dominant language of instruction. Building children's understandings towards taking pride in their multilingualism, LAP advocated for classrooms to move from "supportive pedagogies" where languages are accepted, to "inclusive pedagogies" where classrooms actively include languages, and consider social justice and strength-based orientations.

In another such project, Kindergarten and Grade 1 emergent bilinguals in Roessingh's (2011) Family Treasures and Grandma's Soup dual language book project enhanced their early literacy progress. Using objects of cultural and personal relevance that the children brought from home, stories of "Family Treasures" were generated from the original telling in the children's first language into English, transcribed, illustrated, and uploaded to a website for permanent

sharing and exchange. With a focus on involving the family and encouraging diversity in vocabulary, this project bridged home and school literacies through the power of storytelling.

Projects like these, while uncommon, suggest that Canadian educators are pushing back on monolingual policies and norms that marginalize multilingual students. We need to consider how educators can play agentic roles alongside others to find creative solutions “that open up moments and spaces for transformative pedagogical interventions” (Ramanathan & Morgan, 2007, p. 448). Recognizing such spaces for transformation, however, also comes with a recognition of the constraints of systems and policies, that social injustice is both cultural and material, and that self-reflexive work is often needed to transform learning spaces (Block, 2018; De Costa, 2018; Flores, 2019; García et al, 2018; Kubota & Miller, 2018). The stories I present in this chapter illuminate the complications inherent in the practice of language and literacy teaching and research along with pedagogical pivots that point to possibilities.

6.4.2 Multimodalities, multilingualism, and identities

A second set of studies, reported in this section, incorporate thoughtful attention to children’s communicative repertoires and identity construction. Early work on multilingual students’ literate identities described how teachers mediated expectations of academic success and how this impacted students’ education. The significance of multimodal personal stories for crafting multilingual students’ identities was emphasized by how the “acquisition of a louder voice in the classroom coincided with the availability of a wider range of modalities with which to ‘speak’” (Vasudevan et al., 2010, p. 459), changing how they were recognized within the classroom.

Marshall and Toohey (2010) described an intergenerational, bilingual storytelling project that drew on a school community’s “funds of knowledge” (González et al. , 2005) and accessed a

varying range of communicative modalities for meaning making. The young children in the study created dual language texts after listening and translating their grandparents' stories about when they were children, illustrated them, and finally created picture books of the stories in Punjabi, Hindi, Malay, and English. The authors highlighted not only children's production of hybrid semiotic resources in the classroom but also the broader discourse around culturally responsive or difficult stories that recognize the language competencies students bring to school.

Cummins (2001) has long argued that issues related to identity affirmation are directly linked to patterns of achievement and underachievement. In their inspirational work on identity texts, Cummins and Early's (2011) Multiliteracies Project drew attention to this issue by working collaboratively with teachers to broaden conceptions of literacy beyond linear print-based reading and writing skills in the mainstream language. The authors argued that when students invest their identities in the creation of multimodal texts, the identity text "holds a mirror up to students in which their identities are reflected back in a positive light" (p. 3). Additionally, these projects demonstrated that teachers could expand the pedagogical space to include students' and parents' communicative repertoires even when they themselves did not speak the multiple languages represented in their classrooms (Cummins et al., 2015; Early & Marshall, 2008). In keeping with EDR's theoretically motivated aspect, the children's pieces in this chapter are identity texts as children reframed images of themselves and their capacities for the classroom.

Extending this idea, Prasad (2015, 2016) approached students' creative identity texts as research artifacts that allowed her to access their representations of plurilingualism. In her work with English, French-immersion, and French schools, children documented their plurilingual and pluricultural experiences with photos, drawings, and conversations. After students co-constructed new knowledge, and represented their perspectives, Prasad outlined a *didactique* of

plurilingualism in mainstream classrooms that was culturally responsive, linguistically inclusive and creatively collaborative. With a prism metaphor, Prasad conceptualized schools as transformative spaces in which students, teachers and community members enter like light, become transformed through interactions, and produce “vibrant reflections of each member’s unique competence and potential” (Prasad, 2015, p. 60).

Stille (2015) reported two illustrative cases from her multimodal, multilingual study with a class of ESL learners in an elementary school to discuss how students’ identities were constructed out of particular discourses, social locations, and understandings of cultural difference. One case described a child’s narration of her difficult migration story from her home with emotional shifts – from extreme sorrow and fear to relief on having reached safety – but also included affective aspects that she believed might appear more acceptable to her teacher, for instance gratitude on living in Canada. Stille suggested that teachers offered the children identity positions that conformed with Canadian notions of multiculturalism and questioned whether this tendency risks an erasure of experiences for non-dominant communities. Instead, conceiving identity as *a site of difference* offers a more equitable approach that engages with the diverse realities of students’ experiences, rather than those viewed from monolingual, monocultural assumptions and educational practices.

Translanguaging case studies in classroom settings (see e.g., D’warte & Salughter, 2020; García et al., 2017; García & Kleyn, 2016) show that multilingual students can deepen their understanding of texts, develop confidence in performing literacies, and foster their critical metalinguistic awareness. For instance, Espinosa and Lehner-Quam (2019) documented how the selection of a bilingual book, such as *Marta! Big and Small* by Jen Arena, enabled emergent bilingual kindergartners to engage with authentic translanguaging in a written text. The students

participated in a lively discussion of why the elephant says “hello” in English in the text, but the beetle says “hola” in Spanish. Through this experience, the children became aware that the author is bilingual and that they were themselves bilingual. The students also drew their own multilingual books and performed the stories while the teacher scribed their words, leading to a deeper understanding of texts and languages.

Similarly, Fu et al. (2019) presented several vignettes on how translanguaging supported emergent bilingual writers in elementary grades. An instance they recorded is of a student, Amira, who had difficulty writing a personal story. When the teacher reminded her that one of the texts that they had studied in class included translanguaging, Amira began adding Arabic dialogues and providing explanations in English. Another student in the class wrote a poem about her neighborhood in English and Spanish, adding richer shades of meanings and describing her neighborhood more personally. This study emphasized how multilingual learners draw on their full linguistic repertoire to represent things that matter to them *when* pedagogical spaces in school open for translanguaging.

Studies like the ones reviewed here take on the challenge to help children transform what they know into modes of representation that allow for a full range of human experience and that enables students to develop identities of competence (Cummins et al., 2015; Manyak, 2004). However, a paucity of classroom studies involving young children and translanguaging practices (García & Kleifgen, 2019) offered a space for my study. I was also keen to use EDR’s inherently reflective processes to extend knowledge on the significance of context and children’s perspectives on these critical practices. With these in mind, we designed the multilingual and multimodal project.

6.5 Design and description of multilingual photo/drawing project

As described in Chapter 3, the processes of collaborative photo and drawing projects were designed to invite and encourage children to use their linguistic resources in the classroom. Inspiring research (Cummins & Early, 2011; Luttrell, 2016; Marshall & Toohey, 2010; Prasad, 2015; Rowsell & Kendrick, 2013) further motivated my curiosity to explore multimodality as a bridge to multilingual practices. Following ongoing conversations, the children, Sufi, and I envisaged that a “photo gallery with words” (Class discussion, January, 2018) would be a final project that they would enjoy and would help invite their languages into the classroom. As detailed in Chapter 3, I was motivated by Photovoice (Blackman & Fairey, 2007; Palibroda et al., 2009) and Literacy Through Photography (Ewald et al., 2011), as models for collaborative, critical work that integrate photography and writing. As well, I used the Collaborative Seeing approach (Fontaine & Luttrell, 2015; Luttrell, 2016), where multiple viewings and conversations create supportive contexts for interpretations and primary analysis.

After two weeks of brainstorming, the children decided that the theme that united the interests they wanted to showcase from home would be best captured as *Something or Someone I love*. We then discussed ethical guidelines for the photography and I presented a workshop to the class; later, I invited an award-winning photographer friend to the classroom to present her photographs and drawings (see Chapter 5). These presentations offered the children a chance to ask questions, understand techniques, and express opinions. Further small group discussions involved the children’s ideas for taking photos in their homes, and writing about them. Those children who could not take photos chose to draw their chosen people or objects (some children brought objects to use as models for their drawings). Only two of the eight emergent bilinguals

(see Table 2.1) took photographs for this project and this chapter focuses on these two children – Jay and Pari.

We shared each photo and drawing on the class projector and once the artist had a chance to describe the context of the photo, the group discussed it. I had individual or small group conversations with the children and noted their choices, collaborations, and learnings.

Additionally, I met with each student who had sent in photos from their home to choose ones to print for the gallery. These children edited their photos on my computer by themselves or directed me while I pointed out the various digital modification choices. This collaborative process, in the classroom’s “nook” (a special extra-large beanbag and some cushions tucked away in one end of the classroom), also afforded informal conversations about their home lives.

We used the photos and drawings to construct narratives to complement the visuals. These narratives were written first in English at school and then translated into home languages with the support of families that chose to be involved. At the end of the school year, we organized an art gallery where these pieces and their multilingual narratives were displayed. Families, staff, and other students in the school were invited, and their comments were gathered and shared with the children. Through the year, as the class participated and generated the design of this photo project, we were making meaning of it for ourselves as a group and as individuals. While the photography project provided the context, all the design processes (see Fig 2.1) from the year-long EDR generated fruitful data for analysis relating to *multilingual practices* observed and designed the classroom (see Purcell-Gates et al., 2011b, for a model of literacy practices).

As detailed in Chapter 3, emergent bilinguals’ photographs, drawings, associated pieces of multilingual writing, conversations with individual children, small group discussions, and notes about choices and processes formed my data. I used a modified version of Rose’s (2016)

visual analysis to pay attention to various sites of meaning making, and abductive analysis (Agar, 2010) to recursively connect with unexpected directions and construct analytical codes (Saldaña, 2013). Since children contextually-constructed meaning, the data presented natural ways to include children's perspectives from various steps of the process and analyze a variety of data.

6.6 Findings

I identified four themes related to multilingual practices before, during, and after the collaborative designing of the project. These themes draw from the broad social context of the school, social activities and related goals of the participants, and various literacy texts and functions (Purcell-Gates et al., 2011b). The first theme outlines the systemic issues related to multilingual practices in the school context while the second presents how children's "playful talk" resisted these issues. The third theme relates to multilingual and multimodal practices surfaced in the project, especially highlighted through the stories of two emergent bilinguals. And the fourth relates to how multilingual practices were validated.

6.6.1 Systemic issues limiting multilingual practice: "English is the good language"

The classroom offered resources for children to engage with literacies and collaborate in groups. Nevertheless, of interest to this study, there was little overt evidence (no dual language books, bilingual posters etc.) in the classroom of the rich linguistic diversity of the school. The school's Parent Advisory Committee bulletin board posted their documents in a few languages (Punjabi, Tagalog, Chinese, and English) and I heard a variety of languages used by families before and after school hours in the common areas, but never in the class.

The principal of the school, who was new to the school and used to be a French language coordinator for the district, was extremely supportive of my project. He said he would personally

encourage multilingual usage but felt that current English-only school policy and resources available for schools make it difficult for teachers to independently take on such work. He stated:

We have limited resources, and we are mandated by the government to do specific things. And this is mandated by our province that we teach English and alternate languages, but as a second language. [...] That is where there is opportunity for people [...] And I try to recognize that for all those family languages, they already have a choice to make for themselves as a family, they will promote one language or two languages, and how they will do that is their choice. And that's where the ELL learner is also. My perspective on that is for the learning part, and we know literacy is a big part of their learning. If they are able to read in their home language, [...] That I think for me is the biggest thing, for those families keep that and these students will start reading in their own language...

(Interview, June 11, 2018)

While he was supportive of home language use, this perspective leaves language to the discretion of families. The lack of structural and/or policy acknowledgment of home languages predisposes educators, families, and even students themselves to view home languages as either immaterial to their schooling, or as an impediment to learning the school language (Cummins, 2017; Kubota & Bale, 2020; Toohey, 2019).

Sufi too encouraged families to read to children in their home languages, and to use rich vocabulary in any language to support their children's learning. However, she believed that the dominance of English was a barrier to many multilinguals, especially learners of the language and those that might not have positions of privilege. She pointed out that many of the families she met often believed that it was better to learn English than focus on their own languages so their children could be successful in Canada.

And some of it can be very overt signals that English is the good language or the real actual language of the country, and some of it is just much more subtle, and it's all everywhere, right? [...] And you know if I'm speaking Farsi with my sister and someone turns around and says something terrible to me, [...] I'm very capable of turning around and telling them what I think and that I understood, and all the rest of it. But if your English isn't even that good, you want to make sure that nobody actually would challenge you in the idea that you cannot speak English. It becomes a sort of Catch 22. So, you speak English to not be accused of not being able to speak English, right? (Interview, October 5, 2018).

Since many of the children in her classroom did not have “academic support in the home,” she believed that it was her responsibility to offer them support, especially in the early grades. Her critique of English dominance in Canadian society helped her see her multilingual students as those with valuable linguistic resources, but with the number of pedagogical tasks she was balancing as a teacher, she did not see an easy way to bring these languages into the classroom. In fact, her interests in this research stemmed from this critical acknowledgment of needing to balance her responsibilities as a teacher with a focus on equity.

Many of the children in the class appeared to share Sufi's and the principal's attitude to home languages – that they are important but not necessarily something discussed at school – even though the classroom community held many languages (Cantonese, Hindi, Japanese, Mandarin, Punjabi, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese – only one of the 20 children in the classroom used exclusively English at home). As Cummins (2001) pointed out students “understand very quickly that the school is an English-only zone and they often internalize ambivalence and even shame in relation to their linguistic and cultural heritage” (p. 590). While they used their home

languages in their homes extensively (like Anh from Chapter 3) and some went to language classes after school, most children did not see a place for their languages at school. Children would whisper words in Cantonese to their grandparents who quickly dropped off lunch but, as a group, they preferred to use English in the classroom. Even as I welcomed them to use their home languages, I understood the awkwardness of performative “on-demand” use and acknowledge the adult-dominated tenor of this request; nevertheless, it was telling that many hesitated to speak even a few words of a language they used frequently at home. This omission might well have to do with the obvious limitation that I could not listen to everyone in the class all the time, the possibility that children restrained themselves when an adult was present, or that they had internalized the ideological position of the normative “white speaking and listening subject” (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p.151) often adopted by classrooms.

6.6.2 Multilingual practices in “playful talk” by children

The few times that I observed home languages naturally enter the classroom was when the children worked in small groups and broke into spontaneous unofficial “playful talk” – an interactional practice whereby linguistic resources are manipulated to achieve ludic effects. Waring (2013) elaborated that playful talk acts as a bridge whereby it allows “stepping into an alternative world unfettered by the roles and the setting of the classroom and doing so lightheartedly” (p. 192). Children drew on their linguistic resources and collaborated to activate, reinforce, and deconstruct their linguistic identities through “playful talk” with song, movement, orality, and aurality. At times, some children regulated linguistic resources from entering the classroom and others accepted this regulation as valid and official.

6.6.2.1 The ‘name game’

An instance of “playful talk” was at a free art block, when a substitute teacher was in the class, and I was walking around the classroom. The children were excited for the upcoming winter break, there was much chattering in the air about plans for the holidays and talk about the gifts they were hoping to receive. A group of children were gathered on the floor drawing in their journals. Midway through the conversation about visiting family over the holidays, Jay, a Spanish speaker and one of the children I focus on in this chapter, initiated the following conversation about pronouncing names differently in different languages.

Jay: Do you know how I’d say your name in Spanish?

Harini: No! I’d love to know!

Jay: Harrrrrrrini (laughing)

Harini: Oh, so you are just rolling the Rs? (laughing)

Jay: No, I’m saying it differently. Harrrrrriniii!

Nicole: What about my name?

Jay: Nicole

Pari: Mine?

Jay: Parrrrr....

Anya: And mine?

Jay: An-ya, not Aaaanya like you say.

Harini: What about in Punjabi, Cayden? What would be my name?

Cayden: I don’t know....

Harini: Hmmm, nothing different, maybe? What about yours, how do your parents call you?

Cayden: Caden!

Harini: Oh, so it’s not Cayyy-den like we call you? Sorry!

Cayden: Yeah..

Jay: When I grow up, I’ll be Jayyy the soccer player!

While this exchange did not include anyone speaking a language other than English, it drew on the children's lived experiences of hearing, speaking, and living with other languages and playing with the auditory differences they perceived. Jay enjoyed sharing stories of his many dogs (their family had six!) and his family in El Salvador. Jay and Cayden sat next to each other, and the latter often helped Jay with English writing. However, in this exchange, Jay, by virtue of being a Spanish speaker, demonstrated his expertise in "Spanish-like" pronunciation and when he said my name and Pari's name; he was doing more than "rolling the Rs" as I had suggested above. His pronunciation of Anya's name and ability to listen for the differences in how they might each pronounce it also demonstrated specific aural expertise. This spontaneous 'name game' emphasized Jay's specific metalinguistic awareness of the minute differences in accent, prosodies, intonation, and stressing of syllables intrinsic to typical pronunciations in different languages, using the oral as a powerful mode to identify, categorize, and embellish. Though the children did not use any other words, elements of four languages – Spanish, Hindi, Punjabi, and English – were included by focusing on their specific linguistic features.

The issue of accents points to various sociopolitical implications, including raciolinguistic ideologies and the power of Standard English in the production of a dominant discourse and normative pronunciation (Flores & Rosa, 2015). There is a connection between pronunciation, accent, and identity (Ochs, 1993; Tomic, 2013) and the ways in which these reflect self-knowledge of how one relates to various groups, enabling the development of multiple social identities. The types of language specific articulation and playful pronunciation in this conversation felt very familiar to me. The familiarity came from my experience as a multilingual speaker whose children navigate similar name-related pronunciation differences at school; and from participation in the local Indian community, where interlinguistic puns,

“irregular” pronunciations, diversity of accents and phatic expressions, and how social identities get constructed are topics of thoughtful conversations and mirthful word play.

6.6.2.2 Singing “Bahay Kubo”

Another example of “playful talk” occurred when the children were leaving for recess. Their classroom had a second door that opened onto the school yard and the walkway beside the door was often the site of much excited conversation during recess and lunch lineups. Children shared snacks, video game tidbits, dance moves, Pokémon cards, and classroom and school gossip as they waited to come in and out from the yard. Two Tagalog speakers were in line to leave for lunch recess and one of them, Jordan, started humming a children’s song, “Bahay Kubo” (about a home in a small hut and the foods that grow near it). It appeared that Luke, standing next to him, also knew this song and they started singing it together, waving their arms like music conductors and moving their bodies in time with the song. As their quiet singing got slowly louder, the other children in line (and I) became interested, asking what the song was about and why they started singing it. The two boys began explaining the song line by line, when someone in the group said, “You should only talk English in school.” Jordan’s face fell, especially since he was particularly proud of his Filipino heritage (see Chapter 5 for Jordan’s flag drawings and analysis) and appeared to struggle to connect with his friends in class because of his English. Luke gave him a shy smile, but they stopped singing and the bell rang for recess.

Neither Luke nor Jordan spoke in Tagalog with each other in school; they rarely worked together nor were they particularly friends. The extemporaneous singing showcased a common cultural history and a shared sense of identity as being Filipinos that their regular relationship as classmates had not afforded earlier. While this was a simply a fun, childhood song for Luke, the singing appeared to mean a lot to Jordan, who often spoke about his being Filipino and how he

wished he could remain at home with his family, rather than be at school. When I asked him about the singing later, Jordan was not keen to speak about it, but what was palpable at the time was his disappointment at being cut short by what I interpreted as the dominant voice of English-only policy. This dominant discourse was exemplified during a conversation with another child, Anya, an academically strong student, and a Hindi speaker. We were discussing one of her photos and I asked if we could speak in Hindi; she declined saying, “my parents said I shouldn’t speak Hindi in school and I should make my English better” though she did admit “sometimes it just pops out” when she plays with some friends at recess. I perceived her hesitation as not emerging from Anya or her parents but because multilingualism is structurally unsupported and that often, ideologically and pedagogically, English learning “comes *at the expense* of the home language” (Kubota & Bale, 2020, p. 776, original emphasis), rather than alongside it.

6.6.3 Multilingual and multimodal practices in *Something or Someone I love*

Conversations about language use at home became common when the *Something or Someone I love* project was being designed. Children enthusiastically shared details about attending Mandarin lessons on Saturdays, talking with grandparents and cousins in Hindi, dancing to Vietnamese songs, and seeing online shows in Tagalog. Group discussions of children’s photos and drawings permitted glimpses of children’s home lives to enter the classroom – through images of annoying younger brothers, family pets, and special toys. In examining these choices as a classroom group, many emergent bilinguals displayed acute capacities for empathy, observation, and interpretation, often commenting about details in photos and relating it to other incidents in their lifeworlds. These discussions offered opportunities for hearing the stories of many who were usually quiet in the classroom.

As children met with me to edit their photos, they re-framed, cropped, changed lighting, saturation, and tone on their chosen photos. They also brought stories of why they loved what was in the images and what they might include in their accompanying multilingual narratives. In the following segments, I share two stories – of Jay and Pari – who were the only two emergent bilinguals to have submitted photographs for the gallery and also included narratives in Spanish and Hindi respectively.

6.6.3.1 Jay re-imagines his image

Jay, from the ‘name game’ example, said about speaking Spanish, “I don’t know, it’s a bit boring, ...I speak it at home and my mom speaks it every time and some words I don’t even know.” At the same time, he was keen to maintain his Spanish since he was hoping his family would move back to El Salvador in the next year or two. A few days after this conversation, he had written the English narrative piece to accompany his images (Figure 6.1) and, with his mother’s encouragement at home, had written a few sentences in Spanish about Maxy, his dog.

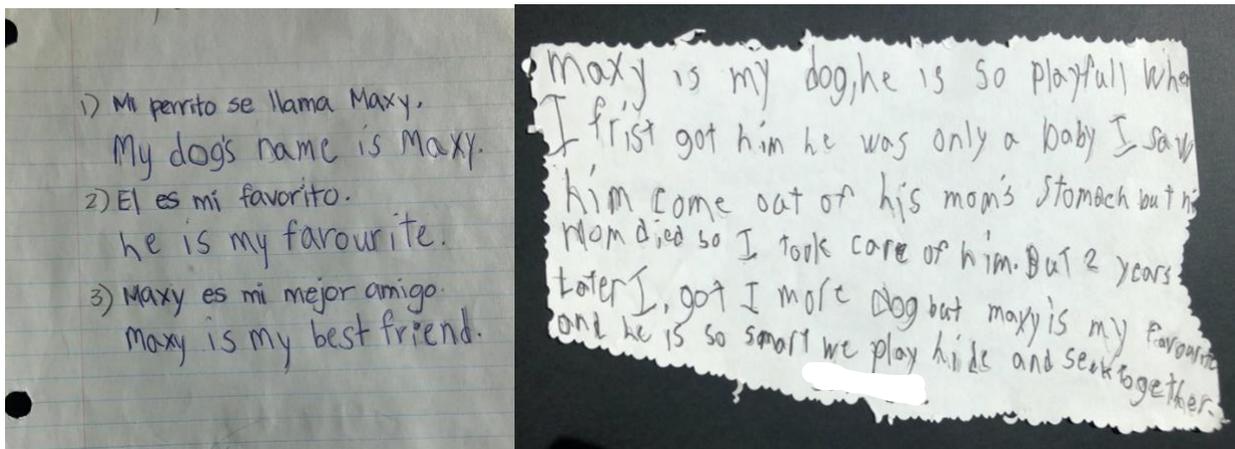
Jay shared excitedly that he wrote the sentences in Spanish himself and that he could introduce his friends to Maxy, his favourite from his six dogs. The Spanish writing was three lines long and less detailed than the English narrative (Figure 6.2) but Jay read the sentences out aloud. A few other children in the class came over, curious upon hearing Spanish. They looked impressed with his reading, gave him positive feedback on his drawing of Maxy, and on the narrative he shared in English of rescuing Maxy as a newborn puppy. After Jay’s reading, some of the other children decided to ask their families to help them with translations, especially after Jay shared how his mother had supported him by reading out the English writing, translating it to Spanish, reminding him of Spanish spelling as he wrote, and about how happy she had been during the process.

Figure 6.1: Jay's drawing of his dog Maxy



Jay's drawing of his favourite dog for inclusion in the art gallery. During small group discussion many children gave him positive feedback on the drawing saying Maxy looked cute, giving him confidence to read his narratives to the group.

Figure 6.2: Jay's writing in Spanish and English



Jay's writing about Maxy in Spanish and English. His friends were impressed with his expertise in reading and writing Spanish and also with the narrative he shared in English of rescuing her as a newborn puppy. These ideas and competencies connected with the group. Because Jay was considered a writer who was not good at English, this interest and appreciation from his friends lifted his spirits.

After his friends' positive reactions to his sharing about Maxy, Jay became motivated about his photo for the gallery. Earlier he had presented it to the class as a quickly taken photograph of a favourite car, a gift from his grandfather. However, when editing the photo

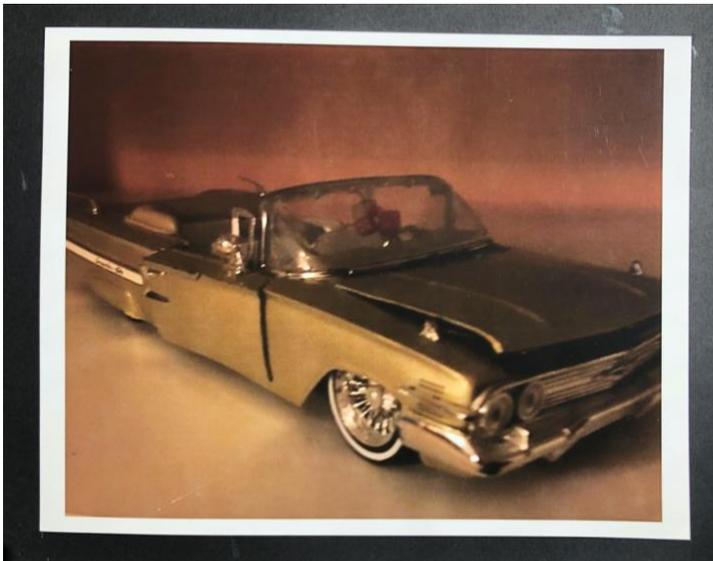
(Figures 6.3 and 6.4) with me, his attention to detail was nuanced and careful, creating a new version of his choice.

Figure 6.3: Jay's photo of car (original)

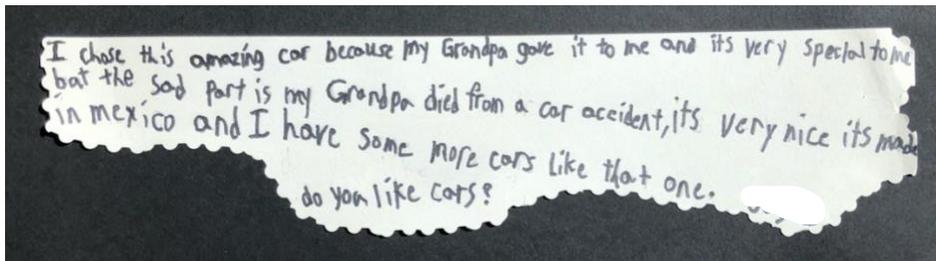


Jay's originally presented photo of his toy car on this shelf at home that includes other items in the frame, including some miscellaneous items on the shelf.

Figure 6.4: Jay's photo of car (edited)



Jay's edited version of the toy car his grandfather gave him. He directed the editing process to make the photo look "like a fancy car, with a background like sunset." In doing so, he displayed not only visual meaning making but also an understanding of nuanced choices created through photo editing.



In this narrative piece describing the photo of the car his grandfather gave him, Jay uses strong writing and affective words like "amazing" and "special" to highlight how much he loved the car. In this writing he employs his literacies authentically and connects with the reader by telling a story but also asking them a question in the end. At the same time, his re-imagining of the car as a beautiful vehicle contrasts with the accompanying difficult narrative of his grandfather dying in a car accident.

As can be observed by comparing the original with the edited photo, Jay paid attention to cropping out the extraneous details – the shelf, the DVDs, and the changing colour line above the car. The re-framed photo emphasized the convertible in all its old-world charm, looking less like a toy and more "like a fancy car, with a background like sunset" he said as he directed the editing process on my computer. After cropping the image, Jay changed the lighting and tint in the photo to give his toy car the appearance of a shiny luxurious vehicle, almost enhancing its beauty to contrast with the accompanying difficult narrative of his grandfather dying in a car accident. The conscious process of transforming the original image to the one he created for the art gallery involved visual sensibilities and literacies that came not only from owing, as he said, "many Lamborghinis and Buggatis," but also an understanding of choices created through photo editing. This conscious re-imagining of the car was a powerful process of re-framing for Jay. While many other children worked with me on editing their photos, no other photo changed so dramatically, and when the children in the class saw the updated photo in the gallery, they were again impressed. As will be elaborated, focusing on technique and process in this intentional way

supports us to move beyond static conceptions of children's capacities, and to focus on what children know and can do rather than what they do not know and cannot do.

6.6.3.2 Pari's translanguaging and shifting audiences

Pari's is the second story related to home language use and the photo project. She began the school year as a new student, smiling and quiet, with bright eyes that widened with curiosity behind her glasses. Her parents were going through a difficult separation; she had moved into a distant relative's house in a new city with her mother and sister, and her mother had to find a job to support them, and Pari was making sense of these life changes while adjusting to the new class. She quickly joined a few friends who shared her love for squishies (a type of squishable toy), slime, drawing, and imaginative games. Her mother was eager for Pari to improve her English since they had immigrated to Canada only a few years earlier, but also equally keen on supporting her to maintain their language, Hindi.

Her mother said that Pari was excited that I spoke with her mother in Hindi, but I had never spoken with her in Hindi inside the classroom except for a few phrases tagged onto the end of English sentences like “है ना?!” (isn't it?) or “तुम बताओ, परी” (“Why don't you tell me, Pari?”). Our linguistic connection, I believed, made her feel special and encouraged her to participate eagerly in the study, much more than she usually did in the classroom where she responded timidly to direct questions. I sensed our common language also helped her feel a closeness to me, displayed with many hugs and impromptu notes of affection. I tried to model translanguaging for the children, and spoke in Hindi and Tamil to small groups when I could translate. However, Pari herself never initiated any Hindi words, phrases, or sentences when we spoke, though her eyes twinkled whenever I did.

When children began bringing in updates of how their families were responding to the requests, Pari shared that, “I speak Hindi at home with my family, all the time!” During a conversation, I asked her if she would like to talk in Hindi; she began with hesitation and said she would prefer to chat in English.

HR: But are you feeling shy to talk with me, or do you just not feel like it now?

P: I’m feeling shy...

HR: क्यों? [Why?]

P: Sometimes I feel shy even when Anya and I talk Hindi here...

HR: Because ये school है? घर में बोलते हो?! [Because it is school? Do you speak at home?!]

P: I do speak Hindi well...

HR: I know! (laugh)

HR: अगर मैं तुम्हारे घर आऊं क्या आप हिंदी में बोलेंगे? क्या आप तब shy होंगे? [If I come to your place, will you speak with me in Hindi? Or will you be shy?]

P: No, I’ll speak

HR: अच्छा! Because ये school है, इसलिये? [OK! Because this is school, is that why?]

P: It’s because it is not home. I’m used to talking it at home.

Another time, when I heard her using “हाँ” (yes), “अच्छा!” (good), “ठीक है” (that’s okay) and “नहीं” (no) of her own volition in response to some questions, I asked her again if I should proceed to talk English or continue in Hindi.

HR: OK. तो आपने पांच pictures लिया, नहीं? उस से एक या दो select करेंगे, OK. एक या दो select करने के बादare you OK with me talking in Hindi or would you like me to talk in English? [So you took five pictures, right? From those we are choosing one or two now. After choosing one or two...are you OK with me talking in Hindi or would you like me to talk in English?]

P: Hindi!

HR: In Hindi, yay! अच्छा लगता है [does it feel good]? You like it?!

P: Yeah

HR: क्यों [Why/how come]?

P: Because मेरी मां ने कहा [my mom said] she likes me speaking in Hindi and because she doesn't want me to forget my home language!

HR: वोही थो ! मैं भी वही काम कर रही हूं, कि आपका home language भी बहुत important है...[That's it! That's what my work is here, that your home language is very important, too!]

This shift in attitude from being hesitant to embracing the translanguaging began slowly with a few words and shy smiles to the inclusion of phrases and sentences like: “क्योंकि मुझे picture लेना अच्छा लगता है [because I like to take pictures!] and “हं, क्योंकि वोह set थ, और वे दे रहे थे. तोह फिर हर्षिल को भ इक मिला.” [Yes, because it was a set and that what they were giving. And then Harshil (her brother) also got one]. Other children came over to hear our conversation as her confidence grew, giving her a chance to explain to them that she was speaking in Hindi, and opting to translate to them in English when she chose. Particularly interesting to note is that she too (like Jay) referenced her mother as being enthusiastic about her using and maintaining her language, in contrast to Anya, who noted that her parents suggested she speak only English and not Hindi at school, similar to other families who internalize English-only ideologies (Chumak-Horbatsch, 2012; Mizuta, 2017).

Sharing rainbow bear: Like Jay, conversations with other children and Pari's confidence in bringing languages into the classroom were interlinked. After taking photos at

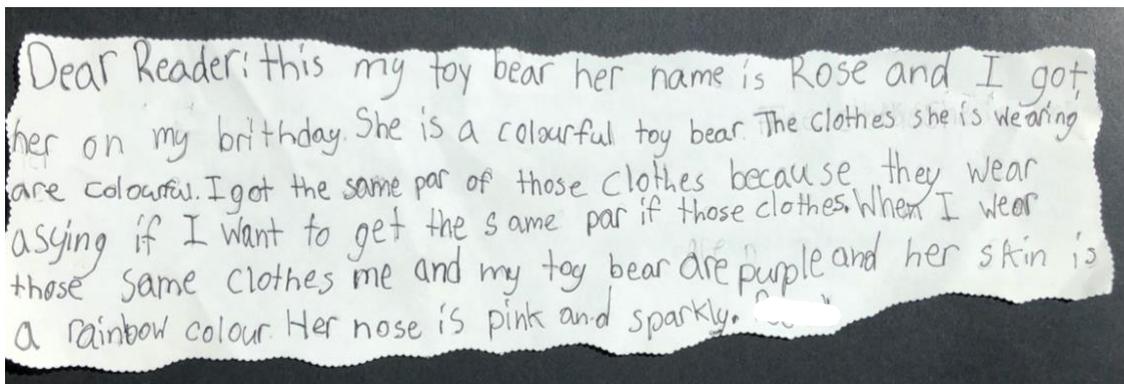
home, Pari also decided to illustrate her favourite toy for the gallery, and she wrote a narrative for both her pieces. The first, a photograph of her bear (Figure 6.5), is something she loved and wanted to include very much.

Figure 6.5: Pari's photo of rainbow bear



Pari received a lot of positive interest when she shared this photo of a rainbow bear with her class. Many of them knew about the store that sells bears with matching clothes for the children, and this feeling of connection meant a lot to her.

Figure 6.6: Pari's English writing about rainbow bear



The experience of sharing the bear photo with the class was very motivating for Pari and that sense of connection is reflected in this piece. Its voice is personal, descriptive, and aware of audience. For Pari, who was usually quiet, the authoring of this piece spoke in a loud voice of confidence.

Upon sharing this photo of the “rainbow bear” with the class, Pari received a lot of good feedback. Children were eager to learn more about her life and family, and a few said they had been to the same store where children and their stuffies could get matching sets of clothes. This experience of sharing and the feeling of connection excited Pari and she sat down to write the narrative with much joy (Figure 6.6). Even the introductory phrase of her narrative, “Dear reader:” begins like a diary, with the authorial voice of someone sharing personal details. The rest of the writing is descriptive, with an emphasis on the “same par (pair) of those clothes,” that other children had been interested in earlier. These aspects of paying attention to audience as a writer had been discussed a few weeks earlier by Sufi.

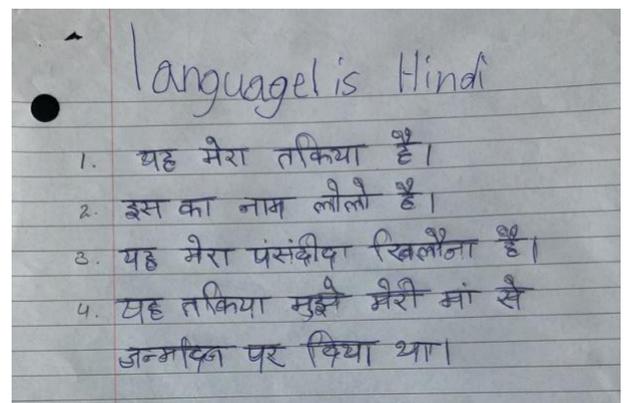
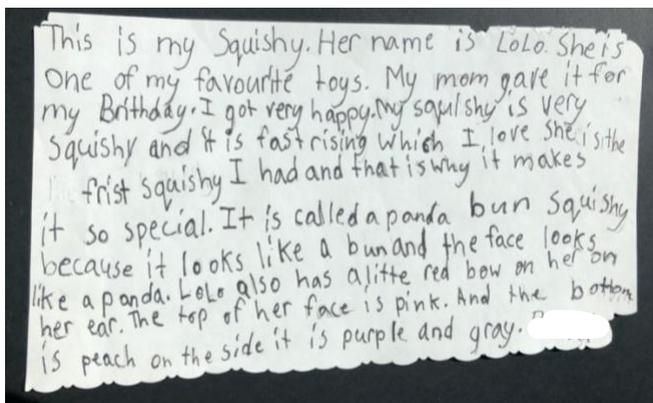
Sharing Lolo: Pari’s second piece for the art gallery was of her squishy, Lolo (Figures 6.7 & 6.8). The attention to detail in this piece was with a focus on making it look “cute,” a gendered quality that many of the girls associated with squishies, a type of soft, smooth stuffed toy that could be squeezed.

Figure 6.7: Pari's squishy toy "Lolo"



Pari's Lolo squishy's primary attribute was "cute," a gendered quality that many of the girls in the class who collected the toy valued as being emblematic of squishies. The pastel colours and large wide-set eyes that Pari employed in this drawing emphasize the toy's softness and cuteness.

Figure 6.8: Pari's writing about Lolo in English and Hindi



Pari's narrative about the squish in English and Hindi (below). While the English writing is much more descriptive of the squishy toy itself, the Hindi writing is about how the toy is her favourite because her mother gave it to her as a birthday present. These speak to various emotional alignments and an understanding of audience for the narratives, with the English being primarily for her classmates and the Hindi piece being for family.

The larger-than-life drawing of the squishy floating above green grass under a sunny blue sky portrays the toy like a dream. The large eyes, rounded body, and pastel colours give it an

appearance of softness, and its squishiness is emphasized by being a panda and a bun at the same time. She also presents other attributes of her squishy, including fast rising, multicolored, and with special features like the red bow. These descriptors connect not only with her love of this toy and establishes cuteness, but also associate with several of the girls' fascination with this type of toy. Like the previous submission, the writing and the image work in concert to draw in the audience and offer details.

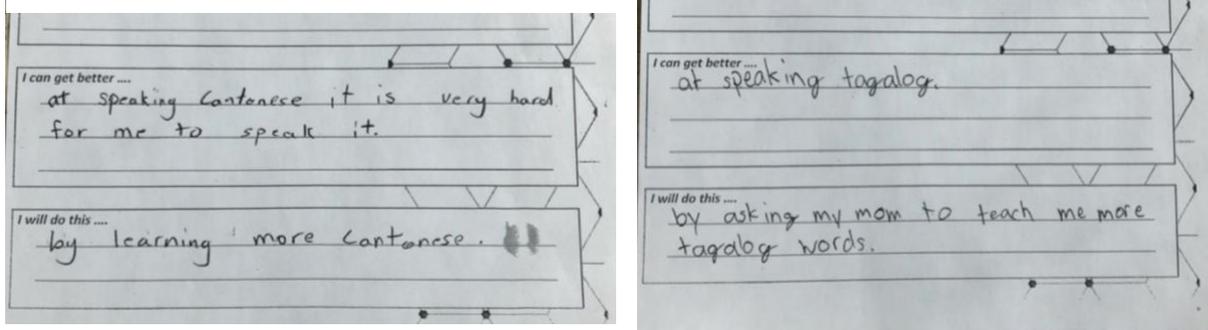
When compared to her English writing, her Hindi narrative about the squishy (Fig. 6.8) is much more to the point, with numbered sentences and the title, "language is Hindi" that orients us primarily to the language of the writing. While the English writing is descriptive of the squishy toy, the Hindi writing is about how the toy is her favourite because her mother gave it to her as a birthday present, aligning more closely to the emotional relationship inherent in the established theme of "Something or Someone I love." It appeared that Pari's expectation of readership was different for the two languages, with the English one centered on her school friends and the Hindi one centered on her family.

6.6.4 Validation of translanguaging practices: "It sort of gives them a little boost"

As the children worked on their pieces for the gallery, the discussions offered validation for emergent bilinguals. The gallery itself served as a demonstration and celebration of the children's communicative repertoires. During the exhibition, many children in the school who passed by commented on the art, many of the school staff and visiting families noticed the inclusion of multiple languages. Grandparents and family members offered children exclamations of joy and pats on the back as they strolled around reading the many languages. The art gallery's comments sheet included notes like, "I wish I could draw like that," "The creativity here is mind blowing," and "I liked the writing, like poems with the drawings." On

hearing and seeing these comments, the children shared smiles among themselves and asked to take back copies of the comment sheet, along with copies of their exhibits. For the emergent bilinguals, these comments additionally validated their capacities, languages, and identities. Pari was happy that people were able to see her Hindi writing: “One person even said ‘it looks so beautiful and very difficult to write’ and that made me feel so proud that I did it.” These types of acknowledgment encouraged self-reflection on languages as well. A few children wrote about wanting to speak and write better in their languages in their self-assessment (Figure 6.9) of core competencies at the end of the year.

Figure 6.9: Languages in students' self assessment



As the project unfolded and languages were included in the classroom, a few children mentioned wanting to work on improving their languages and wrote about it in their self-assessment at the end of the year.

Sufi said that she had earlier not seen a self-assessment when the children considered their home languages. She was pleased with this interest in languages since she had had to often explain to families that their languages were not preventing children from learning English. With this translanguaging stance, Sufi was fostering critical metalinguistic awareness and deepening multilingual understandings around literacies. She considered that bringing multiple languages into the school would build intersections between what was happening at home and at school. That these language inclusions were facilitated by photos and drawings from their lifeworlds enhanced the experience and supported all children with expressing new ideas.

Ms. N, the resource teacher who the emergent bilinguals were keen to invite to the gallery, was also thrilled with the children's work. She appreciated that "non-threatening" supports like drawing and photography encouraged the children to write in many languages.

Like, it's amazing, right? It's amazing to see other languages written down and to see that it's not the English alphabet, and just, you know, I think it would give their student peers sort of an appreciation of other cultural identities and languages. And because, you know, when I look at other languages written out like that, it's pretty amazing. And so those students that don't speak English well, but can speak the language they speak at home well, and either they write this, or their parents write this, they're like, "Wow! How can you do that?" Right? Yeah, it sort of gives them a little boost and suddenly they're like, "Oh, yeah, I can do that. Right!" (Interview, June 2018)

Both Ms. N and Sufi felt that these opportunities were incredible boosts to confidence for emergent bilinguals since they presented their homes and identities in a positive light. Sufi said that the collaboration helped her think of some students in different ways and afforded a way to "look at language differently in the classroom" (Interview, Oct 2018). Especially since these aspects would correlate with competencies that were required in the curriculum, they were both positive about multimodal and multilingual pedagogies. However, both reiterated that teachers needed to be equipped and supported with time and resources to be able to work with children in ways that build collaboration and to sustain such pedagogies.

6.7 Discussion

This section discusses three connections that bring together the stories presented. The first addresses the ways in which multimodal practices (including playful talk, drawing, and photography) and multiple languages reciprocally enhanced students' learning and identities.

The second connection highlights the significance of process and relationships in supporting multilingual and multimodal practices. The third takes account of how dominant English language ideologies needed to be consciously challenged for facilitating these practices.

6.7.1 Bridging multilingualism and multimodality towards identities of competence

I explore the idea that multimodal practices open the way to understanding a diverse range of representations by tapping into linguistic resources that emergent bilinguals bring with them to school. And that, reciprocally, multilingual practices open up avenues for diverse literacies. I argue that this interdependence in meaning making builds emergent bilinguals' "identities of competence" (Manyak, 2004). From a multimodal perspective, "language is not 'more' resourceful, but 'differently resourceful; it does not have more potential but different potential for making meaning – just like any other mode" (Jewitt et al., 2016, p. 23). Children's voices emerge with the visual and the oral supporting them in enhancing their stories.

I observed children's multiple languages percolating into the classroom during "playful talk" with the inclusion of songs, movement, drawing, or in unofficial spaces when participating in a type of "alternative world" (Waring, 2013). Some translanguaging practices are "playful subversion" (Li & Zhu, 2019, p. 156) because they resist conventions, authorities, and ideologies by manipulating them, as the children in this study did. As Wohlwend (2015) highlights, a sense of playfulness "blurs sense-making and self-making, allowing children to imagine themselves in fantasy worlds scaled to child-sized life experiences, feelings, and wishes" (p. 552). Accessing fantasy and alternative worlds through playful talk permitted the children to creatively make and remake themselves in the classroom, even if only for brief periods. The name game occurred when children were casually drawing and conversing about their December holiday plans, a time when home and family are conventionally centered. Similarly, the Tagalog song about the home

in a small hut was sung in a space that literally and metaphorically bridged different lifeworlds – inside the classroom to outside in the yard. That both instances of home language connection occurred when children were thinking about their homes is significant, collapsing and integrating home and school worlds through language and memory. Additionally, the inherent playfulness of these practices appeared to invite other children and other social identities in the official space of the classroom. Their status as EAL learners was irrelevant in these stories since they were expertly using their linguistic resources and cultural awareness in creative ways. Equally, their linguistic awareness worked in concert with their understanding of the aural, the oral, with playfulness, and a perception of how these modes influence interactions and interactors, creating unique multilingual, multimodal experiences in the classroom space.

As we discussed the multimodal and multilingual choices for their project submissions, the children became conscious of each other as keepers and users of many languages, along with thinking of each other as artists, soccer players, and Pokémon fans. Conversations about language in turn encouraged many to talk about homes and their families, but particularly enhanced the participation of emergent bilinguals since it moved the focus broadly to multiplicity in representation and diversity of experiences rather than a narrow focus on English and proficiencies that matched schools-approved topics. These conversations afforded a change from the normative “white listening stance” (Flores & Rosa, 2015) to a more inclusive listening for experiences, shifting emergent bilinguals’ enacted identities.

In the shift from informal and occasional use of home languages at the beginning of the year to the sanctioned welcoming of languages, Pari and Jay transitioned their languages from being an unrecognized skill to a valued resource for enabling communication and confidence. Non-English languages became easier to embrace when non-print modes were accessed, and

since they were translanguaging when working on creative projects, their motivation increased. This synergistic relationship between languages and modes was powerful. Writing complex scripts and bringing in new worlds, they naturally drew on their communicative repertoires to maximize understanding, self-expression, and achievement. This way communication transcended words and involved diverse semiotic resources and ecological affordances (Canagarajah, 2013), especially in Pari's case where English and Hindi were interchangeably used for maximizing engagement during our conversations. EDR's focus on participatory processes meant that I was able to model translanguaging within the classroom context and present ways for the children to value their linguistic resources.

Engaging with the social aspects of literacy and the affordances that multimodal practices bring, both Jay and Pari worked to re-frame their identities. Using techniques and knowledge of visuals, Jay fashioned a new image of his car, one that met his expectations of luxury and impressed his peers. Pari too exceeded expectations of herself, often categorized as quiet and struggling with English, by creating connections across the class with her submissions for the gallery – both her rainbow bear and the squishy toy generated much discussion among the children. In addition to her confident Hindi speaking that impressed her classmates, all three of her narratives showcased her awareness of writing intention and audience, refashioning her as a purposeful user of literacies. Jay and Pari's improvised and intentional repurposing of ideas point to the ways children socially negotiate their literacies, and ways in which they incorporate their favorite bits as 'textual toys' to recruit others to make their texts more appealing to peers (Dyson, 2003). In doing so, they re-imagine themselves within the space of the classroom, belonging anew with identities of competence.

When emergent bilinguals intentionally draw on the full range of their communicative repertoires, it is “as though an invisible power had suddenly become visible” (Prasad, 2018, p. 233). They re-positioned themselves as experts on their lives, languages, and learning – belonging anew in the class. Multimodality and multilingualism, when practiced playfully, invited communicative newness and when practiced with careful attention invited playfulness in its most generative forms, with an openness to experiences and connections.

6.7.2 Attending to process and relationships for collaborative creation of power

This segment emphasizes the significance of paying attention to process and relationships when working with multilingual and multimodal practices in the classroom. Meaning making is recognized as a complex *process of design* in which individuals are seen as makers and re-makers of sets of representational resources (Kress, 2000). The iterative processes of this study contributed to a “collaborative creation of power” (Cummins & Early, 2011) that is foundational to transformative pedagogies (Prasad & Lory, 2020).

The intentionally collaborative and cyclical processes of EDR made it evident that the children were supporting and motivating each other. Learning techniques of drawing and photography together, sharing stories and images, offering feedback in groups, hearing multiple languages, having research conversations with me while editing photos – all of these changed the ways in which they began talking, reading, writing, listening to, and being with each other. They were shaping each other’s views through collaborative seeing (Luttrell, 2016) and making and remaking meaning with multiple opportunities to audience their photographs (Rose, 2016). For Pari and Jay, their choice of objects was also motivated by a recognition of how peers responded, their momentum to write propelled by their classmates’ interest, and these were collaborative processes. At the debriefing after the gallery, children high-fived each other saying, “your

drawing was so cool”; “My grandpa read your writing in Tagalog.” These validations of their skills in turn validated their identities as skilled peers.

As part of the process, the children made *choices* about the theme and the design of their ideas. The choices that are made when opting to draw a world into existence, capture a life in a frame, or photograph an everyday object that engaged their attention or affection offer different cognitive challenges from writing about these worlds (Kress, 2010; Pahl & Rowsell, 2010). Asking their families for support was a choice some children made, and others did not (impacting their projects differently), similarly with bringing in artefacts from home for drawing in class. With their constraints, the children framed their realities in an expressive and personally relevant manner – like Jay’s careful editing of the luxury car photo or Pari’s considered choice and representation of the squishy – pointing to specific skills in expansive literacy repertoires like building engagement and risk-taking. A note, however, that curricular objectives and children’s intentions are not always matched (Dyson, 2010; Yoon, 2013). In these stories, “children are not first and foremost learners; they are first and foremost people living the complexities of their day-to-day lives” (Dyson, 1995, p. 36). It was clear that these children’s agency in making creative choices was attending to a sense of their social and cultural selves and their relationships with each other, as much as, or likely much more than, it was to the goals of the project.

Children’s collaborations on building relations of care were also apparent in how they prioritized favourite toys, exploits of family members, and sharing tales of love and joy. Their selected theme of *Something or Someone I love* offered a universal connection through shared experiences, bridging their own lifeworlds to their friends. Their chosen objects were “embedded within networks of social relationships with carers and peers” (Buckingham, 2011, p. 58); their

familial relationalities infused their stories. In classroom discussion as well, emergent bilinguals felt excited to bring their communicative repertoires forward when they found that their peers and teachers *cared* about their choices and their stories. Multimodality afforded them the space to express powerfully affective dimensions of learning, represent valued aspects about their lives that were not often voiced in classroom, and declare their relationship with others through literacy (Dyson, 2013). I found that when all the children shared stories, they blurred boundaries of what made them different and instead cared about what made each of them connected yet unique.

6.7.3 Resisting systems to transform practices

Despite this, I noticed ideologies that include perceptions of normativity based on social class, and those that produce “racialized speaking subjects” (Flores & Rosa, p. 150). While one of my motivations for this study was to resist these ideologies, the persistent voice of this discourse was evident through the year. I heard it around the school – in conversations about who was considered an academically strong student, in discussions about racialized families’ involvement in their children’s education, worries about “language gaps” based on socioeconomic identities (Johnson, 2019), casual talks about multilingual families’ capacity to understand cultural concepts, families’ responses to schoolwork not in English, children’s perspectives on their parents’ preferences, and children’s chats on and off the playground. These also echoed in my own internal deliberations about what might be most equitable ways to move a justice agenda forward for those that are struggling in more ways than just with language – whether we might be well-intentioned but imposing another type of linguistic belief on families that might be simply desiring English proficiency, in whatever ways they have comprehended it, as a means to gain socioeconomic success within the reality of life in Canada (Block, 2018;

Garcia et al., 2018). The stories presented in this chapter attempt to resist these discourses, question hierarchies, recognize children's capacities for translanguaging, and raise emergent bilinguals' voices in positive ways, "making them *more* than they were" thought to be (Cummins, 2012, p. 178, original emphasis). They speak to the need for awareness of racialized and minoritized languages, reconfiguring goals, and rethinking policy around languages in school – that all languages be welcomed and encouraged to support students' academic progress and identities of competence.

From another perspective, Sufi acknowledged that despite her keen involvement in the study, her collaboration was understandably mediated by limitations of time and resources . Teachers experience tension in balancing the demands of the curriculum, attending to the social and cultural motivations of children's agendas, and institutional and familial expectations for classroom success. While creating flexible spaces for this research, she did not skip teaching language mechanics, writing basics (Dyson, 2013) or other opportunities to enrich the children's learning. Nevertheless, the challenge for teachers like her for teaching through a translanguaging lens is to open lines of inquiry balanced with curricular goals and children's motivations (Genishi & Dyson, 2012; Marshall & Moore, 2013; Yoon, 2013).

After this collaborative project, Sufi felt that she acquired some ideas towards inclusion of languages in ways that spoke to curricular expectations around literacies and core competencies (BC Curriculum, 2019). She was also able to recognize some ways in which to welcome students' home languages into the classroom "without feeling like I have to know Spanish, and Chinese, and Vietnamese, and all the rest, ooff!" (Interview, October 5, 2018). To create a translingual space, teachers need not be bilingual (see Pacheco et al., 2019) and can scaffold and cultivate translanguaging practices as a classroom norm. Cummins (2019a)

conceived translanguaging teachers as those who perceive students' cultural resources as constructing rather than constricting their educational experiences, affording flexible options towards welcoming children's languages and identities. More ideas on these connections to practice are explored in Chapter 7.

For my part, much as I collaborated and sought opinions, I was still an adult making many decisions for the study. Despite “emergent listening” (Davies, 2017), research agendas, timelines, institutional expectations, and sociocultural discourses constrained and mediated mine and the children's emerging identities, interests, and actions (Yoon & Templeton, 2019). I was mindful of these structures and groups with more power (especially with Sufi and I being part of the collaboration), offering multiple iterations of processes and conscious attention to voice to support those that might otherwise be silent during collaborative activities.

6.8 Implications and reflections

This chapter presented contexts and processes towards creating pedagogies that value emergent bilinguals' multilingual and multimodal repertoires into the classroom. Ideas centered on the synergistic connection of multimodal and multilingual practices towards building identities of competence; the importance of process and relationships in collaborating on these practices; and how ideologies and structural issues of power needed to be resisted consciously for facilitating translanguaging practices. In this section, I offer two implications related to these themes for educators and researchers.

Orienting to equity: One implication focuses on valuing children's linguistic repertoires as a matter of justice and equity with the fact that over 50% of students in urban areas speak a language other than English or French at home in Canada (Stats Canada, 2017). Sufi was conscious about “the reality of the world outside the classroom and [to] prepare [students] to

engage as global citizens and as respectful human beings” (Interview, Oct 5, 2018). Working from a translanguaging perspective in a process that considers multimodal dimensions of learning, “has the potential to reposition minoritized learners as literate beings, transform(ing) them socially and politically, and advance social justice” (García & Kleifgen, 2019, p. 561). In recognizing structural issues that constrain minoritized populations (Rosa & Flores, 2017), reflexively considering ideologies, enacting localized resistance through intentional practices, we contribute to more equitable teaching and learning.

Inquiring stances: All the children, the teacher, and I took on a learning stance through the study. By paying attention to each other’s languages – how they looked, how they sounded, how the intonations and pronunciations varied, what was similar and different – the children became language inquirers, drawing on their language awareness in explicit and implicit ways. Through actively engaging with more than one language, students came to appreciate that different cultures have different modes of thought and expression, and different conventions of print (Naqvi, 2015). These became opportunities for the entire group to gain an appreciation of linguistic diversity and to generatively experience what it feels like to not understand a word of what someone else is saying. Sufi, too, took on an identity as a language learner alongside her students, not letting the fact that she did not know all the languages prevent her from including them in the process. She displayed her confusion and delight as she tried to read and write some of the children’s languages, and her curiosity set the tone for the children’s engagement with the study. This learning mindset of the teacher (Freire, 1972; García & Kleyn, 2016) permitted students to play with languages, and feel expertise and belonging. Engaging with the emergent design in this EDR was also a type of inquiry based on reflective engagement with theory and practice. Such formally sanctioned opportunities to experiment with multilingual pedagogies

with an attitude of inquiry (Early & Kendrick, 2020) open up imaginative spaces for critical thinking about students' and teachers' languages, capacities, and engagement.

6.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented stories to illustrate the multilingual, multimodal project that we collaborated on as the final design of my research study. In response to my research questions about the communicative repertoires that emergent bilinguals bring into the classroom and how these may be leveraged for pedagogical practices, this chapter focuses on language as a resource and on translanguaging practices as a design choice. It used photography and drawing as methods that highlight emergent bilinguals' identities of competence and focused on collaborative processes and constraining systems. This chapter connects with the other chapters through reporting about design practices based on learnings from EDR processes through the year, and on emergent designs co-created with participants. It also links with the other chapters by emphasizing stories and relationships that motivate change. In the next chapter, I offer some broad implications and learnings from the study.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Introduction and chapter summaries

In this final chapter, the interlinked and separate findings of the three preceding chapters, conceived as separate manuscripts, are brought together. I briefly summarize the three chapters below before I outline how characteristics of EDR framed this work. Then I outline some limitations and particularities related to this research, as well as its significance; offer implications for educators, families, and policymakers; and reflect on future directions.

In Chapter 4, the home literacies of one child are examined closely to present a foundation for the multimodal and multilingual pedagogical design that unfolded in the classroom described in later chapters. This chapter outlines eight-year-old Anh's agentic learning and literacy practices within a home context where traditional literacies are minimal. It also highlights how Anh's sophisticated linguistic and cultural brokering skills not only support his growth but also represent high degrees of social, emotional, and cultural competence. The themes intersect with understandings of superdiversity, multiliteracies, and translanguaging, and seek to trouble assumptions about immigrant- and refugee-background children's home lives, while pointing to systems that both support and constrain. Implications include designing pedagogies that encourage a full use of students' communicative repertoires and preferred modes of engagement; recognizing complex cultural factors that complicate refugee-background children's learning; recognizing the capacities of, and challenges for, children doing cultural brokering. This chapter accentuated the need for pedagogies and policies that value the things that children do to learn and connect with others.

Chapter 5 highlights emergent bilinguals' creative and expressive competencies by examining and interpreting their drawings and stories from the *Looking Closely* project, along

with their in-class work from the *Dictionary of Feelings* and *Three Terrible Things*. This chapter focuses on capacities of emergent bilinguals beyond print-based ways of meaning making. It addressed new ways of looking at drawing and talking as resources in the classroom; how drawing gave them a chance to express their emotional lives; and how drawing and talking supported new ways of belonging in the world of the classroom. These processes of communication are complex and build on each other through a process of transmodal semiosis to elevate meaning and learning. In embracing multiple modes of meaning making as equally valued, teachers and students design practices that build on students' strengths. I offer implications around enhanced meanings that emerge when moving between modes, about time for "making slowly" through drawings and creative expressions, and on paying attention to children's relationships as part of their learning.

This focus on relationships becomes significant in Chapter 6, which emphasizes language as another crucial communicative resource that emergent bilinguals bring with them to school. Centering on translanguaging and multimodal practices in the classroom through the context of a photo and drawing project titled *Something or Someone I love*, this chapter draws attention to the inherent structural tensions and transformative possibilities in teaching and learning using multiple languages. Three aspects are discussed: the first relates to the connections between multimodal and multilingual practices in supporting emergent bilinguals; the second relates to the importance of paying attention to process and relationships in building collaboration towards translanguaging practices; and the third explores how English language ideologies and structural issues of power need to be resisted consciously for facilitating translanguaging. Stories from the classroom, and related to designing the *Something or Someone I love* project, shifted teacher's and students' conceptions of emergent bilinguals' capacities and identities. Implications from

this chapter centered on orienting to equity as a motivation for pedagogical designs using multiple languages, and children and the teachers adopting an inquiring stance when working with translanguaging practices in the classroom.

7.2 Characterizing EDR in this study

EDR “uses existing theory to frame inquiry” (McKenney & Reeves, 2019, p.13) and that was the predominant methodological basis for this research. I inquired alongside children and their teacher using ideas formed from theory and participant experiences, and reflected on questions (included at the end of each chapter) that led to new directions. Extensive literature review supported my ideas while the context of the focal classroom and home visits offered authenticity and permitted criticality. This balance between theory and contextual realities was important for this work.

Working iteratively through the processes of EDR (Fig 2.1) meant that there was time for gradual building of ideas to design practices towards welcoming emergent bilinguals’ communicative repertoires. Inviting drawing, photography, and languages as resources was in response to children’s interests and engagements, and to observations, conversations, and reflections through the year. From Anh’s home literacies and translanguaging, to drawing and talking in the *Looking Closely* project, to the final design of the multilingual and multimodal project, I paid attention to understanding emergent bilinguals’ communicative repertoires and collaborated to intentionally create space for them.

EDR’s participatory practices aligned with my focus on collaboration and relationships through the study. Planning, designing, and meaning making jointly with participants became ways to better understand not only possibilities and resources but also constraints inherent in the context. As well, the research process itself made a positive and practical contribution by

providing opportunities for those involved – the children, teachers, and others in the school system - for learning and reflection. While this focus on process was a strength it was also a challenge, adding complications for reporting the research in terms of length, level of detail, and having “too much story to tell” (McKenney & Reeves, 2019, p. 255).

7.3 Limitations and particularities

The small number of participants offers a detailed and nuanced understanding of their context and particular sets of experiences that I could participate in and interpret for this work. In line with the context-specific goals of EDR, I worked with a focus on relationships and a few children’s lifeworlds. However, because of this limited number, the findings cannot be generalized to all young emergent bilinguals since there are many variations of classes within each school, many varying life contexts, and many different types of teachers. Similarly, there were aspects of the design that I had hoped to accomplish differently or at a different pace. However, EDR and ethical collaborative work are slow processes meandering in various unexpected pathways, and I could not complete some of my research plans, while other ones were newly generated.

Originally, I had intended to informally interview family members of the focal participants in their homes. However, these interviews were not possible. One of the possible focal children’s family was living in a precarious housing situation, needing to move every few months and I was supporting them with locating resources. I found it difficult and uncomfortable to request an interview about their home literacies during this time of uncertainty. In the other focal child’s family, the single mother spoke very little English and was disinclined to engage in much conversation, though she welcomed me into their space. These aspects relate centrally to

the “messiness” of research” (Law, 2004) that complicates the research process while pointing to the genuine problems that complicate the lives of the participants in my research.

Though this work aims to highlight children’s power and agency, being an adult and a teacher within their classroom setting gave me enormous power, and I am sure that the children experienced the pull of that positioning. While negotiating this work with their teacher and me, on occasion, the children did oppose ideas, suggest changes, reject options, offer new directions, and reframe their participation. However, researchers, even those of us who listen carefully to children’s voices, are listening “more to [ourselves] than to *any* of the children” (Paley, 2007, p. 153); the physical act of listening quite often interacts with reflexive attention and adult-determined intentions. Research and institutional expectations, preferences related to organizational, communicational, and representational processes became limitations when working with children despite conscious attention to not drown out children’s expressions.

Relatedly, post-colonial and post-structural critiques point to the author’s power to interpret, define, and represent (Mayall, 1994; Spivak, 1988), which become in and of themselves unethical moments. Also, the visual image’s polysemy requires us to grapple with the limits of our knowing and understanding – we are never fully conscious of the ways we negotiate narratives, identities, and how much we know of someone else’s lives, so representations already are in the process of creating anew. Whose voices, stories, and interpretations are represented becomes sometimes hard to distinguish (Luttrell, 2016; Pillow, 2010).

Visual research aims to get away from the verbocentrism of qualitative research, yet in a way this study privileged language. Though children had the time and space to create with drawings and photography, used play, songs, and their bodies to make meaning, we still relied on spoken and written word to help them clarify their meanings to me. Mitchell (2006) suggests that

children's multimodal depictions should be considered, "a departure point for apprehending something of their worlds and world-making" rather than a "mimetic or complete" depiction of their knowledge or perceptions (p. 63). The contradiction of needing words to specify their intentions and expressions to each other and the adults while making meaning visually speaks to a particularity of such studies with young children.

Seeing myself and my family reflected in many of the participants and balancing this reflection with my own privilege became difficult to represent in this dissertation. For instance, my family and I have felt quite consciously the ever-present social, psychic, and embodied realities of systemic racism (Menakem, 2017; Rosa & Flores, 2019), have been subject to the reproduction of inherited racial and linguistic colonizing structures (Hesse, 2016); but also have, due to colonization, the knowledge and communicative practices emerging from having learned English from a young age and living in a stable, middle-class household. These types of contradictions and intersectional realities were noted only in the margins due to time and space constraints even though these are rooted in my broader equity-seeking agenda.

Finally, my data were collected a few years ago (2017-2018) and the world has since changed with the Covid-19 pandemic. However, as will be detailed in the implications section, due to the vast inequities made evident by the pandemic, this study has become more relevant for educators and policy makers as we continue to support students.

7.4 Contributions of research

My findings show that emergent bilinguals bring valuable communicative repertoires to school that can be engaged for designing inclusive pedagogies and building identities of competence. There are a number of ways in which my study makes a meaningful contribution to the existing literature. First, this study extends our understandings of translanguaging practices,

where there has been limited research with young children (Chumak-Horbatsch, 2019; Gort, 2012). The stories in this study offered young children's perspectives on linguistic diversity, their linguistic capacities and resources, experiences of translanguaging practices, and critiques and resistance to including their home languages in school. By emphasizing a raciolinguistic perspective (Rosa & Flores, 2017), the study contributed critical perspectives on young children's understandings related to language ideologies.

Second, the study extends multimodal and multilingual understandings around literacies by highlighting their synergistic connections in supporting young emergent bilinguals within Canadian mainstream classrooms. It aligns with other research in this area (see Cummins & Early, 2011; Early et al., 2015; Lotherington, 2013; Prasad, 2015) and emphasizes that a deeper understanding of texts, languages, and emergent bilinguals' identities and literacies was possible because emergent bilinguals were invited to draw on and assemble all their communicative repertoires. We valued children's stories and relationships through listening carefully, looking closely, and amplifying, rather than simplifying (Walqui, 2006).

Finally, like many of the studies reviewed in this dissertation, the study highlights young emergent bilinguals' communicative repertoires as being assets for their learning. However, by emphasizing the voices of emergent bilinguals and including them in the year-long designing, the study's use of EDR for collaborative design is significant and offers an innovative way to actively reframe linguistic and cultural capital as social capital within children's worlds. It also recognizes the multiliteracies perspective of "design processes" (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015) to support emergent bilinguals and translanguaging, while acknowledging the realities and contradictions in this work with young children.

7.5 Overall implications, insights, and connections

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 offered specific implications and reflections related to the data, processes, and ideas discussed within them; the following section outlines broad findings, implications, connections, and interrelated ideas from the dissertation overall.

7.5.1 Theoretical implications and connections

Operating within larger socio-historic contexts and ideologies, many families (including some in my study) and teachers discourage multilingual students from speaking their home languages in school. Scholars (Cummins, 2017, 2019a; Flores & Rosa, 2015) have argued that systemic bias, based on monolingual views of multilingual education, still permeates the public education system, and that raciolinguistic agendas often lie at the core of deficit perspectives directed towards multilingual communities. Thus, paying attention to translanguaging as a theoretical and pedagogical framework can be useful for teachers in critically understanding the fluid and powerful language practices of the multilinguals in their classroom. This work contributed to insights on translanguaging theory related to structural contexts that constrain and challenge the lived experience of young emergent bilinguals. Through this critical framing, the study acknowledged the need to consider inherent inequities and hierarchies of named languages as part of translanguaging's transformative agenda.

This study places relationships and connections as nested within theoretical ideas about how children learn languages and literacies. To do this, it foregrounds children's stories and voices, because as Dyson (2016) reminds us, "every child is a unique story" (p. 16). As discussed in the introductory chapter, these stories offer glimpses of children's capacities, bridge their lifeworlds, and ask us to pause and reflect. What is important in education, is not only the creation of knowledge, or focusing on the means of communication, but also the kind of

interactions that transpire between educators and learners, and the learners themselves, and how these relationships of care create spaces of respectful and engaging learning for all (see Figure 7.1). Children's relationships are complex and creative, and play a major role in their socialization, understanding of the world, and in their sense of belonging (David & Kildrey, 2019; Dusi, et al., 2014; Dyson, 2019). This focus on socioemotional interactions highlights children's awareness of themselves and each other as experts that enjoy each other's skills and framings of literacies as inherently interdependent productions.

Figure 7.1: Holding space, Harini's reflective art



As I considered the ways in which the children, the teacher, and I collaborated, I felt a sense of immense gratitude, and also sensitivity when faced with trying to transform powerful systems. I wanted the classroom to feel like a space where we supported and held each other, cared for each other's lifeworlds, and thought of this image. I'm not sure whether she is resting and reflecting on the hand or holding onto it for reassurance – maybe both!? I wanted the hand to feel caring and capable of raising her up, and also simply opening supportively when she chooses to rise up by herself.

7.5.2 Pedagogical implications and connections

7.5.2.1 For elementary schools and educators

With reconceptualized practices like some of those discussed in the specific implications within each chapter, classroom teachers' and administrators' practices can play a conscious role

in resisting and subverting traditional English language hierarchy, encouraging children's stories, communicative repertoires, and identities to make their way into official school spaces.

Translanguaging in teaching practice. Before outlining broader connections and implications, I would like to acknowledge a few systemic obstacles that make a shift towards translanguaging a challenge. With the current monolingual mindset in Canadian policy, where learning is framed by the often-unquestioned assumption that 'language' is 'English' or 'French,' teachers work in systems that are not necessarily geared for multilingualism. Despite the number of multilinguals, many teachers do not feel fully prepared to teach "diverse learners" with enough experience, knowledge, and confidence (Banilower et al., 2013; Rowan et al, 2017). Indeed, research has shown that teachers who have knowledge and experiences working with emergent bilinguals in school settings develop more positive attitudes to supporting them compared to those who do not have similar experiences (Cummins & Persad, 2014; Hansen-Thomas et al., 2016). Additionally, common misconceptions and taken-for-granted assumptions about emergent bilinguals include: viewing EAL as a fixed social category, universal applications of how to teach EAL, that teaching EAL is only about teaching English, that teaching EAL is for specialists, social and academic concerns related to time and resources, and seeing education as transmission of knowledge (see Ntelioglou, 2021). Moreover, as Block (2017) pointed out, teachers do not have "unfettered agency," (p. 34) and are conditioned by institutional and societal discourses.

While these challenges exist currently, they emphasize the need for reconceptualized practices and pedagogies that are not only culturally responsive but also *culturally sustaining* (Alim & Paris, 2017). In recognizing that we are all developing our communicative repertoires over the course of our lives and moving from the macro-politics of multilingualism and into the

micro-practices of educators, teachers and researchers can transform into allies and activists (Prasad, 2021). By naturalizing discussions about language, creating inviting spaces – physically and pedagogically – for all languages, making visible the range of our students’ language practices, modelling risk-taking, flexibility, collaboration, and inquiry in the classroom, educators can exert our power to support all learners. Including a wide range of dual language books and various digital resources that include multiple languages permits translanguaging practices to be encouraged and normalized, and concepts of print and metalinguistic awareness consciously developed across many languages (Dagenais, 2013; García & Tupas, 2019; Naqvi et al., 2015). These practices can be gradually designed and applied as sustained cyclical processes, as they were in this dissertation design, and taken up towards transforming pedagogies.

Towards these ends, planning includes more than just content knowledge; it means knowing students and their strengths and challenges through formal and informal assessments (such reading and translating to another language, using multiple languages to respond, learning alongside students, listening, observing, and asking both students and their families). For instance, students could produce and curate a portfolio. In such assessments, García and Kleifgen (2018) explained that multilingual learners “can collect artifacts of their learning and reflect on what they have learned collaboratively with one another, their teacher, and their families” (p. 154). These types of portfolios also permit students to represent their understandings from a multilingual and multimodal perspective where the whole expression of knowledge is more than the sum of its individual elements, permitting the teacher to gain an understanding of the varied competencies of the student. Teachers can also be introduced to tools like Storybooks Canada (Gilman & Norton, 2020) that include research-based teaching prompts that can assess a combination of communicative repertoires.

Another implication for educators relates to finding ways to actively incorporate language-minoritized students' *racial positioning* into their critical understandings and to acknowledge their own listening stances when working with students. Antiracist social transformation cannot be based solely on supporting racialized language-minoritized students in engaging with the normative linguistic practices of White educators. Here Whiteness is viewed as a historical and contemporary subject position that can be situationally constructed and inhabited both by individuals recognized as white and nonwhite, and human and non-human entities in authority (Rosa & Flores, 2017; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). Educators must also work actively to dismantle hierarchies and shift the focus to scrutiny of themselves and others in power to open possibilities for reconceptualizing education (Task Force on Race, Indigeneity, and Social Justice, 2021). With such complicating, teachers move towards thinking of more relational ways to understand their own and their students' language and literacy practices and assessment practices, and creating anti-racist democratic classrooms.

Multimodality in teaching practice. This dissertation's focus on multimodality offers implications towards what it means to learn literacies in landscapes where modes like the digital, the visual, the auditory, and the written coexist and build on one another. As made explicit in Chapter 5, the notion of transmodal semiosis (Newfield, 2015; Stein, 2008; Van Leeuwen, 2015) speaks to the semiotic mobility inherent in using multiple modes for the articulation of meaning, including using language. Teachers need to recognize that as children participate in remaking meaning and re-signifying opportunities, they are performing literate activities, elaborating on particular features and adding fresh information through new modes according to their needs.

Implications for pedagogical practice on *transmodal semiosis* deal with having an awareness of different foci, affordances and constraints of different modes as teachers set up

transmodal task instructions and criteria for assessment. Some considerations for educators enacting these ideas, especially with emergent bilinguals, include paying attention to moment-by-moment learning in small groups, making explicit instances of transmodal semiosis, acknowledging the multiplicative effect of this type of learning, pooling expertise and working collaboratively, recognizing how knowledge and understanding can be credited and validated however they are demonstrated – especially in modes beyond speech and writing (Kendrick 2016; Stein, 2008). Many of these ideas correspond well with translanguaging practices, too. However, we need to recognize that solutions do not only involve stacking yet more methods and criteria for assessment and decision-making on already busy teachers. Intricately detailed analysis is simply not feasible in everyday classroom practice nor is constant attention to process. Nevertheless, “being pedagogically alert to responses beyond those that are linguistic and that might be diminutive and fleeting” (Mavers, 2015) is one way towards this goal.

Another connection relates to *multimodal practices and collaboration*. Intentionally offering space for productive discussion and consciously facilitating collaborative approaches that involve multiple modes can engage the reciprocal relationship between multimodal and multilingual practices. In this way, all students would be able to produce multilingual productions when working with emergent bilinguals and build on relationships. While acknowledging that power still operates within intergroup dynamics and that not all students enjoy collaborative work, an atmosphere of caring, cooperative inquiry might change classroom cultures for emergent bilinguals. Consciously offering time when play, art, and other literacies integrate might offer some flexible and informal spaces for collaboration to grow and for children to recognize each other’s communicative repertoires (Dyson, 2016; Mavers, 2011). As in Woodley and Brown’s (2016) study in a superdiverse Grade 5 classroom, we can look beyond

“mirrors and windows” and recognize that multilingual students can lead the way by opening “doors for all students to really be a part of class, and for students to learn from each other in new ways using language to start some really important conversations about culture.” (p. 98)

Valuing play, art, and inquiry-based learning as generative for all learners because the diverse possibilities *creative methods* offer is a connection across all the chapters. These methods ask educators to embrace practices to learn and teach in mainstream classrooms in ways that are culturally sustaining, creative and rigorous. Whether this implies learning new techniques, expanding teachers’ repertoires to enhance and support learners’ creativity, or embracing opportunities for playful and collaborative construction (see Kendrick, 2015; OECD, 2018; Sawyer, 2017; Wohlgend, 2015), these methods develop a more intimate and detailed understanding of children’s stories and about how they learn. Creative and multimodal methods ask us to pause amidst the momentum of daily classroom life, balance freedom and structure, share risk and responsibility with students and families, but importantly remind us that *how* we make knowledge is also critical.

7.5.2.2 For teacher education

Translanguaging and teacher education. In offering implications for teacher education from the perspective of translanguaging pedagogies, I build on the large canon of literature developed by teacher educators and researchers preparing teacher candidates for diverse classrooms (see Kleyn, 2016; Villegas et al., 2018; Wernicke et al., 2021). Preservice teacher education plays a key role in expanding pedagogies that consider linguistic repertoires and identities of their students, towards creating a classroom culture of inclusion (Abiria et al., 2013; Coady, et al., 2016; Moore, 2021; Stille et al., 2016).

Recognizing that many teacher candidates (TCs) may have different “entry points” to understanding translinguaging is key. Encouraging teacher educators and TCs to decolonize thinking and interrogate how normative practices sustain racial and linguistic hierarchies in society becomes important (Task Force on Race, Indigeneity, and Social Justice, 2021). The inclusion of critical multilingual practices as useful for *all* teachers offers a space for a nuanced examination of the relationships between teacher education and TCs’ identities and ways these support equity-oriented practices (Shank Lauwo et al., in press).

Embedding more concrete experiences of, and strategies for, translinguaging pedagogy; and building on existing use of accessible multilingual resources in coursework offer another direction. Encouraging TCs to complete course readings in multiple languages, forming small groups with same language speakers, and exposing all students to multilingual presentations to develop new experiences with languages. Other ideas include encouraging TCs to plan for translinguaging while connecting with curriculum and standards, to include these as part of their practicum strategies, and offering them a chance to move from theorizing to experiencing to enacting translinguaging (Kleyn, 2016; Menken & Sánchez, 2019; Stille et al., 2016).

Also offering implications for teacher education and professional development, García et al. (2016) identify three dimensions in instruction that take up translinguaging: the teacher’s stance, the teacher’s design, and the teacher’s shifts. Rather than consider the inclusion of a child’s language in the classroom as temporary (as one might with a scaffolding stance where home language is used until English proficiency is reached), translinguaging call for a *transformative stance*, which values the power of languages in themselves and transforms students’ subjectivities. Emerging from this stance, is an idea of *design*. For teachers to design instruction based on translinguaging theory requires three elements: 1) constructing

collaborative/cooperative structures, 2) collecting varied multilingual and multimodal instructional resources, and 3) using translanguaging pedagogical practices. Since translanguaging “stems from an understanding of language from the speaker up” (García & Kylen, 2016, p. 23), teachers respond to individual repertoires and small group differences by being prepared to *shift* their learning design as necessary. My study engaged with these three dimensions of translanguaging practice through the teacher and my translanguaging stance, pedagogical design, and flexible and shifting understanding of the design with the children within the multilingual classroom. We worked as knowledge generators so that languages were constructing not constricting children’s learning (Cummins, 2019a; Marshall & Toohey, 2010).

Multimodality and teacher education. There is a need for explicit and effective instructional strategies about how multimodality supports the learning of multilingual students in the classroom. Rather than consider multilingual and multimodal practices individually, TCs can engage with how creative and multimodal methods offers the potential to express powerfully affective dimensions of language learning and academic growth that are not often voiced by multilingual learners (Cummins et al., 2015; Stein, 2008). University researchers and educators could also share multilingual and multimodal data with teacher candidates and discuss their interpretations of data in small groups. Equipped with these experiences, TCs can work more effectively with emergent bilinguals by understanding how they use translanguaging and multimodality towards transformative learning.

Instead of thinking about children’s multimodal creations, especially drawing and visual productions, as additional, extemporaneous, or outside the context of their academic learning, “their work deserves to be treated seriously, and to be taught by teachers who have the knowledge in-house to do so” (Van Leeuwen, 2015, p. 584). This argument offers considerations

for TCs to learn techniques and processes especially related to understanding creative and multimodal methods as ways to access children's lifeworlds. Additionally, these practices reinforce the need for TCs to learn about plans and assessment criteria that will help them understand the quality of collaborations and multimodal literacies and how these may be transformative for emergent bilinguals (Grapin, 2019; Hopperstad, 2010; Reed, 2014). Finally, by creating their own multimodal compositions, TCs may become aware of their personal language and literacy biases and acknowledge that teachers serve as adjudicators who may reinforce or reject normative ideologies (Deroo & Ponzio, 2021; McTavish & Filipenko, 2016).

7.5.3 Implications related to families

Many multilingual families, especially from immigrant and refugee backgrounds, have varying levels of education and interest in traditional schooling and involve themselves in varied ways in children's early learning at home and school. For instance, immigrant parents who have more education in their home country find it easier to draw on their own educational experiences and replicate some of those instructional approaches to support their children's learning (Li, 2006). Some others like Anh's mother (from Chapter 3) may not make connection with the traditional school context. Others may have experienced what Marshall and Toohey (2010) described as "the institutional violence of schooling in the form of literacy and language practices that often ignore, attempt to remediate, or devalue the lives and experiences of children and their families" (p. 222). These perspectives also point to different intersectional understandings about literacy learning and expectations of involvement among teachers and families depending on home cultures, histories, socioeconomic, and racial disparities (Daniel & Pacheco, 2016; Iannacci, 2016; Pushor & Amendt, 2018; Wiltse, 2015).

By recognizing these assumptions, educators can create a classroom environment that fosters positive home-school partnerships in optimal ways – by inviting conversations and projects with families, or connecting with groups that support (im)migrants, for instance. Educators can reflect critically on how their actions and attitudes, no matter how well intentioned, can silence and marginalize families. Critiques of “funds of knowledge” (Moll, et al., 1992) point to the need for disrupting discourses of deficit and for reflexive practice to avoid imposing our own, however well-intentioned, cultural arbitrariness on learners (Rios-Aguilar et al., 2011; Oughton, 2010). While family participation is a worthwhile goal, inquiries-based practices that consider families ways of participation and discussions might enhance teachers’ reflections towards recontextualising funds of knowledge and ways of knowing into school curriculum. In my study, for instance, some children reported that their families did not actively respond to their requests for language support or photo taking in the home while other families showed enthusiastic participation. Given such variance, Sufi and I included a drawing component to the final project so that children could complete the drawing on their own and only need to request their parents for linguistic support, if they so desired. Upon seeing the children’s drawings and writing many more parents responded to the study’s request for language support.

7.5.4 Implications for policy

Reworking the language in policy documents to destigmatize multilingual learners of English can be a worthwhile endeavor. The “Legislation and Policy Glossary” (n.d) of the BC Ministry of Education defines English Language Learners as below:

English Language Learners: Are those whose primary language(s) of the home is/are other than English and who may therefore require additional services in order to develop their individual potential within BC’s school system. Some students speak variations of

English that differ significantly from the English used in broader Canadian society and in school; they may require ELL support.

This definition ties the “individual potential” of multilingual students whose home language is not English to their English language abilities, and as argued in this dissertation, this view does not accommodate for their range of abilities or experiences. Rethinking policy could include awareness about how acronyms such as ELL, EL, ESL, and EAL are categories that are unidimensional, defined by the degree to which individuals vary from standardized English developmental levels as measured by a type of test. The diversity of those labeled EAL learners is misrepresented; it is a deficit label that may have negative consequences for learners that often last for years (Gunderson, 2020; Umansky, 2016). In recognizing that policy lays the foundation for practice, it becomes crucial to think carefully about how these categories might be exclusionary, even if they are intended to support children and families.

An acknowledgment of the value of diverse languages might serve to decolonize educational spaces and present more equitable directions for Canadian schools. I am not suggesting English language support be dismantled completely; rather, I am arguing for the recognition and valuing of all languages within policy as a first step towards understanding that children can be differently and better supported towards the multilingual and multiracial realities of Canada. For instance, The ELL Planning Tool (n.d) is an excellent resource offered by the BC Ministry of Education as a model for instruction and support planning for EAL students, with many research-based, multimodal ideas towards including multilingual students. Inviting students’ home language as a resource towards their academic and socioemotional success, within this planning tool, might present some new and exciting possibilities for educators.

More fundamentally, Viesca and Poza (2019) state that new educational policies often ignore emergent bilinguals' capacities when planning, developing, and implementing strategies. They argue that programs and policies are aimed at quickly remedying students' deficiencies in English towards reclassifying students as "proficient" (removing the ELL label), and then treating students as though they are monolingual for the remainder of their schooling. "These actions posit that English-is-all-that-matters based on monolingual normativity" (p. 74). With this goal, policy decisions often focus on the quick attainment of English outside the parameters of what research suggests is reasonable or desirable. Utilizing the extensive research on multilingual pedagogical practices could lead policy makers to developing inclusive policy that values children's communicative repertoires across their schooling (Cummins, 2018).

Many of the emergent bilinguals in this study received "pull out" language support two or three times a week. While some of the children (like Anh and Jordan) appreciated the special and more personalized instructional time the "pull-out" instruction offered them, it was still something that differentiated the children based on their English proficiency. Given that we work in educational systems where expectations are organized by students' age and grade and the hegemonic power of English in schools and society that are experienced by children, I am not suggesting that "pull-outs" for English support be disregarded. Instead, along with engaging and valuable "pull-out" instruction, encouraging in-class translanguaging and multimodal practices, and using translation technology as a supportive instructional tool (Cummins, 2007; García & Kleyn, 2016; Manyak, 2004) might offer ways to involve emergent bilinguals more fully within classrooms. These practices also situate the locus of control with all the students deploying their multimodal and linguistic resources (including the monolingual students) and integrates a

broader awareness of linguistic diversity, while allowing teachers to facilitate inclusive and participatory pedagogies.

A final policy insight points to connections between the BC Curriculum for elementary students up to 8 years old and the BC Early Learning Framework (Early Learning Framework, 2019). In bridging the early years and primary years, the Early Learning Framework's expanded focus is relevant to working with children (and their families) from birth to eight years. One instance of connection is that the BC Curriculum's Core Competencies and the Framework's Living Inquiries have common philosophies that "support educators in designing environments that are flexible, responsive, and relevant to their local community" (Early Learning Framework, 2019, p. 28). BC Curriculum's three Core Competencies (Communication, Thinking, Personal and Social) correspond to the four domains of Living Inquiries (Well-being and belonging; Engagement with others, materials, and the world; Communication and literacies; Identities, social responsibility, and diversity). If schools and teacher education programs can entwine understandings from the Early Learning Framework into their practices for the early grades, it presents a possibility for a holistic process to center relationships and collective inquiry, build a sustainable and relevant early education system, and create a continuum of learning and care.

7.5.5 Implications related to COVID-19 and other pandemics

As I write this, the notion of four pandemics – the COVID-19 pandemic, the pandemic of systemic racism, the economic crisis, and the climate crisis – together expose the long-standing and deep disparities in our systems (Ladson-Billings, 2021). Many children and families globally are living with increased stress and trauma related to each of these aspects. Reports have identified the education inequalities and the idea of a shadow pandemic referring to learning loss from disrupted schooling for those who were already left behind being further left behind (Bailey

et al., 2021; First Call BC, 2020; UNESCO, 2021, Wong, 2021). These challenges call for ways of understanding and redressing educational disparities and building systems that embrace equity and justice. We can consider these pandemics as opportunities to re-frame and re-set educational systems; as Arundhati Roy (2020) suggested, we can imagine it as a portal to a new world.

Literacies are powerful and break down barriers of time, space, and culture. Earlier, literacy meant an individual could read and write sufficiently to “comply with institutional and social conventions governing work, consumption, leisure and citizenship” (Naqvi, 2015, p. 50). In problematizing and transforming these types of relations, Freire (1972)’s approach to critical literacy was a strategy of decolonizing and shifting our understanding of literacy from conformity to a challenge of normativity and homogeneity (Haddix, 2020). Yet dominant cultures set expectations for normative ideologies and educational frameworks, and cultural power play is at work in the “inclusion and exclusion, of the ‘other’” (Giroux, 1992, p. 7). Acknowledging this type of othering and moving to an integrated approach to learning that encompasses all experiences, values, languages, and cultures offers one portal to a more radically just educational experience, especially for those additionally impacted by the pandemics.

There has long been recognition that education does not only happen in schools but flows everywhere through home, community, school, and the Internet. An approach of revitalization and integration related to education, knowledge, and literacies focuses on achievements of community and culture that also flow across these domains (Eagle Shield et al., 2021; Luke, 2019). Instead of students being placed at risk of failure because of their racial, sociocultural, and socioeconomic status, we need to prioritize inquiry-based practices where educators critically support students and develop the skills to move from the center to the margins. We need education where students access and transform codes of power, and through collaborative

processes like EDR, design pedagogies that value their stories, identities, and communicative repertoires.

The vulnerabilities and inequities exposed by Covid-19 have been present for years and will likely have repercussions for years to come. They will show up in economic hardship, access to technology and Internet, mental health and wellbeing issues, attainment gaps, and educational systems and advocates need to support marginalized children and their families to navigate these challenges. Some of the ideas brought up in this dissertation – including looking closely at multimodal meaning making, valuing languages to support academic and social learning, designing practices along with teachers and children, recognizing systems that constrain, focusing on relationships in the classroom, listening carefully to children’s voices – offer some directions for reimagining education systems.

7.6 Future directions

The findings from this work only provide a glimpse into valuing the communicative repertoires that young emergent bilinguals bring. It draws from many fields including multimodality, translanguaging, childhood studies, and while these fields are replete with examples from important studies, there are specific areas that could benefit from further research.

First, further research is needed to understand the language and literacy practices of emergent bilinguals with understandings of superdiversity (Vertovec, 2007) and with the notion of four pandemics (Ladson-Billings, 2021). It might be insightful for educational researchers to continue examining communicative repertoires with different groups from a longitudinal multi-year view, as was suggested by the principal of the school where I researched. Comparative translanguaging studies across different groups of young children and their teachers might also

be valuable to extend understandings from this study and elaborate on nuances. Further EDR projects with teachers might be helpful to design their own context-specific pedagogical practices to support learners in their classroom. Some ideas include: exploring emergent bilinguals' connections between learning and engagement taking into account families' availability, disposition, and interest in schooling; and, fostering their knowledges, skills, and mindsets required to thrive using digital technologies with an equity-orientation.

Second, in extending scholarship by positioning multimodal ways of knowing as funds of knowledge (Kendrick, 2016; Kress, 2015), the notion of funds of knowledge becomes expanded and the relationship between multimodality and multilingualism becomes more nuanced, especially as both fields grow with understandings of modes as historical and culturally embedded (Kress, 2010; Yamada-Rice, 2015). Research could also include diverse social and geographic locations across the globe where children use multiple modes and multiple languages routinely. This study was undertaken within a particular context in Western Canada but I imagine such research being productively explored in many places where children and families encounter school spaces that differ from their expectations, where children's identities and communicative repertoires can be harnessed towards academic and socioemotional learning.

Another direction that could be further explored relates to children's multimodal design choices and how those choices lead to different learning paths. Just as children speak in different languages, in different ways, they have preferences for their approaches to visual and graphic activity – leaning towards socially-oriented or object-oriented styles, for example (Dyson, 1996). They might make choices because of accessibility of resources, availability of options, perceptions of social acceptance, and preferences related to habit, convenience, cost, or expediency. Ideas for future directions for educators and researchers include: exploring how and

why children make the multimodal design choices they do; investigating how relationships impact children's modal choices; expanding our understanding of how to teach and learn about the interaction between modes; and understanding how systemic and social constraints restrict access to certain modes while privileging other modes.

A potential direction to support early learning and ECED programs and educators to better understand translanguaging and multimodal literacies could include projects with multilingual learners, their families, and their language and literacy practices at early learning centers. Since children attend these programs before making their way to school, these early learning sites offer spaces for reframing understandings about languages and literacies in transformative and flexible ways. This direction also implies that we consider what children, ECED practitioners, policymakers, students, community organizations, and the public need from educational research in these areas. Promising approaches center around the types of questions to ask, asking old questions in new ways, and innovative research methods and methodologies.

Regarding method and methodologies, researcher reflexivity has been developed in qualitative research but not as fully in multimodal research (Kendrick, 2016). A direction that could be explored involves considering reflexivity as a way to better understand, express, and interpret how researchers' personal stories are reflected in our multimodal research, and paying attention to how our "looking inward can lead to a more intelligent and useful *outward gaze*" (Mitchell & Weber, 2005, p.4, original emphasis). Reflexive and iterative ways of looking and reflecting in multimodal research might enable new perspectives, generate different ideas, and offer nuances to the field. Additionally, Davies (2017) explains the notion of emergent listening as one that considers the ways in which researchers need to be open to multiplicities that emerge in moment-to-moment interactions with children. These multiplicities could involve unknown

categories, unanticipated responses, new directions and intentions that emerge in communications with children. These types of new directions are also especially generative in EDR methodology. For instance, a possible direction that emerged from this study relates to the unexpected ways in which children not categorized as EAL resisted their diverse linguistic and communicative repertoires. While these children were not the focus of this research, emergent listening practices constructed an entangled image of their understandings and experiences of educational practices, languages, and literacies. A few of them did not want to talk about their home languages or the language lessons they attended on Saturdays; others felt they could use their languages in class only because they were confident in English – “I know how to write in English, so...”; and, one child felt that drawing in his journal was a waste of time and preferred to practice cursive writing. I wonder about the stories, perspectives, and the productive entanglements I might access through emergent listening of all children’s nuanced interactions with multilingual and multimodal literacies.

7.7 Closing thoughts

The imagination is necessary to reflect on past experiences, to conceive alternatives, to consider consequences, to feel possibilities, and to create means to reach those ends. Stories, as outlined in the introduction, bridge experience and imagination. Through the imagination we can move beyond the here and now and imagine other ways of doing things, and believe that as Arundhati Roy said, “another world is not only possible, she is on her way” (World Social Forum, 2003).

The work here is one such imagining. By focusing on emergent bilinguals, their identities, repertoires, and stories, this study offered one way to bridge children’s lifeworlds through collaboratively designing pedagogies. It emerged from a space that centers the heart and

the mind, paying attention to young children in their stories of being and the becoming (Davies, 2014). While each of the chapters represented different learning contexts, one way to understand learning is as a constantly emerging relational process, as a co-emergent phenomenon where students, teachers, texts, and processes grow together dynamically (Dewey, 1934; Pinar, 2015). In engaging with this complexity, the focus is on iterative, collaborative, and gradually evolving processes and critical and creative reflection, rather than only on the final product – the drawing, the photograph, the conversation, and the paragraph once they are finished. With this work, I hope to have represented this process of designing intentional and respectful practices, blurring the boundaries between research, practice, and play to promote a community of care.

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Appendices

Appendix A : Letters of Invitation and Initial contact

A.1 Letter of invitation to teacher

Dear _____,

We are inviting you to participate in a study about the various types of communication styles that children bring with them to school, especially with regard to their home languages, literacy practices, and cultures. Mrs. Harini Rajagopal, a PhD student at the University of British Columbia, will be conducting the study. The study is part of her requirements for a PhD degree.

Mrs. Rajagopal's collaborative study will use in-class projects as a way to understand how various ways of communication (including photography, writing, drawing, discussion, and different languages) may support children to express themselves. Multiple means of communication, including spoken language and visual methods, can strengthen children's reading and writing abilities. Mrs. Rajagopal would like to work together with you on these projects as part of your regular classroom activities.

While the whole class participates in the study with a photo project in the beginning, two students who are English language learners (ELL) will be separately invited to be focal participants. This is to understand how ELLs might use different ways to creatively communicate information about themselves and how classrooms might better value ELLs' contributions. Notes from the study will be shared with you in order to facilitate collaboration and extension of ideas.

If you consent to participating in this study, Mrs. Rajagopal would like to work with you and your grade 2 class at school from September 2017 until June 2018. This would include:

- 1) Observations at school:
 - These would take place during regular classroom hours including recess and lunch periods on the playground, field notes, informal conversations, and collection of project work focusing on your grade 2 class' activities.
 - They would take place twice per week and at varying times during the day so that the observations will encompass the entire school day.
- 2) Photo project:
 - This will be an in-class project that the whole class participates in. After discussion as a group, which will be facilitated by you and Mrs. Rajagopal, children will take photographs of their activities or interests at home, using home or school cameras or phone cameras, and come up with words in class to further describe the photo.
- 3) Inquiry project:
 - This will be an in-class project that the whole class participates in and conducted in collaboration with you and Mrs. Rajagopal. After discussion, children will determine a topic for their inquiry. Mrs. Rajagopal will collect copies of the focal

children's work including writing, photography, planning documents, artwork, and/or any project-related work. In consultation with you, she will also engage the focal children in informal discussions to understand what she/he thinks of the project.

4) Informal Interviews

- Two informal interviews of about 30-45 minutes each will be conducted with you at the start and end of the study to learn more about your ideas on the projects. The interviews will be audio recorded and will be conducted at a time which is convenient to you. In addition, Mrs. Rajagopal and you may meet 2-3 times during the course of the study to plan and discuss the unfolding of the projects.

The study will help teachers and researchers understand how to better support all children's communication in general. There is the possibility that engaging in creative communicative practices offers new ways to think about teaching and learning in the 21st Century.

You may withdraw from participating in this study at any time. Once the study is completed, Mrs. Rajagopal will write articles for research journals and to present at conferences. She may include samples of your class' work, but will not use any real names or identifying information. Summarized reports based on these presentations and articles will be available to all participants.

If you are interested in obtaining more information about, or participating in this study, please call or email Mrs. Rajagopal to set up a meeting to discuss more details. At the end of the meeting, consent forms will be available should you wish to participate.

Thank you for your consideration.

Harini Rajagopal
Dr. Jim Anderson
Dr. Maureen Kendrick
Department of Language & Literacy Education, UBC
Ph: xxx-xxx-xxxx
Email: xxx@xxx.edu

A.2 Letter of invitation to families

Dear parents/guardians,

We are inviting your child to participate in a study about the various types of communication styles that children bring with them to school, especially with regard to their home languages, literacy practices, and cultures. Mrs. Harini Rajagopal, a PhD student at the University of British Columbia, will be conducting the study. The study is part of her requirements for a PhD degree.

Mrs. Rajagopal's study will use in-class projects as a way to understand how various ways of communication (including photography, writing, drawing, discussion, and different languages) may support children to express themselves. Multiple means of communication, including spoken language and visual methods, can strengthen children's reading and writing abilities. Mrs. Rajagopal and the teacher will work together on these projects as regular classroom activities. She will also be interviewing the classroom teacher about her ideas on various types of communicative practices in the classroom.

While the whole class participates in the study in the beginning, two students who are English language learners (ELL) will be separately invited to be focal participants. This is to understand how ELLs might use different ways to creatively communicate information about themselves and how classrooms might better value ELLs' contributions.

If you consent to your child participating in this study, Mrs. Rajagopal would like to work with your grade 2 child at school from September 2017 until June 2018. This would include:

1) Observations at school:

- These would take place during regular classroom hours including recess and lunch periods on the playground, field notes, informal conversations, and collection of project work focusing on your grade 2 child's activities.
- They would take place twice per week and at varying times during the day so that the observations will encompass the entire school day.

2) Photo project:

- This will be an in-class project that the whole class participates in. After discussion, children will take photographs of their activities or interests at home, using home or school cameras or phone cameras, and later come up with words to further describe the photo.

The study will help teachers and researchers understand how to better support all children's communication in general. There is the possibility that engaging in creative communicative practices offers new ways to think about teaching and learning in the 21st Century.

You or your child may withdraw from participating in this study at any time. Once the study is completed, Mrs. Rajagopal will write articles for research journals and to present at conferences.

She may include samples of your grade 2 child's work, but will not use your children's or your real names. Reports based on these presentations and articles will be available to all participants.

If you are interested in obtaining more information about, or participating in this study, please fill in the form below and return it to your child's teacher by _____. Once all the forms are collected, an information meeting will be arranged to discuss the study in detail and answer any questions you may have. At the end of the meeting, consent forms will be available should you wish to participate. If you would prefer email or telephone contact, Mrs. Rajagopal will be happy to provide more information about the study via those means.

Thank you for your consideration.

Harini Rajagopal
Dr. Jim Anderson
Dr. Maureen Kendrick
Ph: xxx-xxx-xxxx
Email: xxx@xxx.edu

Appendix B : Consent Forms and Assent Scripts

B.1 Teacher consent form

Dear _____

Study team:

Harini Rajagopal

Dr. Jim Anderson

Dr. Maureen Kendrick

Department of Language and Literacy Education, UBC

Ph: xxx-xxx-xxxx

Email: xxx@xxx.edu

Why are we doing this study?

We are trying to understand the various types of communication styles that children bring with them to school, especially with regard to their home languages, literacy practices, and cultures. We will be using projects that will be “multimodal”, which means that they may include writing, visual images (e.g., photographs, drawings, other art), and oral language (e.g., conversations in class, group discussions for the project). This research will be conducted as regular classroom activities together with the children in the classroom and with your support.

In today's world, it is important for children to know how to understand and communicate in various “modes” along with reading and writing, and to offer them many ways to express themselves (e.g., through art, play, movement). We want to better understand how children might use different ways to creatively communicate information about themselves. We are also looking at the ways in which these types of communication may be valued within the context of the classroom. This research is for the co-investigator’s doctoral thesis.

How is the study done?

We will be working on two multimodal projects that use various ways of expression (including photography, drawing, discussion) with you and the children in the class. The co-investigator will be helping with all of these activities.

If you agree to participate in the research, we will interview you at the start and at the end of the study to understand your thoughts on the children’s multimodal communication and the ways in which the projects unfolded. We will also have two or three planning meetings, for about 45-60 minutes, to discuss ideas and directions for the projects. These informal meetings will be audio-recorded to understand the ways in which we collaboratively plan the project.

One of the projects will be for the children to take photographs of their activities or interests at home. We will discuss the directions for this project with the children in class and send a note home to help the children decide what to choose to take pictures of. We will discuss the photographs in class, and come up with words to describe the photo. Another project will involve the children in the class engaging in an inquiry that involves understanding their multimodal

meaning making and the various languages and resources that they bring from their homes to assist them in working on the inquiry project. Those children whose families do not consent to the study will still be able to participate since the activities will be part of their regular classroom; however, their work will not be included in the study.

After gaining permission from them and their parents, two students who are English language learners (ELLs) will also be informally interviewed at the start and at the end of the study about their project work. The interviews will proceed only at a time that is convenient for the class. The interviews will be audio recorded and will be conducted individually. In addition, their class work will also be collected. This may include writing, photography, artwork, and/or any project-related work that they create using a computer or iPad. The co-investigator will also visit the focal children's homes a few times to get a sense of their home communication practices and languages. Small hand-held audio recorders and cameras will be used to collect data.

During the course of the research, the children in your class will be observed twice a week when they are working on the projects. The co-investigator will be taking field notes, as well as engaging with the children in informal conversations and group discussions during class time about the projects. Notes on these will be shared with you in order to facilitate collaboration and extension of ideas.

Duration.

Classroom observations and project work, which will be part of regular classroom activities, will take place twice a week during the months of September 2017 to June 2018, unless otherwise agreed upon by the you, the co-investigator, and school principal. The researchers will not observe the class for an entire day. Interviews with you and the two ELL children it will last about 30-45 minutes each, depending on how much you have to say. The co-investigator will conduct the interviews at times that are convenient to you and your students.

Communication of research results.

The results of this study will be reported in a doctoral thesis. We may also publish results in professional and research journals, and share results with teachers and researchers at national and international academic conferences. A report of research findings will also be submitted to Learning Services, Vancouver School Board. Summarized reports based on these presentations and articles will be available to all participants. Please include your email or mailing address with this consent form if you would like a copy. We will be happy to review and discuss the findings from the study with you once it is completed.

Is there any possible harm from this study?

There are no known risks to participating in this study.

What are the benefits of participating?

The study will help teachers and researchers understand how to better support all children's communication in general, and to collaborate on classroom practices to better engage English language learners in particular. There is the possibility that engaging in creative communicative

practices that are motivated by children's interests offers new ways to think about teaching and learning in the 21st Century.

Measures to maintain confidentiality.

All identities will be kept strictly confidential. You and your students will not be named in any reports. We will use a made up name for you and the focal children. Computer files containing data will be password protected and will only be accessed on the researcher's personal computer. Only the researchers and participants will have access to the information collected during the study.

Refusals.

You and your students have the right to refuse to participate at any time; it is not a problem if you do not wish to be observed or photographed. You have the right to withdraw your consent to participate at any time.

Who can you contact if you have questions about the study?

We will be happy to answer your questions about the research at any time. Please do not hesitate to contact us either in person, by e-mail, or by telephone.

Who can you contact if you have complaints or concerns about the study?

If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1-877-822-8598.

Consent.

You understand that your participation in this research is completely voluntary, and that you have freely and willingly consented to participate in this research project. You may withdraw your consent at any time without any consequences whatsoever.

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information above and have been given a copy of this consent form for your own records.

I consent / do not consent (circle one) to participate in this study.

Name (please print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Email or address for study results (if you wish to have it):

B.2 Families' consent form

Dear _____

Study team:

Harini Rajagopal

Dr. Jim Anderson

Dr. Maureen Kendrick

Department of Language and Literacy Education, UBC

Ph: xxx-xxx-xxxx

Email: xxx@xxxx.com

Why are we doing this study?

We are trying to understand the various types of communication styles that children bring with them to school, especially with regard to their home languages, literacy practices, and cultures. We will be using projects that will be “multimodal”, which means that they may include writing, visual images (e.g., photographs, drawings, other art), and oral language (e.g., conversations in class, group discussions for the project). This research will be conducted as regular classroom activities together with the children in the classroom and the teacher.

In today's world, it is important for children to know how to understand and communicate in various “modes” along with reading and writing, and to offer children many ways to express themselves (e.g., through art, play, movement). We want to better understand how children might use different ways to creatively communicate information about themselves. This research is for the co-investigator's doctoral thesis.

How is the study done?

We will be working on a project that will use various ways of communication (including photography, writing, and discussion) with your child, the other children in the class, and the teacher. The teacher and the co-investigator will be helping with this project. We will also be interviewing the classroom teacher about her ideas on various types of communicative practices in the classroom.

The study will take place as part of the regular classroom curriculum. The only research activities that will take place in the classroom that might distinguish themselves from the children's regular classroom work are observations of the classroom. Even if your child chooses to not participate in the study, she/he can take part in the classroom activities. In that case, she/he will not be observed and her/his work will not be collected.

One of the projects will be for your child to take photographs of his/her activities or interests in your home. The teacher and co-investigator will discuss suggestions and ideas for this project with the children in class and send a note home to help your child decide what to choose to take pictures of. The children will take photos at home and we will discuss the photographs in class, and come up with words to further describe the photo. If any family members are included in the children's photos at home, they will be given a photo release form to give permission in case

their photos will be used in the study, else the photos will not be used.

If you agree to your child's participation in the research, your child will be observed during class twice a week when he/she is working on the photography project. The co-investigator will be taking field notes, as well as having informal conversations and group discussions with the children when working with the teacher on this project. Again, your child's participation or lack of participation in the study will not affect how the classes proceed since these will be regular classroom activities.

After this photo project, the teacher and the co-investigator will plan an inquiry project with the children for the rest of the study. After that point, two students who are English language learners will be invited to be focal participants once permission has been received from their parents. Small hand-held audio recorders and cameras will be used to collect data from the focal children.

While we do not want to audio record or photograph the students who are not focal participants, occasionally there may be times where your child is recorded by chance during small group work. In order to protect your child's confidentiality and privacy, we need consent from you to record your child. Students who do not have consent who are "captured" by chance on audio or in photographs will be edited out of those sections using editing software so as not to include those children. Photographs and audio will only be seen and heard by the co-investigator and the co-investigator's graduate committee. You or your child may withdraw permission at any time.

Duration.

Classroom observations and project work, which will be part of regular classroom activities, will take place twice a week during the months of September 2017 to June 2018, unless otherwise agreed upon by the co-investigator, teacher, and school principal. The researchers will not observe the class for an entire day.

Communication of research results.

The results of this study will be reported in a doctoral thesis. We may also publish results in professional and research journals, and share results with teachers and researchers at national and international academic conferences. A report of research findings will also be submitted to Learning Services, Vancouver School Board. Summarized reports based on these presentations and articles will be available to all participants and will focus on findings and implications. Please include your email or mailing address with this consent form if you would like a copy. Photographs may appear in any of these above publications and/or presentations.

Is there any possible harm from this study?

There are no known risks to participating in this study.

What are the benefits of participating?

The study will help teachers and researchers understand how to better support all children's communication in general, and to collaborate on classroom practices to better engage English language learners in particular. There is the possibility that engaging in creative communicative

practices that are motivated by children's interests offers new ways to think about teaching and learning in the 21st Century.

Measures to maintain confidentiality.

All identities will be kept strictly confidential. Your child will not be named in any reports. We will use a made up name for your child. However, photographs may appear in any of the reports or publications and/or presentations. Computer files containing data will be password protected and will only be accessed on the researcher's personal computer. Only the researchers and participants will have access to the information collected during the study.

Refusals.

Your child has the right to refuse to participate at any time; it is not a problem if your child does not wish to be observed or photographed, or chooses for his or her work not to be included in the project. You or your child may withdraw permission at any time.

Who can you contact if you have questions about the study?

We will be happy to answer your questions about the research at any time. Please do not hesitate to contact us either in person, by e-mail, or by telephone.

Who can you contact if you have complaints or concerns about the study?

If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1-877-822-8598.

Consent.

You understand that you are granting permission for your child to participate in the study, to having your child's responses during the group meetings noted, and for his/her photographs and work to be collected. You understand that your child's participation in this research is completely voluntary, and that you have freely and willingly consented for your child to participate in this research project. You may withdraw your consent at any time without any consequences whatsoever. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information above and have been given a copy of this consent form for your own records.

I consent / do not consent (circle one)

for my child _____ (name) to participate in this study.

Parent/Guardian's Name (please print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Email or address for study results (if you wish to have it): _____

B.3 Oral assent script for all children

Hi everyone!

As you know, I am studying how children express themselves and learn through various ways of communication like drawing, photography, speaking, acting, playing, and writing, and through various languages.

I am now inviting you and your classmates to participate in a Photovoice project. Photovoice is a photographic research method. It involves the people in a study taking photographs related to their lives about a topic. These pictures are then shared with other study participants (the children in your classroom) and discussed. Captions or descriptions explaining the pictures and why it is important can be attached to the photographs.

For this project, I am inviting you to take photographs of your activities or interests in your home. Your teacher and I will discuss more details of this project with you over a few meetings, and send a note home to help you decide what to choose to take pictures of. After that, we will discuss the photographs in class, and come up with words to further describe the photo.

The purpose of this project is to learn more about you! We are seeking to learn more about what you do at home, the different ways you read and write, the languages you speak and use, your culture, the things you enjoy doing, what aspects you think are important for your life. If you take pictures of family members, they will have to fill out a form giving you permission to take the photos.

We will plan and discuss the project in class over a few days. We will go over the timings of the project, see some examples of photos, discuss what you can expect to do, think about some ideas for how to work on it in class and at home. You will have every chance to ask questions. If you have any questions, you may ask your teacher or me at any time.

Other teachers, researchers, policy makers, students, and people from the school and the community may see your photo. Your photos and words might be used as part of my study. We will not include your name when the study results from this photo project are shared with others.

Participation is of your own choice and you may refuse to participate, stop or withdraw from the project at any time.

Do you have any questions?

B.4 Oral assent script for all families

Hi!

I am studying how children express themselves and learn through various ways of communication like drawing, photography, speaking, acting, playing, and writing, and through various languages. I am hoping to understand how these different means of communication may help schools support all young children, but especially those who are English language learners.

Over the next few months, I would like to observe your child while he or she works at school on various classroom projects that the teacher and I will work together on with the whole class. If you agree, I will observe in your child's class several times a week while he or she writes, acts, speaks, or draws at school. Also, the teacher and I will have group discussions with the class on the projects.

In particular the first project that the whole class works on will be a photo project. This will involve your child taking photographs of his/her activities or interests in your home. The teacher and I will discuss this project with the children, and send a note home to help your child decide what to choose to take pictures of. The children will take photos at home and we will discuss the photographs in class, and come up with words to further describe the photo.

After this photo project, the teacher and I will plan an inquiry project with the children for the rest of the study. After that point, two students who are English language learners will be invited to be focal participants for the study.

If at any time you or your child would like to stop participating in the study, that will be alright. In that case, the projects will be ongoing as regular classroom activities but his or her work will not be collected. Please don't hesitate to tell me and we can discontinue the study (or stop right away).

Do you have any questions?

B.5 Oral assent script for focal families

Hi _____!

I am studying how children express themselves and learn through various ways of communication like drawing, photography, speaking, acting, playing, and writing, and through various languages like the ones you use at home. I am hoping to understand how these means of communication may help schools support young children who are English Language Learners.

As you know, I've been working with your child's class and the teacher on a photography project. Over the next few months, I would like to observe your child while he or she works at school on various classroom projects that the teacher and I will work together on with the whole class. If you agree, I will observe in your child's class several times a week while he or she writes, acts, speaks, plays, or draws at school. Also, I will make copies of his/her work – including writing, drawing, art, photography – as part of the study.

In addition, I would like to visit your child at home and see what types of communication practices she/he uses at home. Your child might be doing homework, using the computer, drawing pictures for fun, reading, talking with you or others, playing, or any number of things like that. I will write down some of what happens during these sessions, and may ask to take digital photos of your child's work.

At the start and at the end of the study, I would like to interview your child about her or his types of communication at school and at home, for about a half an hour at a time. I will make audiotapes of these interviews.

If at any time you or your child would like to stop participating in the study, that will be alright. In that case, the projects will be ongoing as regular classroom activities but his or her work will not be collected. Please don't hesitate to tell me and we can discontinue the study (or stop right away).

Do you have any questions?

Appendix C : Interview Questions

C.1 Teacher interview questions (exploratory)

Background

1. Please tell me about your
 - a. Educational background and teacher training
 - i. Literacy training and coursework
 - ii. Educational experiences with multimodality, multilingual, culturally responsive teaching
 - b. Professional experiences with
 - i. Culturally and linguistically diverse children and families
 - ii. English language learners
 - iii. multimodal ways of teaching and learning

Literacy

1. How would you define literacy?
2. What are some of the instructional methods and materials that you use to teach literacy to students in your classroom?
3. Please tell me how you usually decide what resources or materials to use and when?
4. Have you used multimodal techniques in your class and, if yes, how have those experiences been?
5. Would you please be able to give me an example (or more) of a successful literacy activity for the students in your class?

Multilingualism and multimodality

1. Please tell me a little about the composition of your class?
 - a. Could you elaborate on this as it relates to children's home languages and cultures?
2. Have you observed the children in your class bring their home languages into the classroom? What about their home cultures and other understandings from their home?
 - a. What are some of the ways they do this?
 - b. Do you believe this to be valuable?
 - c. What about the English language learners in this regard?
3. Have you observed the children in your class bringing in their various communication styles? These could be through drawing, singing, acting, dancing, playing, through their choice of reading, or ways of talking, for example.
 - a. What are some of the ways they do this?
 - b. Do you believe this to be valuable?
 - c. What about the English language learners in this regard?
4. How do your understandings and responsibilities as a teacher intersect with the your students' home languages, cultures, and personal skills and interests?
 - a. Do you believe that this space of intersection influences your practice in some way?
 - b. What are some of the constraints and benefits offered by this intersection for your

practice as a teacher?

BC's Redesigned Curriculum

1. How do you understand the Redesigned Curriculum?
2. What do you think are the most significant changes in the Redesigned Curriculum?
 - a. How might this affect your practice?
 - b. How do you think this will affect the children in your class?
3. Please tell me how you might see BC's Redesigned Curriculum offering a way to understand the skills and resources that all children bring to the classroom.

Is there anything else you would like to add, perhaps something we have not touched on?

C.2 Teacher interview questions (reflective)

General background

1. How do you believe the research study progressed from the time we began to now that we are finished with the in-class projects?
2. What are the aspects you enjoyed?
3. What aspects were challenging and would you have done differently?
4. Do you believe there was any benefit to your participation in the study? Please explain.
5. Do you believe there was any benefit to your students' participation in the study? Please explain.

Photo project

1. After class discussions, we began with the photo project. What aspects of this do you think were successful and what could be changed?
2. What aspects of children's home languages, cultures, and experiences that they brought in through this project stood out for you?
3. Do you believe that the students engaged with this process?
4. What do you think they learned from it?
5. What are the main things you learned from it?
 - a. In general
 - b. In particular, about how it relates to children's home languages, cultures, and experiences

Inquiry Project

1. Informed by class discussions, we began an inquiry project. What aspects of this do you think were successful and what could be changed?
2. Do you believe that all the students engaged with this process?
3. What do you think they learned from it?
4. What are the main things you learned from it?
 - a. In general
 - b. In particular, about how it relates to all the children's home languages, cultures, and experiences
 - c. In particular, about how it relates to the focal children's home languages, cultures, and experiences
5. How do you think the multimodal nature of the inquiry contributed to children's understanding of the topics/themes they chose?
 - a. What about the focal children in particular?

Student discussions

We engaged in many group discussions and explorations as a class in order to decide many aspects of both the photo and the inquiry project.

1. How do you think the children responded to these types of discussions?
2. What did you think of the children's participation during the discussions?
 - a. In general
 - b. What about the focal children's participation?
3. What did you learn from this?
 - a. In general
 - b. In particular, about the focal children

Pedagogical practices

We engaged in many group discussions and explorations as a class, conducted a photo project and an inquiry project together with the children.

1. How may such projects bring value (or not) to English language learners' experiences and understandings by accessing a way for them to communicate multimodally?
 - a. What about the value of these projects for the other students in your class?
2. Having collaborated on the research, how do think your understandings and responsibilities as a teacher intersect with the your students home languages, cultures, and personal skills and interests?
 - a. Do you think this space of intersection will influence your practice going ahead? Please explain.
 - b. What are the constraints and benefits offered by this intersection for your practice as a teacher?
3. How do you think these projects interacted with BC's Redesigned Curriculum?
 - a. Do you think this research contributed to a better way for you to negotiate the expectations of the new curriculum? Please explain.
 - b. What aspects of this project did not align with the Redesigned Curriculum?
4. Do you think your teaching practice has changed/might change after this research process? Please explain.
 - a. What aspects of change do you think will be easy to incorporate?
 - b. What might be challenging?
 - c. How sustainable might these changes be for the future?

C.3 Resource Teacher interview

Background Information

1. Please tell me about your
 - a. Educational background and teacher training
 - i. Literacy training and coursework
 - ii. Educational experiences with multimodality, multilingual, culturally responsive teaching
 - b. Professional experiences with
 - i. Culturally and linguistically diverse children and families
 - ii. English language learners
 - iii. multimodal ways of teaching and learning

BC's Redesigned Curriculum

4. How do you understand the Redesigned Curriculum?
5. What do you think are the most significant changes in the Redesigned Curriculum?
 - a. How might this affect your work?
 - b. How do you think this will affect the children in your school?
 - c. How do you think this will affect the teachers in your school?
6. Please tell me how you might see BC's Redesigned Curriculum offering a way to understand the skills and resources that all children bring to school.
7. What might be some challenges that the Redesigned Curriculum presents to practice and pedagogy, and the education system as it currently is?

Understanding of the study

1. As a resource teacher, how did you understand the study and see it evolving over time?
2. Were there observations or experiences that the students shared with you about the study, or about home languages, literacies learning in general?
3. Do you believe there was any benefit to the students' participation in the study? Please explain.
4. What about challenges to the students and the teacher?

Multilingualism, multimodality, and school systems

5. How do your understandings and responsibilities as an educator intersect with your students' home languages, cultures, and personal skills and interests?
 - a. Do you believe that this space of intersection influences your work in some way?
 - b. What are some of the constraints and benefits offered by this intersection for your work as an educator?
6. What are your thoughts on what school systems do currently and how school systems might evolve to support *students'* home languages, cultures, and ways of learning? What might be some challenges in this area?
7. What are your thoughts on what school systems do currently and how school systems might evolve to support *teachers'* interaction with students' home languages, cultures, and ways of learning? What might be some challenges in this area?

Is there anything else you would like to add, perhaps something we have not touched on?

C.4 Principal interview questions

Background Information

1. Please tell me about your
 - a. Educational background and teacher training
 - i. Literacy training and coursework
 - ii. Educational experiences with multimodality, multilingual, culturally responsive teaching
 - b. Professional experiences with
 - i. Culturally and linguistically diverse children and families
 - ii. English language learners
 - iii. multimodal ways of teaching and learning
 - c. Administrative experiences with
 - i. This and other schools
 - ii. Culturally and linguistically diverse children and families
 - iii. English language learners
 - iv. multimodal ways of teaching and learning

BC's Redesigned Curriculum

8. How do you understand the Redesigned Curriculum?
9. What do you think are the most significant changes in the Redesigned Curriculum?
 - a. How might this affect your work?
 - b. How do you think this will affect the children in your school?
 - c. How do you think this will affect the teachers in your school?
10. Please tell me how you might see BC's Redesigned Curriculum offering a way to understand the skills and resources that all children bring to school.
11. What might be some challenges that the Redesigned Curriculum presents to practice and pedagogy, school administration, and the education system as it currently is?

Understanding of the study

5. As a school administrator, how did you understand the study and see it evolving over time?
6. Do you believe there was any benefit to the students' participation in the study? Please explain.
7. Do you believe there was any benefit to the teacher's participation in the study? Please explain.
8. What about challenges to the students and the teacher?
9. What about challenges from a school perspective?
10. How do you think these projects interacted with BC's Redesigned Curriculum?
 - a. Do you think this research contributed to a better way for teachers to negotiate the expectations of the new curriculum? Please explain.

Multilingualism, multimodality, and school systems

8. How do your understandings and responsibilities as an administrator intersect with your students' home languages, cultures, and personal skills and interests?
 - a. Do you believe that this space of intersection influences your work in some way?
 - b. What are some of the constraints and benefits offered by this intersection for

your work as an administrator?

9. What are your thoughts on what school systems do currently and how school systems might evolve to support *students'* home languages, cultures, and ways of learning?
 - a. What might be some challenges in this area?
10. What are your thoughts on what school systems do currently and how school systems might evolve to support *teachers'* interaction with students' home languages, cultures, and ways of learning?
 - a. What might be some challenges in this area?

Is there anything else you would like to add, perhaps something we have not touched on?

Appendix D : Photo Release Consent

We are inviting you to participate in a photography project as a part of a study conducted by Mrs. Harini Rajagopal, a PhD student at the University of British Columbia. We are interested in the photos that all the children in _____'s Grade 2 class in _____ School take about their lives at home, about their culture, their ways of communication, and their activities and interests.

This project is for Mrs. Rajagopal's study about how children express themselves and learn through various ways of communication like drawing, photography, speaking, acting, playing, and writing, and through various languages. The study is part of her requirements for a PhD degree.

By signing this form, you consent to have your photograph taken and give permission for the photographs to be used, published, and shared as part of Mrs. Rajagopal's study. The results of this study will be reported in a doctoral thesis. We may also publish results in professional and research journals, and share results with teachers and researchers at national and international academic conferences. A report of research findings will also be submitted to Learning Services, Vancouver School Board. Summarized reports based on these presentations and articles will be available to all participants but will focus on findings and implications. Your photograph may appear in any of these above publications and/or presentations.

We will be happy to answer your questions about the research and the use of your photographs at any time. Please do not hesitate to contact us either in person, by e-mail, or by telephone.

Harini Rajagopal
Ph.D. Candidate
Department of Language and Literacy Education, UBC
Ph: xxx-xxx-xxxx
Email: xxx@xxxx.com

Model's full name (Please print): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov.: _____ Zip code: _____

I affirm that I am more than 18 years of age and competent to sign this form on my own behalf. I have read this release and fully understand its contents. I have been given a copy of this form for my records.

Adult Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Consent (applicable if under 18 years of age)

I am the parent or guardians of the minor named above and have legal authority to execute this release. I consent to use of said photographs based on the contents of this release. I have been given a copy of this form for my records.

Parent/Guardian Name (Please Print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date