



SABRINA F. SEMBIANTE¹

Florida Atlantic University - *ssembiante@fau.edu*

MILEIDIS GORT²

The Ohio State University - *gort.4@osu.edu*

Artículo recibido: 07/06/2014 - aceptado: 03/11/2014

EMERGENT BILINGUAL CHILDREN'S EARLY EXPERIENCES WITH ACADEMIC LANGUAGE IN SHOW-AND-TELL ACTIVITY

ABSTRACT:

The study was situated in two multi-age, pre-kindergarten classrooms within a Spanish-English dual-language preschool program in a linguistically diverse, large urban center in the southeastern United States. Emergent bilingual preschoolers' early experiences with academic language in English and Spanish are explored through children's use of particular grammatical forms that carried out their intended purposes in Show-and-Tell activity. We drew on functional linguistics to analyze the academic language features in children's presentations. Findings suggest that children's presentations represented three distinct purposes: to describe, to explain, and to recount. While children had the opportunity to engage in the activity through English and/or Spanish, most of their presentations were performed in English. Children's talk served specific functions associated with their

¹ Assistant Professor of TESOL/Bilingual Education at Florida Atlantic University. She earned her doctoral degree from the University of Miami in Language and Literacy Learning in Multilingual Settings, with a focus on early childhood bilingualism. Her research focuses primarily on the development of emergent bilingualism and biliteracy in young Spanish-speaking children, and the instructional practices supporting children's academic discourse development in dual language contexts. She frames her research from sociocultural and systemic functional linguistic perspectives. Her research has been published in *Language and Education*, *Bilingual Research Journal*, *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, and *Peabody Journal of Education*.

² Associate Professor of Bilingualism and Biliteracy at The Ohio State University. She studies emergent bilingualism and biliteracy in young Latino children, including instructional practices and educational policies that support their dual language, biliteracy, and academic development. Her research has been published in the *Journal of Literacy Research*, *Bilingual Research Journal*, *Research in the Teaching of English*, *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *International Multilingual Research Journal*, *Language and Education*, *Educational Policy*, and a number of edited volumes. She is co-editor, with Dr. Eurydice Bauer, of *Early Biliteracy Development: Exploring Young Learners' Use of their Linguistic Resources* (2012, Routledge).

varying intentions in the activity and the linguistic complexity of the task. Findings reveal important implications for the benefits of Show-and-Tell and ways that it supports emergent bilingual children's understanding of and engagement with the discourses of schooling.

KEYWORDS: Dual language education, Preschool, Emergent bilingual, Systemic functional linguistics, Academic language.

RESUMEN:

Este estudio se realizó en dos salones de clase preescolar con niños de edades múltiples, dentro de un programa preescolar de lenguaje dual español-inglés, ofrecido en una extensa localidad urbana y lingüísticamente diversa en el sureste de los Estados Unidos. El estudio examina las experiencias tempranas de estos niños bilingües emergentes con el lenguaje académico en inglés y en español, por medio del uso de formas gramaticales para materializar sus propósitos en una actividad de Show-and-Tell (presentación oral a la clase de un objeto especial para el niño). El análisis de las características del lenguaje académico utilizado en estas presentaciones se basó en los principios de la lingüística sistémico-funcional. Los hallazgos muestran que las presentaciones de los niños representan tres propósitos diferentes: Describir, explicar y recontar. Aunque los niños tuvieron oportunidades de participar en la actividad de Show-and-Tell a través del idioma inglés o del español, la mayoría de sus presentaciones fueron en inglés. El lenguaje oral de los niños cumplió funciones específicas relacionadas con las diversas intenciones de la actividad y con su complejidad lingüística. Los hallazgos revelan implicaciones importantes de los beneficios de Show-and-Tell y maneras en las que esta actividad apoya la comprensión y el involucramiento de los niños con el discurso escolar.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Educación de lenguaje dual, preescolar, bilingüe emergente, lingüística sistémico-funcional, lenguaje académico.

1. INTRODUCTION

Children must learn to use academic language registers to successfully participate in school settings, which differ considerably from more familiar registers (Schleppegrell, 2004). While each subject area has its own discourse and ways of using language, there are similar features of language used in schooling that contrast clearly with the way language is used informally outside of school. For example, during Show-and-Tell, a typical preschool activity in early childhood classrooms across the United States, children elaborate on descriptions of personal objects and reconstruct related experiences with an audience who may share little relevant knowledge of the topic in a social context that may provide few cues for making their meaning clear. As such, children have to use explicit references to objects,

persons, actions, events, time, and place in order to convey their meaning (Scheele, Leseman, Mayo, & Elbers, 2012). Moreover, children assume the role of expert in their presentations and must learn to express themselves accordingly by using particular lexical and grammatical structures that code for their authority or expertise (Schleppegrell, 2004).

Emergent bilingual children in dual language (DL) schooling environments must learn to navigate the discourses of academic language of not one, but two languages. This is because high-quality dual language programs promote bilingualism and biliteracy development, cross-cultural competence, and grade-level academic achievement in English and a partner language (Christian, Howard, and Loeb, 2000). To work towards these goals, dual language programs attempt to create linguistically-responsive learning environments by validating and promoting the use of both languages for learning and communicating and by reflecting these values in programmatic, curricular, and instructional decisions (de Jong & Howard, 2009; Shohamy, 2006). Program language use policies, including language distribution across the curriculum, can have an impact on students' dual language development, especially with regard to how each language is used at school and supported during instruction (DePalma, 2010; Palmer, Martínez, Mateus, & Henderson, 2014). Given that students' development of the varying and multiple discourses of academic language progresses with intentional and systematic exposure and opportunity to use these registers (Delpit, 2001; Aukerman, 2007; Scarcella, 2003), programmatic, curricular, and instructional decisions around language use and instruction in dual language programs have the potential to impact children's bilingual development, and the discourses of schooling that they develop in each language (de Jong & Bearse, 2014).

Developing expertise in academic language discourses includes acquiring knowledge about and experience with the ways that language is structured according to different goal-oriented social processes and as a means to enact the social practices of a given culture (i.e., genres) (Martin & Rose, 2008). In school contexts, a range of different genres exists in response to the different purposes and uses of language within and across content areas (Schleppegrell, 2004). Some of these genres include stories, exemplified in narratives and anecdotes, as a means of entertaining; recounts to relate events that have happened; procedures to relay the steps and materials required in doing something; reports to provide information on a topic; and explanations to inform how and why things happen (Derewianka & Jones, 2012). In order to succeed in academic contexts, students need to learn to recognize and gain control over these different genres.

A number of studies have documented the benefits of Show-and-Tell for young children, particularly in exercising control over a variety of academic language features that are particular to different genres (e.g., Cazden, 1988; Christie, 1990). Show-and-Tell - also described in the literature as *Morning News*, *Bring and Brag*, *Sharing Time*, *Circle Time*, or *Newstime* - is a particularly supportive medium for children to engage in oral language that serves as an important contributor to their academic literacy development (Michaels & Foster, 1985). For example, through Show-and-Tell activity, children have the opportunity to engage with the narrative genre by recounting a story (Murphy, 2003; Michaels & Cook-Gumperz, 1979), the reflective genre by discussing personal experiences or problems (Church, 2005; Murphy, 2003), the informational genre by reporting a process or procedure (Church, 2005), and the interview genre by answering questions that the teacher poses (Christie, 1990).

Specifically, when telling stories, which can comprise three main stages, children are expected to introduce the main characters/participants and some contextual information (orientation stage), provide a complication that creates suspense (complication stage), and end with a resolution of the problem (resolution stage). These stages may vary depending on the child's purpose such that a story may not necessarily include a complicating event or may involve additional stages (e.g., moral, evaluation; Derewianka & Jones, 2012). Across these stages, the child is required to narrate a series of events in temporal order, signaling the ways in which events are sequenced, when shifts between stages occur, and providing appraisals if necessary (Martin & Rose, 2008). Children construct events by referencing both human (e.g., Mary) and non-human participants (e.g., the dog), a variety of processes (a doing, happening, or state; e.g., action, thinking, perceiving, saying, relating), a variety of circumstances (the detail surrounding an activity; e.g., place, purpose, time, and manner), and by engaging with other voices, possibilities and perspectives (e.g., attribution, modality, and negatives; Derewianka & Jones, 2012).

In descriptive reports, where the purpose is to describe a phenomenon and its features, children are expected to identify and provide various characteristics that elaborate on different aspects of the entity. Children can choose to discuss characteristics such as classification, appearance, and behavior of the phenomenon, among others, and unlike story stages, can discuss these features in any order (Martin & Rose, 2008). While story is an activity-focused genre, descriptive reports represent an entity-focused genre where children's language choices are expected to involve generalized and single participants that can be simple or complex noun groups (e.g., *the blue bell*), the use of relating processes to link entities with attributes (e.g.,

the box *has* four sides), timeless present tense (e.g., the blue bell *is* small), and pronoun referencing to create cohesion (e.g., *It* is round; Derewianka & Jones, 2012).

When providing instructions around a procedure, the purpose is to describe a series of steps that may include references to tools, materials, methods, and other details and that result in a particular desired outcome. Children are anticipated to use processes in the imperative form that express action verbs (e.g., *turn* this), and to provide specific circumstantial details such as manner, time, and place (e.g., turn this *around*) to describe how others should reenact the procedure. In addition, children may use conditional sentences to alert the audience to the potential for different outcomes, temporal connectives to highlight the sequencing of steps, and may include modals to heighten or soften their suggestions (Derewianka & Jones, 2012).

In sum, children exercise a variety of skills during Show-and-Tell that support the development of a literate style of verbal and written communication (Michaels & Foster, 1985) and that are important components of the discourses of schooling that are critical to children's success in school (Scheele et al., 2012). These skills include organizing ideas (Oken-Wright, 1988), sequencing information (Michaels & Cook-Gumperz, 1979; Oken-Wright, 1988), providing extended descriptions (Cusworth, 1995), crafting explanations (Church, 2005), and structuring presentations according to the different genres of schooling (Christie, 1990).

Research indicates that preschoolers, in general, and emergent bilingual preschoolers, in particular, have varying experiences with the discourses of schooling because they come to school with varying levels of vocabulary, grammar, and text-structuring knowledge and skills in each of their languages (Leseman, Scheele, Mayo, & Messer, 2007). To better understand Spanish/English emergent bilingual children's early experiences and engagement with academic discourses in both languages, we investigated the nature of children's Show-and-Tell presentations in Spanish/English instructional contexts. The analysis presented here specifically focuses on (1) the purpose/s of children's presentations (2) the language/s children drew on to participate in the activity, and (3) the academic language features evident in children's talk that supported their participation in the activity.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

We draw on Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to frame our analysis of emergent bilingual preschoolers' presentation-related talk in the structured, interactive context of Show-and-Tell. SFL is concerned with the ways in which lan-

guage functions to make meaning in different contexts and helps us to understand configurations of certain lexical and grammatical resources appropriate for particular language use within specific discourse contexts (Eggins, 1994). According to SFL theory, language is significant not only for its role in social interaction, but the functions that it serves in that social interaction. As such, language shapes and is shaped by the nature of the social experience and the purpose of the interaction. In the sections below, we detail how the theory of SFL reveals ways in which the meaning of language is derived from its structure and organization in particular contexts.

3. HOW SPEAKERS REPRESENT, INTERACT, AND ORGANIZE THEIR MESSAGE

Language is characterized by three metafunctions, each of which are engaged simultaneously to create meaning: the ideational metafunction, having to do with the experience or information that a person wants to share; the interpersonal metafunction, having to do with the relationship of participants using the language, and the textual metafunction, having to do with the organization of the language for specific purposes. Meaningful speech or text is created when participants simultaneously express some information or experience, negotiate some relationship, and organize the language to be functional in the given social environment. More specifically, the linguistic features of process and taxis represent the ideational metafunction, mood and modality depict the interpersonal metafunction, and theme allows analysis of the textual metafunction. Each of these features are explained before.

Process is expressed in the form of a verb and is used to describe different types of experiences. The main types of processes are material (actions of the text), mental (representing cognition, perception, verbalization), relational (linking or auxiliary verbs such as «are,» «have»), and existential (acknowledging existence through forms of «there are/is»; Halliday, 1985). *Taxis* refers to the way in which the speaker expresses and creates logical relationships between the clauses of a sentence through the use of conjunctions which work to elaborate, expand, and enhance the meaning of a primary clause (Eggins, 1994). *Mood* refers to declarative, interrogative, and imperative clauses that have unique functions in conversational exchanges. Statements (declarative clauses) usually present information for negotiation and frame a speaker as active and taking initiative. Questions (interrogative clauses) are used to probe for information, while commands (imperative clauses) function to demand that the addressee do something or act in a specific way (Eggins & Slade, 1997). Modality is a way in which a speaker can nuance, temper, or qualify a message as

well as communicate attitudes or judgment about that message. The theme of a sentence is the initial noun phrase of a clause and represents the point of origin for the message in the sentence. It usually contains information that has been introduced beforehand and which will be expanded upon in the rheme, or the remainder of the clause.

Guided by SFL theory, we explored the following research questions: (a) What are the purposes of children's Show-and-Tell presentations, and what language/s did they draw on to participate in this activity? (b) What academic language features are evident in children's Show-and-Tell-related talk and how did these features support children's participation in the activity?

4. METHOD

4.1. *Setting and Participants*

Data were extracted from a corpus gathered as part of a larger study looking at language and literacy practices of emergent bilingual preschoolers and their teachers. The study was situated in two multi-age, pre-kindergarten classrooms within a Spanish-English dual-language (DL) preschool program in a linguistically diverse, large urban center in the southeastern United States.

Teacher participants. Although teachers were not the focus of this study, they were videotaped while interacting with children in Show-and-Tell activity and their data were used to contextualize children's activity-related talk. The teachers were four Latina females whose ages ranged between 28 and 53 and who had completed 4-year degrees and certification to teach early childhood. All teachers were native Spanish speakers who came from Spanish-speaking countries (or territories) and who were bilingual in Spanish and English; they had been living in the U.S. between one and 21 years. Teachers' countries of origin were Venezuela, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Puerto Rico.

Two teachers worked alongside each other in each classroom. In this program, languages of instruction were separated by either time or teacher designee. For example, one teacher pair (in classroom A) followed a one teacher/one language instructional language policy in which each teacher used a designated program language (either English or Spanish) throughout the day. In the other classroom (classroom B), teachers followed a language-by-time-of-day language policy in which both teachers used English in the morning and Spanish in the afternoon. Teacher pairs in both classrooms collaborated throughout the day for large and small group

instruction. Generally, individual teachers modeled monolingual language use of the designated language; however, students' language choices and uses were much more flexible and reflected their emerging bilingual proficiencies and language preferences.

Student participants. Ages of child participants (n=19) ranged from 3;11 to 5;7 at the beginning of data collection. Children reflected the community's diversity in terms of cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and socio-economic background. Home languages included Spanish (n=13); English (n=3); Portuguese and English (n=1); and Arabic, French, and English (n=2). Some Spanish-speakers also spoke English at home. Table 1 presents student demographic information, including age, home language/s, culture/ethnicity, and place of birth.

Table 1
STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Name	Age	Classroom	Home Language/s	Culture/Ethnicity	Place of Birth
Nahuel	3:11	A	Spanish	Colombian/Hispanic	USA
Oliver	4:1	A	English	Anglo-American/White	USA
Daniel	4:4	A	Spanish	Cuban/Hispanic	USA
Madison	4:5	A	Spanish	Cuban/Hispanic	USA
Evelio	4:6	A	Spanish	Cuban/Hispanic	USA
Dimitri	4:7	A	Spanish	Russian/Hispanic	Russia
Lucas	4:6	B	Spanish	Cuban/Hispanic	USA
Sabrina	4:7	B	English	Anglo-American/White	USA
Ryan	4:8	B	Arabic	Moroccan/White	USA
Adam	4:8	B	Arabic	Moroccan/White	USA
Nathan	4:9	B	Spanish	Cuban/Hispanic	USA
Bianca	4:10	B	Spanish	Argentine/Hispanic	USA
Abraham	4:10	B	Spanish	Nicaraguan/Hispanic	USA
Nikki	4:11	B	Spanish	Dominican Republic/ Hispanic	USA
Paola	5:1	B	Spanish	Cuban/Hispanic	USA
Javier	5:3	B	Spanish	Cuban/Hispanic	Cuba
Izabela	5:3	B	Portuguese	Brazilian/Hispanic	USA
Joaquin	5:5	B	Spanish	Argentine/Hispanic	USA
Melissa	5:7	B	Spanish	Puerto Rican/Hispanic	USA

During weekly 20 to 30 minute Show-and-Tell activity, children sat in a circle in an open area of the classroom and took turns orally «presenting» an item they had brought from home to the rest of the group. Teachers and peers participated through their questioning and engagement with the items being showcased. Each child that brought an item to present was given a turn; turns varied in length and were managed by the teachers. Show-and-Tell sessions ranged from 5 minutes 26 seconds to 49 minutes 42 seconds, lasting an average of 22 minutes 36 seconds. Each child's presentation lasted on average of 2 minutes 15 seconds, with a range of 1 minute 16 seconds to 5 minutes 26 seconds. Our analysis included Show-and-Tell performances from all 19 child participants; however, we showcase in the findings select excerpts of children's performances that represent patterns observed in the data.

4.2. *Data Collection, Preparation, and Analysis*

Data were collected weekly during the program's six-week summer session. The summer session mirrored the 10-month academic program, including the daily schedule, curriculum, and instructional materials. We used digital video recordings and ethnographic field notes to document teachers' and children's naturally-occurring participation in Show-and-Tell activities. In total, we documented six Show-and-Tell sessions over the course of the summer session, three which were led in English (two from classroom B and one from classroom A) and three which were led in Spanish (all from classroom A). Given the language distribution policy in classroom A (i.e., «one teacher/one language»), Show-and-Tell sessions that were led by the Spanish-language model teacher also included contributions from the English-language model teacher who was present in the activity.

Video recordings were transcribed verbatim soon after each observation by a Spanish-English bilingual research assistant. Transcripts, representing individual sessions of Show-and-Tell activities, included all intelligible teacher and child utterances and incorporated field notes that highlighted related behaviors (e.g., physical manipulation of focal objects, children's and teachers' movement within the Show-and-Tell space, non-verbal communication) and relevant contextual information. Transcripts were verified for accuracy by a second Spanish-English bilingual research assistant.

We employed a microethnographic (Bloome, 2004) and functional grammar (Halliday, 1985) approach to explore the purpose/s of children's Show-and-Tell presentations and academic language features evident in children's talk within and across Spanish and English instructional contexts. The microethnographic analyti-

cal process was reflexive and recursive, allowing us to code participant talk with an eye towards emerging themes and trends (e.g., object features, object uses/functions, object origin) with each pass of the data. Functional linguistics informed the analysis of children's language choices during the structured school activity of Show-and-Tell. Specifically, we coded participant talk for five linguistic features - process, theme, taxis, mood, and modality - that represented the three metafunctions of language according to SFL theory. Process and taxis were coded in order to illustrate the relationship between the presenters' experiences and the content of their talk (i.e., the ideational metafunction). Mood and modality were coded in order to depict personal and social relationships between presenters and audience members and between the presenter and people who they referenced in their presentations (i.e., the interpersonal metafunction). Theme was coded to highlight cohesion and continuity in the content of the presenters' Show-and-Tell (i.e., the textual metafunctions). Coding of the transcripts was conducted by the first author and checked by the second author and a Spanish-English bilingual research assistant. Coding disagreements, which were less than 10%, were discussed as a group until consensus around each disagreement was reached.

5. RESULTS

5.1. *Purpose/s and Language/s of Children's Presentations*

Children's Show-and-Tell presentations evidenced three distinct purposes: (1) to describe the focal object's physical attributes (2) to explain the focal object's use/s, or (3) to recount an object-related event/experience; however, most presentations were hybrid in nature as children weaved in multiple purposes. Children whose presentations encompassed multiple purposes usually described the physical attributes of their object before explaining the focal object's use or recounting an event related to the object. In describing the physical object, children focused on the surface features of the object, making the task more concrete in nature as the object itself provided a common point of reference. When focusing on the object's use/s or function/s, children explained and/or modeled how the object worked or could be manipulated. Since audience members were sometimes unfamiliar with the object, they relied on the presenter to scaffold this information through her talk and physical manipulation of the object. Teachers' prompting, when present, often oriented children's presentation towards the two purposes of physical description and object function.

In the representative Show-and-Tell presentation depicted in Figure 1 below, Sabrina showcased her musical hand bells. The eight color-coded bells each played a different note and had musical notation letters A through G inscribed on the handle to represent the different sound that each bell made when rung. The bells were accompanied by a printed guide that provided instructions for how to play different songs according to the bell's color and musical letter. In the presentation, Sabrina alternated between describing the physical aspects of the bells and explaining their function.

Figure 1.

Physical attributes	{	1	Sabrina: This is the colors what I have [sic]. {referring to a bag full of bells}
		2	Teacher: You going to take them all out?
		3	Sabrina: Green...Pink...Blue? Two blues? {describing the color of each bell as she takes each out of the bag}
		4	Teacher: So, Sabrina, tell us about your show-and-tell.
		5	Sabrina: It's bells.
Use/Function	{	6	Teacher: Why is that paper- What does that mean? {referring to the color guide}
		7	Sabrina: It means that so we don't forget the colors...It's it means when you forget the color you can look at it to make sure which colors you have.
		8	Teacher: So you mean that this is a song. {referring to the color guide}
		9	Sabrina: And look...you got the taught me of a letter {referring to the ABC musical notation on each bell}
		10	Teacher: They have a letter. What [do] these letters mean?
		11	Sabrina: Because it's A B C letters.

In contrast, when children recounted experiences that were related to the focal object in some way, the object served as a representation of that experience. These aspects of children's presentations centered on an event or experience that audience members may have had little to no knowledge of, and who relied on the presenter's oral description and object manipulation for contextualization and meaning. For example, for one representative Show-and-Tell presentation, Nathan brought a racecar helmet. Rather than discuss the physical features of the helmet or demonstrate how one might wear the helmet (and/or for what purposes one would wear it), Nathan described an event - a racecar lesson - during which he received the helmet, as a symbolic representation of his experience. This is depicted in the excerpt below.

- 1 Nathan: I was driving.
- 2 Teacher 2: Oh you went to speedway. Down in Homestead?
- 3 Nathan: And then I had {sic} lots of speed {makes speeding noises while standing up and moving}. And I won.
- 4 Teacher 1: All the people clap {sic} when you finish {sic} and you were like «thank you, thank you, thank you» {bowing}?
- 5 Nathan: And I gotted {sic} a trophy...And I beat my brother.

Regardless of the purpose/s of Show-and-Tell presentations, children's language choices in the activity were similar across the two classroom contexts. Within the monolingual instructional context (i.e., the language-by-time-of-day classroom, and specifically, during English time), children's language aligned with the language of instruction; that is, all children in this classroom used English to participate in Show-and-Tell. Similarly, children in the bilingual instructional context (i.e., classroom A, in which each teacher modeled one of the program's target languages) generally used English to engage in the activity, with one exception. Daniel (a native bilingual), presented his new watch to the class using both Spanish and English in response to the teachers' prompts in each language. During this presentation, which was scaffolded in various ways by both the Spanish-model and English-model teachers, Daniel focused on describing the physical attributes of his analog watch based on teachers' prompting; he did not include an object-related explanation or recount. The presentation, highlighted in the excerpt below, was the only one in which Spanish was used by any child in our data set. In the excerpt, the Spanish-model teacher asks questions in Spanish to help guide Daniel's presentation, to which Daniel answers in both Spanish (line 2 & 4) and English (line 7). The interaction between the teacher and Daniel as exemplified in lines 6 and 7, where the teacher prompts in Spanish and Daniel responds in English, was characteristic of the ways that other presenters engaged in Show-and-Tell activity led by the Spanish-model teacher.

- 1 Teacher 1: ¿Qué trajiste?
- 2 Daniel: Reloj
- 3 Teacher 1: Un reloj. ¿De quién es el reloj?
- 4 Daniel: De Shrek.
- 5 Teacher 1: De Shrek. ¿Okay, puedes enseñarselo a los niños?
{Daniel walks from student to student showing his watch}
- 6 Teacher 1: ¿Y qué es lo que el reloj hace Daniel?
- 7 Daniel: Eleven sixteen {reading the time on his watch}

In the sections below, we provide examples of how children drew on particular linguistic features in support of the different purposes of their presentations.

5.2. Academic Language Features in Children's Presentations

Our analyses suggest that children used language in strategic ways to support their purpose/s in the Show-and-Tell activity (i.e., to describe an object, to explain a function of the object, or to recount an experience related to the object). Differences in children's linguistic choices were noted with regard to ways in which they represented their presentation goals through processes and verb tense, their interactions and relationships through mood and modals, and the organization and coherence of the information through theme/rheme and logical connectors. To contextualize our findings, we feature representative excerpts that highlight the linguistic features that arose most frequently across kids and classrooms.

Focus on physical attributes of objects. When describing the physical characteristics of their focal object, children used a number of linguistic features characteristic of the descriptive report genre (e.g., Derewianka & Jones, 2012). Children represented their intentions through mostly relational processes in the present tense, which they used to signal their possession of the focal object (e.g., I *have* a bigger book; I *have* two) and present various attributes of their object (e.g., It's a boy; It's bells; It *has* beautiful pictures; He *is* one year old). Additionally, children most frequently used the declarative mood when describing physical attributes, encoding their role as informer in their relationship and interactions with the teacher and the audience. There were a few instances whereby the presenter asked the audience a question about the physical attributes of the object as a way to segue into offering that specific information (e.g., You know which ones are the baddest bad guys?; You know why?; You know what else I got?). Modals (e.g., will, would, could, can, should, must) were not often used since presenters did not attempt to add judgment or nuance the information they were sharing when describing the objects.

To organize their meaning during object-based portions of the presentation, children used demonstrative pronouns (e.g., it, this, that, these, those, they) as the theme of most statements in order to reference the focal object and provide cohesion to what they had previously stated. They also used a variety of logical connectors to extend their sentences, such as «and,» as a way to list the attributes of the object (e.g., This one is a high level *and* this one is a low level; The name is this book is [N]arnia *and* it has a lion inside *and* it tells you the words ... what happens on [sic] the story), «because» as a way to justify their choice of object or the object attributes (e.g., [These are the same] *because* they're both big *and*

they're both purple *and* they're both green; [I brought the blanket] *because* I like it), and «but» as a way to juxtapose object attributes (e.g., This is like a high level *but* it's a low level).

The following excerpt showcases how children's linguistic choices were functional for meeting the purposes of their presentations, which in this case was to describe the physical and representational attributes of the focal object, a set of character cards. Javi's cards represented an extension of a Disney-based multiplayer, online role-playing game for children called *Toontown*. Each card symbolized different characters and the characters' unique powers. Toontown cards were traded in a similar fashion to other popular trading-card games.

- 1 Teacher: Javi, what is that?
2 Javi: Toontown Hog cards. Toontown Cog cards.
3 Teacher: *What is that, Javi?*
4 Javi: Toontown! It's... it's a game.
5 Teacher: Oh.
6 Javi: These are the high levels. There's another high level here. This one, this one {he holds the cards up as he goes}.
7 Javi: Those are low levels.
8 Harry: Could we see them?
9 Javi: This is a low level. This is like a high level but it's a low level.

In this example, Javi used the relational process of being (i.e., the *to be* verb) in two very different and complex ways in order to describe his focal object. He used the being process in an attributive manner to assign qualities such as «low level» and «high level» to the Toontown Cog cards (e.g., line 9: this *is* a low level. This *is* like a high level; line 7: those *are* low levels) and to classify the Toontown Cog cards as belonging to a member of a class (e.g., line 4: It's a game). Javi's use of the present tense of these verbs helped to convey that he was describing characteristics of the cards as they currently existed. By using the declarative mood (i.e., statements rather than questions or commands), Javi reported the information to the teacher and audience members, adopting the role of one who is informing others of these characteristics. Modals were not present in Javi's speech since his purpose was to objectively convey the features of his Toontown cards rather than to provide a judgment.

The theme, or point of departure, for most of Javi's statements during his presentation was an orientation to the Toontown cards (e.g., Line 7: *Those* are low levels), which referred back to his initial introduction of his object (e.g., Line 2). This thematic progression, in which references are continually made back to the initial introduction and identification of the focal object, was common across presentations where children were focused on describing the physical attributes of their object. Javi used the logical connector «but» in this excerpt to juxtapose the card's characteristics (e.g., Line 9: This is like a high level *but* it's a low level). Although not shown in the selected excerpt, Javi used a variety of connectors throughout this presentation such as «and» and «because» in order to add information in different ways to what was previously said.

Focus on function of objects. When focusing on the functionality of their focal object, children's linguistic choices aligned with those characteristic of the procedural genre (e.g., Derewianka & Jones, 2012). Children represented their intentions through mostly material processes (i.e., processes of doing), depicting concrete, tangible actions for engaging with the object (e.g., It can *stay*; It can *go* like this; He can *go* upside down; You can't *open* it like this. You have to *open* it. *Go* like this); generally, these verbs reflected the present tense to support the presenters' live demonstration of the object's use. Children only used statements when explaining the function of their object. Modals enabled children to nuance the processes of doing and highlight the potential function and use of the objects (e.g., It *can* stay; It *can* go like this; He *can* go upside down; You *can't* open it like this. You *have to* open it.). The themes of presenters' statements were usually pronouns, and personal pronouns, specifically (e.g., I, you, he, they), since children sometimes referenced the object in the third person when discussing its function (e.g., *He* can go upside down) or when describing ways one could manipulate the object (e.g., *You* open it like this). Children primarily utilized «and» to construct logical connections between clauses of their sentences in order to add new function-related details or related information (e.g., You have to throw a lot of things to them *and* these you kill easily) or to list steps around the object's use (e.g., I read it *and* then [it said] «the fat cat sat on the mat»).

The following excerpt showcases a portion of Paola's presentation in which she explained how to use a clipboard with a pen-holder. Paola's linguistic choices exemplified the features that children commonly used to explain how objects worked or could be manipulated.

- 1 Teacher: What is that, Paola? Oh, that's to draw and then it puts crayons on top.
- 2 Paola: You open it.
- 3 Teacher: You open it.
- 4 Paola: You open it like this {demonstrating how to open the clip at the top of the clipboard}
- 5 Teacher: That's kind of like to travel.
- 6 Paola: You can't open it like this is. You have to open it, go like this, put it XXX {inaudible} {demonstrating which part of the clip to squeeze in order for it to open}

Paola used mostly material processes to explain how to use her clipboard, each of which represented a concrete, tangible action that she performed with the object (e.g., Line 6: You can't *open* it like this is. You have to *open* it, *go* like this, *put* it XXX). She used these verbs in present tense form to support her live demonstration of the clipboard while she explained its functionality. Like Javi, who used the declarative mood to describe his object, Paola also used statements to tell the teacher and the audience how the object could be manipulated (e.g., Line 2: You open it). Although the form of this utterance is similar to that of an imperative command, Paola's intonation pattern, with the stress on the material process (*open*), indicated that she meant it as a statement rather than directive. She also used a number of modals, and in particular, modals of obligation to infer that in order to use the object certain actions were required (e.g., Line 6: You *can't* open it like this is. You *have* to open it, go like this, put it XXX). The themes of most of Paola's statements while explaining the functionality of her object were personal pronouns and in this case, «you», since she was specifically modeling through her talk and actions what one should do with the clipboard (e.g., Line 2: *You* open it.); third person pronouns were also typically used to relay the object's function. Although this particular excerpt doesn't showcase the use of logical connectors, children often used the conjunction «and» as a way to connect their actions when manipulating their objects.

Focus on object-related experience. Children's linguistic choices in relaying object-related experiences mirrored those that are characteristic of the story genre (e.g., Derewianka & Jones, 2012). Children used mostly material processes to recount the actions that took place during object-related experiences. However, in contrast to descriptions of the objects' physical characteristics and explanations of their functions, which were happening in real time, children's recount of these experiences were constructed using the past tense. Moreover, the nature of this type

of presentation involved a higher level of abstraction than other types of presentations since the child took on the task of describing a series of events with little to reference in person. Modals were not a linguistic feature that children drew on to add nuance to their recount of these experiences. The themes of experience-based portions of presentations were usually pronouns, most of which were personal pronouns (e.g., I) and the names of family members (e.g., my grandma, my cousin, my brother, my dad) who were involved in the experience being described (e.g., *I* kick [sic] my brother's butt; *My cousin's grandma* gave it to me. *My grandma* got a blue one; *I* brought in a cruise ship). Child presenters used «and» or «and then» to string together event sequences (e.g., my cousin's grandma gave it to me *and then* I showed it to my mom *and then* I keep [sic] it). Generally, presenters used statements when recounting their experiences with the objects. There were a few instances wherein the presenter invited the audience's feedback about how to proceed with the presentation (e.g., Who likes to have a crash end? Want me to show [you] again?). The function of these «moves» was to heighten or reinforce the audience's attention to the recount and extend the presenter's turn in the activity.

In the following representative excerpt, Lucas recounted an experience with a small, stuffed bunny rabbit. Rather than describing the physical qualities of the bunny or explaining how he played with the bunny (i.e., a process or function), he recounted the event during which he received the toy, drawing on linguistic features that supported this purpose.

- | | | |
|---|----------|--|
| 1 | Teacher: | Lucas, tell us about your Show-and-Tell. |
| 2 | Lucas: | Uh...When we went to a party, uh my cousin's grandma gave it to me and then I showed my mom. |
| 3 | Lucas: | And then I kept it. |
| 4 | Lucas: | And then when my...when my brown monkey left...uh...then my grandma got me a new one. |
| 5 | Teacher: | Oh, that's a nice story, Lucas. So your grandma gave it to you? |
| 6 | Lucas: | No, no my grandma got the blue one and my cousin's grandma got me the...got this one. |

Lucas used primarily material processes, or processes of doing, to explain the events that occurred, both in a transitive sense, where the actions were confined to himself (e.g., Line 2: When we *went* to a party) and in an intransitive sense, where the actions were extended to or directed at other people (e.g., Line 2: my cousin's grandma *gave* it to me; Line 6: my grandma *got* the blue one). These verbs were in

the past tense since Lucas was recounting an event that had already occurred. Additionally, he used mostly statements to recount the story and did not use modals as a way of adding judgment or opinion to the events. Although Lucas used mostly personal pronouns as the themes of his sentences (e.g., my grandma got me a new one), he also forefronted the temporal conjunction «when» as a way to organize the chain of events and to signal the point of departure for the event that he was about to recount (e.g., when my brown monkey left...uh...then my grandma got me a new one). By doing so, Lucas' language was functional for creating a cohesive story and for signposting the connections between his messages.

6. DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to investigate and inform our understanding of the purposes of children's Show-and-Tell presentations and how the academic language features in children's talk supported their participation in the activity. Our analyses reveal that the purposes of children's presentations were to describe an object, to explain how to use the object, and/or to recount an experience related to the object. Moreover, findings suggest that the nature of children's language, as denoted by particular academic language features, was influenced by children's purpose/s in the activity and that children structured and organized their language features strategically for these three purposes. Our work expands upon the results of prior studies that shed light on the role, purpose, routines, and structures of Show-and-Tell activities (e.g., Cusworth, 1995; Michaels & Cook-Gumperz, 1979; Murphy, 2003), and provides insights into the emergence of academic language for preschool-age, emergent bilingual children. Through this activity, children are apprenticed into the discourses of schooling as evidenced in the ways they interpreted the purpose of Show-and-Tell and the types of information that were relevant in this activity. In the following sections, we use a functional grammar perspective to interpret the results.

7. THE HYBRID NATURE OF CHILDREN'S SHOW-AND-TELL PRESENTATIONS

Children's presentations usually consisted of multiple purposes such that children may have described some physical attributes of their object as well as explained its function. Hybridity in children's presentations may represent children's emerging implicit awareness of different genres, indicating that children are in the process of learning and experimenting with these different genres as "recurrent configurations of meanings [...] that [...] enact the social practices of a given culture" (Martin

& Rose, 2008). More specifically, the purposes that emerged in children's presentations serve as a reflection of their lived realities and the ways they perceive and interact with personally-relevant objects. Children who included multiple purposes in their presentations usually included a preliminary description of their object before explaining the object's function or recounting a related event. This finding may provide evidence of how children are learning to appropriate literate styles of verbal communication (Michaels & Foster, 1985) by concretely contextualizing the object before highlighting other object-related information that requires the audience to be knowledgeable of the object's physical structure or appearance. Children might have also provided this information in response to teachers' prompts, which could serve to constrain the nature of the activity.

In the monolingual instructional context (i.e., English time in the «language-by-time-of-day» classroom, classroom B), children's language choices aligned with the language of instruction and teachers' languaging practices. Aside from the one exception highlighted above, however, children also used English to engage in Show-and-Tell activity in the bilingual instructional context (i.e., the «one teacher/one language» classroom, classroom A). While children did not «take up» the Spanish-model teacher's use of Spanish in their Show-and-Tell performances, they employed their receptive bilingual skills to understand the teacher's prompts and engaged in translanguaging (García, 2009) by responding in English. Thus, children drew on their entire linguistic repertoire to make meaning in this context (García, 2013) even though they did not productively display the use of two languages. Factors such as the scheduling of the activity (e.g., in the «language-by-time-of-day» classroom, Show-and-Tells were always scheduled in the morning and, thus, always led in English by both teachers) may have influenced children's language choices. In the «one-teacher/one-language» classroom, where both English-language and Spanish-language model teachers were always present during Show-and-Tell activity, children may have recognized that they would be understood in either language, and thus may have chosen to participate in their preferred or more dominant language. This suggests that children were developing an awareness of which languages were appropriate and/or acceptable for use in different situations given the audience and their communicative purposes (DePalma, 2010). Thus, even when spaces were created for children to draw on their developing bilingual skills, the children chose to use English to engage in the activity. The shift towards English may be a result of inequitable support or opportunities to engage in Show-and-Tell activity exclusively in Spanish, and a reflection of the importance of academic English for survival in the United States educational context.

8. THE FUNCTIONALITY OF CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE

A functional linguistics approach to analyzing children's Show-and-Tell presentations illuminated how their language choices served each of the purposes of their presentations in specific and strategic ways, and reflected their emerging awareness that language is used differently for different purposes (Halliday, 1985). Children varied the structural features of their speech according to the different ideas they were attempting to communicate, evidencing the ways in which they have come to understand how language works and can be modified for different purposes. In their presentations, children practiced sequencing and organizing their ideas according to different purposes that align with school-based genres such as narratives, descriptive reports, and procedures (Scheele et al., 2012).

Show-and-Tell provides important opportunities for children to learn to express particular meanings that are specific to particular purposes. Through this activity, children are given a space in which to take up an instructional register (Christie, 2005) and engage in presentation performances that are congruent with subsequent academic activities. Children in this study were positioned as experts who highlighted relevant aspects of their objects and who drew on their funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992), because their participation in the activity was embedded in their lived experiences with that item in the world. Moreover, children had the flexibility of presenting in different ways, using more concrete language (i.e., the here and now) to describe physical attributes of objects or abstract language to recount object-based events, according to their emerging bilingual proficiency, their experience with the Show-and-Tell activity, and their interest and relationship with the selected objects.

9. IMPLICATIONS

Our findings have important implications for understanding the benefits of an activity like Show-and-Tell and the variety of learning opportunities that it provides to emergent bilingual children with regard to their engagement with different genres in preschool and beyond. The value of this activity lies in the variety of learning opportunities that it provides to children with regard to being apprenticed into the discourses of schooling. Show-and-Tell is a school-based activity in which children are expected to use language to describe, explain, and/or report object-related information from the position of an expert (Christie, 2005), often much different to the way that children from diverse backgrounds and experiences use language in other contexts, such as at home and in the community. This activity affords children the

opportunity to engage interpersonally and textually in ways that other preschool activities may not. In this activity, children are able to express themselves at the level at which they are most comfortable while learning and appropriating more literate styles of communication within different genres (Murphy, 2003). In dual language settings, such activity has the potential to provide children with opportunities to engage in discourses of schooling across two different languages. For emergent bilingual children to have access to such opportunities, however, dual language programs need to be intentional and strategic in their language designation policy and activity planning so that children can have access to and opportunity to use each language purposefully and flexibly (DePalma, 2010) for doing school and beyond.

REFERENCES CITED

- Aukerman, M. (2007). A culpable CALP: Rethinking the conversational/academic language proficiency distinction in early literacy instruction. *The Reading Teacher*, 60(7), 626-635.
- Bloome, D. (2004). *Discourse analysis and the study of classroom language and literacy events: A microethnographic perspective*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Cazden, C. (1988). *Classroom discourse: The language of teaching and learning*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Christian, D., Howard, E. R., & Loeb, M. I. (2000). Bilingualism for all: Two-way immersion education in the United States. *Theory into Practice*, 39(4), 258-266.
- Christie, F. (1990). The morning news genre. *Language and Education*, 4(3), 161-180.
- Christie, F. (2005). *Classroom discourse analysis: A functional perspective*. London: Continuum.
- Church, E. B. (2005). Group time: Showing and sharing at group time. *Scholastic Early Childhood Today*, 19(5), 46-47.
- Cusworth, R. A. (1995, April). *The framing of educational knowledge through «Show-and-Tell» in elementary classrooms*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.
- de Jong, E. J., & Bearse, C. I. (2014). Dual language programs as a strand within a secondary school: Dilemmas of school organization and the TWI mission. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 17(1), 15-31.
- de Jong, E. J., & Howard, E. R. (2009). Integration in two-way immersion education: Equalizing linguistic benefits. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 12(1), 81-99.
- Delpit, L. (2001). The politics of teaching literate discourse. In E. Cushman, E. Kintgen, B. Kroll, & M. Rose (Eds.), *Literacy: A critical sourcebook* (pp. 545-554). Boston, MA: Bedford.
- DePalma, R. (2010). *Language use in the two-way classroom: lessons from a Spanish-English bilingual kindergarten*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Derewianka, B., & Jones, P. (2012). *Teaching language in context*. Victoria, Australia: Oxford University Press.
- Eggs, S. (1994). *An introduction to systemic functional linguistics*. New York, NY: Pinter Publishers.
- Eggs, S., & Slade, D. (1997). *Analysing casual conversation*. London, UK: Cassell.
- García, O. (2013). Countering the dual: Transglossia, dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging in education. In R. Rubdy & L. Alsagoff (Eds.), *The global-local interface and hybridity: Exploring language and identity* (pp. 100-118). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- García, O. (2009). Bilingualism and translanguaging. In O. García (Ed.), *Bilingual education in the 21st century: A global perspective* (pp. 42-72). Malden: Blackwell Publishing.

- Halliday, M. A. K. (1985). *An introduction to functional grammar*. New York: NY: Elsevier
- Leseman, P. P. M., Scheele, A. F., Mayo, A. Y., & Messer, M. (2007). Home literacy as special language environment to prepare children for school. *Zeitschrift für Erziehungswissenschaft*, 10(3), 334-355.
- Martin, J. R., & Rose, D. (2008). *Genre relations: Mapping culture*. London, UK: Equinox.
- Michaels, S., & Cook-Gumperz, J. (1979). A study of sharing time with first grade students: Discourse narratives in the classroom. *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*: 647-660.
- Michaels, S., and Foster, M. (1985). Peer-peer learning: Evidence from a student-run sharing time. In A. Jaggar & M. Trika Smith-Burke (Eds.), *Observing the language learner* (143-158). Newark: International Reading Association.
- Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & González, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into Practice*, 31(2), 132-141.
- Murphy, S. (2003). Sharing time goes awry...or does it? *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 17(2), 218-229.
- Oken-Wright, P. (1988). Show and tell grows up. *Young Children*, 43(2), 52-58.
- Palmer, D. K., Martínez, R. A., Mateus, S. G., & Henderson, K. (2014). Reframing the debate on language separation: Toward a visión for translanguaging pedagogies in the dual language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 98(3), 757-772.
- Scarcella, R. (2003). *Academic English: A conceptual framework*. Berkeley: University of California, Language Minority Research Institute.
- Scheele, A. F., Leseman, P. P. M., Mayo, A. Y., & Elbers, E. (2012). Home language and literacy and three-year-olds' emergent academic language in narrative and instruction genres. *The Elementary School Journal*, 103(3), 419-444.
- Schleppegrell, M. (2004). *The language of schooling: A functional linguistics perspective*. Mahwah: Erlbaum.
- Shohamy, E. (2006). *Language policy: Hidden agendas and new approaches*. New York, NY: Routledge.