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The Development of Language Choice in a German Immersion School

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THESIS APPROVAL

The abstract and thesis of Miranda Kussmaul Novash for the Master of Arts in TESOL were presented June 10, 2003, and accepted by the thesis committee and the department.

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ABSTRACT

An abstract of the thesis of Miranda Kussmaul Novash for the Master of Arts in
TESOL presented June 10, 2003.

Title: The Development of Language Choice in a German Immersion School

When bilinguals converse with one another, they make choices about which
language to speak. Many different factors have been shown to influence adult
bilinguals' language choice, including interlocutor, setting, discourse content and
discourse function. Less, however, is known about the factors influencing the
language choice behavior of young bilinguals. Although case studies have provided
insight into the type of language choice behavior exhibited by individual children,
there is a lack of knowledge of the course of development from the language choice
behavior of early childhood bilinguals to the more complex behavior of adult
bilinguals.

This thesis examines the developmental pattern of language choice behavior in
bilingual children at a German foreign-language immersion school in the Pacific
Northwest. Four children, aged five through eleven years of age, were selected as
participants. Each participant was observed throughout an entire school day on three
separate occasions. Observations were made on the participants' language choice
behavior (German or English), with specific attention paid to interlocutor, setting,
discourse content and discourse function.

Analysis of the observations revealed age-based differences in language choice behavior, which suggests that bilingual children do in fact go through a developmental process of acquiring the competence for language-choice. In addition, the children appear to develop two different types of language-choice competence, one for communicating with peers and another for communicating with adults. Finally, results concerning the development of language-choice behavior can be best explained by children's stages of social development, rather than by adult models of sociolinguistic behavior.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE CHOICE IN A GERMAN

IMMERSION SCHOOL

by

MIRANDA KUSSMAUL NOVASH

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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This thesis is dedicated to my husband,

Joseph M. Novash, Jr.

in appreciation of his steadfast support.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

When two speakers who share more than one language interact, they make decisions regarding which language to speak. These decisions are influenced by a myriad of factors. In fact, bilingual speakers have been observed to consider factors relating to speech partner, context, content, function, and form of the linguistic interaction when choosing a language or deciding to alternate between them. For instance, a speaker might choose one language for serious communication but the other to create a humorous effect, or prefer one language at work but the other at home.

While adults, teenagers, and older children appear to consider all of these factors (partner, context, content, function and form) when making a language choice, very young children appear to be influenced by a smaller subset of these variables. In particular, preschool-aged children appear to be influenced first and foremost by the language they associate with their speech partner (Fantini, 1978), particularly with regards to the speech partner's linguistic competence (McClure, 1981; in Goldstein, 1995). However, they can also be sensitive to speech context and to the intent of the interaction, such as making a joke (Fantini, 1978).

For teachers and administrators of preschool and elementary-school foreign-language immersion programs, the issue of bilingual children's language choice is of great pedagogic importance. The more frequently children use the target language, the better they will learn it (e.g., Kavanagh, 2001). If educators can understand the developmental sequence of language-choice behavior, it will help them encourage greater use of the target language by the students. The bilingual setting created by

immersion programs is fairly unique, and past studies have identified patterns of language choice common to children in many immersion programs (see Kavanagh, 2001 for a summary). Of particular concern to the educators has been the tendency of immersion-school children to use the language of the school less frequently as they move into the fourth and fifth grades.

Although linguists have studied many aspects of child language acquisition and childhood bilingualism in detail, the development of the sociopragmatic skill of choosing a language has not been documented with the thoroughness devoted to the development of other linguistic abilities. Several case studies have made an effort to note the language choices made by individual children. However, these case studies have been conducted independently of one another, and they do not provide an overview of how such behavior develops. A few of these case studies have been conducted at immersion schools in an attempt to identify the patterns of language-choice behavior among immersion school students and to draw parallels to the larger social phenomena studied by sociolinguists. Unfortunately, the role that childhood development might play in the children's behavior has not been adequately addressed. Although there is recognition that language-choice behavior changes as children in these programs progress into the higher grades, studies have not attempted to tie these changes to early childhood development. In particular, no discussion appears in the literature of how children's overall social and psychological development influences the development of language-choice behavior in immersion schools. This thesis seeks to

explore the interrelationship between the linguistic and social/psychological aspects of development.

Unfortunately, it is outside of the scope of a master's thesis to study the course of language-choice development in a large, homogenous group of bilingual children over time. What this study does attempt to do, however, is demonstrate a design for a cross-sectional study for examining developmental issues relating to language choice; this design could be replicated on a larger scale. In this study, four German/English bilingual children between the ages of five and eleven were observed going about their daily routines in a German-language immersion school. The situations in which the children used English and German were noted and examined for patterns that might indicate a change in language-choice behavior from youngest to oldest participant. Specifically, evidence was sought for an evolution from the restricted set of influences previously noted in the literature on young children's language choice to the more complicated set of factors influencing adult bilingual behavior.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

This chapter provides background information in the areas of research with which this study is concerned. First, an overview is provided of the issues related to language choice, an aspect of the communicative competence of bilinguals. The second section summarizes the current developmental psychology theories that are relevant to the language-choice decisions of bilingual children. Finally, there is a description of elementary-school foreign language immersion programs and the language-choice behavior of their students. This section concludes with a discussion of the research context for bilingual and monolingual development, and a discussion of the gap in the literature that led to the research questions of this thesis.

Communicative Competence and Language Choice

Children are not born knowing how to speak their native tongues. The ability to use language develops over a period of years as children's productions gradually approach adult norms. A child acquires the elements of grammatical competence simultaneously (phonology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics), although not necessarily at the same rate. Yet the ultimate goal of child language acquisition is not merely the ability to produce grammatically correct, meaningful sentences with native-like pronunciation. Children want to communicate, and in order to do this effectively they need to acquire communicative competence.

Communicative competence has been described as encompassing grammatical competence, which includes the structural features of the language; discourse competence, which refers to the ability to organize language coherently; sociocultural competence, which is the ability to use language in socially appropriate ways; and strategic competence, which is the ability to use language successfully to accomplish goals (Savignon, 2001). Thus, possession of communicative competence allows a speaker to create coherent, structurally correct utterances which accomplish a particular goal in a way deemed appropriate by the community. Consider, for instance, an American boy who says to his grandmother, "May I have some milk, please?" Grammatically, this sentence is no more well-formed than "Give me some milk right now!" However, the first sentence is socially more appropriate in the context of American culture. The child's choice of the first sentence demonstrates his knowledge of this sociocultural aspect of his language.

The sociocultural aspect of communicative competence, as the name implies, is the familiarity and facility with the social norms of language use. Correct social language use varies from society to society and depends entirely on the norms of a given speech community (Trudgill, 1995; Saville-Troike, 1993). Its acquisition by children implies awareness of these norms and thereby the ability to use language in the same ways and for the same purposes as adult members of a society (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1979). Such an ability, according to Savignon (2001), "requires an understanding of the social context in which language is used: the roles of the participants, the information they share, and the function of the interaction" (p. 18).

Like other aspects of language, acquisition of sociocultural competence is a social process as well as a cognitive one (Saville-Troike, 1993). The sociocultural aspect of language is embedded in and intertwined with the linguistic information, and socioculturally-correct language use is modeled for children by the adults around them (Ochs, 1986). There is evidence that certain aspects of sociocultural competence, such as turn-taking ability, may be in place even before a child learns to produce comprehensible language. However, a large part of correct sociolinguistic behavior requires the ability to choose which forms are most appropriate in a given context, which of course requires sufficient mastery of these forms to make such a choice. Therefore, this type of competence develops gradually, alongside acquisition of the structural aspects of language. Even though development of the structural aspects of language is typically in place by the end of early childhood, development of sociocultural competence continues to develop throughout childhood, and adult-like facility with the sociocultural aspects of language may not be in place until adolescence (Saville-Troike, 1993).

The entire task of learning to communicate competently through language becomes even more complex in bilingual settings, because the child must master and keep separate two complete communicative systems as well as learn the appropriate contexts in which each is used. A child's mastery of more than one language can happen in the context of simultaneous bilingualism, in which a child has two native languages; or in the context of successive bilingualism in which the child begins to

acquire an additional language well after he or she has begun to acquire the first, often after three years of age (Grosjean, 1982).

Language choice, or knowing which language to use in a given context, is part of sociocultural competence for bilinguals. It is bilingual children's acquisition of this particular aspect of sociocultural competence, language choice, which will be the focus of this thesis. There are a number of constraints on language choice. One of the most obvious of these constraints is the linguistic competence of the speaker (Kasuya, 1998). Balanced bilingualism, in which a speaker has equal facility with two languages, is rare; bilingualism can range from the ability to communicate basic needs in more than one language to fluency in both (Crystal, 1987). As Crystal points out, it is best to view bilingualism "as a continuum: bilingual people will find themselves at different points on this continuum" (1987, p. 362). Therefore, this thesis will consider language choice a marker of sociocultural competence only if the speaker has the ability to express a given utterance in more than one language and has therefore made a choice. The term "choice," however, does not necessarily refer to conscious decisions; this thesis will not seek to establish whether children are making language choices deliberately.

There is a growing consensus among researchers that language choice is "a communicative option which is available to a bilingual member of a speech community on much the same basis as switching between styles or dialects is an option for the monolingual speaker" (Romaine, 1995; p. 161). That is, the language choice of bilinguals is a natural extension of the normal speech behavior of all humans, and not a unique phenomenon unrelated to the communicative behavior of monolinguals

(Grosjean, 1982; Heller, 1988). Just as monolinguals know which manners of speech are appropriate at a given time, in bilingual communities "knowing the alternatives and the rules for appropriate choice among [languages are] part of the speakers' communicative competence" (Saville-Troike, 1993; p. 50).

In the same way that monolingual children must learn the appropriate ways in which to use language with a given individual in a given situation, bilingual children must acquire the ability to choose appropriately between their languages. Cromdal views bilingualism and language choice not as a part of cognitive ability, but as part of a social setting itself, as an "interactional resource" rather than as a skill. Viewed in this way, appropriate language choice is a mark of a bilingual's social competence; it "displays children's recognition of relevant aspects of the context" (Cromdal, 2001; p. 538).

Approaches to Studying Language Choice

Language choice can take several forms; in bilingual conversation speakers can choose one language, or alternate between languages in a process called codeswitching. Linguists who study language choice in adults recognize that language choice is influenced by what is being spoken about, where, why and by whom. At the same time, researchers have attempted to categorize these factors in various ways and used different terminology in classifying influences on speakers' language-choice behavior. Despite the diversity of terminology, the underlying concepts they represent are fundamentally similar. For instance, Grosjean (1982) uses the term "content" and

Saville-Troike (1993) uses the term "topic" to refer to the same concept, i.e. the subject that the participants are talking about. Grosjean also mentions "situation" and "function of interaction" as influences, which Saville-Troike subsumes under the category of "setting," i.e. where the interaction takes place. Auer (1998) on the other hand lumps these concepts together, and all other non-participant-related influences, as "discourse-related."

These terminological differences may reflect an underlying difference in each author's perception of the factors influencing language choice. Auer describes linguists' studies of language choice as taking one of three perspectives. The first is the "macro-sociolinguistic" view, in which choice is stimulated by participants, topic and setting. In this type of study, the researcher attempts to identify and categorize external influences on the speakers' language-choice behavior. The views of Saville-Troike and Grosjean are macro-sociolinguistic, as they are concerned with identifying external factors that influence language choice and, in the case of Grosjean, with ranking them hierarchically. The second perspective described by Auer is the "grammatical" approach, which examines grammatical restraints on intrasentential codeswitching. This type of study examines the extent to which the structural aspects of the languages themselves influence language choice. The third perspective is based on the "social and cultural context;" according to this view, language choice is primarily discourse-driven and cannot be separated from the context in which it occurs.

The key to understanding the differences among these perspectives is the realization that bilinguals' decisions regarding which language to use can be viewed

from a societal, a linguistic, or an individualistic standpoint. The linguistic standpoint is concerned only with features of the languages being used, and the extent to which these features constrain the speakers' choices. The societal standpoint views language-choice behavior as constrained by rules shared by all members of a speech community; once these rules are discovered, predictions can be made about which language would be used by a member of the community in a given context. The individualist standpoint is concerned not with the language-choice rules of the community, but rather with the language choice of individuals, who can use language choice as a tool to serve a variety of purposes in interacting with others.

It is important to understand that these three viewpoints represent differences only in research focus, not differences in bilinguals' behavior. Therefore, these viewpoints are not mutually exclusive. Synthesized, these views paint the following picture: When two bilinguals interact, their language-choice behavior will be constrained by the grammatical features of their mutual languages, and by their community's typical guidelines regarding when to use each language; however, they may depart from these guidelines for a variety of reasons. Thus, a bilingual's decision regarding which language to use will be decided on two levels. On the broader level, the speaker will be aware of what is appropriate in a given situation, but on a more personal level he or she may also be influenced by specific reasons particular to the moment. A speaker who knows that English is expected in a given context may choose to use German for a humorous or shocking effect.

As this thesis seeks to examine bilingual children's development of communicative competence in language choice, i.e. their acquisition of the norms of their linguistic environment, it will focus on the development of the children's language-choice behavior. It will be kept in mind that departures from the norm can be purposeful; however, there will be no attempt to determine whether such departures were made consciously.

Children and Language Choice

For very young bilinguals, language-choice behavior may be based on a less complicated interaction of influences than that of adult bilinguals. It has been suggested that the main, and in fact exclusive, influences on the language choice of very young children are participant, setting, and speaker intention, such as shocking the listener (Grosjean, 1982; Fantini, 1978). For the factor of participant, a variety of features of the participants can influence a child's language choice. One of the most basic of these features is the linguistic competence of the participants; language choice is constrained by the ability of a speaker to express him- or herself in a given language (Auer, 1988; Grosjean, 1982; Romaine, 1995). Another participant-related factor is the relationship between the speakers, for example the power dynamic or degree of intimacy (Grosjean, 1982; Jørgensen, 1998). The degree of similarity between the participants is also important. Lüdi (in Milroy & Muyksen 1995) distinguishes between *exolingual* interaction, which takes place between speakers of differing linguistic backgrounds, and *endolingual* interaction, which involves speakers of the same linguistic background.

This distinction is so powerful that Auer hypothesizes in his 1988 study of Italian immigrant children in the upper elementary-school grades in Germany that it can be used predictively; when children of "similar biographical background" converse endolingually, codeswitching will be discourse-related, but in a mixed group it will be overwhelmingly participant-related (p. 207). However, this situation could also be viewed in light of Grosjean's hierarchical rankings of external influences, with "participant background" ranking higher than "discourse," the former thus determining to what extent the latter is to be used.

It has been suggested that competence in language choice is modeled for very young children by their caregivers (Ochs, 1986). For instance, there is evidence that occurrences of mixing in children's speech correlate to the amount of mixing in the speech of their parents (Juan-Garau and Perez-Vidal, 2001; Kasuya, 1998). It has also been shown that the language choice of bilingual preschoolers is guided by a much smaller and more constraining set of factors than the language choice of adult bilinguals; preschoolers' language choice is influenced exclusively by the variables of participant, setting, function, and form, with participant as the overriding influence (Fantini, 1978). Fantini also notes that even at age five, children are rarely influenced by social factors. Yet how children's language-choice competence develops into the broader, more complex decision trees of adults is still unclear, as is the role that peer relations plays in this development.

Several studies have shown that adults and older children are influenced in their language-choice behavior by the linguistic nature of the community. Caldas and Caron-

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Caldas (2000) studied an older boy (from age 9½ to 12 ½) who, although he speaks French fluently on visits to Québec, speaks almost exclusively English in the United States, even when his speech partners are using French. That is, his preference is dependent on societal norms, which differ in the United States and Québec. On the other hand, his younger sisters (twins who are two years younger), who attend a French immersion school, appear to base their language choice on the preference of their speech partners. This difference could be a result of their younger age, which would be supported by Fantini (1978), who found that speech-partner preference was the main influence on the language choice of his young children; or it could result from the fact that, as students at an immersion school, they are influenced by a different set of language-choice norms.

Children's Social Development

In order to understand fully the development of sociolinguistic competence, it is necessary to understand the course of children's general social development to see how it relates to language. According to Camaioni, language is "essentially a means of communication and social interaction" (p. 325, 1979); that is, language can be viewed as a tool of social interaction. Developmental psychologists describe social competence as "the set of skills that collectively result in successful social functioning with peers" (Cole and Cole, 2001; p. 581). Initially this set of skills is fairly limited, but as toddlers develop into children and begin to spend less time with adults and more time with peers, they progress through stages of social development.

The difference between children's interactions with their peers and their interactions with adults has been widely commented upon, generally (Cole and Cole, 2001; Shaffer, 1994; Corsaro, 1985; Youniss, 1980) and with regards to language use specifically (Camaioni, 1979). These two categories of interactions differ in terms of the balance of power, the types of social control exerted, and the function of the interaction. In adult/child interactions, the power and authority are clearly one-sided and the child is in a subordinate position; social rules are imposed by the adult. However, the power balance in child/child interactions is quite different. In the case of these peer interactions, without an adult social "expert" to guide them, children must mediate their own social interactions as equals. This allows a certain amount of experimentation with and adaptation of the social rules, which is not possible within the unequal power relationship of adult/child interaction (Shaffer, 1994). Therefore, according to Cole and Cole (2001), "whenever a peer group forms, a social structure emerges" (p. 595). This is not to say that there is no connection at all between adult/child and child/child interaction. Indeed, initially adult/child interactions appear to "provide working models for how people should interact with each other that carry over to interactions among peers" (Cole and Cole, 2001; p. 583). Nevertheless, these "working models" evolve into something distinct as the children adapt them to their own needs.

Thus, it is a mistake to exclusively "view socialization as the process by which the child becomes an adult" (Corsaro, 1985; p. 2) and think of child social development solely as a linear process of children striving to achieve adult norms. A child must develop social competence, and sociolinguistic competence, in two distinct realms, that

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of the adults and that of their peers. In the adult world, the children must learn to recognize and adhere to the prevalent social norms. In the world of their peers, however, children become co-constructors of the social norms, and these norms may end up being different from those required of them by the adults. As a result, the structure of linguistic interaction may be different in adult/child versus child/child conversations (Camaioni, 1979).

There have been many attempts to define the stages children go through in acquiring social competence (Cole and Cole, 2001). But while there may not be agreement on the exact number of stages or the specific features that signal that they have been attained, there is a consensus that children gradually develop a more sophisticated awareness and understanding of social norms as they get older. Two aspects of this development are particularly relevant for the development of social, and sociolinguistic, competence. The first is children's developing awareness of themselves in relation to others, which includes an awareness of how their language behavior compares to that of others. The second is their understanding of rules, which influences bilingual children's understanding of their community's language-choice norms.

According to Ruble (in Sroufe, 1992), prior to the age of seven or eight years most children evaluate their own skills and abilities without comparing themselves to others. By about seven or eight, they begin to develop an awareness of their abilities relative to the similar abilities of their peers, and by nine or ten years of age they "consistently and systematically use comparative information in making self-assessments" (p. 443). Thus, they gradually begin to view themselves as members of a

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group and become aware of similar features they share with other members of the group. With increased awareness of group membership comes a tendency towards increased conformity to group norms (Erwin, 1993). It is typically at around age ten through twelve that children's "social and personal norms are integrated and reconciled" (Veroff, 1969, as summarized in Erwin, 1993).

In a bilingual community, language choice is one such feature shared by group members. Grosjean (1982) mentions language choice as a marker of group membership among older children, but not for younger ones. According to Fishman (1971), language choice can be used to signal group membership even among adult bilinguals. This holds for children as well; Cromdal (2001) observed the importance of choosing the right language in gaining entry into group play at a bilingual elementary school in Sweden.

The accounts of social development discussed above have implications for language choice as well. Ruble's and Veroff's accounts of the development of children's self-awareness as part of a peer group appear to support the prediction that, prior to age seven or eight, children will not be comparing their language-choice behavior to that of their peers. By nine or ten, on the other hand, they might be predicted to have such an awareness of the language-choice behavior of their peer group, and be so motivated to conform, that the peer group will be relatively uniform in its language-choice behavior. Then between ten and twelve, as children begin to balance their individual beliefs with the expectations of their peer group, we might

expect to see greater individual variation in bilingual children's language-choice behavior.

A second aspect relevant to the development of social competence is the children's evolving understanding of rules and social conventions. Much research has been devoted to children's developing understanding of social conventions and the rules of games, since they presumably reflect their developing understanding of the role of societal rules. The original work on this subject was that of Piaget, who believed that at first children's rules "are based on unilateral respect for authority, and then they become based on mutual respect" (Cole and Cole, 2001; p. 595). That is, very young children think that rules cannot be broken, but at a later stage they realize that rules can be changed if there is common consent.

Although later research indicates that the situation is more complex, research by Turiel (in Cole and Cole, 2001) indicates that children's understanding of social norms develops in a manner similar to their understanding of game rules. Turiel's work suggests that prior to age eight, children appear to believe that "[social] conventions reflect the natural order of things" and cannot be breached (p. 567); by about eight or nine years of age, however, they begin to see social conventions as arbitrary and believe that they can, in fact, be changed. By age ten or eleven, there is evidence children begin to view social conventions as being adhered to by common consent and as having a legitimate place in their society.

This growing awareness of the democratic nature of social norms may influence bilingual children's understanding of language choice and codeswitching. If language

choice is indeed a social convention, then the research on social development makes several predictions. For instance, up through about age seven, children could be expected to believe that language-choice norms, as modeled by the adults, "must" be the way they are and are therefore inflexible. This belief would be evidenced in the use of a fairly strict code of language-choice conduct among children up to age eight. In fact, this has been reported by Fantini (1978), who describes the concern and inflexibility of his bilingual children at age 5 with regards to "appropriate" language choice. Thereafter, the research indicates that from roughly age eight to ten, children see the language-choice conventions as somewhat arbitrary and believe that they could be altered under conditions of mutual consent. After age ten or eleven, the same studies would allow the prediction that children would view the language-choice conventions as democratic in nature, but that they should be conscientiously adhered to nevertheless.

One final aspect of peer socialization must be addressed. If it is true that, as has been asserted, children create their own norms, one might expect every group of children to have its own distinct set of rules. Yet within one setting, such as one particular elementary school, each successive class of third-graders may be observed by the teachers adhering to nearly the same social norms as the preceding classes. This is most probably because child/child interaction is, as Shaffer (1994) points out, not always between children of the same age. Younger children observe and imitate older ones, so that a sort of "peer culture" may perpetuate itself in a setting such as an elementary school. Thus we might predict that language-choice behavior among

bilingual children in a particular environment might remain relatively constant, or change slowly, even over a period of years.

Foreign-Language Immersion Schools

A final topic of concern to this thesis is early foreign-language immersion and the issues surrounding it. First, it is necessary to understand the type of programs described by this term. Secondly, it is important to understand the linguistic context in which students at these schools find themselves.

Early Foreign Language Immersion Programs

A mode of foreign-language instruction which has steadily gained in popularity since its creation in Canada in the 1960's is the foreign-language immersion program. Instead of teaching a foreign language directly, as is typical in traditional methods of instruction, immersion programs use the foreign language as the medium through which academic content is taught, and the students learn the language through exposure and daily use. Johnson and Swain (1997) have identified eight features typical of foreign-language immersion programs:

1. The foreign language is the *medium* of instruction in the program, as opposed to an explicitly taught academic subject.

2. The curricular content of the program parallels that of local native-language schools.

3. The native-language support for the students is built into the program design.

4. The goal of the program is additive bilingualism, in which the foreign language is acquired without detriment to the native language.

5. Students' exposure to the foreign language occurs primarily in the classroom, as it is not spoken in the outside community.

6. The majority of students enter the program with little or no knowledge of the foreign language.

7. The teachers are fluent speakers of both the foreign language and the students' native language, and are thereby able to understand all students regardless of the students' foreign-language proficiency.

8. The school's 'classroom culture' is primarily that of the local community, not that of the culture of the foreign language.

Immersion programs can be designed to start at almost any academic level. However, this thesis is concerned only with early immersion programs, which begin in the preschool or kindergarten. Such programs may be full immersion programs, in which all instruction, except native-language literacy classes, are taught in the foreign language. Or they may be partial immersion programs, in which only a couple or as many as half of the classes are taught in the students' native language, while the rest are taught in the foreign language. Children who attend early immersion schools typically exit the programs with listening and reading skills on a par with those of native speakers of the foreign language, and speaking and writing skills far superior to those of individuals who have studied the foreign language through traditional direct instruction (Goldstein, 1995).

The Immersion School Linguistic Context

The immersion school is a relatively unique bilingual environment. Compared to a larger bilingual community such as a bilingual neighborhood or immigrant community, the bilingual immersion-school environment is relatively restricted in

several ways. Typically, children are only in the immersion school environment on weekdays; they spend afternoons, evenings, nights, weekends, and holidays in a different linguistic environment. Also, children's experiences at school take place primarily in large groups, such as the classroom, recess or lunch. Depending on the class, they may not have many adult-child dyadic interactions in the language. The contexts of school are also limited. They are largely academic, with some socializing, mostly with same-age peers. Family groups are a context that rarely comes into play in the immersion school environment.

Since the immersion school has a fairly well-defined goal, i.e. children's acquisition of a foreign language, there have been attempts to study the language development of immersion school students in order to assess achievement of this goal. These studies are usually concerned with the relative success of a particular program, rather than with issues concerning the children's sociolinguistic development. There is agreement among these studies that there are changes in the language behavior of children at different stages of the program.

Studies of language choice in immersion school settings show remarkable similarities in these changes in different schools. According to the overview of three recent studies provided by Kavanagh (2001), two generalizations can be made about the language choice of children in immersion school programs. First, children in all of the immersion programs studied used the two languages available to them, i.e. the target language and the language of the community outside of the school, under different

circumstances. That is to say, the children's linguistic behavior indicated a recognition that a particular language was called for in a particular circumstance.

The second, and for the purposes of this study more interesting, generalization was that the immersion program students' language-choice behavior changed over time. In the schools studied, children from preschool through third grade used the school language with increasing frequency and in an increasingly wider array of contexts as they grew older. As Kavanagh (2001) points out, this increase in use of the school language parallels an increase in proficiency. Somewhat surprisingly, however, although the students' proficiency continues to increase in the fourth and fifth grades, in these grades students' use of the school language begins to decrease. In particular, students in these higher grades tend to use the school language only for academic purposes, such as addressing the teacher or contributing to a class discussion. For social interactions with peers, including some group work in class, the language of the outside community is preferred.

This use of the two languages for different purposes can result in codeswitching. During group work, for example, students have been observed referring to the question under discussion in the school language, but often they revert to the language of the outside community for the actual discussion among the students. In summary, it has been noted that initially, children strive to acquire the school language. As their school-language proficiency increases in the lower elementary-school grades, they use it more frequently. However, in the upper elementary-school grades there is then a decline in use of the school language (Tarone and Swain, 1995).

Tarone and Swain (1995) have interpreted these changes over time in a sociolinguistic framework as an example of language change. In particular, they interpret the changes as the development of a diglossia in the language community of the immersion school classroom. Tarone and Swain define diglossia as a situation "in which a second language is the superordinate formal language variety, and the native language is reserved for use in informal social interactions" (p. 166). According to the authors, diglossic situations can change due to two types of influence. The first type of influence is exerted by the wielders of social power, who can dictate changes in the superordinate variety. The other influence is exerted by informal aspects of the culture; specifically, it involves the influence of vernacular, or informal, speech varieties on the superordinate variety.

According to Tarone and Swain, the changes which occur in the language choice of immersion school students as they reach the higher elementary school grades are instances of language change within a diglossic setting. While this analysis captures the changes in language-choice behavior over time, it appears to be based largely on sociolinguistic theories used to describe the linguistic phenomena of adult bilingual communities. It does not appear to consider the possible influence of the students' social/psychological development on the changes in their linguistic behavior.

The Language Development Research Context

In order to put the findings of this study into context, it is useful to have an overview of the research which has previously been done on issues relating to first language acquisition and bilingual language acquisition. Knowledge of current research

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in the field of first language acquisition provides a context in which to view specific aspects of child language development, such as the development of language-choice behavior. In addition, the research on bilingual language acquisition provides insight into the issues of language development unique to children with more than one first language.

First Language Acquisition Research Context

Many studies of first language acquisition examine acquisition of the structural aspects of language, particularly phonological and syntactic development. These studies indicate that children progress gradually towards mastery of the adult norms, and that acquisition of these aspects is fairly complete by the end of early childhood. For instance, children typically master the majority of their native-language sound system by the age of six years, although a few of the more difficult sounds may not be fully mastered until around eight years of age. This mastery is evidenced by adult-like production of the phonemes. During early childhood, basic pragmatic skills are also developed, as is basic word learning.

Although the syntactic and phonological aspects of the language system are pretty much in place by the end of early childhood, there are other aspects of language learning whose acquisition continues into middle and later childhood. For instance, although the foundations of basic word learning are in place by the end of early childhood, semantic studies indicate that humans continue to expand their vocabularies well beyond early childhood, even into adulthood. The semantic,

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pragmatic, sociolinguistic and metalinguistic aspects of children's language acquisition are still developing throughout elementary and middle school.

This thesis is concerned with the language-choice behavior of children from ages five through eleven, and it attempts to chart a course of development of this behavior from the end of early childhood through the end of middle childhood. I would like to argue that like other aspects of pragmatic and sociolinguistic acquisition, language-choice behavior continues to evolve and change throughout this time period.

The Bilingual Language Acquisition Research Context

As with monolingual language development, much of the literature on bilingual language acquisition has focused on early development. In particular, many studies have attempted to elucidate the processes by which a bilingual child learns the two different structures of his two native languages. Much of this effort has focused on the issue of whether children are acquiring a single, or two separate, structural systems in their language (see Bialystok, 1991; Romaine, 1995; Grosjean, 1982 for overviews of this debate). Thus, there has been a strong effort to discover how a child learns two different structural systems (i.e. phonological and syntactic) simultaneously.

Although bilingual language acquisition has been much studied, the focus of most studies has been rather narrow. The majority of studies have focused on acquisition of the structural aspects of language, as opposed to the pragmatic or sociolinguistic aspects. An additional constraint has been that the majority of studies

focus on early development, meaning they often do not include information on pragmatic and sociolinguistic development, which appears in later childhood. Since the primary interest has been in bilingual children's ability to separate their two languages, there have been fewer studies that attempt to discover just what it is that children do with the two systems once they have mastered them both.

Research Gap

Since the majority of research on language acquisition has focused on early language development, later developments, such as social uses of language, are less well documented. This is particularly true in the field of bilingual language acquisition, where the attempt to determine the extent to which young bilingual children separate their two language systems has overshadowed inquiry into later language use. As a result, there has been very little study of the development of bilingual children's social uses of language.

Although there have been some noteworthy efforts to study childhood language choice, this research is comprised overwhelmingly of case studies. In addition, these case studies have tended to focus on a particular age group: early childhood (Fantini, 1978), middle childhood (Jørgensen, 1998), or late childhood/early adolescence (Auer, 1988). There is a notable scarcity of studies attempting to identify a developmental progression in language-choice behavior.

In terms of immersion school contexts, a developmental view of language choice in childhood is needed because of the well documented changes in language use that occur over time. Although some attempts have been made to document language use in

immersion classrooms, the emphasis has been on the influence of the immersion-school setting on language-choice development; the potential relationship between children's social development and their language-choice behavior has not been examined. Thus, there is a need for more studies that examine social uses of language, especially among older children in bilingual immersion-school settings. This study attempts to provide some insight into these neglected aspects of bilingual language development. In particular, this study will examine the development of the social uses of language during the elementary-school years in the context of both linguistic and general social development.

Research Questions

The general purpose of this study is to seek evidence of a developmental pattern of language-choice behavior. That is to say, an attempt will be made to chart the development of bilingual children's language choice from the early, simple behavior observed by researchers like Fantini (1978) to the complex system of bilingual adults' language choice described by Auer (1998), Saville-Troike (1993) and others. More specifically, however, this study also seeks to establish a relationship between the social/psychological aspects of childhood development and the development of language-choice behavior.

These goals can be stated in terms of the following research questions:

1. Are there observable differences in the way that certain factors, particularly interlocutor, topic and setting, influence the language choice of bilingual children of different ages?

2. Are these differences unsystematic, or do they indicate a pattern of development from a simple, hierarchically-organized set of influences in the youngest children to a more complex system of interaction between factors for the older children?

3. Do developmental patterns in language-choice behavior correspond to the social and psychological developmental stages outlined in the literature on childhood development?

CHAPTER III

Research Methods

This chapter provides information about the design of the study used to collect data for this thesis, the location of data collection, and the participants from whom it was collected. The design of this thesis was intended to provide insight into the patterns of bilingual children's developing language-choice behavior. Because so little is known about the developmental progression of children's language choice, this study was designed as a case study in order to seek a holistic picture of the children's language-choice behavior, with special attention to markers of their developmental progression. Essentially, the study consists of four case studies of bilingual children who range in age from five to eleven years, yielding observational data of a cross-sectional nature.

Location and Structure of School

The data for this study were gathered at the Pacific Northwest German Program (PNGP). This is a private, German-language early immersion school that offers classes for children from preschool through fifth grade. Academic classes are taught exclusively in German by German teachers who also speak German to the children during lunch and recess. Music, art, gym and English class are taught in English by American teachers. Fifth-grade math is also taught in English, by a German teacher, in order to prepare them for transition into English-speaking middle schools and to ensure that students have adequate knowledge of English math terminology to succeed on standardized state tests.

There are several important differences between instruction at the preschool and kindergarten level and at the elementary school level. Each preschool and kindergarten class has two teachers. At the time of data collection, each class had one teacher from Germany and one American teacher, both of whom strove to communicate with the children exclusively in German. Children at this level attend art and music classes in English, but they do not yet have gym or English class. In the preschool and kindergarten schedules, a large part of each day is devoted to free play. During this time children interact primarily with their peers, although they also have the opportunity to interact with the teachers. The peer group in the preschool and kindergarten consists of between one-quarter and one-third children who hear German at home, either because one parent is German and they have been raised bilingually,[1] or because both parents are from Germany. The remaining children are native speakers of English, usually with little or no prior exposure to German. Average class size in the preschool and kindergarten at the time of data collection was seventeen children.

At the elementary-school level, children are in a classroom with only one teacher at a time. Academic subjects are taught in German by native-speaking German teachers, except for English, which is taught by an American. Art, music and gym are likewise conducted in English, as is fifth-grade math for the reasons described above. These higher grades require that the children spend more time in class and less time at play than in the lower levels. However, children still receive plenty of time to play. As

[1] The children raised bilingually differed from both their German-speaking and their English-speaking peers. Their German was often marked by non-developmentally-related errors that did not occur in the speech of the native Germans. However, since they were quite comfortable speaking German and quite able to express themselves, they represented potential German speech partners. For this reason they are grouped together with the German children in analyses.

at the lower level, play is primarily with peers, but children also converse with their teachers during breaks and recess. In both the preschool and elementary school levels, children eat lunch at a table with a teacher and their classmates. At the time of data collection, class size in the elementary school averaged ten students, with the fourth and fifth grade combined into one class. In the first and second grades, the ratio of native English speakers to German and bilingual children was about the same as in the preschool/kindergarten, between two-thirds and three-quarters of the class being English speakers who did not hear German at home. The proportion of German speakers in the higher grades was lower, with both the third grade and the combined fourth/fifth grade each having only one German and one bilingual.

The German teachers at the school are all able to communicate in English, although their levels of confidence in English vary. At the time of the observations several of the American teachers who taught classes at the school in English had no knowledge of German, while others had some German proficiency. However, there are certain German lexical items in common usage at the school, which are used even by non-German speaking American teachers. For example, the German word "Pause" is used exclusively for "break" or "recess," even by the American teachers. Such "cross-linguistic borrowing" is not uncommon in bilingual school settings (Cromdal, 2001).

Participants

The data for this study were observations of the linguistic behavior of four German/English bilingual children between the ages of five and eleven. As linguistic competence is a factor which can confound language choice, the study was restricted to

children who have excellent communicative skills in both languages, as determined by their teachers and parents, and confirmed by my own observations as a speaker of German. All of the teachers and the parents of the participants signed consent forms, as did participants old enough to read and comprehend a consent form (Appendix A).

Participants of the same gender were chosen for this study, as research indicates that gender can influence the communicative behavior of young children (Thompson and Moore, 2000) as well as their social behavior (Cole and Cole, 2001). The age spread of potential female participants was better suited for a cross-sectional study than the age spread of potential male participants, so I chose to study girls. The participants are described below in Table 3.1. All names used in the study are code names.

Table 3.1: Participants

Name	Age	Grade	Home Language(s)
Ella	5½	Kindergarten	German and English
Kelly	7½	First Grade	German and English
Alexandria	9	Third Grade	German
Beth	11	Fifth Grade	English

Data Collection and Procedures

For this study naturalistic data were gathered through observation. I collected data from each child throughout an entire school day on three separate occasions per child. These observations consisted of my observing each participant as she went about her ordinary daily routine at the PNGP, such as lunch, circle time, class instruction, play time, and field trips. I noted each participant's language choices and their contexts, specifically with regards to interlocutor (the person or people with whom the participant

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was interacting), setting (the place where the interaction was occurring), and discourse function (what the participant was accomplishing through the interaction). I also made note of language mixing, interference, and switching.

For the sake of speed and organization, notes were made on the following form:

Table 3.2: Sample Data Collection Form

Child:_____   Date:_____

Time	Interlocutor	Setting	Topic	Language

Notes:

Notes typically were made in the following style:

Example: K(G)→GT5 clarification of activity

This example should be read as follows: Participant K addressed a comment in German to the German fifth-grade teacher, requesting clarification of an activity. Occasionally utterances were written down verbatim, but since speech was often rapid and uninterrupted, I rarely had time to make such detailed notes. Because the issue under investigation was the choice of which language to use, and not the actual structure of what was being said, the decision was made to not attempt to record each utterance of the child, but rather to code those variables that have been shown to influence language choice in children and adults.

Data Coding and Analysis

The data were examined to determine which factors influenced the language choice of each child. In particular, I looked for patterns between the child's use of each language and: individual speech partners, setting, discourse function, and topic. The relative influence of each factor was assessed by noting the subject's choice in the presence of competing factors (i.e. German speech partner, English setting).

For analysis, an instance of "language choice" was determined to be each time a conversation began or there was a change in the participant's interlocutor, setting, function of the interaction, or discourse form. This was based on the supposition that with each change, the participant had to reevaluate the situation and make a decision about which language to use, i.e. whether to switch or continue using the same language. A separate occurrence of language choice also occurred when conversation was resumed after a lengthy pause. For instance, if a participant discussed a project with a classmate during class, then both worked quietly for a few minutes, and then conversation about the project resumed, this was counted as a new instance of language choice.

Example 1, taken from Ella's data, illustrates how individual instances of language choice were recognized:

Example 1:

(Children washing hands in preparation for snack)

E(E)↔AK1,AK2 discussion of their places in line
E(E)→AK1 you touched the wall, should wash your hands again
E(E)→AK3 AK1 should wash her hands, shouldn't she
E(E)↔AK3 discussion of washing hands and touching things

E(E)→AK1 AK3 thinks you should wash again
E(G)→GTK AK1 touched the wall

In the first line of the example, Participant E is discussing her place in line in English with two American friends. Although this is a conversation of several turns, it is counted as one instance of language choice since there are no changes in interlocutor, topic, function or setting. The second line shows a change in interlocutor (now E is speaking only to one friend), topic (they are no longer discussing their places in line) and function (she is now trying to coerce her friend). This was therefore counted as a second instance of language choice, even though E did not actually change language. In lines 3 and 4, E has again changed interlocutors, and she and her new speech partner engage in a discussion of hand-washing rules which comes to a conclusion supporting E's assertion in line 2. Lines 3 and 4 were counted as a single instance of language choice, since they involve the same interlocutor, setting, topic and function. Line 5 again represents a choice, since there is a change in interlocutor, with the introduction of a new child; line 6 is a choice again, when E draws the teacher into the discussion, and here she chooses to switch to German.

After instances of language choice were determined, they were sorted by factor (participant, setting, function and topic) so that patterns between language choice and factor could be more easily observed. Since each instance of language choice was an example of each type of factor, this means that each instance of language choice appeared in each grouping of the analysis. That is, each instance of language choice appeared in the separate analyses of participant, setting, function and topic.

CHAPTER IV

Results

This chapter describes the data collected through the observations of the participants at school. A description is given of each of the four children's language-choice behavior, and the primary and secondary influences on this behavior are identified. The specific influences discussed are interlocutor, setting and discourse function (for explanations of these terms, please see Appendix B). At the end of the chapter, a summary provides an overview of this behavior and attempts to highlight the similarities and differences between the language-choice behavior of the participants. This overview also suggests a course of development from the youngest through the oldest child.

Ella (Kindergarten)

Background

Ella, the youngest participant, was five years and eight months old at the time of observation. Her mother is German and her father is American, and she has an older sister; all members of the family are German-English bilinguals. Ella is an outgoing and talkative child who appears to express herself with equal ease in both of her native languages. Her language development also appears to be age-level appropriate for both languages. For example, at the time of observation she was making age-appropriate overgeneralization errors in both languages.

Ella's kindergarten classroom was led by a German head teacher and a German-speaking American assistant teacher. Eleven of Ella's classmates were American

children, and six were native-speaking German children. Several of the American children spoke German with some fluency, but the majority of the American children had primarily passive language skills in German. Of the German children, one or two could converse in English, but the others had primarily passive language skills in English. Ella was the only balanced bilingual in the class.

The typical daily events in Ella's class included German-language activities, occasional English-language activities such as art and music class, and relatively unstructured times. German-language activities included Kreis (Circle Time) and various structured kindergarten-level academic activities. Art and Music class, which each met once a week, were conducted in different classrooms and were taught by non-German-speaking American teachers. During relatively unstructured times such as naptime, playtime and lunch, when the teachers were not leading the class, there was not a particular language associated with the activity. However, during these times the head teacher and assistant teacher continued to use German with the children.

Language Choice

Primary Influence on Ella's Language Choice: Interlocutor

Interlocutor

In general, I found that the main influence on Ella's choice of language is interlocutor. Specifically two particular aspects of the interlocutor influenced her choice: native language/language preference and age/status. The primary influence on Ella's choice is the native language of her interlocutor, as is clear when the interlocutors

are grouped by native language, as in Table 4.1 below. The data show Ella speaking to interlocutors of three different types: German-speaking Germans, English-speaking Americans, and German-speaking American teachers. In general, Ella's language choice is based on the interlocutor's native language; she speaks German to Germans and English to Americans. The case of the German-speaking Americans, however, presents a potential conflict for Ella. The native language of this type of interlocutor is English, yet by addressing her in German the German-speaking American adults signal a desire to be spoken to in German. Presented with this conflict between the interlocutor's native language and language preference, Ella usually defers to the interlocutor's preference. However, as is clear from Table 4.1, she is less consistent with this choice for the American German speakers than she is with native-language speakers.

Table 4.1:
Ella's Language Choice with Native Language as an Influence

Interlocutor	English	German
German Interlocutor(s)	3%	97%
American Interlocutor(s)	96%	4%
German-Speaking American(s)	19%	81%
Mixed Group of Interlocutors	57%	43%

In the case of the researcher, an American who always speaks German to her, Ella consistently chooses German. In the case of the American assistant kindergarten teacher, she is less consistent. Approximately 80% of the time, Ella uses German to address the assistant teacher. When Ella is in the midst of a long conversation in

English, she switches to German to talk to native German speakers; however, she does not always switch to German for the assistant teacher under these circumstances. There are also several examples in the data of Ella speaking English to the assistant teacher for reasons that appear to be motivated by discourse function; these are discussed below in the section on Discourse Function. It should be noted that, on rare occasions, the assistant teacher does speak to the children in English, so English as a language choice with her would not appear to be entirely taboo.

Generally, Ella's language-choice strategy when speaking to other children is simple, and based on the native-language aspect. She speaks English to American children and German to German children whenever possible. Even when this strategy is unnecessary and difficult, she tries to maintain this pattern. For example, when she plays with a mixed group of children, she attempts to make direct comments to American children in English and German children in German, even when the participants are competent in both languages and switching is so frequent as to result in a high cognitive processing demand. On a few occasions, Ella does address an American child in German or a German child in English. This occurs only when she switches from speaking to an interlocutor of one language to speaking to an interlocutor of the other language. On these occasions, she quickly self-corrects and switches to the native language of her interlocutor.

The status of the interlocutor, such as whether it is an adult or a child, also influences Ella's choice. This is evident by the fact that in a mixed-language group which includes an adult, Ella speaks the native or preferred language of the adult in

about the same proportions as when she speaks to that adult alone (Table 4.2). Thus,

when she has to choose a language in a mixed group that includes an adult, she typically

chooses the language of the group member with the highest status. On rare occasions,

though, Ella does deviate from this norm. On one occasion during Circle Time, for

instance, the German teacher is addressing the mixed group in German; the children,

including Ella, respond by speaking to the group in German. However, this is too

challenging for Ella's American friend Karin, who switches to addressing the group in

English. As soon as Karin switches, Ella switches from addressing the group in

German to addressing the group in English. In this example she uses whichever

language has preceded her contribution. This is actually more typical of Ella's behavior

in linguistically-mixed groups that do not include adults.

Table 4.2:
Ella's Language Choice with Age/Status as an Influence

Interlocutor	English	German	Total
German or G/A Adult*	13 (10 %)	121 (90%)	134
Mixed Group with German or G/A Adult*	2 (10%)	17 (90%)	19
American Adult	4 (100%)	0	4
Mixed Group with American Adult	1 (100%)	0	1
German Child/Children	3 (5%)	54 (95%)	57
American Child/Children	415 (97%)	11 (3%)	426
Group with Mixed Children	38 (72%)	15 (28%)	53
Toys and Animals	3 (75%)	1 (25%)	4

* G/A = German-speaking American

In the case of linguistically mixed groups of children without adults, age and

status no longer appear to be influential. In these cases, Ella is confronted with a

potential conflict; her audience does not share a native language. Under these

circumstances, she typically follows the linguistic lead of her interlocutors; she chooses whichever language the group is currently speaking. The result is that she uses English approximately 70% of the time when addressing mixed groups. The frequency with which a mixed group settles on a given language appears to be influenced by the linguistic competence of the group members. If the American children in the group speak German more competently than the German children speak English, then the group speaks predominantly German. However, if the German children speak English more competently than the American children speak German, then the group speaks predominantly English.

On one occasion for instance, Ella is playing with two American girls and one German girl. When Ella addresses them individually, she chooses the native language of the child she is addressing. When she addresses them as a group, however, she chooses the language the others are currently using to address the group. When one girl speaks to the group in English, Ella also speaks to the group in English. When another girl switches and speaks to the group in German, Ella also begins speaking to the group in German.

It is interesting to note that Ella's choice of language when she talks to animals or dolls is likewise determined by the children around her. When her American friends speak to Karin's hamster in English, so does Ella. However, when her German friends begin speaking to the hamster in German, Ella also switches to German.

It should be noted that there are exceptions to Ella's habit of following the language choices of her interlocutors in mixed groups. These exceptions are usually

related to discourse function, such as tattling or excluding, and will be discussed below. There are also two occasions on which Ella wishes to address the group but there is no linguistic lead to follow, such as when she suddenly makes an announcement to the entire class during naptime. On these occasions, she once chooses English and once chooses German. Since the data for this type of interaction are so sparse, however, it is difficult to draw conclusions.

Although these two aspects of the interlocutor, native language/language preference and age/status, are the primary influences on Ella's language choice, there are two other influences. The first of these is setting, and the second is discourse function. Both of these influences are discussed in the sections below. It should be kept in mind, however, that these influences play a relatively minor role. By far the strongest influence on Ella's language choice is her interlocutor.

Secondary Influences on Ella's Language Choice: Setting; Discourse Function

Setting

The influence of setting is not completely unrelated to the interlocutor influence. As was described in the Methods section, English-language classes are taught by American teachers who are not conversant in German. Since the teachers are monolinguals, Ella does not really have a choice of which language to use with them if she wants to be understood; likewise, when she addresses the class as a whole, she must use English if she wants the teacher to understand.[2] Therefore, the fact that Art and

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[2] This means that some of the German children will not understand; the reverse is true during Kreis, where Ella's use of German will mean that some of the American children will not understand.

Music are English-language settings may be related to the fact that in these settings the high-status member of the group, the teacher, has English as a native language.

Nevertheless, setting does appear to exert some influence on Ella's language-choice behavior. In particular, when the interlocutor does not provide a reliable cue as to which language to speak (such as in mixed groups and with German-speaking Americans), the setting appears to influence her language choice-behavior (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3:
Ella's Language Choice with Setting as an Influence

Setting	English	German	Total
German Structured Activity	74 (53%)	65 (47%)	139
English Structured Activity	36 (97%)	1 (3%)	37
Unstructured Activity	385 (69%)	169 (31%)	554

In English and Art class Ella speaks primarily English, except on the one occasion when she speaks directly to a German native speaker. This one occasion involves an argument as well, so discourse function may also have contributed to her choice of German. In these English-speaking settings, she uses only English to address mixed groups of children. In the two non-English settings, however, Ella's language choice appears to be based on the considerations described under the section on Interlocutor.

The data show Ella speaking English to American children 417 times and German to American children 11 times. It is interesting to note the settings in which

this use of German occurred. One time German was used to an American child during a German structured activity; the other ten times were during unstructured time.

Discourse Function

There are several occasions on which discourse function appears to have contributed to Ella's language choice. On one such occasion, Ella asks the American assistant teacher a question in German, and switches to English when she does not get a response. This decision to repeat a question in the other language when the first attempt is not successful is a common phenomenon in bilingual settings (Grosjean 1982). As has been noted above, Ella uses German with the assistant teacher approximately 80% of the time. When Ella desires assistance of any kind from the assistant teacher, she uses German. Thus, when the discourse function is to persuade or coerce, she consistently uses the preferred language of her interlocutor. Similarly, the one occasion on which Ella uses German in an English setting is a case of disagreement. In her efforts to persuade a German child that she is correct, Ella uses the child's native language even though it is not the appropriate language for the setting.

Conversely, language choice can also be used for the function of exclusion. On one occasion in which a German child asks in German whether she can join Ella and two American children at the water table, Ella rejects her bid in English. Ella's choice of a language, which the German child does not speak proficiently, adds strength to the rejection (see Cromdal 2001 for discussion of this phenomenon in slightly older children). Discourse function also occasionally influences Ella's language choice in

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linguistically mixed groups. For example, on one occasion where she has been speaking English with an English-speaking mixed group, she suddenly switches to German when she has a complaint that she evidently wants the nearby German teacher to overhear.

Kelly (1st Grade)

Background

Kelly, the second participant, was seven years and six months old at the time of the data collection. Her mother is a German and her father is an American; at her home, English is spoken more often than German. She is a little bit shy with strangers, but talkative and playful once she feels at ease. Although Kelly can express herself easily and well in both German and English, English appears to be her stronger language. In both languages Kelly occasionally makes age-appropriate overgeneralization errors; in German, she occasionally makes the non-native error of assigning the incorrect grammatical gender to nouns.

Kelly's first-grade class was taught by a teacher from Germany. Her classmates consisted of five American children, two German children, and two simultaneous bilinguals. Two of the American children were highly competent speakers of German, and the other three were still developing their second-language skills. Both of the German children could converse in English, although one of them sometimes struggled to do so. The bilinguals were completely at ease with both languages, but like Kelly

they appeared to have English as a stronger language despite having a German-speaking parent and having learned both languages simultaneously. The teachers themselves classify these two children as Americans who speak German very well, rather than as native speakers of German. However, since Kelly's linguistic behavior relative to these bilinguals is slightly different from that of her behavior towards the American children, they are represented in Table 4.4 as a separate category. Kelly did not have contact with German-speaking Americans in her classroom, with the exception of the researcher.

In the first-grade classroom, classes were taught entirely in German, with the exception of Art, Music, Gym, and English, which were taught in English by American teachers. However, the majority of the day was spent in instruction conducted in German. During lunch, play time, and snack, Kelly and her classmates did not have any particular language expectations imposed on them. During these times, the German teachers spoke to them in German and the American teachers spoke to them in English.

Language Choice

Primary Influence on Kelly's Language Choice: Interlocutor

Interlocutor

For Kelly, the factor with the strongest influence on her language choice is interlocutor. It is also worth noting that Kelly, unlike Ella, does not appear to make language-choice errors as a result of high cognitive-processing demands. There is not a single occasion on which she self-corrects after speaking German to an American child,

or English to a native-speaking German. It appears that Kelly is consistent in her language-choice decisions.

Like Ella, she typically chooses the native language of her interlocutor, deferring to language preference when there is a conflict between the two (Table 4.4). Unlike Ella however, Kelly is confronted not only with adults whose language preference conflicts with their native language, but also with children who prefer their non-native language. Specifically, Kelly interacts with German children who, regardless of their proficiency in this second language, prefer to speak English with other children.

Table 4.4:
Kelly's Language Choice with Native Language as an Influence

Interlocutor	English	German
German Interlocutor(s)	6%	94%
American Interlocutor(s)	100%	0%
Bilingual Interlocutor(s)	90%	10%
German-Speaking American(s)	6%	94%
Mixed Interlocutors	60%	40%

In fact, my observations of the first grade show indications of an age-based dichotomy of language preference. The bilingual adults Kelly comes into contact with prefer to speak German to the children; the children with whom she interacts usually tend to prefer to use English with other children. Thus language preference, which is related to age/status, begins to exert a stronger influence than native language in the first grade.

The situation with the adults appears to create little conflict for Kelly. With the non-German-speaking adults she speaks English, and with German-speaking adults she speaks almost exclusively German (Table 4.5). The only two exceptions to this rule appear to be closely connected to the setting, and will be discussed further in the Setting section. Like Ella, she is also sensitive to the higher status of adults when one is present. With only a single exception, she chooses the preferred language of the adult in mixed groups which include an adult. In these situations, Kelly always addressed the entire group in the language she chose when speaking to that adult alone, even if this conflicted with the language she would have chosen for the group of children alone. For example, when speaking to a mixed-language group of children, Kelly always chose English, but when speaking to the German teacher she spoke German. When speaking to a group that included the German teacher and both German and American children, Kelly spoke German.

Table 4.5:
Kelly's Language Choice with Age/Status as an Influence

Interlocutor	English	German	Total
German or G/A Adult*	2 (3%)	74 (97%)	76
Mixed Group with German or G/A Adult*	1 (4%)	24 (96%)	25
American Adult	14 (100%)	0	14
Mixed Group with American Teacher	7 (100%)	0	7
German Child/Children	3 (43%)	4 (57%)	7
Bilingual Child/Children	46 (90%)	5 (10%)	51
American Child/Children	52 (100%)	0	52
Group with Mixed Children	28 (100%)	0	28

* G/A = German-speaking American

However, Kelly's language choice when addressing children appears to be more complex than Ella's. Unlike Ella, Kelly does not appear to be basing her language choice with other children primarily on their native languages. With American children, Kelly consistently speaks English, which is their native language. She never deviates from this, even accidentally. However, she also speaks primarily English with the bilinguals, and nearly half of her speech to German children is also in English; she does not automatically address the German children in their native language.

In order to gain insight into the factors motivating Kelly's language choice with her bilingual and German classmates, it is necessary to look at some specific instances in which she made these choices. Upon looking more closely at Kelly's linguistic behavior with her bilingual classmates, a pattern does emerge. There are two simultaneous bilinguals in the class, one of whom is her best friend Christina. With Christina, Kelly speaks primarily English, although on a few occasions she does speak German; with the other bilingual, Kelly speaks exclusively English. Primarily, the data show Kelly speaking German to Christina only when instructed to do so by the teacher during a structured German activity, or when Christina has initiated an exchange in German.

There are exceptions, however. For instance, on one occasion Christina and Kelly were discussing the prizes they had just found in their surprise eggs. Kelly began speaking in English, switched to German, and then switched back to English within a period of a few seconds. There were no discourse features such as topic or function that appeared to be related to the switch. This may have been an early instance of code-

switching, which Kelly could use because her interlocutor spoke both languages. However, this was an exception to the rule. Typically, Kelly chooses English with her child bilingual interlocutors, except in circumstances where her choice is influenced by the requirements of a teacher or the preference of the interlocutor.

Closer examination of Kelly's linguistic behavior towards her German classmates is even more important. Unfortunately, there are few examples of it. Her decision as to which language to use with German children appears to be influenced by an array of factors. If Kelly is instructed by a teacher to use German with another child during an activity, then she obliges. She also makes this choice when a child's English skills are insufficient for communication, which happened once when a younger German child approached Kelly and her friends during recess.[3] However, in these circumstances she is not truly faced with a choice if she wants to follow the rules or be understood. Under circumstances in which she faces a choice, however, Kelly is still influenced by the preference of her interlocutor. This is accomplished in the same way that Ella made her language choice in mixed group of children, by following the lead of others. Kelly replies to German children in whichever language they have just been using, which is usually English.

However, the data do show an instance in which Kelly attempted, at least briefly, to choose a language different from the one preferred by her German child interlocutor. This occasion took place during Art class, a setting in which English usually dominates. Tobias, a German classmate, was attempting to find the glue. He

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[3] Kelly had been playing with a linguistically-mixed group of children, all of whom had been speaking English. When they were approached by the younger boy, who did not know much English, the entire group addressed him in German.

initiated discussion with Kelly in English, and she helped him search; she replied to him in English, the language in which he began the exchange. However, Tobias began to struggle to express himself in English; at this point, Kelly switched to German to accommodate him. Tobias rejected this switch and continued in English, at which point Kelly obligingly switched back to English.

The other two occasions on which the data show Kelly speaking German to a German child or children were during German-language structured activities. With the exception of her attempt to help Tobias by switching to German in Art class, she does not use German with any children during the English-language classes. Thus, setting may influence her language choice when she speaks to German children. This influence will be discussed further below in the section on Setting.

The age-related general preference for English is reflected not only in Kelly's language choice with individual children, but also her linguistic behavior in linguistically mixed groups of children without an adult. In these situations, she consistently chose English, which appeared to be the accepted language of the peer group in general. Thus, it can be stated that the general pattern underlying Kelly's language choice is that she typically speaks English to children and non-German-speaking adults, and German to all other adults. Exceptions are usually clearly motivated either by issues of interlocutor competence, or by teacher requirement. One other exception occurred when Kelly chose to address the German-speaking American researcher in English. This exception appears to be related to the setting, and will be discussed below.

Secondary Influence on Kelly's Language Choice: Setting

Setting

Setting does influence Kelly's choice of language to some types of interlocutor, but not to all. Specifically, setting appears influential only with her bilingual friend, or when interlocutor prefers to use his or her non-native language. Under this limited set of circumstances, setting may play a role in Kelly's decision to use English or German (Table 4.6). For instance, with only one exception, Kelly spoke German to Christina only during structured German activities. The one exception took place during unstructured time, but it was in the German classroom, not in an English-language classroom or the language-neutral playground. Likewise, the data show Kelly choosing to speak English with German children in English-language settings and unstructured time, and German during structured German activities. The two exceptions to this generalization occurred only when Kelly had doubts about her interlocutor's English-language competence (described above in the Interlocutor section). However, it should be remembered that the sample of utterances directed at German children is quite small to use as the basis of generalizations.

Table 4.6:
Kelly's Language Choice with Setting as an Influence

Setting	English	German	Total
German Structured Activity	41 (30%)	94 (70%)	135
English Structured Activity	63 (80%)	16* (20%)	79
Unstructured Activity	48 (60%)	32 (40%)	80

*NOTE: All but two of the German utterances made during English Structured Activities were addressed to the researcher, who would not have been present under normal circumstances; this has resulted in a misleadingly high number in this cell.

Another instance where setting appears to have played an influence is when the researcher accompanied the first graders on a fieldtrip downtown. Kelly was very consistent in her language choice when speaking to teachers; she always addressee a teacher in his or her native language. With the researcher, however, Kelly was presented with conflicting influences. The researcher's native language is English, but she always spoke to Kelly in German. Although Kelly was presented with a conflict between the American researcher's native language and her preference for speaking German, Kelly chose German to speak to the researcher, regardless of whether she was initiating an exchange or responding to the researcher. However, on one occasion she spoke to the researcher in English, despite the fact that the researcher was speaking to her in German. On this occasion, Kelly's class was in a public bus, returning from a long English fieldtrip to the public library. During the entire fieldtrip, Kelly had spoken German to the researcher. On the bus back to the school, the researcher had been conversing at length with an American parent in English, and directly afterwards Kelly chose English to speak to the researcher. Back at the school, she returned to using German.

Interestingly, Tables 4.5 and Table 4.6 suggest that where there is a conflict between setting and interlocutor, interlocutor is the more powerful influence. This is evident from the fact that there are types of interlocutors with whom Kelly never uses a particular language, as indicated by the number zero in a column (Table 4.5), but there are no types of setting in which Kelly never uses a particular language (Table 4.6).

Although the use of a particular language in a given setting may be very low, such as the use of German in English-language settings, it is never zero.

Changes since Kindergarten

Comparison of Ella's and Kelly's data suggests that several developments have taken place between kindergarten and first grade. First, the first grader does not appear to make the language-choice mistakes evidenced by the kindergartner's occasional self-corrections. Second, the first grader's data show greater use of English to German children and in mixed-language groups, evidently as a concession to the preferences of her speech partners. Third, setting appears to be a slightly stronger influence on the first grader who, unlike the kindergartner, uses primarily German in some settings.

Alexandria (3rd Grade)

Background

At the time of observation, Alexandria was nine years and one month old. Both of her parents are Germans, and German is the language her parents speak in her home. Her mother reports, however, that Alexandria prefers to use English at home. The exception is when she has school friends over to play; these friends speak German with Alexandria's parents, and under these circumstances Alexandria also uses German. Alexandria is a very quiet child in group settings. Although she is a balanced bilingual who can express herself fully in German and English, she engages in a very large amount of non-verbal communication, such as facial expressions and gestures.

Alexandria's third-grade class was taught in German by a German teacher. Exceptions were Art, Music, English, and Gym, which were taught in English by American teachers. During recess, at lunch, and between classes, the teachers did not impose any particular language expectations. In these free-time settings, each teacher addressed the children with the language she or he would have used in the classroom. Alexandria had one German classmate, who had minimal English skills and avoided using English whenever possible, even in the English-language classes. The remaining six children in the class were Americans. Of the American children, five could express themselves very competently and confidently in German; the remaining child spoke and understood German, but occasionally struggled to express himself. With the exception of the researcher, Alexandria did not have frequent contact with German-speaking Americans.

Language Choice

Primary Influences on Alexandria's Language Choice: Interlocutor; Setting

Interlocutor

For Alexandria and her classmates, interlocutor and setting were both important factors influencing language choice. Alexandria typically, but not exclusively, chose the native language of her interlocutor, or the language preference if there was a conflict between native language and the preferred language of the interlocutor (Table 4.7). Unlike the younger children, native language and language preference were no longer the only influence on her language choice. However, as might be expected, in the case

of monolinguals such as non-German-speaking American teachers or the non-English-speaking German classmate, Alexandria always used their native languages (Table 4.8). Alexandria also showed herself to be as sensitive to age and status as the two younger children. Her language choice in mixed groups including adults shows the exact same pattern as when she speaks to the adults alone. For instance, Alexandria chose German 94% of the time when speaking to German adults and 95% of the time when speaking to groups which included a German adult.

Table 4.7:
Alexandria's Language Choice with Interlocutor as an Influence

Interlocutor	English	German
German Interlocutor(s)	2%	98%
American Interlocutor(s)	93%	7%
German-Speaking American(s)	12%	88%
Mixed Interlocutors	26%	74%

Table 4.8:
Alexandria's Language Choice with Age/Status as an Influence

Interlocutor	English	German	Total
German or G/A Adult	1 (6%)	17 (94%)	18
Mixed Group with German or G/A Adult	1 (5%)	19 (95%)	20
American Adult	18 (100%)	0	18
Mixed Group with American Adult	7 (100%)	0	7
German Child/Children	1 (2%)	50 (98%)	51
American Child/Children	32 (89%)	4 (11%)	36
Group with Mixed Children	1 (12%)	7 (88%)	8

* G/A = German-speaking American

One particular interlocutor in the third-grade class exerted a particularly strong influence over Alexandria. The German third grader, Paula, avoided speaking English

and liked to stay near Alexandria. Alexandria respected this child's desire to use only German, and as a result spoke German to her in virtually every setting. The one instance where Alexandria used English with her was when Paula requested a translation. Therefore, in all cases Alexandria respected Paula's preference.

As an extension of this observance of Paula's wishes, Alexandria also usually spoke German to groups which included the German girl. It should be noted, however, that the data do not contain many examples of Alexandria speaking to mixed groups of children without an adult. However, the data do show Alexandria speaking English to a mixed group of children on one occasion. Interestingly, this occurred at the lunch table, a purely English setting from the children's perspective. This was also the one occasion on which she spoke English to the researcher; this is discussed below.

The language Alexandria chose to speak with her American classmates, all of whom could have conversed with her in either German or English, was primarily English. There were a few exceptions, however. Twice she used German for the purpose of play, which is discussed below under Discourse Function. Alexandria also spoke German to American classmates when required to do so by a German activity, such as reading questions off of a cue card; all personal comments were made in English, however. There was one exception though, when Alexandria did not understand the question on a card read to her by an American and requested clarification in German by asking "Wer?," which means "Who?" Finally, she also once initiated a conversation in German with an American fourth-grader named Alice. On this occasion, she had just been conversing at length in German with a German child,

the researcher, and the German teacher during a German activity. During the break she asked Alice a question in German. On all similar occasions, however, she switched to English to talk to American children.

There are few examples of Alexandria speaking to the researcher, but they show Alexandria speaking German to her, with one exception. The third-graders had just undergone a very unsettling experience, and immediately afterwards Alexandria addressed the researcher in English. This immediately preceded the one occasion on which she spoke English to the mixed group of children. This may be related to the lunchtime setting, or to the shock of the experience, which happened in an English-language setting.

Setting

For the third grader, setting definitely had an influence on language choice. That the children themselves were aware of this influence became clear to me one sunny day when the teachers had brought blankets outside during lunch and the children were picnicking in small groups around the playground. I joined Alexandria, who was sitting with a large group of third grade girls, and I stayed on eating my lunch after Alexandria had left to play on the swings. Although the children were all speaking English, I continued to use German. Suddenly Maria, one of Alexandria's classmates and a former student of mine, turned to me and very carefully explained that I was welcome to sit with them at their picnic, but that it was lunch time, and outside of class English was spoken. I protested that Paula was present, and that she didn't speak English. I asked whether they were concerned that she would not be able to understand

the conversation. At this, all of the girls began giggling. It occurred to me, however, that Paula was in fact respecting the English-at-lunch preference of the others; she had remained silent rather than use German.

Typically, German was spoken by the third graders only in German-language academic settings. For instance, the third-graders spoke German to the German teachers and the researcher in the classroom, during and between classes; however, at lunch they spoke English even to these German-speaking adults, even when the adults addressed them in German. In fact, although the data for Alexandria's language choice at the lunch table are very small, they do show her using English exclusively. Thus, for the third-graders, English was the language appropriate in all settings other than during a German class. The only exceptions to this general rule were remarks addressed to Paula, for which Alexandria and most of the other children chose German. However, during lunchtime remarks addressed to the mixed group were made in English, and at least one American classmate occasionally spoke English directly to Paula during lunchtime.

Although most of the third-graders had very clear delineations of where and when to speak English, Alexandria's data are atypical for the third grade. This appears to be a direct result of the presence of Paula. Although Paula did not go against expectations and speak German to the group in settings where English was preferred by the children, she did speak directly to Alexandria in every setting. Alexandria, who typically respected the language preferences of others, responded by using German with Paula in these settings. As a result, the data show Alexandria using German in every

setting (Table 4.9). However, the instances of German use during English structured activities occurred exclusively as a result of Alexandria's responding to Paula's German utterances. Similarly, the high ratio of German use during unstructured free time results directly from the fact that Paula was her main playmate during these times.

Table 4.9:
Alexandria's Language Choice with Setting as an Influence

Setting	English	German	Total
German Structured Activity	6 (10%)	57 (90%)	63
English Structured Activity	53 (77%)	16 (23%)	69
Unstructured Activity	13 (30%)	31 (70%)	44

For parts of the data, it is difficult to separate the influence of interlocutor and setting on Alexandria's language-choice behavior. The music teacher, for instance, a native speaker of English, was addressed only in the setting of the English-language music classroom. Under such circumstances, it is difficult to conclude whether Alexandria's decision to used English was based on interlocutor or setting. Similarly, the data show 13 instances of Alexandria addressing a group including a German teacher and multiple children of mixed nationalities. All thirteen of these utterances occurred during a structured German activity, so it is difficult to separate the effect of interlocutor and the effect of setting. However, the fact that all but one of these utterances was in German suggests that it was the effect of setting, since German is only used primarily in certain settings. The one time Alexandria used English to address the teacher and mixed children was an example of self-translation, and is discussed below under Discourse Functions.

It should be remembered that Tables 4.7, 4.8 and 4.9, which represent Alexandria's language choices, are in some ways not typical of the third-grade class as a whole. For example, Alexandria's classmates all spoke to the German teachers in German during class, but in English at lunch. Since the data do not include examples of Alexandria speaking to the German teachers at lunchtime, they neither support nor contradict this trend.

Secondary Influence on Alexandria's Language Choice: Discourse Function

Discourse Function

On a few occasions the data show Alexandria deviating from her typical language-choice behavior. These departures from her norms appear to have been made intentionally to carry out specific functions. The first example is when Paula, who was working on an English assignment, asked Alexandria how to say a German word in English. Alexandria used English for the purpose of teaching her friend, with whom she otherwise would have used German.

On two occasions, Alexandria spoke German with her American friend Maria for the purpose of play: Once they sang a song in German; the other time they spoke German with heavy American accents and poor grammar, a game that they found hilarious. These exchanges took place during free time, a setting in which they typically would have used English.

The one time Alexandria used English to address the teacher and a mixed-language group of children is interesting, as it was an example of self-translation. Alexandria was attempting to get a paper down from the wall at a time when everyone

in the room was moving around and talking. Frustrated, she called out: "Ich komme nicht dran! I can't reach it!" This use of both languages appears to add emphasis to her announcement, a use of both languages which Grosjean (1982) describes as common among adult bilinguals.

Changes since First Grade

Between first and third grade it appears that several changes have taken place in the children's language-choice behavior. First, the third grader is slightly less consistent in speaking German to Americans who prefer German. Second, setting has become more important for the third graders, who will now speak English even to German adults in some settings. Finally, it appears that the third grader's language-choice norms can be broken when doing so serves certain discourse functions.

Beth (5th grade):

Background

Beth's age at the time of the data collection was eleven years and one month. Both of her parents are Americans, and both parents are able to speak German. The primary language spoken in her home is English. Beth is a relatively quiet child, particularly in groups, but she expresses herself very well when she chooses to speak. Beth is a balanced bilingual who is able to express concrete and abstract ideas with great facility in German and English, and she can construct highly complex syntactic structures in both languages.

With the exceptions of Art, Music, English and Gym, which were taught in English by Americans, Beth's fifth-grade classes were taught in German by a German teacher. The fifth-graders were also taught Math in English for the first time, in preparation for English-language middle schools, but although Math instruction was in English, it was taught by a teacher from Germany. As with the other grades, free time, such as during lunch and recess, did not have a particular language imposed on it by the school. During this free time, all teachers continued to use the language they used in the classroom. Beth had little contact with German-speaking American adults at the school, aside from the researcher.

Due to the small size of the fifth-grade class, the fourth and fifth grades were combined and instructed as one class for some academic subjects. Beth's two fellow fifth-graders were a German girl who spoke fluent but imperfect English, and an American boy who spoke German with near-native proficiency. The six fourth-graders, with whom she also had frequent contact, included two bilinguals and four Americans. Of the Americans, two spoke German fluently, and two spoke it easily but with frequent errors.

Language Choice

Primary Influence on Beth's Language Choice: Interlocutor

Interlocutor

Interlocutor exerted a strong influence over Beth's language choice and the language choice of her classmates. In particular, the native language of the interlocutor

is still a powerful influence on language choice at this age, as can be seen in Table 4.10. However, with the exception of the monolingual English speakers, it is certainly not the only influence. In fact, Beth speaks English to Germans 30% of the time, and German to American children 12% of the time.

Table 4.10:
Beth's Language Choice with Interlocutor as an Influence

Interlocutor	English	German
German Interlocutor(s)	30%	70%
American Interlocutor(s)	88%	12%
Bilingual Interlocutor(s)	99%	1%
German-Speaking American(s)	73%	27%
English-Speaking German(s)	100%	0%
Mixed Interlocutors	87%	13%

One very interesting difference between Beth's data and the data for the younger children is in the area of language preference. Language preference is a much less influential feature of the interlocutor than it is for the younger children. Unlike the younger children, Beth does not honor the German-speaking Americans' language preference the majority of the time; in fact, she chooses English 73% of the time. However, she honors the English-speaking Germans' preference for English 100% of the time. There are two possible reasons for this apparent discrepancy: the status of the interlocutor and Beth's own language preference.

As with the other participants in this study, the age and status of her interlocutor also appears to influence Beth's language choice (Table 4.11). In mixed groups she, too, defers to the higher status of adults when one is present. For instance, Beth speaks

exclusively in English in mixed groups that do not include adults, and overwhelmingly

in German when she talks to German adults. When these two types of interlocutor are

combined, there is a conflict. In this situation, the language she uses with the adult

predominates.

Table 4.11:
Beth's Language Choice with Age/Status as an Influence

Interlocutor	English	German	Total
German Adult	2 (7%)	28 (93%)	30
Mixed Group with German Adult	0	8 (100%)	8
American Adult	7 (100%)	0	7
Mixed Group with American Adult	8 (89%)	1 (11%)	9
English-Speaking German Adult	2 (100%)	0	2
Group with English-Speaking German Adult	8 (100%)	0	8
German-Speaking American	11 (73%)	4 (27%)	15
Group with German-Speaking American Adult	7 (88%)	1 (12%)	8
German Parent	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	5
Group Including German Parent	0	1 (100%)	1
American Child/Children	23 (85%)	4 (15%)	27
German Child/Children	12 (92%)	1 (8%)	13
Bilingual Child/Children	76 (99%)	1 (1%)	77
Mixed Group of Children	50 (100%)	0	50

* Because Beth does not group language preference with native language like the
younger children, German-speaking Americans and English-speaking Germans are
represented in their own categories in Table 4.11.

The age-based dichotomy of language choice that was observed among the first

graders is also apparent in the language-choice behavior of Beth and her classmates.

With children, Beth spoke primarily English, regardless of their native language. Even

with her German classmate, whose English was not as good as Beth's German, Beth

spoke English 85% of the time. This reflected a general trend among all of the fifth and

fourth graders to speak English to one another whenever possible. But although the

trend of speaking English to other children is comparable to that of the first graders, Beth's language-choice behavior towards adults is different. Whereas Kelly spoke German to any adult who expressed a preference for it, Beth does not. With adults she chooses German consistently only with native-speaking Germans who also express a strong preference for German.

Beth is not inflexible, however, in her assignment of a specific language to a particular interlocutor. Whereas the youngest children are basically consistent in their language choices, which can be predicted based on a relatively small set of features of the interlocutor and setting, Beth's decisions appear to more complex. It is possible to predict which language she will most likely choose under a given set of circumstances, but there seem to be many more subtle and competing influences on her decision. It is therefore important to look more closely at her choices with various interlocutors.

Beth's language choice when speaking to adults depended on several factors. The most basic of these factors was the speaker's native language. To non-German speakers, such as the American teachers of the classes taught in English, Beth spoke almost exclusively English. On one occasion, however, Beth used a German word to explain a joke to an American teacher. There are no examples in the data of any of the younger children using German with non-German speakers.[4]

In the case of the bilingual adults, however, there appears to be an interaction between Beth's language choice and several other interlocutor characteristics such as role, native language, and preference. Setting and discourse function, which will be

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[4] With the exception of the word "Pause" which, as discussed above, was fully incorporated into the English vocabulary of the school community.

discussed below, also appear to have been influencing factors. Adult bilingual interlocutors fell into two categories: teachers and non-teachers. With the German teachers who taught in German, Beth spoke primarily German. The data do include two examples of Beth speaking English to a German teacher while working on a project, however. The first time, Beth responded to the teacher's instructions with "Oh, alright," which appeared to be directed towards the teacher. Subsequent comments to the teacher were in German, but about half an hour later she protested to the same teacher, "But we don't have any silver [colored pencils]!" To the math teacher, an English-speaking German, Beth communicated solely in English, even though her German classmate used German with this teacher before and after class.

The two non-teacher bilinguals with whom Beth had contact were the researcher and a parent volunteer. The researcher, an American, spoke to Beth only in German. However, Beth responded to her in English the majority of the time. At times this resulted in lengthy conversations of several turns each in which the researcher spoke German and Beth spoke English. The researcher found this type of conversation difficult to maintain. While Beth's fourth-grade bilingual friend always switched into German after several turns, Beth was able to continue responding in English. Occasionally however, Beth did give one-word German responses to the researcher; these one-word responses will be discussed further below. Beth spoke German to the researcher on one other occasion, which is discussed under Discourse Function.

In the case of the German classroom volunteer, the data sample is small but it shows Beth speaking both languages to this interlocutor. This parent was not a regular

volunteer, and she seemed unsure which language to speak to the children, switching often between English and German. Beth spoke English to this parent when the parent herself was using English, and when the parent spoke German, Beth spoke German to her. In this case, Beth appears to have been trying to accommodate the preference of the adult.

With her fellow children, Beth nearly always chose English. Although there are exceptions in the data, they occur only under a limited set of circumstances. When Beth did speak German to another child, it was either as a concession to preference of her interlocutor or because it was required by a particular classroom activity. Beth never initiated casual conversation with another child in German, nor did she ever address a child in German by accident. The data also do not show Beth ever speaking German to a mixed-language group of children.

Beth's German utterances to other children appear to be as brief as possible. If she is using German in fulfillment of the requirements of an academic activity, she limits the German to the academics; for the interpersonal aspects of the exchange she switches to English. When another child addresses her in German, she usually replies in English. Only twice does she concede to an American child's preference for German, even though the child repeatedly attempts to speak German with her. She chooses a German response only if she can answer in one word, just as she did with the researcher. It is interesting to note that with all interlocutors Beth was more likely to deviate from her own language-choice norm if she could do so with a one-word response, such as "Ja."

There are only four examples in the data of Beth speaking German to an American child. Two of these are instances of one-word responses to a fourth-grade girl who repeatedly addressed Beth in German. Usually Beth responded in English, the language she preferred to use with other children, but on these two occasions she gave monosyllabic answers in German. The other two occasions on which Beth spoke German with an American classmate were during a structured activity in which the students were required to ask one another science questions. In this context, Beth and her fellow student used German only to fulfill the requirements of the activity; all comments to one another aside from the actual questions and answers were made in English.

Superficially, the data represented in Table 4.11 appear to indicate that Beth chose German even less frequently to speak with bilingual children than with American children. However, this is actually a result of the circumstances of contact. The bilingual children with whom Beth had contact were fourth graders, and were therefore not present in all of Beth's classes. The majority of instances in which Beth was required to interact with children in German occurred during classes such as science, in which only the fifth graders were present.

The data show Beth speaking German on one occasion to a bilingual child, and once to a German child. In the first instance, Beth spoke German to the bilingual child when this child asked her, in English, how to spell a German word. On this occasion, Beth responded by using German letter names to spell the word out loud; interestingly,

however, on another occasion she spelled a German word to the same bilingual classmate using English letter names.

The German utterance to a German child occurred when the classmate did not know the English equivalent of a German lexical item, and as a result she used the German word in an English sentence. Beth appeared to find this humorous; she laughed and then repeated the German word. An interesting feature of Beth's speech to the German girl is that on several occasions when her classmate makes errors in English, Beth responds by incorporating these same errors into her own speech. For example, when the German child says, "I used to draw so good horses," Beth replies, "You still draw so good horses." Beth is conforming her own speech to that of her classmate, perhaps as an expression of solidarity.

Secondary Influences on Beth's Language Choice: Setting; Discourse Function

Setting

There are settings in which Beth spoke nearly exclusively English, but no settings in which she spoke nearly exclusively German (Table 4.12). In fact, there are no settings in which she spoke German even half of the time. The only occasion on which Beth used German during an English-language activity was to repeat a German word used by her German classmate, as described above. Likewise, lunch is an exclusively English setting for Beth, just as it is for the third graders. The single time she used German at lunch was to explain a joke for an English-speaking monolingual teacher, as described above. During the German structured activities, Beth used both

languages. Which language she used tended to depend on her interlocutor. For example, she usually spoke English to children and German to teachers.

Table 4.12:
Beth's Language Choice with Setting as an Influence

Setting	English	German	Total
German Structured Activity	109 (66%)	56 (34%)	165
English Structured Activity	45 (98%)	1 (2%)	46
Unstructured Activity	62 (85%)	11 (15%)	73

Beth's data suggest that setting did influence her choice of language, hence the very low numbers for German usage in the English- and neutral-language settings. However, setting appears to have been an even greater influence for Beth's classmates. Although most of these other children spoke German with the German teachers during class, they spoke English to these teachers between classes and at lunch, i.e. when the setting changed, even though the teachers themselves only used German. While Beth did not speak English to her teachers during these breaks, this behavior differed from that of her classmates.

Discourse Function

There are several examples of the influence of discourse function on Beth's language choice. On one occasion, Beth used a German word, which she then translated, for the purpose of explaining to an American teacher what the other children were laughing about. In the second example, Beth spoke German to the researcher. On this occasion, the German teacher had left the room and an American child asked Beth, in English, a question about a historical figure. Beth chose German to ask the

researcher, the only adult present, to help answer the question. This may have signaled a temporary shift in the researcher's status, as she filled the role of teacher; or it may have been an example of discourse function, as Beth was subordinating herself and making a request. Finally, Beth once used a German word in conversation with her English-speaking German classmate. This occurred when the classmate didn't know an English word and attempted to anglicize its German equivalent. Beth laughed and said the German word, then provided the English translation. On this occasion she apparently used German because she thought it was amusing, and in order to help her friend.

Changes since Third Grade

The most major difference in the language-choice behavior of the third grader and the fifth grader is that the fifth grader consistently speaks English to all Americans, even those indicating a preference for speaking German. Additionally, the settings in which her fifth-grade classmates use English even with German adults has expanded to include the short breaks between classes, further eroding the circumstances under which they speak German. Finally, there is evidence in the fifth-grader's data that she is no longer simply conforming to a specific set of language-choice norms. Rather, her language-choice behavior is more individualistic and complex than that of the younger participants.

Summary

There are observable differences in the language-choice behavior of the four subjects. For the five and a half year old, the primary influence on her language choice is the native language of her interlocutor, although she a few times begins in their non-native language and then self-corrects. Where there is a conflict between the interlocutor's native language and language preference, which occurs only with adult speakers, she honors this preference. However, she does not choose the preferred language with as high a degree of consistency as when there is no conflict between native language and language preference. She appears to be motivated by the same influences when choosing which language to use with adults and with children. However, she is sensitive to the higher status of the adults, as evidenced when she chooses the language of the adult in mixed-language groups that include an adult and children. In mixed-language groups that include only children, she appears to defer to the preference of the group.

Setting and discourse function also influence the kindergartner's language choice, but this influence is more limited than that of the interlocutor. For her, there appear to be English-language settings in which German is used only on the rare occasions when it's absolutely necessary, and mixed-language settings, but no settings in which German truly predominates. The data suggest that discourse function can override setting, as when she has a conflict with a German child in an English setting. Discourse function may also strengthen interlocutor-related influences; she is much

more consistent in honoring language preference when she is making a request, for instance.

The data for the seven-and-a-half-year-old first grader show two main changes in the influences on language choice. The first change relates to the age/status of the interlocutor. In the first grade, an age-based dichotomy in the language-choice behavior of the children appears to be emerging. The seven and a half year old's language-choice behavior towards adults is very similar to that of the younger child, except that she is more consistent; she makes fewer self-corrections and she is more apt to honor adult language preference. Like the younger child, the adult language choice predominates in mixed-language groups. If two adults of conflicting language identities are present, such as a German teacher and a monolingual American teacher, the children follow the lead of the adults, who speak the language of the community (English).

However, her behavior towards other children is different. The first grader uses English with German children and with mixed groups with much higher frequency than the kindergartner. This appears to be at least partly a concession to the preference of the German children; unlike in the kindergarten, the first grader faces children whose native language conflicts with their language preference. For the entire peer group, English appears to be the preferred language, even for native German-speaking children.

The second change relates to setting. For the first grader, setting is a much stronger influence on language choice than for the kindergartner. Not only are there settings in which she speaks predominantly English, there are also settings in which

German predominates. In addition, there are settings in which she speaks both in nearly equal proportions. Influences such as interlocutor preference, however, can override the setting. The data do not show discourse function playing a strong role, except perhaps insofar as the majority of academic discourse functions, such as presenting or answering questions, occur in the German-language settings.

The nine-year-old third grader's language choice appears to be influenced in many of the same ways as the first grader's. Her language choice when speaking to adults is very similar, although she is less consistent in honoring the language preference of the German-speaking American adult. At first glance, her choice when speaking to other children appears quite different from that of the first grader. However, the circumstances of the third-grade classroom are different in some ways. In the third grade, there are more academic situations in which the children are required to speak German to one another, so she does speak to American children in German on occasion. Also, there is only one German child in the third grade, and she does not speak English. Alexandria consistently respects this child's preference for German, and as a result she speaks primarily German to mixed groups of children.

The frequent presence of the non-English-speaking German child also influences the frequency with which the nine-year-old speaks German in various settings. Nevertheless, she speaks predominantly English in English settings and predominantly German in German settings. However, for interactions with other children that are interpersonal rather than academic, she chooses their native language regardless of the setting despite the extra effort needed for codeswitching. She also

recognizes mixed settings, in which she bases language choice on the interlocutor. In some of these settings, her classmates use English even to speak with German adults; for them it appears that setting has become very important. Discourse function does appear to influence the nine-year-old's language choice on occasion; she will choose to speak German with a heavy American accent to make an American friend laugh, for instance.

The situation is more complex with the eleven-year-old fifth grader. Like the other children, she is strongly influenced by her interlocutor's native language. However, she is flexible, and she does deviate from interlocutor native language. She is aware of the language preference of adults and children, but she does not always honor it, particularly if the preference is for German. She will occasionally make exceptions and reply in German if she can respond with one word; however, she may also use English for a one-word reply. The age-based dichotomy observed in the first grade is much more pronounced in the fifth-grader's data. When she has a choice, she nearly always chooses English to speak to other children. She uses German with children when she is required by a teacher to do so, or sometimes when a child expresses a strong preference for German, although this preference is not always honored. For most generalizations that can be made about her language choice, there are a few exceptions. The influences causing these exceptions are subtle enough that it is not always apparent to the observer what has motivated them.

Setting influences her language choice only insofar as the fact that she can be required to use German in the German settings. In these instances, she uses German

only to fulfill the requirements of the academic activity; for interpersonal comments to other children, she chooses English despite the extra effort required by codeswitching. Also, in the German settings she has more frequent contact with German adults than in other settings, and this is the only population with whom she consistently speaks German. For her classmates, however, setting is more important. They speak English even to German adults outside of German class. Discourse function does influence Beth on occasion; she will change languages for humor.

By the fifth-grade, the children seem to have set ideas about the exact circumstances under which each language is spoken. Whereas the kindergartners will use the language that best facilitates communication in a peer group, the fifth-graders will choose English for mixed groups, even when an American speaks German more competently than a German speaks English. For the kindergartners, native language and language preference are the primary influences on choice; for the fifth-graders age, status, setting and function are nearly as influential as native language, and sometimes more influential than language preference.

Addressing the Research Questions

The children's language-choice behavior having been summarized, it is possible to restate the research questions from Chapter 2 and determine to what extent they have been answered:

1. Are there observable differences in the way that certain factors, particularly interlocutor, topic and setting, influence the language choice of bilingual children of different ages?

2. Are these differences unsystematic, or do they indicate a pattern of development from a simple, hierarchically-organized set of influences in the youngest children to a more complex system of interaction between factors for the older children?

3. Do developmental patterns in language-choice behavior correspond to the social and psychological developmental stages outlined in the literature on childhood development?

The data have demonstrated that the answer to the first two questions is affirmative. There are clearly-observable and systematic differences in the language-choice behavior of bilingual children of different ages which indicate a pattern of development from the youngest to the oldest child. In addition, the data also indicate that the developmental patterns found may be amenable to an analysis based on the developmental stages found in the child development literature. This topic will be explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

In this chapter, I am going to view the development of the children's language-choice behavior from both a social and a linguistic perspective. Whereas studies of acquisition of the structural aspects of language in early childhood typically chart a course of development towards an adult norm, I will argue that development of language-choice competence in middle childhood requires the acquisition of two norms. The first norm is the adult norm, while the second is the norm of the peer group. Prior to approximately age eight, children's language-choice behavior does not show evidence of these two different norms. However, as the children progress through the stages of social development outlined in Chapter 2, their language-choice behavior shows the development of distinct adult and peer norms. Previous researchers have attributed the development of different language-choice norms to influences in the children's immersion school environment. While I recognize the relevance of setting to the children's language choice, I will argue that the environment is not causal. Rather, I will argue that it is the children's social development itself, rather than influences in the environment, which leads to development of the two norms.

Previous studies and observations of language use in immersion school settings have reported a progressive change in language use behavior; in particular, it has been noted that there is a decline in use of the school language in the upper elementary grades. Several studies have attempted to interpret this progression (see Tarone and Swain, 1995). The simplest explanation is that children find it easier to speak the language of their

community than the school language. However, as has been noted by several researchers (e.g. Kavanagh, 2001; Tarone and Swain, 1995), this explanation is overly simplistic. As children progress through an immersion program, their ability to speak the school language increases; if children were choosing the language of the community because it is easier to speak than the school language, one would expect to see more community-language use among the younger children, not the older ones. However, the opposite pattern is generally found.

In addition, Tarone and Swain note that the decline in school-language use is not general; rather, the students use the school language only in certain fairly well-delineated circumstances. Specifically, children have been observed to use the school language for completion of academic tasks, while using the language of the community with peers for social purposes. Tarone and Swain's observation that in the higher grades children begin to use particular languages to serve specific functions is an important one. First, this observation recognizes that the change in the children's language use is not simply a change in the amount of each language spoken. Rather, it reflects a change in the function each language serves for the children. At this stage there is evidence for the first time that the children are actively choosing which language to use, based on their communicative intent. This represents a large step in the direction of adult bilinguals' language-choice behavior.

Tarone and Swain view this development as a change in the student speech community motivated by environmental factors. They postulate "that somewhere around the third or fourth grade, the immersion class speech community begins to

undergo a fairly dramatic process of language change" (p. 170). According the authors this results in a diglossia, which they define as a situation "in which a second language is the superordinate formal language variety, and the native language is reserved for use in informal social interactions" (p. 166). According to Tarone and Swain's interpretation, the older children's target language competence is restricted to academic situations because they have insufficient linguistic competence to satisfy their desire to communicate in a peer vernacular. They suggest that this results from lack of a model for this type of speech in the school language in the immersion school setting.

However, this would not appear to be an explanation for the language use behavior of the children in my study. Since the student body included native speakers of German, students at the school had access to some sort of vernacular both from native-speaking classmates and at home. An additional problem for Tarone and Swain's hypothesis comes from de Courcy (1997). De Courcy makes reference to a "pidginised form of the language" which Lyster (1987) described as arising when immersion school students use the school language for peer socializing and private speech. The development of such a form of the language shows that children are capable of developing their own peer vernacular. If children are capable of creating peer vernacular using the school language, then lack of knowledge of vernacular in the school language would not appear in itself to be a sufficient explanation of why the children choose the community language for social interactions. In addition, Kavanagh (2001) points out that the "anecdotal nature of this research and limited data that they provide make support for their conclusions, at this point, weak," (p 29).

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I would like to suggest that Tarone and Swain's analysis of this change in the children's behavior also may be insufficient because it explains development of the diglossia as an environmentally-motivated change in the children's speech community, rather than as a developmentally-motivated change in the individual children. Although they recognize that pre-adolescents and adolescents have a strong desire for a peer vernacular, the authors do not appear to link this desire with the children's social and psychological development. Thus, Tarone and Swain do not appear to recognize a link between the children's overall development and changes in their language-choice behavior. Rather, as noted above, they speak of "the immersion class speech community" itself undergoing "a fairly dramatic process of language change" (p. 170).

The downward trend in school language use is viewed as the result of a gradual change in the speech community. According to this hypothesis, the "strong social and functional pressures on the speech community…create a need for both a superordinate and a vernacular style" (p. 169). Therefore, according to Tarone and Swain, children's language-choice behavior changes to suit the needs of their community. While there is certainly some merit in viewing immersion schools in light of sociolinguistic theory, the authors are analyzing the changes in the children's language use behavior with the sociolinguistic phenomena of adult language communities. It is unclear whether the same sociolinguistic phenomena that influence adult language choices are also motivating the changes in the children's linguistic behavior. For example, Tarone and Swain attribute the changes in the children's language-choice behavior to a change in the speech community, yet this change occurs in each class of children as they progress

into higher grades. This analysis does not explain why diglossia always develops at the same age, and leaves open the question of why younger children at the same school do not take part in the change as well. The only explanation would be to claim that each classroom is a separate speech community isolated from the rest of the school, a claim which is supported neither by observations of the school environment nor by research into the behavior of elementary-school children's behavior (Shaffer, 1994).

While the data I gathered during the course of this study do reflect the language-choice patterns of immersion school students described in Tarone and Swain, I will argue for an analysis based on childhood development rather than on sociolinguistic explanations derived from study of adult communities. The pattern evident in the data is that in the higher elementary-school grades the children's use of English and German begins to be related to the function of the interaction in some contexts. They tend to use German for academic tasks, but English for social ones. For instance, a pair of fifth-graders engaged in a science activity used German to fulfill the academic requirements of the activity but switched into English for all social interaction.

Current studies of child social development can provide a strong explanation for this data. First, if the changes in language-choice behavior are attributed to developmental changes in the children themselves, it can be predicted that each successive class of children will undergo these changes as they mature into each successive stage of development. This prediction is in fact supported by the data (and also by reports from the teachers in the school). Also, the language-choice changes themselves appear logical in light of the children's developing social awareness.

Changes in children's understanding of the source and sanctity of social rules, as well as development of separate peer/peer and adult/peer social schemata, will influence their language-choice behavior. Viewed through the lens of social development, the changes in language-choice behavior at the different ages are predictable. More simply put, a child's language choices are naturally motivated by his or her current understanding of social behavior.

Therefore, I would like to argue that the interrelationship between language development and social-psychological development play an elemental role in the changes in these children's language-choice behavior. As was discussed in Chapter 2, children progress through certain phases of social development at the same time that they are developing linguistically. These phases of social development reflect fundamental changes in their understanding of the nature of social rules. A child's understanding of social rules at a given stage will differ from the understanding of a child of a different age or an adult. Therefore, I would like to argue that a child's perspective and motive for language choice will be related to his or her stage of social development, and will differ from those of an adult or a child in a different stage.

In addition, I would like to note the importance of the dichotomy between children's role in adult/child interactions and their role in child/child interactions. Children must develop social competence both in peer interactions, in which they are on an equal footing with other participants, as well as in interactions with adults, in which the adult is viewed as the social expert (Cole and Cole, 2001; Shaffer, 1994). Thus, it can be expected that the sociolinguistic behavior of the children will reflect this need for

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competence in both types of interaction. That is, children's language behavior will show two different kinds of competency: one with adults and one with children, as they play very different roles in the two different types of interaction. This assertion is supported by my data, which show a difference between the older children's language-choice behavior towards adults and towards peers.

Combining the knowledge gained from current studies of child social development, adult language-choice behavior, and child language acquisition, leads to other predictions as well. Up until about seven or eight years of age, according to current child-development theories, children believe that rules, which are modeled by adults, are an inflexible part of reality. At this stage, children are not yet comparing themselves to their peers. At this stage, then, it can be predicted that children will see language-choice rules as inflexible, and their behavior will be modeled on that of the adults in their community rather than of their peers. Between seven or eight through about ten to twelve years of age, children view social rules as arbitrary and believe they can therefore be changed by people if everyone agrees to do so. At this stage, children are comparing themselves to their peers and attempting to conform to peer norms. It can be predicted then that at this age, children will be influenced by peer models of language choice, and they will realize that as a group they can create their own rules of language use.

Finally, at about ten or twelve years, children view social rules as having been created by society to serve a function, and that rules should basically be respected. A child at this age also recognizes the value of individuality, and attempts to balance

individuality with peer conformity. At this stage, it can be predicted that children's language-choice behavior will be consistent, reflecting that it is based on rules; however, it will also be flexible, reflecting the influence of the child's individual interpretation of a given situation. At this age, it can also be predicted that there will be increased variation between individual children's behavior. These predictions are summarized in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Comparison of Language Choice and Social Behaviors

AGE	SOCIAL STAGE - RULES[1]	SOCIAL STAGE - SELF/OTHERS[2]	LANGUAGE-CHOICE BEHAVIOR PREDICTIONS
Up to age 7-8	— rules are inflexible — rules are modeled by adults	— does not compare self to peers	— strict adherence to rules — influenced by adult rather than peer models
7-8 through 10-12	— rules and social conventions are arbitrary — rules can be modified by mutual consent	— compares self to peers — shows increased conformity to peer norms	— influenced by peer models
10-12 onwards	— rules are created by society — rules should be respected	— recognizes individuality — balances self with peers	— consistent but flexible language-choice behavior — increased individual variation

These predictions appear to be supported by my data. The two youngest children, aged 5½ and 7½, are remarkably consistent in their language-choice behavior. This behavior appears to be patterned on the adult model, but the modeled rules have been overgeneralized and greatly simplified. For instance, like the adults, the two younger children do not seem to differentiate much between adult and child

[1] Cole and Cole, 2001
[2] Sroufe, 1992; Erwin, 1993

interlocutors in making language-choice decisions, although they do recognize the power status of the adults. However, the children do not appear to make exceptions to their rules, which adult bilinguals do often in a variety of circumstances (Auer, 1998). These children are showing strict adherence to their rules of language choice.

On the other hand, the nine-year-old third-graders' behavior shows an increase in conformity to a peer norm different from the adult norm. While the adults speak German to the children and to one another in all settings, among the third-grade students there is a taboo against speaking German in certain settings, such as lunch. However, their rules are somewhat more flexible than those of the younger children. For instance, German can be used in these settings for certain purposes, such as in order to make a joke.

In the behavior of the eleven year old there is evidence of adherence to separate peer and adult norms, but also a willingness to depart from these norms under a variety of circumstances. Like the third-graders, the fifth-grader uses German specifically in certain settings and for certain purposes. Her deviance from these rules, however, occurs not only in the execution of clearly recognizable speech acts such as joking. At times the motivations behind her atypical language choices are not clear to the observer, and rarely but notably she will even break very strong language-choice rules, for example by addressing her teacher in English while working on a project in class. Unlike her classmates' use of English to the teacher during the breaks, this was clearly not motivated by setting; rather, this appears to be an example of the increased individual variation predicted in Table 5.1.

All of the predictions about the development of children's language-choice behavior which I made based on the child development literature have in fact been supported by the data. A comparison between the stages of development discussed in Chapter 2 and the language-choice behaviors of my participants shows many parallels. For example, my subject whose age corresponded to the stage at which children think rules cannot be broken was highly consistent and predictable in her language-choice behavior. Similarly, the third-graders in my study, who were in the stage in which children believe rules can be changed by mutual consensus and create their own code of behavior among peers, were creating their own language-choice norms. These norms were so strongly felt that the children even objected to my violating them. This supports my analysis that the stages of social development influence the children's language-choice behavior.

Thus, it appears that the developing language-choice behavior of bilingual children can be best understood when it is examined in the context of the children's general social/psychological development. Viewed in the light of current theories of developmental psychology, the children's language-choice behavior is not only unsurprising, it is predictable. Linguists and language educators who wish to understand the influences on child bilinguals' language-choice behavior need to consider not only the factors which typically influence the behavior of adult bilinguals, such as context and topic; in addition, they need to be aware of the role that childhood social and psychological development play in influencing the children's language behavior.

Limitations

The limitations of this study need to be considered: its small scale and its qualitative design. Although notes were made about the general language-choice behavior of each classroom, specific data were gathered from only one child in each class, and observations were made on only three occasions and in only one immersion program. As is evident from the data from the third-grade classroom, the distribution and personalities of native speakers of each language in a given classroom can influence the sociolinguistic behavior of the students in that classroom. In addition, each child is unique, and focusing on one child does not allow for differences between children of the same age. However, the patterns of language-choice behavior observable in my data reflect the same trends noted in other studies of bilingual children, such as Fantini (1978), Auer (1988) and Tarone and Swain (1995), which suggests that they are in fact typical.

Also, due to the small size of the school, I had difficulty finding four participants with an even age spread who were similar in all ways except age. I did manage to find four participants of the same gender who all spoke German and English with equal ease. However, despite the fact that they all went to school in the same linguistic environment and were all fairly balanced bilinguals, they unfortunately did not come from the same linguistic background. The youngest participant came from a bilingual home in which English and German were both spoken by all family members. The seven-and-a-half year old also heard both languages at home, but English appears to have been dominant in her family. The nine-year-old came from a home in which

only German was spoken by her parents, although both parents are able to speak English. Conversely, the eldest participant came from a home of two native English-speaking parents, although both parents are able to speak German. Ideally, the participants would have come from more similar linguistic backgrounds. However, all four participants' linguistic behavior was consistent with that of other members of the linguistic environment, so I do not believe the differences in their linguistic backgrounds have affected the results at all.

In addition to limitations of size, this study is subject to the same limitations as all studies based on qualitative data, which is by nature difficult to view objectively. Individual factors cannot be controlled for, so the relative degree of influence of various factors must be interpreted. Moreover, without a second observer it is impossible to check the reliability of the results. Nevertheless, the language-choice behavior patterns I have identified in this study through qualitative observations are commensurate with the results of similar studies.

Recommendations for Future Research

The qualitative nature of this study was designed to provide a broad picture of the bilingual participants' language-choice behavior, since little was known about how such behavior develops in children. Future research could explore the specific behaviors identified in this study in greater detail. In addition, an attempt could be made to observe these behaviors under more controlled circumstances.

This study attempted to establish a relationship between stages of social/psychological development and the language-choice behavior of bilingual

children. While examination of the data has indicated such a relationship, the data for this study were collected in one environment: a foreign-language immersion school. If there is indeed a relationship between social development and language-choice behavior, this relationship should be evident in the linguistic behavior of bilingual children in other environments as well. Further studies of the development of language-choice behavior of children in other types of bilingual community would help establish that the behaviors observed in this study are in fact the result of the children's development rather than the result of the environment. Data from bilingual children in minority language communities, bilingual communities, and other types of bilingual environments need to be gathered for further investigation into this area.

Conclusion

Analysis of the data gathered for this study indicates that the language-choice behavior of bilingual children develops gradually from early childhood through early adolescence. The children's language choice progresses through a series of stages, and the role that factors such as setting and interlocutor play in influencing their language choice gradually changes in each stage. These stages in language-choice behavior correspond to stages in the children's social/psychological development. This suggests that changes in bilingual children's language-choice behavior over time are motivated by developmental factors, rather than by environmental factors as has been suggested elsewhere. As bilingual children progress through these stages of language-choice behavior, they do not merely acquire the norms of language choice

modeled for them by adults. Rather, they begin to create their own peer-group norms of language-choice behavior which are distinct from the adults' behavior.

The suggestion that bilingual children's language-choice behavior is not determined by the environment, which can be manipulated, but by developmental factors, which cannot, has important implications. For educators working with bilingual children, understanding the influence of the children's social/psychological development on their language choice is essential. If the educators wish to encourage greater use of a particular language, they need to be aware that merely making changes in the environment will not be sufficient. Attempts to influence the language-choice behavior of bilingual children need to take into account the role the children's social development plays in their linguistic behavior.

The suggestion that child bilinguals create their own norms of language-choice behavior, and that their language choice in conversation with adults differs from that used in conversation with peers, may help explain certain phenomena observed in the bilingualism literature. For instance, it has been observed that when a family immigrates to a country where a different language is spoken, the language of the home country is often lost within a few generations. The family members who immigrate as adults must learn the language of their new country as a second language. Their children, who grow up with the language of their parents and the language of the new country, are bilinguals. Often, however, the next generation of children are monolinguals, who speak only the language of the new country (Grosjean 1982).

If children were merely adopting the linguistic behavior of their parents, then the bilingual parents would have bilingual children who used both languages in the same ways as their parents. However, children create their own norms of language use within their peer group. I would like to suggest that when the children grow up, these peer norms remain the basis for their linguistic behavior. Thus, there are changes in the language behavior of each successive generation.

In conclusion, this thesis has presented evidence that the language-choice behavior of bilingual children follows a path of development which parallels their social/psychological development. Bilinguals at each stage of social development will exhibit language-choice behavior motivated by their current understanding of social behavior. Ultimately, this will result in the acquisition of two sets of language-choice norms, one for use with adults and one for use with peers. This relationship between children's social development and their language choice has important implications for researchers and educators who wish to understand or influence the linguistic behavior of young bilinguals.

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APPENDIX A:

CONSENT FORMS

Parental Consent Form:

Dear Parent:

You and your child are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Miranda Kussmaul Novash, who was formerly a teaching assistant at the German American School of Portland (GSP). Miranda is currently a graduate student at Portland State University (PSU), and is working on her master's degree in Applied Linguistics, under the supervision of Dr. Lynn Santelmann at PSU. She hopes to learn more about what influences a bilingual child's decision to use a particular language.

If you decide to participate, your child will be part of the researcher's observations of the children's regular daily routine at the GSP. Ms. Kussmaul Novash will observe at the school several times this spring, but she will not interfere with classroom activities or with the children's routine in any way. Audiotaping may occur during some of these sessions. You and your child may not receive any direct benefit from this study, but the study may provide information that would help teachers, students, and parents involved in immersion programs in the future.

There is some risk that you or your child may feel uncomfortable about the observations or the audiotaping. If that happens, you and your child retain the right to withdraw your consent and end your participation at any time. There is also a small risk that Ms. Kussmaul Novash's presence may be distracting to the children in class. To safeguard against this, Ms. Kussmaul Novash will first introduce herself to the children during recess and non-class times, so the children can become used to her presence. She will not interact with the children during class time unless asked to do so by the teachers. If the teachers feel that her presence is disruptive, she will leave. Finally, there is a small risk that someone may be able to connect what your child has said in class with your child's name. To safeguard against this, any information which can be connected to your or your child that is obtained in connection with this study will be kept confidential. Invented names will be used for the school and all of the people in the study. Also, all observation notes and tape recordings will be stored in a secure location under the researcher's control for three years. After this time, the data will be archived in a secure location in Dr. Lynn Santelmann's office, where only Ms. Kussmaul Novash and her thesis advisors will have access to them.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You and your child do not have to take part in this study. Should you or your child decide not to participate in this study it will not affect your relationship with the German School of Portland, Portland State University or Miranda Kussmaul Novash, or Lynn Santlemann. If you and your child decide to

withdraw from this study at any time, this will also not affect your relationship with the researchers, PSU, or the GSP.

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's participation in this study or about your rights as research participants, please contact the Human Subjects Research Review Committee, Office of Research and Sponsored Projects, 111 Cramer Hall, Portland State University, (503) 725-8182. If you have questions about the study itself, please contact either Miranda Kussmaul Novash personally at (503) 293-9418 or at mircrez@yahoo.com. or Dr. Lynn Santelmann at (503) 725-4140 or santelmannl@pdx.edu.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understood the above information and agree for yourself and your child _____ to participate in this study. Please understand that you may withdraw your consent at any time without penalty, and that by signing this form you are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies. The researcher will provide you with a copy of this form for your own records.

Parent's Signature:_____

Parent's Printed Name:_____

Child or Children's Name(s) _____

Date:_____

Teacher Consent Form:

Dear Teacher:

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Miranda Kussmaul Novash, a graduate student from Portland State University (PSU). This study is a partial fulfillment of the requirements for a master's degree in Applied Linguistics, and is being carried out under the supervision of Dr. Lynn Santelmann. This study hopes to learn more about what influences a bilingual child to choose to use a particular language. You may not receive any direct benefit from this study, but the study may provide information which would be useful to teachers, students, and parents involved in language-immersion programs in the future.

If you agree to participate, you will be part of the researcher's observations of the regular daily routine at the German American School of Portland. The researcher will observing your class three or four times this spring, and she will not interfere with regular classroom activities. The researcher will contact you in advance to arrange with you convenient dates for the observations. Audiotaping may occur during some of these observations.

While participating in this study, it is possible that you may find it uncomfortable or inconvenient to be observed or audiotaped. For this reason, you have the right to end your participation in the study at any time. There is also a small risk that Ms. Kussmaul Novash's presence may be distracting to the children in class. To safeguard against this, Ms. Kussmaul Novash will first introduce herself to the children during recess and non-class times, so the children can become used to her presence. She will not interact with the children during class time unless you ask her to do so. If you feel that her presence is disruptive, she will leave. Finally, there is a small risk that what you say in class may be able to be linked to you. To safeguard against this, any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be connected to you will be kept confidential. Invented names will be used for the school and all of the people in the study. Also, all observation notes and tape recordings will be stored in a secure location under the researcher's control for three years. After this time, the data will be archived in a secure location in Dr. Lynn Santelmann's office, where only Ms. Kussmaul Novash and her thesis advisors will have access to them.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You do not have to take part in this study, and it will not affect your relationship with the German American School of Portland, with Portland State University, with Miranda Kussmaul Novash or with Lynn Santelmann. You may also withdraw from this study at any time without affecting your relationship with the German American School of Portland, with PSU, or with Miranda Kussmaul Novash.

If you have any questions or concerns about your participation in this study or about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Human Subjects Research Review Committee, Office of Research and Sponsored Projects, 111 Cramer Hall, Portland State University, (503) 725-8182. If you have questions about the study itself, please contact either Miranda Kussmaul Novash personally at (503) 293-9418 or at mircrez@yahoo.com or Dr. Lynn Santelmann at (503) 725-4140 or santelmannl@pdx.edu.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understood the above information and agree to participate in this study. Please understand that you may withdraw your consent at any time without penalty, and that by signing this form you are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies. The researcher will provide you with a copy of this form for your own records.

Signature:_____

Name (printed):_____

Date:_____

Child Consent Form:

Dear _____ ,

Your parents have said that it is okay for you to be a part of a project about children who can speak German and English. If you agree to be part of this project, it means that I will be watching some of your classes and activities, and I will sometimes take notes about what you are doing. Sometimes I will also be tape recording what goes on at school. All of the notes and everything you say will be kept private.

If you don't want to be part of this project, that's okay! Just tell me. You won't get into any trouble. If you ever have any questions about what I'm doing, you can always ask me to explain. I will always be happy to talk to you.

If you want to give it a try, please sign your name on the line below. And remember, if you change your mind, you can always tell me any time!

Signed,

_____

Date:_____

APPENDIX B

Definition of Terms

Codeswitching – "Switching from one language, or dialect, to another in the course of a conversation" (Berko Gleason, 2001)

Discourse competence – Language ability which has to do "not with isolated words or phrases but with the interconnectedness of a series of utterances, written words, and/or phrases to form…a meaningful whole" (Savignon, 2001)

Discourse function – In this thesis, the term is used to signify the function which a particular linguistic interaction serves, or the goal it accomplishes, such as making a request.

Grammatical competence – Language ability which has to do with "sentence-level grammatical forms, the ability to recognize the lexical, morphological, syntactic, and phonological feature of a language and to make use of these features to interpret and form words and sentences" (Savignon, 2001)

Interlocutor – The person or people with whom a speaker is interacting.

Language choice – A bilingual's decision regarding which language to use in a given context is "far from being a random matter of momentary inclination" but rather it is "related to widespread sociocultural norms and expectations" (Fishman, 1972)

Language immersion school – A type of school where students learn a foreign language not through direct instruction, but by exposure to the foreign language "used as the medium of instruction" for academic content (Johnson and Swain, 1997)

Language mixing – "Co-occurrence of elements from two or more languages in a single utterance. Involves interaction between the bilingual child's developing language systems (Genesee, 1989)" (Goldstein, 1995)

Setting – The term "setting" has been used in a variety of ways. For the purposes of this study, the physical location in which an interaction is taking place, in addition to the type of activity in which the interlocutors are engaged.

Sociocultural competence – Language ability which "extends well beyond linguistic forms; [it has] to do with the social rules of language use…[and] requires an understanding of the social context in which language is used" (Savignon, 2001)

Speech community - a group "all of whose members share at least a single speech variety and the norms for its appropriate use" (Fishman 1971)

Strategic competence – Language ability which has to do with "coping strategies [used] in unfamiliar contexts, with constraints due to imperfect knowledge of rules or limiting factors in their application such as fatigue or distraction" (Savignon, 2001)