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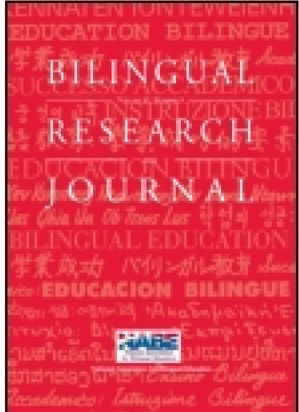

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La Cosecha/The Harvest: Sustainable Models of School-Community Engagement at a Bilingual Program

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This article examines the culminating activity—*la cosecha* or the harvest—in a yearlong project in which teachers at a bilingual afterschool program and staff from a citywide environmental advocacy group taught students to plant, harvest, and sell produce grown at the school site. The authors show how students are socialized to become empowered members of their heritage-language community as they participate in harvest-related activities and co-construct shared beliefs about environmental and social justice. By examining the interactions between adults and students, our findings extend previous research highlighting the pedagogical and communicative resources employed in educational heritage-language settings.

INTRODUCTION

Community-led efforts to support bilingualism and biculturalism are often intertwined with community members' grassroots efforts to address related social concerns such as Latino migrants' rights (Mangual Figueroa, 2014), Mexican religious socialization in the U.S. (Baquedano-López, 1997), and the preservation of ethnic and linguistic identity (Hornberger, 2005). This article examines the ways in which teachers at an afterschool program socialized students to become heritage-language speakers of Spanish while also teaching them about the importance of environmental and social justice. We specifically focus on interactions between adults and children participating in an annual garden-based activity organized by two nonprofit organizations in

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Northern California's Bay Area—a bilingual afterschool program called *La Escuelita* and an environmental advocacy group named Food For All—to explore the communicative and pedagogical resources used by participants to socialize one another to become empowered members of their community.[1]

The educational and environmental justice movement in the Bay Area has been strongly intertwined since the late 1990s; one of its most renowned proponents has been Alice Waters, founder of the Edible Schoolyard program.[2] The goal of the program is to counter the globalization of food production and consumption by providing opportunities for children to grow and eat food locally. Since 2005, the model has been replicated across the country, forming part of what Waters calls an "edible education" (White, 2008) and coinciding with federal policy reforms to change perspectives on food and nutrition (for example, the First Lady has made obesity a national priority since 2004, and two new food pyramids have been introduced since then). Waters is not alone in working toward environmental sustainability through schooling; the focal site for this article is located less than two miles away from one of the first Edible Schoolyard projects.

We draw from a two-year ethnographic study of language socialization at *La Escuelita* to examine interactions between adults and children during an annual event known to participants in Spanish as *la cosecha* (the harvest). We focus on two questions: (a) what communicative and pedagogical resources do teachers and students use to articulate the connection between language use and social justice? and (b) How do participants express the significance of Spanish as a heritage language? While there is an established body of research documenting the importance of bilingual heritage-language maintenance (see the 2001 special issue of this journal edited by Wiley and Valdés) and a growing literature showing the positive effects of school gardening on student development (see reviews by Blair, 2009; Ozer, 2007; Williams & Dixon, 2013), there are few, if any, studies that merge these two areas of learning. This article seeks to remedy this gap by examining language socialization during a garden-based, bilingual activity. We first provide an overview of the relevant literature and introduce the theoretical framework that guides our analysis. We then describe the study and our methodological approach. Next, we present our findings and close with a discussion of the implications for educators and researchers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Heritage-language programs have been developed across the U.S. to counter the trend of language loss in Spanish-speaking communities and other linguistic minority groups (Hirvela, 2010; Roca & Colombi, 2003). These programs have gained particular importance in the context of English-only legislation restricting Spanish speakers' access to bilingual educational opportunities (Crawford, 2008). California's Proposition 227, which became Education Law 300 in 1998, has made teaching and learning in English and Spanish increasingly difficult for public school educators and students. The analyses presented in the special issue of this journal entitled "Implementation of California's Proposition 227: 1998–2000" detail the various ways in which administrators, educators, and parents in school districts across the state interpreted the law and influenced English language learners' access to bilingual education (García & Curry-Rodríguez,

[1]The names of the programs and participants relevant to this study are pseudonyms.

[2]Information about the Edible School Yard program can be found at https//:edibleschoolyard.org/.

2000; Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, & Asato, 2000).[3] There is a wealth of research on language policy, pedagogy, and ideology conducted within public school classrooms that continue to be impacted by California's Proposition 227 (Kerper Mora, 2002; Shannon, 1999; Olivos & Quintana de Valladolid, 2005; Wentworth, Pellegrin, Thompson, & Hakuta, 2010, to name a few). Next to no empirical research has been conducted on the role of nonprofit educational programs in promoting language retention and use *outside* of school. The focal site of our study, *La Escuelita,* is a nonprofit educational organization founded in 1975 to provide bilingual programs and Spanish heritage-language maintenance for Bay Area families and Latino children.

The UCLA Heritage Language Priority Conference Working Group's Report—drafted in 2000 and published in the *Bilingual Research Journal* in that same year—highlights the exigency of promoting heritage-language learning, concluding that "the urgency involves issues of cross-cultural understanding, identity, equitable access to social services, and social justice, as well as cognitive issues related to the achievement of higher level competencies" (p. 477). The report calls for empirical studies that identify models of heritage-language maintenance and that provide rich evidence of the everyday practices of heritage-language learners. We take up Valdés' (2001) charge to present research focusing on Spanish heritage-language learners because:

> there is little information available to the practitioner about how certain classroom practices—for example, consciousness raising about language and identity, the teaching of sociolinguistic principles, or the teaching of overall language skills—can contribute to students' views of themselves as lifetime Spanish speakers. (p. 16)

This article contributes to the literature by detailing classroom practices and examining Latino and Spanish-speaking students' responses to teaching about heritage language and social justice.

We use the definition of "heritage-language learner" articulated by He (2012) as "those who have ethnolinguistic affiliation to the heritage but may have a broad range of proficiency in oral or literacy skills" (p. 588). This definition underscores two key issues related to the study of heritage languages: first, the inextricable relationship between language learning and identity formation; and second, the temporal focus on connecting with linguistic and cultural practices of historical significance and contemporary relevance for the learner. Our research at *La Escuelita* has shown that students are socialized into bilingual practices that are shaped by historical conditions and renegotiated during ongoing culturally organized schooling activities (Baquedano-López, Mangual Figueroa, & Hernández, 2011). As we discuss here, talk about language during *la cosecha* was relevant to unfolding learning activities and connected to shared histories of migration and linguistic oppression.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Language Socialization

This study is based upon the theoretical and methodological tenets of the language socialization paradigm. Language socialization is a field of study that draws from linguistic anthropology and

[3]This special issue, guest edited by Eugene E. García and Julia E. Curry-Rodríguez (2000), provides an important backdrop for understanding the policy context that gave rise to Proposition 227 and the ways in which the law has shaped language education in the state of California.

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developmental psychology to examine how socialization to community norms is negotiated by expert and novice interlocutors. It employs ethnographic methods of observation, recording, and analysis of language to document and analyze how "children and other novices in society acquire tacit knowledge of principles of social order and systems of belief . . . through exposure to and participation in language-mediated interactions" (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986, p. 2). Members of a community participate in a lifelong process of teaching, learning, and co-constructing a shared set of conventions for acting and talking. These social expectations can be explicitly stated or implicitly indexed through talk, including narrative telling (Ochs, 1996).

We know that narrative is a significant site for the expression and adoption of shared beliefs within a speech community (Ochs & Capps, 2001), but this is particularly true in heritage-language settings where metalinguistic talk about community is a central feature of teaching novices about the relationship between the language they are learning and the cultural group that speaks the language. Lo's (2009) study of a Korean heritage-language school in Northern California shows how teachers' narratives demarcate roles and behaviors available to different members of the class (for example, teachers could express anger but children could not). Baquedano-López (1997) has demonstrated that enlisting Latino children in retelling religious narratives at a neighborhood church in southern California fosters a shared Latino identity grounded in histories of oppression and contemporary struggles for linguistic and social rights. This relationship between language and belonging has also been found in Yu'pik youth's narrations of subsistence and seal hunting in Alaska; Wyman (2009) notes that as young people recount their experiences, they describe those intergenerational relationships that situate them within a shared cultural past even as they experience language loss in the present. Wyman warns that schools tend to have reductive notions of the causes of language shift, blaming language loss on families or communities instead of examining broader social and economic causes. She, like the other scholars reviewed here, calls for a holistic look at micro interactions and macro social influences that shape affiliations to and fluency in a language during specific historical moments.

As heritage-language learners acquire the conventions for speaking a language, they also coconstruct shared understandings about that language and its speakers (He, 2006, 2012). These local beliefs about heritage languages and speakers are not neutral; interlocutors make judgments based upon particular communicative practices. Duff's (2014) review of research conducted in Chinese heritage-language settings shows how individuals evaluate one another's authenticity as heritage-language speakers based upon the use of specific forms of discourse (such as code switching and shaming) that signal group membership. He's (2001) research in Chinese heritage-language schools traces the way that the cultural construct of "ambiguity"—when teachers purposely use vague language to express their opinions about student behavior—socializes children to simultaneously infer meaning from adults' subtle social cues and defer to adults' judgments about them. Like He, we track the ways that teachers use vague referents to socialize children to infer culturally specific and locally relevant forms of role taking and meaning making.

Our view of the continuum of referential indeterminacy in language learning builds upon Ochs' (1996) research on the process of entering and becoming part of community. Language is a resource that community members use to express their various identities and roles. In order to do so speakers often employ linguistic indexes—structures such as emphatic stress, diminutive affixes, changes in pitch and tone of voice, among others—that are "used variably from one situation to another and become conventionally associated with particular situational dimensions such that when that structure is used, the form invokes those situational dimensions" (Ochs,

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1996, p. 411). In the following sentence, which we revisit in Example 2, one of the focal participants employed indexical language to position himself as a linguistic and cultural minority in the California public schools that he attended:

> *Cuando me me crearon en las escuelas, yo iba mucho a escuela donde donde era una mino- una minoría.*[4]
> When I was raised in the schools, I went a lot to the school where where I was a minority.

In this statement, marked by the adverbial clause "*Cuando me crearon*," the first person subject position and the past tense provide a temporal frame for the ensuing narration and subsequent referents. Across social settings, these forms indicate that the speaker is recounting an autobiographical story that occurred in the past. Additional information is communicated by forms whose meaning may shift depending on the social context, for example, the use of the term "*mucho"* to signal intensity and the hesitation in the speaker's voice evidenced through repetition that marks the sensitive and complex nature of the experience being described. Throughout this article, we highlight the *ways* in which speakers talked as well as *what* they said in order to draw attention to indexical speech and the significance of those forms in a particular communicative context.

We draw on Peircian semiotics to define an index as a sign that can only be deciphered in a social (spatial, temporal) context by speakers who share the referents of that sign (Peirce, 1955, p. 107). There are varying degrees of fixity and creativity in indexical reference—more fixed referents presuppose that interlocutors share an agreed-upon frame of reference for intelligibility while more creative ones can shift the terms of the interaction and reveal tacit social norms (Silverstein, 1995). In our work we focus on indexical language use as a communicative resource for demarcating membership and socializing novices to beliefs about their heritage language. The adults and children at *La Escuelita* employed varying degrees of creative indexical language to communicate their beliefs about concepts discussed during *la cosecha*. The teacher used indexical language for didactic purposes: the more creative her indexical language, the more students had to employ complex reasoning such as inference to participate in the discussion.

We call this phenomenon—the development of a continuum of referential indeterminacy in educational settings—"pedagogical indeterminacy" and its analog "learning with ambiguity," and we show how these two practices constitute an important vehicle for socialization at *La Escuelita.* For instance, in Example 1, Segment A, the focal teacher told her students what to expect at the start of the harvest activity:

> *Vamos a hacer dos equipos.*
> We're going to make two teams.

The modal verb in this statement "*vamos*" encodes the subject and tense in a relatively fixed way, leaving no room for ambiguity about *who* is being referred to (*we*, members of the class) and *when* the action will be taking place (in the immediate future). A few turns later, the teacher explained that:

> *Y::: luego vamos a decidir en los precios cuando llega::: Pedro porque el trae los precios que dan los granjeros*

[4]In the transcripts analyzed in this article we make an effort to represent speakers' dialectical variants and pronunciations.

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> And then we're going to decide on the prices when Pedro arrives because he brings the prices that the farmers give

Here, the teacher continued to describe the sequence of events that would comprise the harvest activity, but she used much more ambiguous language by not specifying *where* Pedro was coming from, *what* commodities the prices referred to, and to *whom* the farmers give the prices. As we will see, there are patterned ways in which the teacher vacillated between fixed and creative indexical reference, and these pedagogical decisions have instructional value that prompted students to become active participants in this heritage-language setting.

Socialization to Empowerment

In this article, we merge our perspective on heritage-language socialization with Latino studies and anthropological conceptualizations of *cultural citizenship.* We propose that a focus on indexical language use in heritage-language settings can help us understand how cultural citizenship, and its attendant forms of empowerment, "take hold in a social interaction" when speakers make sense of and share cultural conventions and collective histories (Ochs, 1993, p. 290). Flores and Benmayor (1997) define *empowerment* as "a process of constructing, establishing, and asserting human, social and cultural rights. These values and rights organize individual and collective identities and practices" (p. 12–13). In other words, an individual's expression of shared identity and community participation constitutes an expression of cultural citizenship (Flores & Benmayor, 1997; Inter-University Program for Latino Research, 1992). In a recent study, Fránquiz and Brochin-Ceballos (2006) used the framework of "cultural citizenship" to examine artwork produced by U.S. Mexican youth at a rural after-school program near the Texas-Mexico border. They found that these youth employed the hybrid medium of videopoetry to not only construct individual identities but also to develop collective practices for expressing their belonging within multiple communities.

The concept of *socialization to empowerment* that we introduce here merges the language socialization focus on language learning and community membership with the cultural citizenship approach to the study of identity. Rosaldo (1996) states that cultural citizenship involves at least three aspects: first "it emphasizes participation and influence in the national and local polity"; second, "it stresses local, informal notions of membership, entitlement, and influence"; and third, it foregrounds "vernacular definitions of community, identity, and human dignity, particularly those of subordinated minority groups" (p. 243). While studies of cultural citizenship have tended to focus on the civic activities that adults engage in (Flores & Benmayor, 1997; Rosaldo, 1997; Fránquiz & Brochin-Ceballos, 2006, are an important exception), our work extends the concept in two ways. First, we examine the significance of cultural citizenship across the life span by focusing on interactions between children and adults. Second, we show how identity and community formation are encoded in talk in a heritage-language setting. We take up Ong's (1996) intervention in theorizing cultural citizenship by examining the "dual process of self-making and being-made within webs of power linked to the nation-state and civil society" (p. 738). The tension inherent in this duality is evident in adults' talk about power and racism and in the ways that they implicate students in specific forms of economic and linguistic oppression while fostering in them a sense of agency, pride, and civic participation. As we show how adults foster heritage-language maintenance, we underscore how students are socialized to become

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empowered members of a transnational speech community as they talk about social justice and situate themselves in community-wide struggles using creative indexical language.

METHODS: ETHNOGRAPHY AT *LA ESCUELITA*

La Escuelita is one of the oldest bilingual programs in Northern California. It is located in a residential neighborhood bordering an industrial zone and an exclusive high-end business area . *La Escuelita* houses a Spanish immersion bilingual preschool, a bilingual afterschool program, and a Spanish-language family literacy program. According to the 2000 Census, the racial/ethnic composition of the neighborhood was 37.4% Anglo, 25.7% African American, and 23% Latino. Most residents rented their homes (66.7%), and fewer owned their homes (33.3%); 41.7% reported speaking a language other than English at home. *La Escuelita* currently serves a culturally and economically diverse group of approximately 145 children each year; 60% of the students are Latino, and the remaining 40% are African American, Asian, Anglo, and biracial.

This research took place between spring 2006 and fall 2008; the first author collected ethnographic data as part of a multi-sited study of language socialization during educational transitions in the elementary years. The focus at *La Escuelita's* after-school program was to examine how staff and students negotiated heritage-language use in an era of English-only legislation. Participant observation took place in third- and fourth-grade classes since those students had attended schools impacted by Education Law 300 for at least two years. The first author made weekly visits to *La Escuelita* to observe and record classroom practices from the time children arrived at 3:00 pm until family members picked them up around 6:00 pm. Data analysis involved coding field note and video recorded data for recurrent, patterned activities and identifying participants' talk about language use, language policy, and other relevant themes. We employed conversation analytic transcription methods to show how participants co-constructed meaning and beliefs about language use in moment-to-moment interaction (Schegloff, 2007).[5]

The Focal Event

The adults and children featured in this article participated in *la cosecha* held at *La Escuelita* in May 2007. During this activity, *La Escuelita* and Food for All staff, along with kindergarten

[5]Note that "the punctuation marks are not used grammatically, but to indicate intonation" (Schegloff, 2007, p. 267).

(.)	micropause	CAPS	especially loud talk
.	falling, or final intonation contour	°	talk following it was quiet or soft
?	rising intonation	↑↓	sharper intonation rises or falls
::	prolongation of the preceding sound	(( ))	transcriber's description of events
_	stress or emphasis	> <	fast or rushed talk
[	a point of overlap	=	single, continuous utterance

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through fourth-grade students, harvested fruits, vegetables, and herbs that they had planted in the school garden earlier in the year. On the afternoon of the harvest, they also sold the crops to community and family members at a public farmer's market hosted at the school site. The goal of the harvest was to sell the crops at low cost to the families and community members that lived near *La Escuelita*, many of whom also had children enrolled in the after-school program. Food for All staff worked with *La Escuelita* teachers and students to determine the prices of the food to be sold at the farmer's market held on site after the crops were harvested.

The Focal Participants

The exchanges presented in this article include one teacher from *La Escuelita,* one Food for All staff member, and 10 fourth-grade students. The students and Pedro, the Food for All staff member, were heritage-language speakers of Spanish born in California; Aura, the focal teacher, was a bilingual speaker of Spanish and English born in Mexico. Nine of the 10 students and Pedro were children of Mexican and Central American immigrant parents, and their educational identities were inextricably linked to globalization and the movement of family members across borders. One student in the class identified as African American and was born in California. Two students of Mexican descent were the younger siblings of students who previously attended *La Escuelita,* and three other Latino students were related to other children attending the program at the time of the study. This underscores the transnational and intergenerational context of immigrant families attending this after-school program, an important factor that informed classroom conversations about the significance of language maintenance.

A Note on Researchers' Roles

The researchers and administration at *La Escuelita* developed a sustained and collaborative relationship that shaped the perspectives shared in this article. While the first two authors of this article (both university professors) initiated this study of language socialization, the collaboration with the director of *La Escuelita* extended beyond the scope of data collection. Our work has taken numerous forms at different points in time, including grant writing, co-organizing and delivering professional development sessions at the after-school program, presenting at regional and national conferences, and discussing day-to-day curricular decisions and programmatic directions. These activities led to a more participatory research process and inform our understanding of the local significance of events such as *la cosecha.*

FINDINGS: SOCIALIZATION TO EMPOWERMENT DURING *LA COSECHA*

La cosecha provides us with an opportunity to examine the procedural, pedagogical, and political considerations that constituted the core of instructional activities at *La Escuelita*. Our analysis focuses on indexical forms that encode beliefs about community membership and agency. These forms display two aspects of socialization to empowerment: how adults employed pedagogical indeterminacy to enlist student participation in talk about social justice, and how participants made connections between social justice and language maintenance.

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Indeterminacy as a Pedagogical Tool

At the start of *la cosecha*, Aura met with the fourth-grade students in their assigned classroom and outlined the schedule for that afternoon. In Example 1, Aura explained the significance of the procedures that the class would follow and posed a question for discussion.

Example 1: *"What is a Fair Price?"*

Segment A

1 Aura: *>Vamos a hacer< dos equipos. Un equipo que va a hacer los anu::ncios?*
We're going to make two teams. One team will make the signs
2 *que van a ayudar ya una vez que recojamos las cosas? Tenemos que saber qué es*
that will help once we gather the things. We have to know what it is
3 *lo que hay. >°Qué hay a la disposición° entonces tenemos que buscar< el*
that we have. What there is available then we have to look up the
4 *nombre? y se va poner en inglés y en español. >En los dos< (.) porque*
name and it is going to be put in English and Spanish. In both because
5 *viene mucha gente a comprar? y queremos que se vea.*
a lot of people come to buy? and we want it to be seen.
6 *Y::: luego vamos a decidir en los precios cuando llega::: Pedro*
And then we're going to decide on the prices when Pedro arrives
7 *porque el trae los precios que dan los granjeros >entonces vamos a hacer<*
because he brings the prices that the farmers give so we are going
8 *hacer un precio justo? para la gente. Y qué es un precio justo?*
to make a fair price for the people. And what is a fair price
9 Ss: Fair
10 Aura: *Levante (.) la (.) mano (.) cuando quiere decir algo. No yo no te dije*
Raise your hand when you want to say something. No I didn't tell you
11 *tradúceme qué es un precio justo. Uh:: Adán.*
translate for me what a fair price is. Uh Adan.

Aura described the participants, purposes, and division of labor that would constitute *la cosecha* (lines 1 through 7). She spoke at a faster pace when listing the tasks that would be performed (lines 1, 3, and 7) and used more fixed referents when outlining routine classroom procedures familiar to the students (for example, verb conjugations inflected with the third person plural indicating that she and the students would form teams to complete harvest-related tasks, line 1). A few moments later, Aura spoke at a noticeably slower pace, pausing just before naming key participants in the harvest—the shoppers (line 5) and Pedro, along with the farmers with whom he negotiated prices (line 7)—who were less familiar to the students and who would be central to the ideas about the harvest elaborated upon later in the exchange. Aura emphasized the equal status assigned Spanish and English by placing stress on the endings of both words and reiterating that the signs would be provided in both languages for the shoppers to see (lines 4–5).

While Aura assumed that the students shared a frame of reference for routine classroom procedure, she introduced key concepts relevant to *la cosecha* using what we call *pedagogical*

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indeterminacy. For example, she did not specify why having bilingual signs would be significant to the shoppers who would see them. By leaving unspecified the pronominal indirect object of the verb *to see* in the phrase "we want *it* to be seen" (line 5), Aura's intended meaning remained ambiguous. Was she referring to the signs themselves, to the pride in bilingualism communicated by their presence, or to the visibility of Latinos in the community?

In addition, Aura invited the students to think with her about how they would determine which crops to sell by coupling modal verbs ("we have to know," line 2) and the subjunctive tense ("once we gather," line 2) to signal uncertainty and to generate curiosity about what the harvest would yield. We argue that this expression of ambiguity was intentional. It served as a teaching tool to enlist student thinking about the complex transactions that predated *la cosecha* (buying and planting seeds) and those that would take place later that afternoon (harvesting and selling crops). Aura's description of the economic transactions underpinning *la cosecha*—stressed by the elongated vowel sounds in the words indicating temporal sequence such as "*y:::*" and "llega:::" ("and," "arrive," line 6)—signaled the contingencies involved in a successful harvest, among them the local availability of plants and the prices dictated by the farmers. Thus, Aura humanized this process by noting that decision-making was a shared activity across levels of interaction and by including the voices of farmers via Pedro, the Food for All staff member.

In line 8, Aura introduced the question "*Y qué es un precio justo*" ("and what is a fair price") and began to elicit students' responses. Although the discussion was teacher-led, she guarded against an initiation-response-evaluation (IRE) pattern of classroom interaction that is often used to "simplify" complex tasks for learners (Cazden, 1988) by vacillating between providing explicit information and continuing to employ the pedagogical indeterminacy that invited students to make connections across key terms. Aura linked these terms by using an interrogatory tone at the ends of words ("signs," "the things" (referring to the crops), "to buy," and "fair price") that indexed broader themes of commerce, harvest, and the economic transactions underlying the event. Her use of temporal and pronominal indexes in the English gloss "and *then we*'re going to decide on the prices" (line 6) allowed for indexical creativity in which students took up novel roles in the exchange as they were implicated in the decision-making processes and economic transactions particular to *la cosecha*.

The students first responded to Aura's question with a literal translation of the Spanish word *justo* into the English word *fair*, and Aura reminded the students to distinguish between translating the phrase and providing its meaning (line 10–11)—a significant distinction in the heritage-language classroom. Throughout the activity, individual students translated key terms into English before participating in the collective process of deciphering the word's meaning in Spanish. Students also displayed their understanding of the distinction between translation and interpretation, shifting from one-word translations to more elaborate guesses of the phrase's meaning, actively engaging in the meaning-making process and shifting roles of teacher-expert and student-novice. For over 10 turns of talk, students wrestled with the ambiguous meaning of the phrase, and Aura encouraged them to make informed guesses in Spanish.

The students built on one another's ideas, supported by Aura's scaffolding, before arriving at a shared definition. After several student responses—omitted from the transcript—Aura prompted them to elaborate by saying "*casi lo tienes completito, tiene la información, pero hay un propósito*" ("it's almost complete, you have the information, but there is a purpose"). Héctor offered a rendering of the phrase that Aura ratified.

Segment B

21 Héctor: °<*Un precio e::s que:: la gente pue::de compra::r.*>
A price is something that the people can buy.
22 Aura: *La palabra que dijiste. Que- acabas de decir primero.*
The word that you said. That- you just finished saying it first.
23 Héctor: °*Que pue::de compra-*
That you can bu-
24 Aura: *Que pue:::de compra:::r (.) es a:::lgo ju:::sto.*
That you can buy is something fair.
25 Nina: *Que vale la pena!*
That would be worth it!
26 Aura: *Por eso se está luchando por justi:::cia so::cial. Para que sea algo*
That's why there is a struggle for social justice. So that it can be something
27 *donde la gente pue:::da comprar, pue:::da alimentarse, pue::::da vivir mejor.*
where the people can buy, can nourish oneself, can live better.
28 *Entonces es el propósito de ↑Farm for All y por eso lo te↑nemos allí.*
Therefore, that is the goal of Farm for All and that's why we have them there.
29 *Para que sus papás puedan come::r comida orgánica que es de lo mejor que hay*
so that your parents can eat organic food which is the best that there is
30 *para ustedes (.) y para su fa↑milia. Pero tiene que ser un precio justo, un precio*
for you and for your family. But it has to be at a fair price, a price that
31 *que ustedes y sus familias pueden↑ pagar. Porque lo orgánico es bastante caro.*
you and your families can pay. Because the organic (food) is pretty expensive.
32 *Entonces, eso es lo que tenemos que ver* >*que el precio que vamos a dar va ser*<
Therefore, that is what we have to see that the price that we're going to give is
33 *un precio ju::sto.* >*Para que ustedes aprendan eso*< *es bien importante.*
a fair price. So that you learn that is very important.

Aura asked Héctor to repeat the definition of "*precio justo*" (fair price), placing him in an expert role at the start of Segment B. In the context of *la cosecha*, a fair price meant access to quality food—not necessarily accomplished by offering everyone the same price, but instead by offering socioeconomically diverse communities prices they could afford. Aura's emphasis on Héctor's choice of the verb *que puede* ("to be able to"), evidenced by her repetition and elongation of the word in lines 24 and 27, indexed the significance of the concept of agency and choice. As the political stakes of *la cosecha* became more explicit, Aura used a similar cadence to index the relationship between being able to buy and the movement for social justice ("*justi:::cia so::cial,*" line 26), and she identified groups of people likely to be affected by the ability to purchase food at a fair price. She shifted from using unspecified, collective nouns such as "*la gente*" ("the people," lines 21, 27) to mentioning specific groups of people including the parents (line 29) and the students and their families (lines, 30, 31). Aura implicated the students in the struggle for social justice that she described—positioning them as participants (through their actions as harvesters) and potential beneficiaries (who needed access to farmer's markets like the one they created).

Shortly after this discussion, Aura transitioned the class into the school's patio to begin the harvest. The students worked alongside their younger peers and teachers to trim herbs, pick and

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wash lettuce, and create bilingual signs. Over an hour later, the fourth graders and Aura reconvened in their classroom to reflect on the day. Pedro (the Food for All staff member) joined them to talk about the connection between the harvest activity and the organization's broader goals of environmental justice. His seamless entry into the conversation indicated that he was an ongoing participant in the classroom familiar with the local norms for talking to students about language and identity. As Pedro explained that he was going to be interviewed by a local radio station, the conversation turned to heritage-language maintenance and linguistic rights. At the start of Example 2, Aura prompted a student to ask Pedro why he agreed to the interview.

Example 2: *From Food Rights to Linguistic Rights*

Segment A

1 Aura:	*Pero, pregúntale porque sale el en el radio. Rafa. °Pregúntale.*
	But, ask him why he is going to be on the radio. Rafa. Ask him.
2 Rafa:	*Por ↑qué va a salir en el radio?*
	Why are you going to be on the radio?
3 Pedro:	*Pues para (.) compartir información? acerca de de (.) justicia de los alimentos=*
	Well to share information about food justice
4 Ines:	Share
5 Pedro:	*=de:: qué tan importante es alimen↑tarnos. Pero de de que es nuestro derecho*
	about how important nourishing ourselves is. But that that it is our right
6	*poder (.) comprar comida que es li::bre (.) de pesticidas.*
	to be able to buy food that is free of pesticides.
7 Rafa:	What are you going to say?
8 Pedro:	[*Qué son pesticidas?*
	And what are pesticides?
9 Timo:	[No pesticides, [NO PESTICIDES ((puts right fist in the air))
10 Aura:	[*Escucha lo que te esta diciendo* ((points to her ear then to Pedro))
	Listen to what he is telling you
11 Pedro:	*Quién aquí sabe (.) sabe que son (.) son pesticidas?* ((raises his hand))
	Who knows what a pesticide is?
12 Nina:	[Tienes que abrir las manos para que (–unintelligible)
	You have to open your hands to
13 Laura:	[Pesticides
14 Pedro:	*Y qué son* pesticides*?*
	And what are pesticides?
15 Nina:	*Son como unos insectos?*
	They're like some insects?
16 Pedro:	*Esperate -perate -perate. Quién está hablando?*
	Wait wai- wai-. Who is speaking?
17 Timo:	°No pesticides ((puts right fist in the air))
18 Aura:	*Qué son? [Te está haciendo una pregunta, contesta* ((looks at Timo))
	What are they? He is asking you a question, answer
19 Laura:	*[°Son malas cosas que te pueden hacer daño*
	They're bad things that can hurt you

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20 Pedro: *Qué qué puede hacer ma- malas cosas? Digo.*
What what can do ba-bad things? I mean.
21 S5: °medicine
22 Pedro: *Cómo?*
What?

Rafa, the student pictured in the foreground of Figure 1 with his back to the camera, echoed Aura's syntax and asked Pedro what he would say. Although Rafa's question is posed in the second person singular (*por qué va salir*, line 2), Pedro responded in the first person plural ("us/we"), implicating the class in his response that organic food was a collective right, in line 5. Pedro's creative use of adverbial indexes "about" (indicating proximity in line 3) and "how important" (indicating quantity in line 5) allowed the students to make their own judgments about what could be relevant to and significant about this topic. His use of indeterminate pronouns "our" when referring to "our rights" also encouraged students to imagine their own relationship to the issues being discussed and suggested that these were shared concerns.

Using linguistic indeterminacy as a pedagogical approach to enlisting student participation similar to the way Aura had done earlier, Pedro asked the students to help him decipher the term "pesticides" (lines 8 and 11). The students, however, made clear that they had other concerns. Rafa continued pressing Pedro to tell the class what he was going to say on the radio, and Timo literally translated the Spanish word for pesticides into English while laminating it with a gesture iconic of social struggle. Timo raised his right fist in the air (pictured in Figure 1), indexing protest settings and revealing his metalinguistic awareness of the grassroots struggle described—the kind of social movement that has a long history at *La Escuelita* and the city it is located in. In so doing, he demonstrated his understanding of the concept of collective rights and his sense of belonging in the community that Pedro indexed with the pronoun *our*.

FIGURE 1 "No pesticides!"

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The communicative environment, rich with creative indexical language use, is pictured in Figure 1, where Pedro, Timo, and Aura's speech and gesture all overlap and unify the pedagogical (Pedro's raised hand inviting students to define pesticides), political (Timo's raised fist signaling struggle), and procedural (Aura's finger pointed toward Pedro to remind students to listen to and answer his question) components of the exchange. Like Example 1, as students and adults worked to decipher the meaning of a particular word or phrase in Spanish, they employed both English and Spanish during their discussions of the broader social and political significance of language use and of *la cosecha.* The exchange continued as students called out possible definitions until Aura interjected to draw their attention to Pedro, who she positioned as a role model. The group discussion concluded with the adult's narration, meant to unite the students in a collective identity while socializing them to advocate for their rights.

Segment B

23 Aura: *Te está diciendo (.) cómo? Sabes qué? Deja compartir algo °contigo. Pedro? Él*
He is saying like. You know what? Let me share something with you. Pedro?
24 *nació de °este lado. Y también creció no pudiendo usar tanto el español↑ y él*
he was born on this side. And also he grew up not being able to use Spanish
25 *quiere muchísimo °al español. Cuando habla conmigo?, él siempre me pide*
and he loves Spanish very much. When he talks with me he always asks me
26 *hablemos en español porque me encanta? usar mi idioma. Me escri::be y me dice*
let us speak in Spanish because I love to use my language. He writes me and tells
27 *corrí::geme si me equivo::co. Yo quiero aprender más. Por qué? Porque él sabe*
me correct me if I make mistakes. I want to learn more. Why? Because he knows
28 *de la importancia de utilizar °el lenguaje.*
of the importance of using the language.
29 Pedro: *Si, sabe también? Cuando me me crearon en las escuelas, yo iba mucho a*
Yes, you know what else? When I, I was raised in the schools, I went a lot to the
30 *escuela donde donde era una mino- una minoría. Había mucho güero? y todos*
school where where I was a min-minority. There were lots of whites and all
31 *los güeros se se reían de mi porque yo no hablaba el inglés muy bien↑. Y las*
of the whites laughed at me because I didn't speak English very well. And the
32 *maestras no me deja:::ban hablar español, para nada. Y con mis compañe↑ros*
teachers didn't let me speak in Spanish, not for anything. And with my peers
33 *que eran °mexicanos también, no me deja::::ban para nada hablar el español↑.*
who were Mexican too, they didn't let me speak Spanish for anything.
34 *Entonces con los años, estaba yendo, y vez que estaba perdie::ndo mi español.*
((moves arms away from body))
So then with the years, it was going, you see I was losing my Spanish.
35 *Ya que se dieron cuenta mis papás?, pues ya pararon de hablarme inglés en*
Once my parents noticed, well they stopped speaking to me in English in
36 *la casa. Y pues era °puro español. Y así es. Entonces*
the house. And well it was pure Spanish. And that's how it is. So I
37 *°>agradezco muchísimo<que Aura °>tiene paciencia< con mi español.*
appreciate very much that Aura has patience with my Spanish.
38 Aura: *Y ellos que no lo quieren usar!* ((laughs and shakes head no))
And they don't want to use it!

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Aura began by repeating the question that Pedro posed ("*cómo*?"/"what?," line 23) to elicit more information about how pesticides negatively affect produce but quickly moved on to share something about Pedro himself. The conversation shifted from describing the politics of food justice to providing a narrative of language learning within a broader social justice framework. Aura positioned Pedro as the example of a language learner that she hoped her students would emulate. In order to connect the students with Pedro, Aura noted that like her students, he was born "on this side" of the border ("*de este lado*," line 24). This creative indexical language gave students the opportunity to affiliate with Pedro and to hear the remaining narrative as a reflection of their own identities as heritage-language learners and children of immigrants. She uttered this personal note, and the mention of Spanish, in hushed tones to communicate that this information was not to be shared with others. This is especially significant in a community whose members were often policed for their immigration status and linguistic proficiency. She then described the efforts that Pedro made to practice his Spanish—pinpointing the different modalities in which he communicated with Aura—and emphasizing each word with elongated vowel sounds (lines 26 and 27). Aura narrated Pedro's bids for language practice in the present tense, underscoring the fact that he continued to learn and study the language. Aura described herself as a resource for supporting Pedro's language learning and applauded his commitment to maintaining his Spanish fluency (lines 27 and 28).

Pedro took his cue to recount his experience learning Spanish and English, describing the restrictions placed on speaking Spanish at school and his parents' efforts to maintain his fluency in their home language. He enlisted the students active listening by posing the question "do you know what else?" (line 29) and then describing his experience not being allowed to use Spanish in school for academic nor social purposes. Like Aura, who elongated verbs emphasizing agency in Example 1, Pedro elongated the ending of the verb "*dejar*" ("let") to punctuate his restricted ability to speak his heritage language in school (lines 32 and 33). As he described the power dynamics that shaped his language acquisition, loss, and maintenance, Pedro racialized language use and described the disciplinary role that teachers played in his development. He named two groups of students: the ("*güeros*"/"whites") who spoke English and those like Pedro ("*mexicanos*"/"Mexicans") who didn't speak it very well. This narrative, a testimonial, served as a reminder that the current practice of assigning English learners to English-only programs had preceded the passage of Proposition 227 (confirmed by studies showing that only 30% of Spanish speakers were enrolled in bilingual programs at the time that Proposition 227 passed, Wiley & Wright, 2004). Pedro's narrative depicted a racial and linguistic divide in which Mexican students' language rights were stripped, resulting in language loss (where "let," and "lose," were placed in parallel meaning through shared tone and cadence); yet it also signaled the possibility of linguistic maintenance through the active parental involvement in education.

Concluding his narrative, Pedro used the general truth construction "*Y así es*" ("and that's how it is"), an unspecified demonstrative adjective *that* coupled with the conjugated form of *to be* (line 36), to communicate that his story was not unique to him and that his experience was shared by others. Closing with this creative indexical construction again allowed the students to identify with his story. Aura provided a final coda with a moralizing commentary phrased indirectly to the students in the third person plural; in effect, she reprimanded them for not taking an active role in maintaining fluency in a language that others before them had struggled to preserve.

DISCUSSION

Cultural Citizenship and Empowerment

This article illustrates how the process of heritage-language socialization at *La Escuelita* was inextricably linked to students' socialization to empowerment. In the working-class immigrant community convened at *La Escuelita*, participants grappled with issues related to sustainability—ranging from language maintenance to economic self-sufficiency. These themes were intertwined and referenced within *la cosecha*. We consider these examples of socialization to be at the core of the notion of cultural citizenship because the interactions between students and adults focused on defining a local, transnational, and intergenerational community and were thematically focused on a shared struggle for environmental and linguistic justice. They also motivated students to take action as individuals responsible for advancing these collective rights.

The students demonstrated their uptake of the socialization to empowerment by becoming active citizens, meaning participants in this context, in unfolding and imagined democratic processes. When Aura and Pedro prompted them to define key terms, the students moved between translation and interpretation and developed a sense of agency in defining key terms and building consensus. Timo's raised fist and Rafa's concerns about what Pedro would say on the radio indicated their interest in imagining ways of becoming advocates in political processes that extended beyond the classroom. These exchanges constitute examples of public cultural expression at different levels of community formation (families, Food For All, immigrants born on this side of the border) and a continuum of indexical language use (from fixed to creative referents) that prompted students to affiliate with the social issues being depicted and become empowered to effect social change.

Aura's insistence on the exclusive use of Spanish in the heritage-language classroom was informed by her own beliefs about cultural citizenship and linguistic self-determination and was subject to negotiation with her students. In the fall of 2006, during a conversation with Mangual Figueroa during an orientation to *La Escuelita*, Aura explained that her goal of working with the children exclusively in Spanish was often undermined because "*los niños traen tareas en inglés*" ("the children bring homework in English"). A year later, during a discussion about educational language policy and Proposition 227 Aura explained that, "*los Latinos trabajadores no pagan impuestos y no tienen derechos. Significa que aprenden inglés para sobrevivir y los Anglo-Sajón aprenden español como un lujo*" ("the Latino workers don't pay taxes and don't have rights. This means that they learn English for survival and the Anglo-Saxons learn Spanish as a luxury"). Aura wanted to ensure that her Latino students did not develop the "*mal hábito*" ("bad habit") of code-switching because she feared that they would be unable to communicate successfully with family members living across the border who spoke Spanish. Aura's concerns about the effects of language education policy, the importance of political power, the ability to communicate across generations and borders led her to privilege the use of Spanish at *La Escuelita*. As a result, she insisted that students move from individual responses and translations to whole-group conversations about the meaning of words and the significance of language use. Her students—heritage-language learners growing up in California—translated from Spanish into English at particular moments during Aura's lessons, often to check their comprehension of key terms before participating in whole-group discussions in Spanish. In this way, they monitored their own learning and negotiated the norms for their participation in the classroom.

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Our analysis of the interactions during *la cosecha* contributes to existing research on heritage-language socialization by demonstrating how a metalinguistic focus on empowerment is integral to community formation and language learning in an immigrant community working to sustain its economic and linguistic rights. By focusing on the indexical language use employed during *la cosecha,* we have broadened the research on heritage-language socialization—which has tended to focus on moral personhood, ethnicity, and group membership—by examining how language use also encodes the sociopolitical dimensions in which language learning occurs.

Pedagogical Indeterminacy and Learning with Ambiguity

Our findings demonstrate how Aura led her class beyond explicit requests for information (e.g., IRE) toward pedagogical indeterminacy (and learning with ambiguity) characterized by the use of indeterminate phrases and multiple referents and their eventual anchoring to local needs and rights of the participants. As part of this pedagogical approach, we identify a set of linguistic resources that express creative indexical language use. The pedagogical approach itself, not just the content of the exchanges, socialized empowerment within and across conversations between adults and children. As students were encouraged to participate in decision-making and meaning-making processes throughout the afternoon, they also interpreted the fixed and creative indexical language used by Aura and Pedro to highlight key concepts during *la cosecha.* The use of first person inclusive pronouns ("*we* have to know *what we* have") actively enlisted membership and responsibility during the day's activities. The contingency of these activities was also marked temporally ("*once we* have gathered items" and "*when* Pedro arrives"), thus socializing a disposition to sustained collaborative activity.

The significance of pedagogical ambiguity is first evident in the discussion on fair prices. We have shown how and why Aura encouraged her students to move away from individual bids at translating key terms to whole-group discussions about economic justice that implicated them and their families. When she did so, Héctor offered a meaning of fair price as something that people could afford; this, in turn, led to further reflection when Nina added that a fair price was something that would be worth the effort and cost. There were other instances of indexical creativity during the discussion led by Pedro, the Food for All staff member, when he asked the class for the meaning of the word pesticides. This prompted a similar type of exchange–ranging from initial approximations to more elaborate responses–including something being harmful to health, invocations of insects, and indexical representations of a social struggle for rights in Timo's closed fist and repeated chanting of "no pesticides!" These student contributions led to the co-construction of a shared lexicon related to *La Escuelita's* agricultural project, a longitudinal learning activity that also serves as a microcosm of the broader realities faced by immigrant farming communities. The use of creative indexical language allowed the participants to shift between the hypothetical and the actual, an important metalinguistic feature of building community and solidarity through talk.

Finally, the place of narrative in classroom instruction is particularly significant in heritage-language learning. Aura elicited Pedro's narrative through an affiliative statement that located him and the students "on this side" (of the border). This demarcation of community also indexed a community on the other side—Mexico. Pedro's narrative presents a racial microcosm of U.S. society where Mexicans and their language, Spanish, were both marked and excluded. But such exclusion can be countered. Pedro mentioned the role his parents and teachers such as Aura (who,

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we note, were located outside of the Post-Proposition 227 public school sphere) to help maintain the home language. After framing language learning as a right, perhaps the most moralizing moment of socialization took place when Aura wistfully stated, again employing the language of indeterminacy, “and they don’t want to use it” (Spanish). This simultaneously chastised and invited her students to participate in the same struggle for language rights.

CONCLUSION

By creating opportunities for children to address the intersecting forms of “cultural exclusion” that they face, *La Escuelita* forms part of a larger educational movement to support local communities empowered to advocate for social justice (Dyrness, 2010). Administrators and staff at *La Escuelita* have developed sustained collaborations among key educational stakeholders—children, families, educators, and community members—through programs like *la cosecha,* weekend family literacy programs, and partnerships with youth mentors attending local universities. The dynamic intergenerational relationships developed in these programs challenge traditional dichotomies between home and school, family and educator, immigrant and citizen, monolingual and bilingual. In this learning environment, diversity is viewed as a productive (versus problematic) reality that has led to creative educational programs and pedagogies drawing on community resources and responding to multiple forms of oppression. *La cosecha*—a school-based, community-wide initiative that merges garden-based learning, heritage-language maintenance, and economic empowerment—is a prime example of this approach.

Our analysis of the interactions at *La Escuelita* offers a view into the type of heritage-language learning that engages in what Valdés (2001) calls a type of “consciousness raising about language and identity” (p. 16), and, which we argue, necessarily engages an ideological positioning toward language and identity. In the case of *la cosecha*, that positioning is meant to empower from within the community and to empower for community well-being through shared responsibility (Flores & Benmayor, 1997). The students in Aura’s classroom were learning dispositions that framed them and their families as deserving of just economic and cultural practices. The students’ role, as socialized through the language of pedagogical indeterminacy, was to actively search for meaning and to engage in communitywide struggles for social justice.

We encourage researchers and educators to consider the central role that language can play in learning about and replicating best practices for empowerment and sustainability. Ethnographic methods of recording and reflection provide unique opportunities to listen in on learning while becoming an active participant in the unfolding educational activity. As such, ethnographers have a responsibility to support innovative pedagogical concepts like the one we have introduced here—learning with ambiguity—by working with educators to document best practices and sharing them with local colleagues and the larger educational community. By developing long-term, socially relevant units of instruction that invite participation among key stakeholders, educators can create new possibilities for teaching and learning. Through sustained collaboration with family and community members, educators may identify linguistic role models who can not only support student learning but also teach educators about unique approaches to socializing children to become empowered agents of learning and change.[6]

[6]We are indebted to the reviewers of this manuscript for sharing the term “linguistic role models.”

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