



## Mainstream K-2nd Grade Teachers' Beliefs Towards Using Learners' Home Languages in a Multilingual Setting

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### Abstract

*This article reports the quantitative phase results from a mixed-method study conducted with K-2nd grade mainstream teachers in a U.S. district where most teachers and learners are multilingual. The study aimed to capture teachers' beliefs about using learners' home languages (HLs) in classrooms. Previous research on teachers' beliefs towards linguistic minorities (Dixon et al., 2016; Lucas et al., 2014; De Angelis, 2011) suggested that some variables, such as being bilingual and receiving training, could positively impact teachers' beliefs. The results reported here indicated a more complex situation with significant implications for teachers' training courses in multilingual settings. Abandoning a monolingual mindset during instructional time may involve revising teacher training and curriculum development. The results reported here bring valuable insight into the general belief that immersion in a monolingual-only environment would help students learn the language of the school faster, which impeded teachers from using learners' HLs for instructional purposes. Further studies could discuss if and how teachers' training programs on second language acquisition, literacy, and TESOL validate and incorporate learners' HL repertoire and adhere to a monolingual mindset. Moreover, if multilingual learners (MLs) have the right to understand instruction, express their knowledge, and participate in the classroom, it is essential to discuss the role of HL inside classrooms.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Based on the quantitative results from a mixed-methods inquiry, this article discusses the complexity of understanding mainstream teachers' beliefs about using learners' home languages (HLs) in multilingual classrooms. Its overarching discussion approaches Language Policy and Planning (LPP) issues considering the U.S. educational system.

Data from the National Center for Education Statistics (2024) indicated that in 2021, 10.6% or 5.3 million students in the U.S. were classified as English Learners. The data indicates that when caregivers enrolled the learner in a U.S. school, they noted in a questionnaire that one or both caregivers do not speak English at home. Interestingly, the American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023) indicated that 21% of U.S. school-age children a language other than English at home. Crossing these data, one can assume that 20% of U.S. students are multilingual learners (ML), and 10% are multilingual learners (MLs) not accounted for by the system.

Since The Equal Educational Opportunities ACT (EEOA) of 1974, states and the U.S. education department must take action to ensure equal participation for all learners. This right

was further supported during the same year by the Lau X Nichols federal case when meaningful participation was guaranteed to MLs inside schools. Furthermore, learning theory confirms the significance of these rights, establishing that comprehension, understanding, and opportunities to express thinking must be placed at the forefront of learning (Bridges et al., 2010). If MLs have the right to understand instruction, express their knowledge, and participate in the classroom, it is essential to question the monolingual implicit or explicit educational language policies and discuss the role of HL inside classrooms. Moreover, discussions on equity for MLs argue that acknowledging, valuing, and using learners' cultural and linguistic repertoires are necessary to dismantle the deficit perspective in monoglossic school curricula (Flores & Schissel, 2016).

In second language acquisition, applied linguistics, and TESOL, the multilingual turn (May 2014) comprises research, theoretical, and pedagogical discussions that incorporate learners' HLs inside classrooms. This growing body of approaches, such as multilingualism by Cenoz and Etxague (2013), translanguaging by Canagarajah (2018), translanguaging (Cenoz & Gorter, 2021; García, 2009), and plurilingualism (Piccardo, 2018), sustains a new perspective on how teachers can value, acknowledge and use MLs' repertoire in increasingly diverse school systems. These theories and approaches encompass a multilingual stance towards education (French, 2019; Ollerhead, Choi, French, 2018), where multiple languages are valued and serve as resources for instruction.

Despite the expansive body of research and pedagogical frameworks valuing multilingualism inside classrooms, research on teachers' beliefs about MLs (Bernstein et al., 2023; Martinez et al., 2024), linguistic and cultural diversity (Flores & Smith, 2009), multilingual pedagogies (Van Raemdonck et al., 2024; Portolés & Martí, 2020), students classified as ELs (Harrison & Lakin, 2018), and the use of HLs inside classrooms (Deroo & Ponzio, 2019; Szecsi et al., 2015; De Angelis, 2011; Lee & Oxelson, 2006) have consistently indicated that mainstream teachers say they value multilingualism, but these positive tendencies are not carried out into practice (Lucas et al., 2014).

Considering teachers' critical roles as language policy actors inside classrooms (Johnson, 2010; Garcia et al., 2014; Skilton-Sylvester, 2003), this article discusses results from a district-wide survey on K-2nd grade teachers' beliefs aiming to provide insight into why teachers do not use learners' HL during instructional time.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The overarching discussion in this project relates to language policy and planning (LPP). It relies on Spolsky's (2007, 2004) idea that LPP involves three components: language practices (habitual pattern of selecting among linguistics' repertoire), language beliefs or ideologies (beliefs about language and language use), and language planning or management (efforts to modify or influence language use).

Ricento and Hornberger (1996) argued for the importance of studying language policy inside classrooms. Hornberger (2020) explained that the field of LPP expanded its scope from government, its policies, and official documents to include research on the school ecosystem, where teachers are perceived as crucial language policymakers. Glasgow and Bouchard (2018) commented that teachers and students are perceived as agents in multiple levels of adherence

and resistance to top-down, explicit-implicit language policies and drawing from different ideologies.

Language ideologies, as part of language policies, are perceived as a "regime of value" (Gal & Irvine, 2019, p. 13), neither true nor false, but local and historic framings representing social groups' moral and political interests. Ideologies are not static, nor are they doctrines, and people enact creative interpretations of them. Schieffelin et al. (1998) noted that in language ideology, there is a "naturalizing move that drains the conceptual of its historical context, making it seem universally and/or timelessly true" (p. 58). Community members have greater or lesser degrees of awareness of language ideologies; some may be contested, and others may be unnoticed.

Considering the U.S. history of education, critical scholars noted that U.S. state curricula and schools' practices reproduce an ideological hegemonic discourse (Au et al., 2016; Wiley & Wright, 2004; Tollefson, 1991) of English as the language most (many times, the only one) valid in school settings. Considering that 21% of U.S. school-age children are multilingual learners (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023), analyzing teachers' beliefs at the classroom level can help critically discuss equity for the increasing number of MLs inside schools.

Language ideologies corroborate language management systems, which might be official or unofficial, explicit or implicit. Language management is "any specific efforts to modify or influence practices by any kind of language interventions, planning, or management" (Spolsky, 2004, p. 5). Classroom language practices can diverge (Spolsky, 2004) from official or management policies because they represent how teachers enact the intricacies of their experience and interpretations of language ideologies and schools' curricula with their explicit and implicit language management systems. For example, in her study of two high schools in Maryland, Feagin (2023) concluded how standardized assessments influenced teachers' language practices, leading to English-as-goal and English-as-default implicit policies. This confirms Spolsky's (2007) elaboration on how language management efforts can be covert. In this case, even if teachers' language ideologies contradict the standardized assessment as a language management effort, Feagin (2023) concluded that teachers may concede to them due to the coercive force of the state testing apparatus.

### **2.1. In-service Teachers' Beliefs**

Gill and Fives (2014), as well as Skott and Aarhus (2014), agreed that it is challenging to find consistency across definitions of teachers' beliefs because the literature uses different terms to explore this idea, for instance, teachers' perceptions, views, perspectives, and attitudes. Despite these challenges, these researchers and others (Pajares, 1992; Fives & Buehl, 2014; Wall, 2018) considered that teachers' beliefs are pervasive frames guiding teachers' experiences, decisions, and actions. Skott and Aarhus (2014) explained how researchers need to be careful not to make simplistic deterministic links between teachers' beliefs and actions due to the complexity of educational phenomena. Other factors, such as dominant school culture, time constraints, curricular materials, and assessment practices, can influence teachers.

Pajares (1992) indicated that the most salient characteristic of beliefs in educational research is that (a) the nature of beliefs makes them a filter to new phenomena and thought processes; (b) epistemological beliefs play a crucial role in knowledge interpretation and cognitive monitoring, and (c) beliefs strongly influence perception and behavior.

Studies of teachers' beliefs and attitudes toward HL and linguistically diverse students (Dixon et al., 2016; Lucas, Villegas, and Martin, 2014; De Angelis, 2011; Pettit, 2011; Flores & Smith, 2009; Lee & Oxelson, 2006; García-Nevarez et al, 2005) suggested that some variables can contribute to positive attitudes towards learners' diverse languages, such as knowledge of a second language, experience with teaching multilingual learners, and training specifically related to second language acquisition and methods of teaching MLs. However, Flores & Smith (2009) noted that none of these factors alone was sufficiently strong in isolation, and it should also be highlighted that some research also contradicted these tendencies. For example, García-Nevarez et al. (2005) found in Arizona that the more years teachers taught, the more their attitude became negative toward their students' HLs, and teachers' beliefs towards the role of HLs could vary based on the child's age and grade level. Harrison and Lakin (2018) explored implicit and explicit teachers' beliefs about MLs, concluding that mainstream teachers held a slightly negative implicit belief about them compared to monolingual students. Interestingly, recent studies (Martinez et al., 2024; Van Raemdonck et al., 2024; Feagin, 2023; Fu & Aubain, 2023; Deroo & Ponzio, 2019) confirmed the Lucas et al. (2014) literature review observation that while many teachers say they value linguistic diversity in general, those beliefs do not necessarily carry over into their practice.

## **2.2. Monolingual Mindset**

Ellis et al. (2010) compared the language education policies of Germany and Australia, concluding that despite both countries being multilingual, their educational systems frame literacy through a monolingual mindset (Clyne, 2008), naturalizing monolingualism as a habitus (Gogolin, 1997). Similarly, despite the increased number of MLs, the U.S. educational system maintains a monolingual-oriented system where English is assumed as the only linguistic resource and basis for developing literacy.

This hegemonic discourse is at the core of the notion of universal education in the U.S., where the monolingual learner has been used as a paradigm and a form of disciplinary power (Foucault et al., 2004) in curriculum development to promote assimilation and "normalization" of children with diverse language backgrounds. This "normalization" becomes effective through mechanisms of power such as standardized tests, monolingual curriculum programs, extended activities, and stakeholders' silence towards the value of HLs. Boruchowski's (2023) research showed that this monolingual mindset is predominant even in a multilingual district when bilingual teachers and MLs' language use inside classrooms are regulated by teachers' interpretations of district policies and monolingual curriculum standards and textbooks.

A prominent challenge of many school systems is abandoning deficit perspectives towards diverse learners and adopting a culturally responsive curriculum (Howard, 2023; Ladson-Billings, 1995) incorporating a multilingual mindset. For example, adopting the pedagogical benefits of translanguaging (Cenoz & Gorter, 2020) and framing learners' background knowledge and languages as scaffolding and as a base for curriculum development.

## **2.3. Study's Context**

This study was conducted in a U.S. state where, since 1990, a Consent Decree required equal access to appropriate programming for MLs. Consequently, all teacher-preparation courses in the state require pre-service teachers and support personnel to receive training to work effectively with this population in their classrooms (Coady et al., 2022). Noteworthy,

these trainings involve a traditional ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) perspective, not focusing on multilingual development but based on a monolingual mindset (English being the only language valued inside schools).

After the Consent Decree, Coady, Harper, and de Jong (2011) researched state teachers' graduates, noticing an increased perception of their knowledge and competence to teach MLs. However, findings revealed that teachers felt unprepared to communicate with students and their parents and to use their HL in the classroom to facilitate learning.

In this state, teachers must receive ESOL training, consequently this district presents researchers with a particular setting: 70% of district teachers are bilinguals, 74.9% of the population above five years old speak a language other than English (United States Census Bureau, 2019), and there is a general idea that, in this community, Spanish has economic, cultural, and political capital. Despite the perception that bilingualism is part of this region's everyday life, researchers found a different scenario inside schools. Case studies on teachers' practices in the district indicated little or no use of learners' HLs inside schools (Dwyer and O'Gorman-Fazzolari, 2023); Pontier & Ortega, 2021; Valencia & Lynch, 2019; Mackinney, 2016; Lanier, 2014).

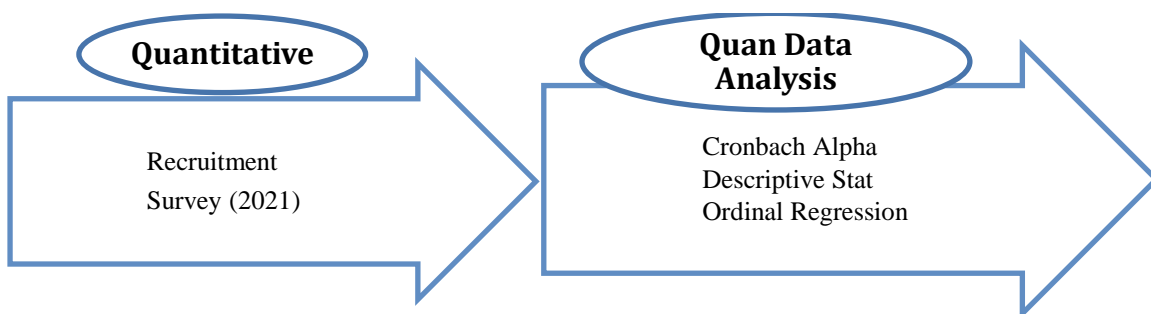
For these reasons, this article's relevance relies on providing insight into why teachers perceived classrooms as monolingual spaces, despite being bilinguals, receiving training, and serving mostly MLs. The data reported in this article concentrates on answering the following two research questions:

- a) In this multilingual district, considering K-2nd grade teachers, what are teachers' language ideologies regarding the use of home languages?
- b) Is there any relationship between teachers' demographics and language ideologies?

**3. METHODOLOGY**

This article reports general findings from a quantitative district-wide survey and discusses further implications for teacher training programs and curriculum development for literacy in multilingual settings. The survey, as part of a mixed-method study, indicated possible explanations of what impedes teachers, despite traditional ESOL training and experience as bilinguals, in valuing and using learners' languages inside schools. The following figure summarizes the general research procedures of the quantitative phase:

*Figure 1. Quantitative Approach*



### **3.1.Setting**

This study concentrates on a U.S. region that has received many immigrants and refugees, from diverse Caribbean workers from the beginning of the 20th century through the Cuban diaspora, from 1960 until now. For example, during the 2022-23 school year, the district's schools received around 20,000 immigrant students (Payne, 2023).

### **3.2.Population**

The study's population was K-2nd grade teachers (adults over 21 years old) from public and charter schools (an estimated 3,120 teachers). All data collection was approved and followed the requirements of the University's International Review Board (IRB) and the District Research Committee.

### **3.3.Survey**

I used a similar survey instrument to the one applied in California by Lee and Oxelson's (2006) mixed-method study, which was replicated in Europe by De Angelis (2011) and in Southwest Florida by Szecsi Szilagyi and Giambo (2015). With minor modifications, the survey compiled 29 closed questions on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree), plus eight items on demographics.

Previous questionnaires' sentences mainly focused on a dichotomic position of whether teachers valued EN-only or home languages (HLs). As in this study, most teachers were bilinguals and received ESOL training; I expected to find more nuanced results. I grouped the questionnaire statements into three constructs within an ideological continuous scale (monolingual, tolerance, and plurilingual) to address that. This scale is similar to the one French (2019) used to position teachers in a continuum of rejections, acceptance, and engagement of multilingual practices. In the study reported here, the statements delineated a continuum of monolingual, tolerance, and plurilingual ideologies:



It is noteworthy that this scale pointed out tendencies and not static perceptions. Sentences describing a monolingual ideology represented an assimilationist perspective; teachers with these tendencies would not see value in HL maintenance and perceive schools as English-only spaces, inculcating assimilation to a society that reproduces a monolingual mindset. The items in the tolerance ideology aimed to capture a less dichotomic perception, assuming that teachers valued bilingualism and understood the importance of HL maintenance; however, they enacted a monolingual mindset perceiving classrooms as English-only spaces. The items in the plurilingual ideology assumed that teachers valued HL, understood the benefits of HL literacy, and explicitly legitimized and used HL inside classrooms. See Appendix I for the questionnaire items and how each represents these three ideological tendencies.

I used Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to check my questionnaire's internal reliability and validity within the three ideology scale constructs. All showed good internal reliability and

validity. To analyze the data collected by the survey instrument, I used SPSS (IBM) to calculate descriptive statistics and ordinal logistic regression, which checked if I could predict any relation between teachers' demographics and their ideological tendencies.

**3.4. Recruitment**

I started collecting data during the pandemic, and the difficulties of accessing participants became evident. The district's research committee required that I had the school principal's approval before inviting teachers to take the survey. Due to pandemic restrictions, the main modes of contacting principals and teachers were phone calls, emails, and mail, avoiding in-person contact. However, these ways were not efficient. I realized that conducting random sampling would be unsuccessful, and I changed the data collection procedure to conduct a census. A census is considered a non-probability sample and helpful for researchers during the early stages of research (Fricker, 2008); its representativeness refers to how well the sample compares with its population (Fincham, 2008). After data collection, I compared district teachers' demographics and my participants, and I concluded that the slight differences did not indicate a significant nonresponse bias.

**4. RESULTS**

I mailed a package with documents and a QR code for the online survey to all district schools' principals and K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers. After six months of contacting principals and teachers many times by email and mail, 150 teachers filled out the online survey. After discarding participants who did not complete the survey through the end, I had 125 valid responses (n = 125). Most participants were females, representing 94% (n = 117) of the sample. Related to ethnic background, most of the participants classified themselves as Latina/o/x, representing 54% (n = 67) of the sample, followed by Black Caribbean or African American (16%, n = 20), and then Whites (28%, n = 34). Figure 2 below summarizes the participants' ethnicity distribution.

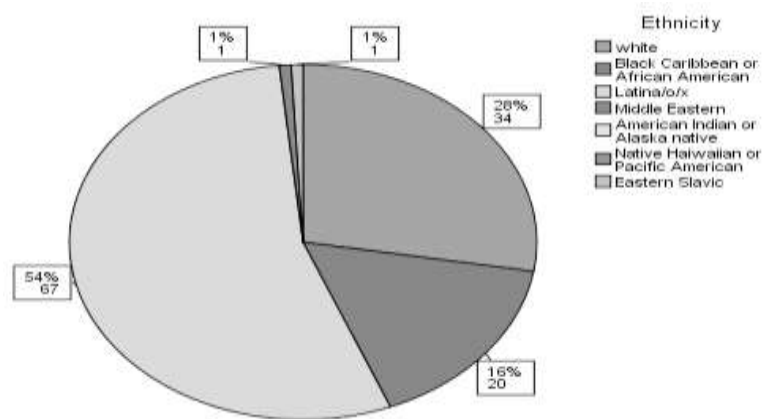


Figure 2. Ethnic Distribution of Participants

I compared my data set with national, state, and district demographic representations. The following table summarizes elementary teachers' ethnic proportion among national, state, district (Florida Department of Education, 2021), and my research data for elementary teachers.

**Mainstream K-2nd Grade Teachers' Beliefs Towards Using Learners' Home Languages in a Multilingual Setting**

*Table 1- Elementary teachers' demographics (20-21 school year)*

%	White	Black or African American	Hispanic/Latino	Asian	American Indian or Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Two or more races
National	79	7	9	2			
FL	68	13	17	1	0.21	0.09	1.04
MDCPS	16	23	59	1	0.31		0.17
My research	28	16	54	1.6			

Comparing all ethnicities of elementary teachers in national, state, and district and my research participants' percentages, my data set is consistent and compatible with district elementary teachers' demographic proportions. The difference between the district (Florida Department of Education, 2021) and my data is that my participants represented 12% more White teachers, 6% fewer Black Caribbean or African American, and 5% fewer Latinxs. Despite observing slightly more than a 10% difference in White respondents, I concluded that all the differences between the district and my participants did not indicate a significant non-response bias in the need for weighting data adjustment.

Considering teachers' experience, most participants (30%, n = 37) had less than five years of teaching experience, followed by those with more than 26 years of experience (16%, n = 20). The third most prominent data were those with six to ten years of teaching (15%, n = 18). Related to grades, a balanced representation indicated that 37% (n = 43) of the participants taught kindergarten students, 32% (n = 37) 1st-grade students, and the rest, 32% (n = 37), taught 2nd-grade students. Most participants taught the mainstream program, English immersion (84%, n = 97), whereas only 16% (n = 19) taught a bilingual program. Figure 3 below shows that 77% (n = 96) of participants could speak another language besides English, whereas 23% (n = 28) could speak English only.

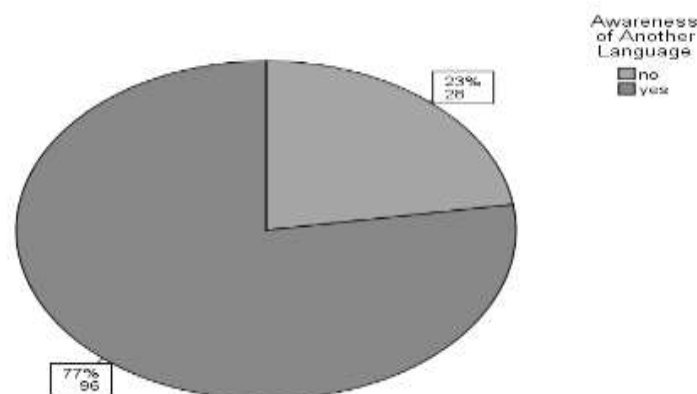




Figure 3. Participants' Knowledge of another Language

I compared participants' schools' SES using their schools' percentage of students receiving Free or Reduced Lunch data (FRL). Most teachers (57%, n = 58) in this study represented schools with mostly students receiving this assistance. Figure 4 below shows this distribution.

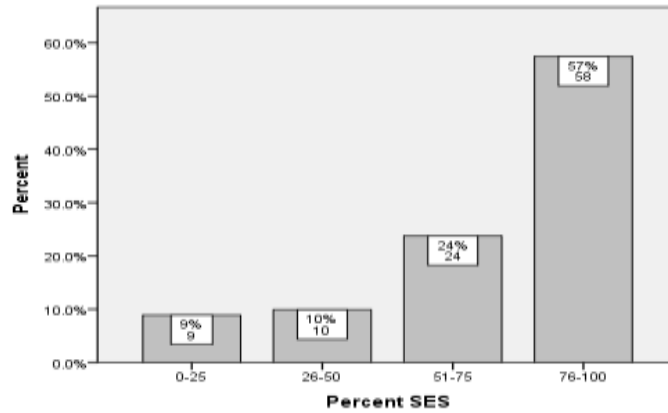


Figure 4. Percentage of participants representing schools with students' population receiving FRL

Most of the teacher participants in the quantitative phase represented schools with 0 – 50% of learners classified as English Language Learners (ELL). Figure 5 below displays the distribution of ELL students at teachers' schools.

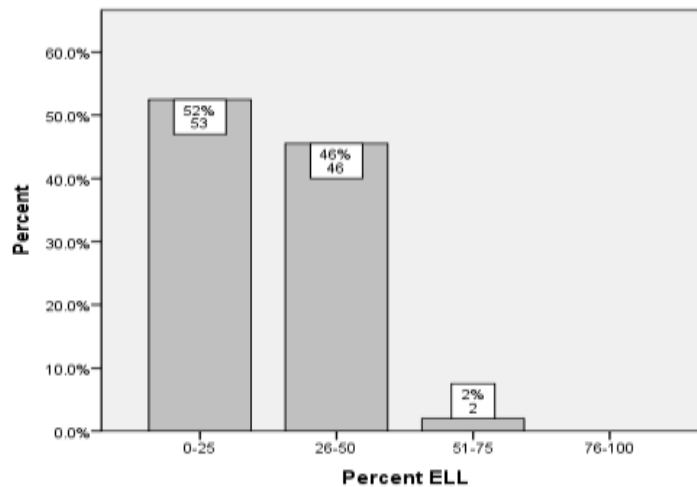


Figure 5. Percentage of ELL in the Participants' School

#### 4.1.Descriptive Statistics of the Survey Statements Grouped by the Ideology Scale

My survey compiled 29 closed questions on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). Previous questionnaires were organized mainly to determine whether you value EN-only or HL. As in my study, most teachers were bilinguals and received traditional ESOL training; I expected to find more nuanced results. As noted before, I grouped the questionnaire statements into three notions within an ideology scale (monolingual, tolerant, and plurilingual) to address that. In the following subsections, I present the descriptive statistics of the survey statements grouped by the ideology scale.

**Mainstream K-2nd Grade Teachers' Beliefs Towards Using Learners' Home Languages in a Multilingual Setting**

**Monolingual Ideology.** From all participant teachers, 26% (n = 33) strongly disagreed with statements indicating a monolingual ideology, 57% (n = 71) disagreed, 14% (n = 17) were not sure, 2% (n = 3) agreed to have a monolingual ideology, and 1% (n = 1) strongly agreed. More precisely, teachers indicated a blunt rejection of the monolingual ideology in six of the total ten statements in this group. The following table represents the six statements receiving more than 70% of disagreement or strong disagreement.

*Table 2. Statements which confidently indicated a rejection of the monolingual perspective (Ordered by the highest number of disagreements<sup>1</sup>).*

Question number	Statement	Disagreement Percentage
Q22	Everyone in this country should speak English and only English.	95.2%
Q12	Encouraging students to maintain their home language will prevent them from fully learning English.	90.4%
Q6	In my class, I ask students to leave their home language behind and focus on English.	88%
Q26	Frequent use of the home language at home will prevent students from learning English.	87.2%
Q18	Schools should be invested in only helping students learn English.	84%
Q16	Students should spend their time learning to read and write in English rather than in the home language.	73.6%

A detailed observation of the percentages in specific questions from this pool indicated teachers' rejection of a monolingual ideology towards more general affirmations. For example, (Q16) "Students should spend their time learning to read and write in English rather than in the home language," received a 73.4% percentage of disagreement. In contrast, questions that indicated using HL inside classrooms received less confident numbers. As an example, (Q5) "In my classroom, students need to spend time and energy learning English rather than their home language," most teachers (54.4%) inclined towards a monolingual mindset when indicating that the focus of classrooms should be EN. Other revealing results could be seen in Q1, Q8, and Q20. While teachers still rejected the monolingual mindset, they showed a higher adherence towards it in some statements (if we combine the number of unsure teachers, agreed, and strongly agreed).

*Table 3. Statements which rejected a monolingual mindset but had mixed results. (Ordered by the highest number of disagreement).*

		Disagree	Not Sure	Agree
Q1	It is confusing for a student's brain to simultaneously develop literacy in their home language and English.	64.8%	13.6%	21.5%
Q8	In my class, students must use English all the time to learn English faster.	63.2%	4.8%	32%

<sup>1</sup> Disagreement here indicates the sum of all teachers choosing strongly disagreeing and disagreeing with those statements.

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Q20 I advise parents to help their children learn to speak English faster by speaking English at home.	54.4%	12%	32.4%
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Tolerance Ideology. The statements grouped to portray a tolerance perspective revealed more balanced results than the monolingual mindset. Figure 6 below shows that 10% (n = 12) strongly disagreed with statements indicating a tolerance ideology, 38% (n = 48) of the participants disagreed, 38% (n = 37) of the participants were not sure, 14% (n = 17) agreed with statements indicating a tolerance language ideology, and 1% (n = 1) strongly agreed.

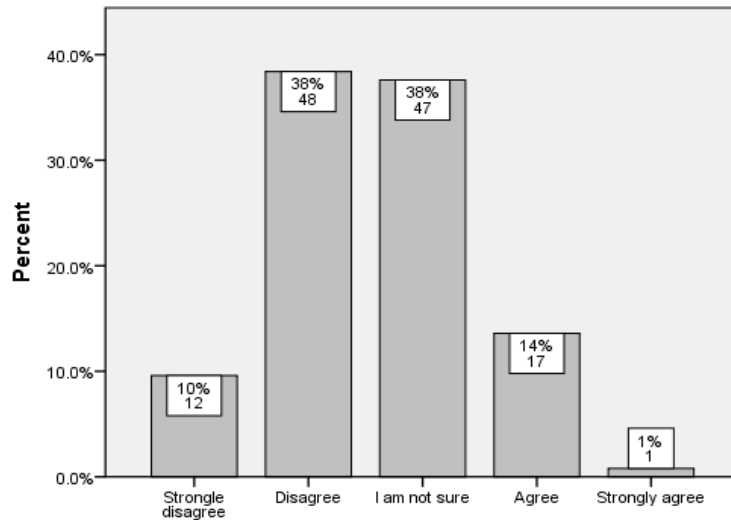


Figure 6. Distribution of teachers' perceptions towards statements representing the tolerance ideology

The questions in this pool showed that most teachers (Q2=72%) agreed that HL maintenance is the parents' responsibility. Most teachers (Q24=80.8%) rejected that HL literacy is good only after learners have mastered EN. Similarly, teachers disagreed that the preferred time for HL instruction should be after elementary years (Q28=75.2%). Interestingly, although most participants disagreed that they only acknowledge students when speaking in EN (69.6%), a considerable number of participants (30.4%) were not sure or agreed to ignore learners' HL use in class (Q10). The following table shows the tolerance sentences on a scale based on participants' responses:

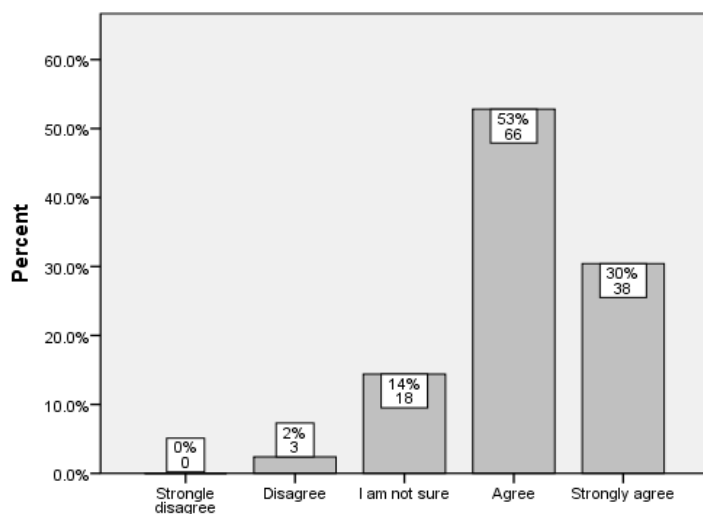


- Q24. Home language literacy is good, but only after children master English.
- Q28. Schools should provide home language instruction in middle or high school only.
- Q10. Students may use their home languages in class, but I acknowledge them only when they use English.
- Q14. I tell my students that their home language is important and valuable, but that at school, we must use English.
- Q17. After students have mastered English, I value their home language(s).
- Q2. Home language maintenance is the responsibility of the parents.

*Figure 7. Comparison of tolerance perspective statements on a scale*

Similar to the monolingual scale results, these results indicated that teachers valued students' bilingualism in general, but inside schools, teachers valued English predominantly.

**Plurilingual Ideology.** Consistent with previous results, the statements analyzed in this pool confirmed teachers' general knowledge about the importance of learners' HLs: most teachers agreed (53%) or strongly agreed (30%), with sentences indicating a plurilingual perspective. As the figure shows:



*Figure 8. Distribution of teachers' agreement with statements indicating a plurilingual ideology*

In the plurilingual perspective, eight statements received a high percentage of agreement:

*Table 4. Statements which confidently indicated adherence to a plurilingual perspective(Ordered by the highest number of agreement).*

Question number	Statement	Agreement Percentage
Q13	I believe the maintenance of the home language is important for a student's development of his/her/their identity.	96.8%

Q4	Home language literacy is beneficial for students' English language development.	91.2%
Q7	Developing speaking skills in the home language helps students in their academic progress.	91.2%
Q3	Students can learn to read and write in two languages at the same time.	90.4%
Q11	It is beneficial that students are highly literate and orally fluent in both English and their home language.	89.6%
Q19	I discuss with parents how we can help their children learn English and maintain their home language(s).	82.4%
Q23	In my teaching, I place equal importance and value on knowing both English and the home language.	80.8%
Q9	I explicitly praise the students for knowing another language.	74.4%

Despite most teachers agreeing with a plurilingual perspective, interestingly, most teachers (56%) disagreed and (9.6%) were unsure about the statement (Q21), "I allow students to use their home language in completing classwork or assignments." Considering all the statements with more proportional results from the three-ideology scale group, one implication is that teachers indicated that they do not value or use HLs specifically inside classrooms.

#### 4.2. Summary of Survey Findings

Most teachers rejected an assimilationist perspective and disagreed that schools should be EN-only spaces. However, more balanced results towards specific statements indicated that they do not value or use HLs inside classrooms. Results showed that participating teachers value bilingualism and tell parents to maintain HL but do not feel responsible for learners' HL development.

#### 4.3. Ordinal regression

I used ordinal regression to check if participants' demographic variables could predict adherence to ideological tendencies (monolingual, tolerance, and plurilingual). Since the demographic variables were the predictor variables, all records with missing data were deleted, thereby reducing the sample size to 91 from the 125 records initially collected.

As noticed before, the dependent variables used in this research captured variability in teachers' beliefs, observing their tendencies towards monolingual, plurilingual, or tolerant perspectives in a language ideology scale. The independent variables were not manipulated. In this way, I observed whether there was any correlation between teachers' beliefs and the independent variables (gender, ethnicity, years of teaching, students' SES, and percentage of ELL in the school).

All the constructs representing monolingual, tolerance, and plurilingual ideology scales were confirmed to have good internal reliability and validity. Some independent variables were eliminated to satisfy the proportional odds assumption for conducting ordinal regression, such as eliminating the teaching program, teaching grade, and knowledge of another language. Using independent variables such as gender, ethnicity, students' SES, and the number of ELL

students at school, I confirmed the proportional odds assumption, which was checked by analyzing the test of parallel lines.

In the monolingual scale, only gender showed a possibility in predicting the variation [GENDER=1 ( $p = .000$ )]. Noteworthy, considering that 94% of participants were female, this significance relates only to an interception. In the tolerance dependent variable model, the measures were also not helpful in predicting any variation. In the plurilingual scale, two measures were noted to be statistically significant in predicting the variation in plurilingual language ideology, namely, [RACE=1 ( $p = .039$ ), and GENDER=1 ( $p = .000$ )].

Despite these results, the overall judgment of whether independent variables influence the dependent variable is based on each model's fitting information. The presence of the predictor/independent variables did not help predict the dependent variable. Because of this, the independent variables are considered to influence intercept only. Consequently, I understand that regardless of variables such as gender, ethnicity, teaching in a school with many students receiving FRL or the number of ELL students at school, the tendencies were pervasive to all participants.

## **5. DISCUSSION**

Research results indicated that most teachers rejected an assimilationist perspective and disagreed that schools should be EN-only spaces. This implies that in a district where most mainstream teachers are bilingual and receive traditional training about second language acquisition, they value bilingualism and HLs in general. However, more balanced results towards specific statements indicated that they do not value or use HLs inside classrooms.

More specifically, the survey indicated that teachers refrain from using learners' HL for instructional purposes due to the belief that immersion in a monolingual environment would help them learn the language of school faster. This is a concerning outcome because it is already established in the literature that HL can support scaffolding instruction (Chen et al., 2022; de Oliveira & Westerlund, 2022; Gottlieb, 2020; Peregoy & Boyle, 2017; Garcia et al., 2014; Soltero-Gonzalez & Reyes, 2012; Díaz-Rico, 2008; Echevarria et al., 2008; Gort, 2006) as well as avoid a deficit perspective inside schools.

Previous research on teachers' beliefs towards linguistic minorities (Dixon et al., 2016; Lucas et al., 2014; De Angelis, 2011) suggested that some variables, such as being bilingual and receiving training, could positively impact teachers' beliefs. The results reported here indicated a more complex situation with significant implications for teachers' training courses in multilingual settings. These tendencies confirm current reports on teachers' beliefs (Martinez et al., 2024; Van Raemdonck et al., 2024; Feagin, 2023; Fu & Aubain, 2023; Deroo & Ponzio, 2019), that found abandoning a monolingual mindset during instructional time may involve more than the teachers' valuing bilingualism and students' HL but may also include revising traditional teachers' training and curriculum design.

The results reported here bring specific explanations for why teachers avoided using learners' HLs during instruction time. With the increasing linguistic diversity in schools' systems, teacher training should focus on a multilingual mindset and specifically confront the following teachers' beliefs:

- It is confusing for a student to develop simultaneous biliteracy.
- They are helping learners when creating an EN-only classrooms and should ignore learners' HL use in class.
- Advise parents to help their children learn English faster by speaking English at home.
- Do not allow students to use their HL to complete assignments.
- At school, students must use English only.

### **5.1.Implications**

These results led to two main implications. One is that teacher training courses, while adopting a multilingual mindset, should also explicitly challenge myths about using HL during instructional time and clarify that teachers should use learners' HLs to scaffold their learning inside the classroom. Another implication is that teachers' experiences as bilingual individuals, and traditional training in second language acquisition, may not be sufficient to challenge the monolingual mindset inside classrooms. Educational language policies, curriculum development, and textbooks should also revise their hegemonic discourses towards learners' HLs and incorporate the multilingual turn (May 2014).

### **5.2.Limitation**

Although participants' anonymity was provided and assured, data from this study may have limited generalization due to the abandonment of randomization (due to the pandemic) and reliance on teachers' self-reporting. Another factor that limits its generalization is that these results may represent the specific demographic conditions of the district studied (a multilingual context) and may not represent national tendencies.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

The results reported here indicated that it is challenging to abandon a monolingual mindset inside classrooms despite teachers receiving second language acquisition training or having experience as bilinguals. In practice, a monolingual mindset may lead MLs to "sink or swim," which infringes upon these students' rights to equitable learning conditions. Coady et al. (2022) argued that, historically, in the U.S., while laws require MLs to receive equitable schooling conditions attuned to their necessities, compliance with these rights faces challenges. Firstly, HLs have been seen as a problem inside U.S. schools. Secondly, there is limited ability to enforce these policies; thirdly, teacher preparation, schools' curricula, and textbooks do not value or promote using learners' HLs but perform a monolingual mindset.

Nevertheless, we can conclude that in multilingual contexts, while learners' diverse, multilingual repertoires are ignored or not used during instruction, schools cannot provide equitable conditions to ML. This study indicated that despite experience and traditional training, what impeded teachers from using learners' HLs for instructional purposes was a general belief that immersion in a monolingual environment would help them learn faster.

Another implication of this study is that curriculum developers must revise a monolingual mindset and embrace pedagogical frameworks that values all learners' languages, cultures, and subjectivities. For example, adopting culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Teachers and curriculum designers can also actively engage in a process of pedagogical reflection by questioning how assignments or activities encourage connections to students' funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 2006).

Further studies could discuss if and how teachers' training programs on second language acquisition, literacy, and TESOL validate and incorporate learners' HL repertoire and adhere to a monolingual mindset. Moreover, if multilingual learners (MLs) have the right to understand instruction, express their knowledge, and participate in the classroom, it is essential to discuss the role of HL inside classrooms.

### **Declaration of Interests**

There are no competing interests to declare.

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**APPENDIX A**

**Survey Statements Differentiated by Ideology**

**Key**

Tolerance = highlighted

Monolingual = underlined

Plurilingual = *italicized*

1. *Maintenance and development of the home language helps students in their academic achievement at school.*
2. *Home language literacy is beneficial for students' English language development.*
3. It is important students learn literacy in English. Their home language is not my responsibility.
4. I explicitly encourage students to maintain and speak their home language at home not at school.
5. *Proficiency in the home language helps students in their social and emotional development.*
6. *The maintenance of the home language is important for the student's development of his or her identity.*
7. I tell my students that their home language is important and valuable, but at school we must use English.
8. *I encourage students to maintain their home language.*
9. In my classroom, children need to spend time and energy learning English rather than learning their heritage language.
10. *In class, I have my students share their home language and culture every chance I get.*
11. *I allow students to use their home language in completing class work or assignments.*
12. *I discuss with parents how we can help their children learn English and maintain their home language.*
13. *Children who maintain their home language have a better chance of succeeding in the future.*
14. *In my teaching, I place equal importance and value on knowing both English and the home language.*
15. Frequent use of the home language at home will prevent students from learning English.
16. Everyone in this country should speak English and only English.
17. Encouraging the children to maintain their home language will prevent them from fully participating into this society.

18. I ask students to leave their home language behind and focus on English when they step into my classroom.

19. *I talk to my students about how important maintaining their home language is.*

20. Schools should be invested only in helping students learn English.

21. Home language literacy should start only after children have mastered English.

22. *Schools should provide home language literacy instruction starting in kindergarten.*

23. Schools should provide home language instruction starting in middle or high school only.

24. Home language maintenance is the responsibility of the parents.

25. I advise parents to help their children learn to speak English faster by speaking English at home.

26. It is too much work for a child's brain to learn their home language and English simultaneously.

27. Children should spend their time and effort learning to read and write in English rather than the home language.

28. *Children can learn to read and write in two languages at the same time.*

29. After students have mastered English, I value their home languages.

### **AUTHOR'S BIO**

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