

“I’m Multilingual”

Leveraging Students’ Translanguaging Practices to Strengthen the School Community

Ivana Espinet, Brian Collins, and Ann Ebe

Manuel, a 16-year-old student from the Dominican Republic (DR), came to the United States three years earlier. Although he had consistent schooling in the DR, when he first began at “Knowledge and Power Preparatory Academy” (KAPPA) International, his reading level was at 3rd or 4th grade in Spanish, and he did not speak or read much English. Nevertheless, Manuel was very motivated to learn, consistently attended school, and was engaged and persistent in his approach to learning. Since beginning school at KAPPA International, he has been part of the bilingual program, where many of his classes were conducted in Spanish. Teachers at the school provided specific strategies to support Manuel’s development in language and content areas. For example, when he first came to the school he struggled with using Spanish language for academic purposes, so teachers worked with him on how to annotate certain words, ask what they mean, and look for meaning within context to figure out complex texts. Manuel was able to raise his Spanish reading abilities quickly to grade level and read at grade-level academic Spanish. The school offered after-school support as well, which Manuel consistently attended. After 3 years in the school, Manuel also made progress in his writing and understanding of English, although he remains somewhat hesitant to speak. As a result, he has been very successful at passing all the required state exams to graduate (Regents) and doing well in most of his classes. Manuel has even begun to tutor other students in Spanish who did not pass or struggled with the Regents. Manuel also was involved in many extracurricular programs, including the student-created multicultural club in which home languages and cultures in the school were represented. He participated in student-led conferences, which KAPPA International hosts during the year for students to reflect on their learning and discuss what they need to do to continue to grow as learners. Several students at the school have been separated from their families who are in their home country. For these families, the school video-records the student-led conference in their home languages for the parents to see from home. Samantha Heiderscheid, the

school's ENL coordinator, explained that they began to videotape the conferences for parents "because they won't have access to this American high school experience for their child otherwise."

This vignette exemplifies how a school with a humanizing philosophy can create a space that reaches beyond the school walls so students and families can work together. It takes an educator who knows about her students' lives beyond the school, and who respects and cherishes their languages and cultures, and who reaches out to families so the students can reflect and share their successes, challenges, and plans for how to continue to learn. In this chapter, we focus on KAPPA International, a high school in the Bronx that embraces translanguaging practices in its work with emergent bilinguals. We describe how a school's model of distributed leadership of the English as a new language (ENL) support team has supported faculty to find creative ways of working with emergent bilinguals and their families. Throughout the chapter, we highlight and discuss the work of the three teachers in the ENL team: Samantha Heiderscheid, Tammy Wang, and Sarah Van Etten. Following Salazar's (2013) descriptions of humanizing pedagogy, the philosophy of the school's focus on meaningful, purposeful, student-centered education also builds upon the sociocultural realities of students' lives. To demonstrate how KAPPA International embraces this philosophy, we begin by describing the context of the school and the community in which it is situated. Next, we analyze how the school philosophy, structures, and translanguaging pedagogies have advanced students' literacy and language learning. We end with concluding points and provide recommendations.

COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL CONTEXT

KAPPA International School is a public high school (grades 9–12) in the Bronx, New York City. The school is colocated with five other small schools within the building and shares a floor with another school. With close to 500 students in the school, space is always an issue in making decisions about structuring and supporting student learning.

The student population is primarily Latinx (60%) and Black (33%), including a cohort of newcomer African students who are English speakers but also speak various African languages. The majority of students in the school speak a language other than English, predominantly Spanish, but also Arabic, Bengali, Urdu, and several African languages. Most classes include anywhere from 10 to 100% of students who speak a language other than English at home. Approximately 15% of students have been identified as English language learners (ELLs) and are entitled to accommodations and additional language support. Approximately 10% of students are "newcomers" or students with interrupted formal education (SIFE) who are placed in cohorts with dedicated classes to support their learning. The majority (90%) of students receive free/reduced-price school meals.

SCHOOL ELEMENTS THAT SUPPORT STUDENTS' LEARNING

Committed Staff and School Leadership

The school has a committed staff and principal, as well as 39 teachers, including three ENL teachers and 12 teachers who speak a language other than English (Spanish, French, Arabic, German, and Chinese). The school staff is also multilingual. Two out of three ENL teachers grew up in immigrant families and spoke languages other than English at home. The principal of the school was previously a bilingual (Spanish/English) math teacher before becoming the KAPPA principal in 2007. She believes in a model of distributed leadership where activities and interactions are shared across multiple people and situations (Harris, 2008). Teachers take the lead in different areas and the staff works collaboratively in planning and designing programs.

New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals (NYSIEB)

The school was selected to participate in New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals (NYSIEB), a collaborative project with the City University of New York (CUNY) and the New York State Education Department (NYSED) working toward improving the education of emergent bilingual students across the state. During school visits, researchers from CUNY-NYSIEB, including the authors, interviewed school staff and conducted classroom observations. Through this data collection process, researchers identified specific practices that these schools used to support emergent bilinguals. In addition, an emergent bilingual leadership team (EBLT) was created at the school to lead efforts to increase support and improve the academic achievement and outcomes for emergent bilinguals. The team included teachers, students, and administrators. Part of the support provided to the school included translanguaging strategies to meet communicative and academic needs in English and other languages, and to learn challenging new content. Translanguaging refers to the use of a learner's full linguistic repertoire—including features from multiple languages—to make meaning from the complex interactions that are enacted by different human beings and texts in our globalized world (Sánchez, García, & Solorza, 2017). We describe specific examples of translanguaging in the sections below. The EBLT participated in professional development and support from the CUNY-NYSIEB project over a period of 3 years.

Celebrating and Supporting Bilingualism

Although the school had a philosophy about teaching and learning that was grounded in humanizing pedagogy, its involvement in the CUNY-NYSIEB initiative shifted this philosophy to focus even further on the school's emergent bilingual population of students. As a result, a key aspect of the school's philosophy is to truly celebrate bilingualism. The principal described the school's thinking as

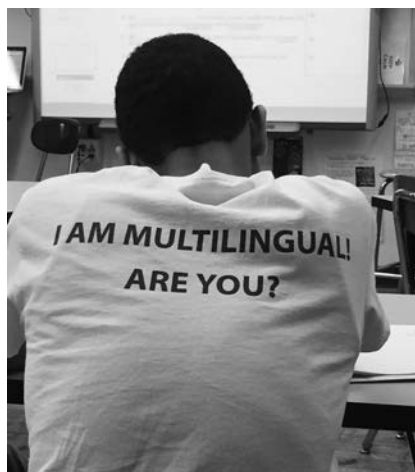
they began implementing the CUNY-NYSIEB initiative: "The whole philosophy is moving and we are having those open conversations with our staff and with our students. Learning more about what it means to be an effective educator who is trying to promote multilingualism. How do we get better at that? What does that look like in a school that is promoting the program?" KAPPA's goals were to create spaces for students to use home language, develop professional development for all school teachers to learn strategies of translanguaging, and build multilingualism and multiculturalism into the curriculum design. These goals were created to develop student voice and empowerment as well as to support the school's multicultural student group. The EBLT met regularly to discuss and define the language policy of the school and also included students in the planning.

Having students develop bilingualism or multilingualism was a key aspect of the school's language policy. The students created a survey for their classmates to respond to on how their home languages and cultures were represented in the school and what they would like to improve. As a result, the school started an after-school multicultural club. The administration and school staff embraced the goals of CUNY-NYSIEB and worked toward enriching the multilingual ecology of the school to have the students' languages visually represented in the school environment. New signage around the school included the students' home languages and teachers created multilingual word walls in their classrooms. Teachers were provided time for teams to meet and plan how to incorporate translanguaging in the classroom.

The school organized community events that celebrated the languages and cultures of the families in the school and made efforts to reach out to bilingual families in the community. For example, during Open House Night, student ambassadors communicated with prospective parents in various home languages. The school principal recalled, "Our own students acted as translators and because we have various groups within our school community, the parents are impressed when they see how the students articulate the vision of the school in their native language and that has given a sense of familiarity and trust, so those parents, and the students as well, are quick to identify our school as a safe environment and a communal environment, and it's because our own students have taken a leadership role and they want to reach out." Following the Open House, students also volunteered to be translators for Parent-Teacher Night. The school also started a bilingual bulletin board with information targeted to parents in the school.

Perhaps the most powerful example of the school's focus on celebrating students' languages were the school T-shirts with the KAPPA logo and the slogan "I am multilingual! Are you?" Many of the students wore the shirts proudly in the school (Figure 8.1) The principal explained that when they gave the T-shirts out to the emergent bilingual students in the school, "that just piqued the interest of the other students. 'How do I get that T-shirt? What do I have to do?' and it was nice to see how they wanted to recognize a language other than English, not just to receive the T-shirt but because then they were curious about the languages that other students spoke, again, doing more things as a school community that unite us rather than divide us."

Figure 8.1. I Am Multilingual T-Shirt



Open Enrollment International Baccalaureate Program

The school philosophy of celebrating diversity is also reflected in their International Baccalaureate (IB) Program, which is open to all students. This program strives to value and support all cultures and the use of all languages present in the learning community. The program explores broad questions, providing students with the opportunity to demonstrate what they know and foster cross-cultural understanding. To implement these ideals, the school includes information, literature, and history from multiple cultures in its content and curricular design.

The International Baccalaureate Program, which fosters cross-cultural understanding, includes, among other things, visits to other countries and exchanges with students from different communities. As the assistant principal described in an interview, the school's program is one of a few programs that has open enrollment in New York City:

IB is usually viewed as a gifted-and-talented program, you need a 90% average to get in; you know, it's for the elite. It was started in the 1960s for the children who studied over in Europe. We know that it's good pedagogy, right? We know that students who undergo this program, even if they don't get the highest marks, even if they don't take the full program, just a course here or there, they're going to be more prepared for the rigors of college.

The school has done an excellent job of getting students excited about taking IB classes and has created a culture of students wanting to push themselves. Though the school makes this opportunity available to all its students, there are indeed challenges in implementing open enrollment. The assistant principal goes on to explain:

In so many schools, it’s “I’m a senior, I only have three classes that I need to graduate, you can’t make me take any more than that.” Our seniors are asking if they can take IB classes. That’s the easier part. And I think we’ve done a really fantastic job with getting students very excited about pushing themselves in that way. The hard part is the academic part, and the fact that if a kid is coming to us in 9th grade, reading at a 5th-grade level, and by the end of 12th grade, they need to be doing this complex analysis, how do we fill those gaps?

The school prides itself on providing classes based on the population of students it receives each year and their various needs.

Flexible Programming

The school has offered a range of programs for bilingual students, and these programs have changed from year to year, depending on the needs of the incoming students. Most recently, the school applied to New York City Department of Education to open a bilingual program that started in the 2017–2018 school year. In this new bilingual program, additional content courses (math, science, and social studies) are offered in Spanish and English and are aimed at building bilingualism and biliteracy. An ongoing challenge that the school faces, however, is personnel. The school has encountered difficulty finding content teachers who are bilingual or are certified to teach in a bilingual program. Given the limited number of teachers who speak Spanish in the school, in the past the school has offered bilingual sections of a few courses for the students in grades with the largest numbers of newcomers. In the other grades, the school offered classes with bilingual support from ENL teachers who speak Spanish.

Regardless of whether students are part of the bilingual program, the school expects all students to work toward multilingualism by developing their home and additional language literacies. The ENL department incorporates bilingual methodologies across core content classes to build emerging English language acquisition and literacy.

Collaborative Team Teaching

The school employs a collaborative team-teaching model in which ENL and bilingual teachers co-teach within subject-area classes with large numbers of emergent bilinguals. Home language instruction and materials are provided in these classes and students are often grouped by shared home language and encouraged to work together in both languages to complete assignments. This model also includes specific supports for the social–emotional and linguistic needs of newcomers and SIFE students.

In 2017, the administration and a few teachers began to participate in a Learning Partners Program focusing on improving co-planning and co-teaching as a

school, hosting and visiting other schools, and examining their shared practices as a triad school team together. As a school, they have been exploring and experimenting with six various co-teaching models (Friend & Cook, 1992). Samantha, the ENL coordinator, explained: “Alternative and station teaching¹ has become more prominent in our ENL practice as we drill down to target skill gaps in co-taught classes with special attention to our EBL students’ groups. It’s becoming a whole-school topic rather than an ENL and co-teacher conversation, which is tremendously exciting!”

KAPPA began its work with CUNY-NYSIEB with the goal of addressing the needs of emergent bilinguals and capitalizing on their strengths in all the classrooms. Because the culture of the school has always been very collaborative, teachers co-planned and shared resources to incorporate translanguaging strategies in their classroom. In the following sections, we highlight some of the specific examples of how translanguaging was used as a resource in the classroom.

TRANSLANGUAGING FOR TRANSFORMATION IN THE CLASSROOM

A translanguaging perspective in creating student programming and developing classroom curricula focuses on what bilingual learners do with language to produce and interpret their social and academic worlds. This comes with the understanding that students are incorporating new features of languages into their developing linguistic repertoires. Sánchez, García, and Solorza (2017) write about spaces in which translanguaging is used in the classroom intentionally for three purposes: “(a) to have a more holistic understanding of the child as learner (translanguaging documentation), (b) to scaffold instruction for individual students (translanguaging rings), and (c) to transform the normalizing effects of standardized language in school and the hegemony of English (translanguaging transformation)” (p. 7). This framework is useful in analyzing how educators at KAPPA provide students with translanguaging affordances that empower the diverse group of emergent bilinguals that are part of their school community to meaningfully participate in classroom instruction.

Translanguaging Documentation

The ENL team keeps track of the students’ language development, not only in English, but also in Spanish in formal and informal ways. SIFE students are assessed at entrance using New York State’s Multilingual Literacy Screener (MLS) to determine their home language literacy levels in order to design appropriate instruction. In addition, the ENL team also makes an effort to observe and document the practices of all students’ home language use and to assess their understandings in a holistic way.

For example, when Jaime, a student with interrupted formal education, entered the school, his MLS test placed him at a 2nd-grade level in Spanish litera-

cy. Although the initial test informed the school how to place him and the kinds of supports that he might need, Tammy, who works with him in language skills class, continued to observe him and document his language practices for classroom communicative and academic purposes in both languages. She noted that he was very strong in expressing his ideas orally when he shared in class discussion and small groups, which showed that he was capable of complex thinking, but he struggled to write his ideas. Tammy's assessment was based on his oral language practices mostly in Spanish, because he was at an "entering level" in English according to the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT). She also noted that Jaime didn't write in complete sentences in Spanish. So, she started to teach him strategies that could be applied to both languages, such as using part of the question to begin writing a response. Her understanding of what Jaime could do, regardless of the language, helped Tammy focus on which skills he had and which skills he needed to build, and this helped her determine the scaffolds she used with him in order to support his development.

Documenting students' fluid language practices provides invaluable information to support emergent bilinguals' growth as learners and help them fulfill the external demands that high school students face, such as passing New York State's Regents exams.² For example, Samantha, who provides support for a science class, explained: "We use a lot of translanguaging methods since we pre-identify in private conferences that they would be more successful taking the test in Spanish." The class supports the students in learning the content, and developing their language both in Spanish and English, but with the understanding that the students in this specific class will perform better on the test if they are given the chance to take it in their home language.

Translanguaging to Scaffold Instruction

The teachers at KAPPA try to differentiate the design of instruction and provide instructional material and strategies that support individual students. Members of the ENL team shared that determining the appropriate scaffolds for different students in each class is one of the biggest challenges that they face. Sanchez, García, and Solorza (2017, p. 10) explain that translanguaging rings "act as a temporary scaffold until bilingual students have acquired new features that expand their repertoire to the necessary level, and until they gain confidence leveraging their own translanguaging to perform with whatever linguistic features they do have in their repertoire." These translanguaging rings might include the use of bilingual materials or technology such as Google Translate.

In Tammy's literacy class, students read the fantasy novel *The Lightning Thief*, by Rick Riordan. Though all the students are engaged with the same novel, some students read the English and Spanish versions side by side, others have the English version and the graphic novel in English, while a student like Jaime, who is developing his reading skills in both English and Spanish, have the graphic novel in English and Spanish, as well as the novel in Spanish. Tammy explained that the

pictures and the images, as well as the language used in the graphic novels, help students like Jaime follow the storyline and the context: “I’m trying to help him understand the book as a whole, through these different resources.” Using different kinds of texts is embedded in a guided process. As Tammy explains:

I don’t give them all the books at the same time. We practice short snippets of each kind of text for a particular purpose. For example, we might use the graphic novel to move through the book and learn specific vocabulary words in both languages, but we would also close-read a few paragraphs of the novel itself to analyze characters or a conflict which requires more complex thinking. It is important to use each kind of text purposefully.

Tammy’s design of the translanguaging rings that support Jaime in reading this novel along with his peers is based on the understanding that translanguaging also involves the use of multimodal communication. Jaime was able to utilize not only linguistic signs, but also images, lines, drawings, and other conventions used in graphic novels.

In addition to the individual rings that teachers provide, they also use whole-class instructional practices such as lesson scaffolds that build students’ language competence in both languages. The following example describes a lesson in a co-taught living environment class in a heterogeneous classroom, with some emergent bilinguals who are newcomers, some who have had interrupted formal educations, as well other experienced bilinguals who are comfortable moving fluidly between both languages.

As the students enter the room, a “Do Now” (warm-up activity) is posted on the smartboard in English and Spanish: What are fossil fuels? What impact do they have on our planet? The prompt also displays a picture of oil wells to provide a visual clue to the students. The “Do Now” activity is designed to help students make connections to the content that they learned previously. The students take a minute to jot down their ideas in either language and share them. Sarah, the ENL teacher, writes down notes on the board. One of the students shares in English that fossil fuels “are made of ancient organisms.” Sarah writes it down and asks: “What does the word *ancient* mean?” A student responds in Spanish: “*Anciano, muy viejo*.” She points out that *ancient* and *anciano* are cognates. Many Spanish words that are part of everyday language are encountered, in English, in the context of language used for academic purposes. In this short exchange, Sarah demonstrated using Spanish cognates to make sense of vocabulary that they might find in academic subjects in English. As the lesson progresses, the content-area teacher introduces key concepts, such as global warming and greenhouse effect, in English, but also provides the definition in Spanish and images that support the main idea. The students watch a short video, in English with Spanish subtitles, about fossil fuels’ contribution to global warming and about alternative sources of energy. When they are finished, the students work with a partner. Each pair gets two copies of a short article, in both Spanish and English, about alternative sources of energy. The

students take notes about the pros and cons of each source of energy, translanguaging as they make sense of the article and negotiate what to write. When they finish the task, they discuss with another pair of students: What kind of alternative energy would you choose for your home? Why is it better than fossil fuels?

In this lesson, the teachers taught content, the students learned about fossil fuels, expanded the students' subject-area vocabulary—in both Spanish and English—and they provided the students with metalinguistic translanguaging strategies that they could use to support their learning. For many emergent bilingual students, translanguaging is also transformative, providing possibilities to learn and engage meaningfully and authentically with lessons.

Though these examples focused on bilingual Spanish support, for the students who speak lower-incidence languages in the school, such as Bengali or Arabic, the ENL team provides scaffolds to access content, such as strategic partnerships with students with the same home language (if available) and access to home language dictionaries. The students also learn to use their home language strategically during reading and writing such as note-taking in their home language when reading a text in English or brainstorming in their home language before writing.

Translanguaging Transformational Spaces

It has been well documented that the effective teaching of emergent bilinguals allows for opportunities for students to use their full linguistic and cultural repertoires of practices (Collins & Cioè-Peña, 2016; García & Wei, 2013; Freeman, Freeman, Soto, & Ebe, 2016; Seltzer & Collins, 2016). Furthermore, researchers have documented that the social and cognitive aspects of learning are inextricably bound together (Jones & Doolittle, 2017; Walqui & Van Lier, 2010). Cognitive processes develop through rich, challenging, and well-supported activities. For example, Walqui and Van Lier (2010) write about how “language is learned primarily in the process of developing a ‘voice’ in the language, an ability to desire to be heard while claiming the right to be listened to” (p. 57). In working with emergent bilinguals, KAPPA teachers leverage the knowledge that students bring to the school and create opportunities for them to expand and build on their strengths.

Building students' social competencies is an integral component of KAPPA. Tammy, in a language skills class in which most of her students are at an “entering” or “emergent” level, leveraged students' experiences in class activities where students brainstormed questions in Spanish, English, or both that they wanted to ask people in the community about their professions. Next, the class interviewed community members. Given the diverse community that surrounds the school, they found individuals who only spoke English, some who only spoke Spanish, and others who felt comfortable moving between both languages. After approaching individuals and introducing themselves, they had to decide how to ask the questions. In some cases, they had written the questions in Spanish and had to switch to English with the help of a peer. After doing a few interviews, students came back to the classroom and debriefed their experiences, sharing the informa-

tion they had gathered, as well as how they fluidly moved between their linguistic repertoires.

As a follow-up activity, students chose one person in their family or their community to interview about their work. Students chose the language of the interview, keeping in mind what they knew about the interviewee's language practices. The students created the questions, practiced asking them in class with their peers, thought of possible follow-up questions, and conducted the interviews as homework. After the interviews, they used the information that they had gathered to write an article and create a newsletter that they shared in the school community.

This project extended learning beyond the classroom with students using their knowledge of members of the community to choose an interviewee and their full linguistic repertoire to conduct interviews and write about them. Pauline Gibbons (2015) writes about how spoken language and written language are better understood as a continuum rather than as two discrete forms of language. She recommends that classroom activities should be planned to move along this spoken-written continuum, so that the teaching and learning builds on language that occurs in a face-to-face context toward the written language of school that uses language for academic purposes. In Tammy's classroom, her students translanguaged as they moved fluidly between language modes, writing questions, asking them, listening to the interviewees, taking notes, and reading their answers, in order to write an article. The tasks were grounded in a real-world project of creating a newsletter, in which they could share their knowledge about community members.

USING STUDENTS' LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES TO ENRICH THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

One of the challenges that school newcomers face is having to adapt to a new culture, learn a new language, and understand the demands of schools in the United States. High school is a time when young people are developing their identity, establishing friendships, and building social skills. For this reason, it is important to create a caring, supportive environment. It is essential for adolescents to make connections to young people who share their experiences and have a deep understanding of what it is like to be in a new school, in a new country, speaking a new language (Cloud, Lakin, Leininger, & Maxwell, 2010).

KAPPA International places an emphasis on supporting the social-emotional development of each student. Salazar (2013) has written about how strong relationships with adults and peers that are grounded in students' cultural funds of knowledge impact their academic resiliency and help them build strong academic identities. Furthermore, the chance of academic success of newcomer students is strengthened when there are friendships and integration with academically engaged students with and outside of their own cultural background (Conchas,

2001). KAPPA has set up two significant ways in which students provide peer support: through a buddy system that connects individual students on their first day with an older student who is also an emergent bilingual, and through student mentors who provide academic and emotional support during class and after school.

The Buddy System

Before the beginning of the year, all freshmen, including newly enrolled emergent bilinguals, come to KAPPA for orientation to review the school’s expectations and to participate in community-building activities. For the students who come during the school year, the ENL coordinator connects each of them right away. Samantha explains: “No new student should eat lunch alone. The most important thing to a teenager is the social–emotional aspect of being a student. We connect them on day one with a buddy who takes them to lunch and gives them a school tour.” The buddy, who shares the same home language, shows the new student how to get lunch, takes him or her on a tour of the school, and walks the new student to class. As a result, many of the students also begin new friendships that support them throughout their school career.

The ENL faculty brainstorms with the students who will become buddies about what students need to know about the school because, as Samantha explained, “They know best because they have gone through the same process.” The buddy system helps build community and responsibility among the students and allows the older emergent bilinguals to be the expert for the newcomer. In addition, the newcomers who are newly enrolled are invited to an after-school outing with a group of older bilinguals so they have a chance to socialize and discuss how to adjust to their new schools and homes. This buddy system is particularly useful for SIFE students who often need more explicit explanations from their peers about how school works.

Student Mentors

In a meeting with the student mentors, Samantha, the ENL coordinator, told the group: “Diana is the reason why I learned to teach a better Global Prep for the bilingual juniors. I never had taught that before. This was a new thing for me. She would give me feedback at the end of each lesson and then they all passed.” Samantha shared her experience with other mentors to illustrate to them that they are not only valuable resources to other students, but also to the teachers who are learning from them how to become better teachers. In setting up opportunities for peer support, teachers at the school are disrupting the adult–child and teacher–student binaries of classroom hierarchy, creating an “in-between” space in the class community and forming relationships with the students who are not subject to those binaries.

The ENL team pairs emergent bilinguals to become mentors for newcomer students who speak their home language. Among other things, the mentors share

their work with the new students as peer-led exemplars. They talk through their work samples with their mentees to show what the target looks like. The mentors help “demystify” the academic process, which is particularly important for students who have interrupted formal education.

Camila, one of the student mentors, explained, “I was in the same situation [as the newcomer students] 3 years ago. It’s important that we address the language and the content, because if we teach them the words in both English and Spanish, they are gonna do better in the classroom. It’s important to explain the content, but also it’s important to keep track of the key words that they need to know in English.” Camila reflected on her own experience as a learner so she could share strategies to help the newcomer students. In turn, the process of reflecting on her linguistic practices built her metalinguistic awareness.

From a sociocultural perspective, development is an active and dynamic process, as students change their ways of understanding, perceiving, and thinking along with other people, while building on the cultural practices and traditions within communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The mastery of knowledge requires moving toward full participation in the sociocultural practices of a community. Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015) also use the concept of landscape of practice to describe the social body of knowledge that stretches beyond an individual community of practice. Learning is not merely acquisition of knowledge; it is the journey to become a person who inhabits the landscape with an identity whose dynamic construction reflects the trajectory through that landscape. In order to become mentors, the young people at KAPPA needed to reflect on their trajectories as learners so they could strategically leverage them to help new students become members of the community. During the first mentor’s meeting, Samantha asked the students: “Thinking about the juniors, what are some things that you can bring to the table to help them?” Some of the suggestions from the students included the following:

- Establishing a relationship with the students, but at the same time setting up boundaries
- Including them in the process of creating a plan
- Giving them the opportunity to explain content to others, because I feel that when I was in freshman year, it was really rewarding for me to actually teach something to other people in the classroom

The student mentors recognized their own expertise: knowledge of bilingual language practices and of what it feels like to be a student. The mentoring process is rooted in an understanding of young people as active participants and contributors to educational communities. It conceptualizes young people as agents who are not only being transformed by their experiences in and out of school, but who are also involved in transforming the communities in which they participate.

One of the student mentors, Javier, was comfortable speaking in English when he started KAPPA but needed to improve his writing skills. He did not want to

be in classes with bilingual support. His oral and written skills in Spanish were at about grade level, but he did not want to do schoolwork in Spanish. Over time, Javier started to value his bilingualism and eventually became a tutor in 11th grade, helping younger students in Spanish. In framing students' bilingualism in a way that showcases students' linguistic resources as a source of strength, the peer mentors program offers a space for students to regain, reshape, and assert their identity as bilingual scholars. Javier worked with a small group of boys and tried to be a role model for them. When he talked about his job as a bilingual tutor, he said: "*Me gusta porque uno aprende como tratar con diferentes personas*" (I like it because I learn how to work with different people). Javier had to figure out how to reach out to different personalities and inspire them, a task that many experienced teachers often struggle with.

The mentors program benefited not only the newcomers, but also the student mentors. They learned to see their bilingualism as a source of pride, disrupting linguistic hierarchies and creating a space that can transform students' stigmatized bilingual identities and help them build new bilingual subjectivities that validate their multilingual practices and identities.

OUTCOMES

Diana was a peer mentor for newcomers in English and history classes. She used her personal experience to create strategies to help other emergent bilinguals understand the work. One of her teachers described how having her in class was invaluable because of her ability to move fluidly between Spanish and English to help her peers. Diana came to the United States at the end of elementary school from the Dominican Republic and speaks Spanish at home. When she first started at KAPPA, she was at a beginner level in English. Diana preferred bilingual content instruction in particular for high-level processing and demanding content areas. She made excellent progress and passed her English Regents exam. She will be graduating college ready for both ELA and math and has applied to 4-year universities. She reflected: "Everything takes time and through time, I learned how to put my thoughts together in order to turn something simple into something more advanced using many writing strategies. . . . This year I am really confident. At first, I didn't want to do essays, but now I'm inspired to write. As days passed, I got better at it and it makes me proud how much I've improved since I came to the United States not knowing English and I've gotten so far."

Diana's vignette as well as the others that we shared in this chapter represent some of the many stories of emergent bilinguals who arrived at KAPPA looking for a place where they could belong and grow. Although graduation rates and test results don't tell the full story of a school, 90.6% of KAPPA International students graduate in 4 years (compared to 72.6% citywide). For emergent bilinguals, 58.3% graduate in 4 years (compared to 30.8% citywide) (NYC DOE, Graduation Results, Cohorts 2001–2012).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

KAPPA International has created a community that supports and embraces students and their families using the strengths that young people bring with them to grow and succeed. The school fosters an environment that celebrates bilingualism and embraces students' languages and cultures. It has designed school programming and classroom instruction with emergent bilinguals at the core. While we recognize that every school/community is unique, there are many lessons that we can learn from the school's success.

In many middle and high schools, emergent bilinguals are often fitted into the existing programming of the school, responding only to the demands of the existing scheduling. Schools need to reexamine the structures and procedures they use, reflecting a philosophical shift in which course offerings and schedules are designed around the needs and strengths of emergent bilinguals. Also, one of the most important aspects of a humanizing space is to create formal structures in which students can support one another. These structures recognize students as agents who have important contributions to make to the school community.

We propose that teachers use a framework in which they document what students can do, regardless of their language (translanguaging documentation), and that the teachers use their knowledge of their students to design translanguaging scaffolds for individual students (translanguaging rings). It is important to create a space within the language structures of the classroom in which emergent bilinguals are encouraged to be creative and analytical language users. Creating a transformational space involves incorporating the linguistic practices that exist beyond the walls of the school and bringing the language and culture of the community into the school space.

NOTES

1. Marilyn Friend and Lynne Cook proposed six approaches to co-teaching: One Teach, One Observe; One Teach, One Assist; Parallel Teaching; Station Teaching; Alternative Teaching; and Team Teaching. In the Alternative Teaching model, one teacher takes responsibility for the large group while the other works with a smaller group. In Station Teaching, teachers divide content and students. Each teacher then teaches the content to one group and then repeats the instruction for the other group. If appropriate, a third station allows students to work independently.

2. The Regents Exams were originally honors exams to evaluate college readiness, but to fulfill NCLB requirements, the state required students to pass the tests to receive a high school diploma.

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