

Classroom Discourse Around *Don Quixote*: a Case Study in a Bilingual School

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ABSTRACT

In this article, I will make reference to an ethnographic study carried out in a bilingual school for Spanish children living in London, which is organised and run along lines similar to state schools in Spain. As stated in the school policy document (Proyecto Educativo de Centro) one of the main school goals is “a pedagogía del encuentro” (a meeting of cultures”) when dealing with the two cultural worlds in which the children are immersed. This goal is in sharp contrast the school policy of bilingualism via two monolingual paths, one English, one Spanish. In the light of these school goals, the study aims to identify ways in which teachers and learners evoke the two cultural worlds associated with the Spanish and English languages, the means by which the separation approach of languages is achieved and ways in which the legitimate language of the class is established. This article will focus on the discourse practices of the Spanish language teacher and her 24 pupils aged 14 during a particular teaching/learning event, relating to the use of a multimodal text which the teacher associates with the well-known episode in which Don Quixote fights with wind-mills, thinking they are giants. The results of the analysis show that despite a strict observance of the school policy of “bilingualism through two monolingual streams”, the teacher not only drew on the learners’ knowledge of Britain but the pupils themselves made comparisons between their two cultural worlds in their discourse practices around the text.

Key words: bilingual education, language and culture, language teaching

Discurso en el aula en torno a *Don Quijote*: un estudio de caso en un colegio bilingüe

RESUMEN

En este artículo, me referiré a un estudio etnográfico que se llevó a cabo en un colegio bilingüe para escolares españoles que viven en Londres, que funciona de una manera similar a los colegios públicos españoles. Como se menciona en el Proyecto Educativo de Centro, uno de sus objetivos prioritarios es conseguir una “pedagogía del encuentro” al referirse a los dos mundos culturales en los que están inmersos los alumnos/as. Esto contrasta con la política del centro de bilingüismo a través de dos vías monolingües, una inglesa y otra española. Ante estos dos objetivos educativos, se pretende identificar las maneras en que los profesores y alumnos evocan los dos mundos culturales asociados con la lengua española e inglesa y los medios en que la separación de lenguas se lleva a cabo y se establece la legítima lengua de la clase. Este artículo se centra en las prácticas discursivas de la profesora de Lengua Española y sus 24 alumnos/as de 14 años en un aspecto concreto de su enseñanza/aprendizaje, en relación al uso de un texto multimodal que la profesora asocia con el conocido episodio en que Don Quijote lucha contra molinos de viento creyendo que eran gigantes. Los resultados del análisis apuntan a que a pesar del estricto cumplimiento de la política del centro “bilingüismo a través de dos sendas monolingües”, la profesora no sólo recurre a los conocimientos de los alumnos sobre Gran Bretaña, sino que éstos a su vez también establecen relaciones entre sus dos mundos culturales en sus prácticas discursivas alrededor del texto.

Palabras clave: educación bilingüe, lengua y cultura, enseñanza de lenguas

RÉSUMÉ

Dans cet article, je vais faire référence à une étude ethnographique faite dans un collège bilingue espagnol à Londres, cet établissement suit des directives officielles similaires à celles des établissements publics en Espagne. D'accord avec le Projet Éducatif d'Établissement, l'un des objectifs prioritaires, c'est de réussir une "pédagogie de la rencontre", profitant du fait de l'existence, au moins, de deux cultures dans le monde quotidien des élèves. Cependant, la politique de bilinguisme, au sein de l'institution, est de faire l'écart entre le monolinguisme de l'anglais et celui de l'espagnol.

Étant donné ces faits, nous voulons identifier les «faire» des professeurs et des élèves quand ils évoquent les deux cultures associées à l'apprentissage de l'espagnol ou de l'anglais, et les milieux où la séparation des langues est effective et la langue «légitime» de la classe est établie. Je vais donc étudier les pratiques discursives de l'un des professeurs d'espagnol et de ses 24 élèves de 14 ans, dans un aspect concret de l'enseignement/apprentissage: l'utilisation d'un texte multimodal que l'enseignante associe à l'épisode, bien connue, dans laquelle Dom Quichotte attaque le moulin à vent en supposant que ce sont des géants.

Les résultats montrent que, malgré la politique de bilinguisme dont on a déjà parlé, les professeurs, non seulement ils font appel aux connaissances des élèves sur la Grande Bretagne, mais ceux-ci établissent des rapports spontanés entre les deux cultures lors de leurs pratiques discursives.

Mots-clés: éducation bilingue, langue, culture, enseignement des langues.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In this article, I will describe the classroom discourse practices of bilingual children in relation to a particular episode of Don Quixote, his fight with windmills thinking they are giants. This is part of a study which aimed to develop a particular dimension of the ethnography of bilingual education, involving the study of the interactional processes and the uses of texts involved in the construction of knowledge through two languages.

Up to now, relatively little attention has been paid to the bilingualism of Spanish migrants in Europe. This study was carried out in a particular social, cultural and historical context: that of educational provision for Spanish-speaking children in London, many of whom come from families of migrant origin and it highlights the need to take account of the social context of bilingual education and the ways in which the day-to-day practices and routines of classrooms are shaped by this wider context.

The new trend in foreign language education in Europe seems to have taken a bilingual orientation, adopting a CLIL approach (Content and Language Integrated Learning) where the teaching of the English language is combined with the teaching of other subjects. Now that some European countries, including Spain have begun to include CLIL in the curriculum of both primary and secondary education, I would argue that it is important to explore the language use of teachers and students in a bilingual school in London which is organised and run along lines similar to state schools in Spain.

The importance of classroom discourse in multilingual settings can not be underestimated as Virginia Unamuno states:

La observación y el análisis del discurso en el aula nos permite mirarnos desde otro punto de vista y al hacerlo, observamos el modo en que vamos guiando a los demás en la construcción de diversos saberes. El análisis del discurso en el aula nos permite, también, verificar que no siempre lo hacemos de la misma manera y que no siempre tenemos éxito al hacerlo. En este sentido, nos ofrece un instrumento de indagación y una herramienta para detectar problemas y actuar en consecuencia. (2003: 92.)

Classroom observation and discourse analysis allows us to see ourselves from another point of view, we observe the way we guide the construction of different kinds of knowledge. Discourse analysis allows us also, to verify that we do not only always do this in the same way and that we are not always successful when we do so. In this sense, it offers us a research instrument and a tool to detect problems and act accordingly.

I will first review the literature on both monolingual and multilingual classrooms, then describe the historical-social context in which this study took place. Next, I will examine the bilingual approach adopted by the school, the research population and aims of the study. Finally, after writing an account of the analysis and findings of lessons that I observed, I will draw some conclusions.

2. PERSPECTIVES ON CLASSROOM TALK: MONOLINGUAL AND MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS

The first research on classroom talk was carried out in secondary classrooms in Britain (cf. Barnes 1971, 1976; Edwards and Furlong 1978, and Sinclair and Coulthard 1975) and in primary classrooms in the United States (for example, Mehan 1979). These early studies focused on qualitative analysis of classroom talk and their main concern was on the structuring of lessons in teacher-led lessons and the occurrence of recitations in which teachers control the turn taking and do most of the talking. Mehan, provided an alternative to Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) I-R-F format (Initiation-Response-Feedback), by drawing attention to a typical exchange in the classroom, the triad IRE. He noted that this was "an act initiated by one classroom participant, most frequently the teacher, followed by a reply, most often by the pupils, which in turn is followed by an evaluation act" (1979:72). Cazden (1988) argues that the IRE format is the most common sequence in teacher-led discussions. Finally, recent trends in constructing knowledge have been influenced by Vygotsky (1978) and Bruner's (1978) theories providing alternative models to Mehan's triad.

As far as multilingual classroom interaction is concerned, this was influenced by the qualitative approach adopted in the early studies of classroom talk that were carried out in monolingual classrooms. As stated in Martin-Jones, 2000, there have been different influences on research on bilingual education since the first studies were carried in the United States in the 1970s, particularly due to the influence of new social science fields, conversational analysis, interactional sociolinguistics and

microethnography. The work of both Sinclair and Coulthard and Mehan has been influential in studies of bilingual classroom discourse, for example Milk's (1981) use of the IRE exchanges to focus on teacher's codeswitching in his analysis.

Despite the wealth of research on bilingual classroom processes, there has so far been relatively little attention paid to the bilingual construction of knowledge. The only exceptions to this general trend lie in recent work by Lin (1996) and Martin (1997). Angel Lin focused on secondary classrooms in Hong Kong and examined data recorded in classes where different subjects were being taught. She argued that the teachers' codeswitching practices served to construct English as the legitimate language (in ¹Heller's terms) for knowledge-building while Cantonese was primarily used in facilitative mode. She talks of: "Cantonese-annotated English academic monolingualism". Peter Martin, for his part, looked at talk around texts in his primary classroom study in Brunei. He drew attention to bilingual routines which had emerged in this context, such as the bilingual labelling of key terms from the texts. This present article also purposes to foreground the construction of knowledge and uses of texts in a bilingual Spanish/English secondary school in London.

3. THE HISTORICAL-SOCIAL CONTEXT

The Spanish community in Great Britain is quite small if compared with the communities in France, Germany or Switzerland. Most of the population originally came from the autonomous communities of Galicia and Andalusia. One of the key issues is how those Spanish "residentes"² have managed to organise educational provision for their children, with a view to language maintenance. In this article, I will deal with a study that was carried out in the Spanish school in London, V. Cañada Blanch, a bilingual school for Spanish children living in Britain, which is currently supported by the Spanish government, organised and run along lines similar to public schools in Spain, but which first came into being with support from the local community.

4. THE BILINGUALISM APPROACH OF THE SCHOOL AND AIMS OF THE STUDY

Following the requirement of the LOGSE Law, the Spanish school in London produced their first *Proyecto Educativo de Centro*, which I call School Policy Document in 1993, including an analysis of context, signs of identity, educational objectives and organizational structure. As Arnaiz & Soto point out "these four elements are often used to formulate the school commitment towards intercultural education" (2003:380). One of the goals of the maintenance programme of the school is

¹ Heller (1995) expanded the use of Bourdieu's notion of legitimate language "the authorized language which is also the language of authority" (1977:648), to accommodate language choice in bilingual settings and minority language education.

² I am using the term "residentes" ("residents") in line with the way they like to be called.

related to cultural issues, specifically, how to deal with the two cultural worlds in which the children are immersed, as stated in the school policy:

El mantenimiento y supervivencia de los usos, costumbres y valores que forman parte de nuestra cultura, integrando en ella todo lo que de positivo tengan las otras culturas del entorno. Utilizando la diversidad cultural como recurso educativo para una mayor integración de la cultura británica y española, promoviendo una “pedagogía del encuentro”, buscando más lo común que lo diferente, en una enseñanza bilingüe (Proyecto Educativo de Centro, 1993: 5).

(my emphasis)

The maintenance and survival of the uses, customs and values that form part of our culture, integrating all the positive aspects of the surrounding cultures. Using cultural diversity as an educational resource for a better understanding of British and Spanish cultures, promoting a “meeting of cultures” and seeking commonalities rather than differences in a bilingual experiential education.

In the school, the children’s bilingualism, following ³Swain’s term, is sustained and developed through the construction of two monolingual educational paths: one Spanish and one English. By the end of their schooling, pupils are expected to have become equally proficient in both languages, “el alumnado deberá expresarse con fluidez y corrección, tanto en castellano como en inglés” (*pupils should express themselves fluently and accurately not only in Spanish but in English too*), (School Policy document, 1993: 8).

In the light of these two statements of goals, I was particularly interested in investigating how the separation approach of the school into two monolingual paths and the “pedagogía del encuentro” (“*meeting of cultures*”) were accomplished in the day-to-day practices of the teachers and learners in the classrooms. In this case study, I focus on 24 pupils in Form 8 (aged 14), the last year of the former Spanish compulsory education provision and hence, the end of some pupils’ bilingual experience. I will deal with the Spanish language lessons and in particular, a long aside by the teacher in relation to a type of multimodal text: a picture of some windmills that led her to describe the well-known episode of Don Quixote and his fight against the windmills that he took for giants. To analyse the teaching and learning practices in the school, together with the audio recording of classroom interaction, interviews with the teachers and learners were used to add the perspective of the participants involved.

This research aims to answer the following questions:

- 1) How is the school’s stated policy of achieving English/Spanish bilingualism translated into the day-to-day language practices of teachers and learners in the Spanish lessons?

³ Swain developed three principles, the second “The development of bilingual skills on the part of the students will be enhanced by the separated work of languages on the part of the teachers” (1983: 40) is the approach which informs school policy in the Spanish school in London

- 2) Is there a “pedagogía del encuentro” “observable in this school (as stated in the school policy). Are the teachers and learners orienting to different worlds or are they making links across those worlds? If so, how?”

With respect to question one, my focus will be on the means with which the separation of languages is achieved and, following Heller (1995), the ways in which the “legitimate” language of each class is established. With respect to question two, I aim to identify the ways in which teachers and learners evoke the two cultural worlds associated with the Spanish and English languages.

5. ORIENTING THE PUPILS TO DIFFERENT CULTURAL WORLDS

In this section I will explain in what ways the talk around the text was addressed to bilingual children. As the teacher explained in the interview “se trabaja la parte cultural, si hay alguna referencia geográfica, comparando los dos países” (“we work on the cultural aspects, if there is a geographical reference, comparing the two countries”)

5.1 REFERENCES TO SPANISH CULTURE

The teacher made frequent asides, where she extensively explained cultural features of Spain, as illustrated in Extracts 1 and 2. In Extract 1, with the help of a map, she first referred to the location and the geographical features of Castilla-La Mancha, the autonomous community where Don Quixote takes place. Then, she described the windmills in this area to contextualise the episode from Don Quixote she was going to deal with later.

EXTRACT 1: Lines 454- 451

- T: Castilla-La Mancha viene en esta zona bajo Ma . . . está bajo . . . debajo de Madrid. Esto es Castilla-La Mancha. Bueno . . . si nosotros hiciéramos un recorrido en coche . . . ¿eh? . . . en coche. Pues de repente nos podríamos encontrar sobre pequeñas lomas . . . ¿eh? . . . no grandes elevaciones. Sobre
5 pequeñas lomas . . . de repente aparecen una serie de molinos de viento . . . que son éstos. Son muy altos . . . muy anchos y . . . además . . . muy elevados . . . muy altos . . . están pintados de color blanco y el . . . la parte de arriba . . . el techo . . . tiene forma de cono y es . . . está siempre pintado en color negro . . .

TRANSLATION OF EXTRACT 1:

- T: *Castilla-La Mancha is in this area underneath Ma . . . it's underneath . . . underneath Madrid. This is Castilla-La Mancha. Well . . . if we were driving . . . right? . . . a car. Suddenly we could*

5 *find ourselves on small hills . . . right? . . . not big high areas. On
small hills . . . suddenly a serious of windmills come into sight. . .
that are those. They are very high . . . very wide and . . . besides . . . very high
. . . very high . . . they are painted white and . . . the top part . . .
the roof . . . is in the shape of a cone and is . . . is always painted black . . .*

5.2 CONTRASTING THE TWO CULTURAL WORLDS

In Extract 2, showing the picture of windmills to the pupils, she started comparing water mills that are relatively common in the north part of Spain (Galicia) and Britain alike with the windmills in Castilla-la Mancha.

EXTRACT 2: Lines 462-475

T: . . . Y delante tiene estas grandes aspas que son las que se mueven
con el viento y las que le sirven a los . . . sobre todo esto era para los
labradores . . . los agricultores . . . para moler dentro el grano. Como aquí no
hay abundancia de agua . . . no hay ríos . . . por ejemplo en la parte norte . . .
5 en el norte de *España . . . los molinos se mueven con agua ¿eh? . . . En
* Inglaterra . . . si viajáis . . . veréis también muchos molinos se mueven con
agua . . . pequeños riachuelos . . . se mueven con agua. Aquí no hay agua . . .
entonces la gente inventa otras cosas. ¿Qué hay aquí ? . . . pues hay viento.
Todo esto son pequeñas lomas . . . además están un poco elevadas . . . hay
10 mucho viento. Entonces . . . hace muchísimo viento . . . esto es de la época
medieval . . . se construyen estos molinos y éste era el sistema a través de
viento que podían ellos moler los distintos . . . avena . . . centeno . . . trigo . . . lo
que fuese . . . ¿no? . . . Y esto viene a cuento del episodio entre don Quijote y
Sancho en los molinos de viento. Lo recordáis . . . ¿verdad? . . .

TRANSLATION OF EXTRACT 2:

T: . . . *And at the front they have these big sails that turn round
with the wind and the ones that are used . . . mainly by
farmers . . . peasants . . . to grind the grain inside. Because
there is not a lot of water . . . there are no rivers . . . for example in the north part . . .*
5 *in the north part of *Spain . . . mills work with water right? . . . In
* England . . . if you travel . . . you can also see a lot of mills that work with
water . . . little streams . . . they work with water. Here there is no water . . .
so people invent other things. What is there here? . . . there is wind
Those are little hills . . . besides they are rather high . . . there is
10 lot of wind. Then . . . it's very windy . . . this comes from
medieval times . . . those windmills were built and this was the system using
wind they could grind the different . . . oats . . . rye . . . wheat . . .
anything . . . right? . . . and this is to tell you about the episode of Don Quixote and
Sancho with the windmills. You remember . . . don't you? . . .*

5.3 REFERENCES TO GALICIA

In addition to the continuous references to Spain there were also references to Galicia, which is where the teacher and many of the pupils come from (see Extract 3 below). Once the teacher had explained the episode in the windmills, one of the pupils asked the teacher how Don Quixote could have been lifted up by the sails in the windmills (Line 1). The teacher explained, positioning herself and her pupils as Galicians (Lines 12-18). As Norton argues, “the historically and socially constructed identity of learners influences the subject position they take up in the language classroom and the relationship they establish with the language teacher” (2000:142).

EXTRACT 3: Lines 500-517

- Ja: ¿Cómo van a levantar a una persona?
 T: Pues . . . porque son unas aspas muy grandes . . . Ja. Es que aquí parece muy pequeñito . . . pero son unas aspas enormes . . . ¿eh?. Entonces . . . cuando esas aspas están moviéndose y tú te . . . te acercas a una de ellas . . .
 5 te puede levantar perfectamente. Hombre. . . yo no conozco el mecanismo a la perfección . . . pero te puede levantar perfectamente.
 P: Es como eso de los dibujos animados.
 T: Eh?
 P: Es uno de los . . . [unclear]
 10 T: ¿Cómo que se ve en los dibujos animados?. . . esto no es posible. . . dices tú? . . . que levante . . . Es que . . . os vuelvo a repetir . . . estos molinos son enormes. Vosotros estáis acostumbrados a ver los molinos pequeños. Molinos . . . por ejemplo que hay en* Inglaterra . . . que son muy pequeñitos con una rueda enorme en la que va pasando el agua. Yo estoy acostumbrada o estaba
 15 acostumbrada a ver los molinos de *Galicia que son muy pequeñitos también. La primera vez que vi esto en la realidad . . . me quedé realmente muy sorprendida . . . porque yo los había visto en fotos . . . igual que lo que yo estoy enseñando a vosotros.

TRANSLATION OF EXTRACT 3:

- Ja: *How can they lift a person?*
 T: *Well . . . because those sails are very big . . . Ja. It is only that here it looks very small . . . but they are huge . . . right?. Then . . . when those sails are turning round and you come . . . closer . . . they can easily lift you up. Well . . . I don't know how they work very well . . . but they can lift you up perfectly well.*
 5
 P: *It's like in cartoons*
 T: *What?*
 P: *It's one of those . . . [unclear]*
 10 T: *What do you mean you can see it in cartoons?. . . that this is not possible? . . . that it lifts . . . I'll repeat again . . . those windmills are huge. You are used to seeing small mills. Mills . . . for instance that you find in *England . . . that are very small with a*

15 *huge wheel which is turned by moving water. I am used or I was used to see the mills in *Galicia that are very small too. The first time I saw this in reality . . . I was really surprised . . . because I had seen them in pictures like . . . I'm showing you now .*

5.4 LINKING CULTURAL WORLDS: SPAIN AND BRITAIN

There were also references to Spanish and British literary works, as illustrated in Extract 4 below, where the teacher answered the pupils' question about whether windmills were currently used in Spain by referring to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and Cervantes' *Don Quixote*.

EXTRACT 4: Lines 582-599

- Ja: ¿Ahora ya no se utilizan?
 T: Yo creo que ahora ya no los utilizan. Ahora ya está como una atracción turística. Claro . . . toda la zona de La Mancha . . . pues . . . está . . . eh . . . la explotan como atracción turística. El Quijote se refiere a La Mancha . . . El
 5 Toboso . . . bueno . . . cuando uno va al pueblecito de El Toboso . . . pues . . . te dicen . . . la casa de Dulcinea . . . pero Dulcinea . . . pues . . . no existió. O sea que es imposible. Pero lo mismo que se hace en España . . . también se hace en Italia . . . ¿eh? . . . también se hace en Inglaterra. En Italia . . . por ejemplo . . . cuando uno va a Verona . . . ¿eh? . . . donde *Shakespeare
 10 construyó *Romeo y Julieta* . . . pues te dicen . . . ése es el balcón de Julieta. Pero como va a ser el balcón de Julieta . . . si Julieta no existió?
 Ja: Donde se le cayó el pañuelito
 T: ¿Eh? . . . pues allí está el balcón de Julieta. Pues *en España se hace lo mismo. En El Toboso hay muchas cosas . . . pues . . . dedicadas a Dulcinea de
 15 El Toboso . . . normal. Es una explotación turística normal . . . ¿eh? . . . Si se puede sacar algo de dinero . . . Es una forma de comercializar el asunto . . . ¿por qué no?. Y ya que El Quijote es una obra universal . . . que conoce todo el mundo . . . pues mejor todavía . . . ¿eh? . . . muchísimo mejor

TRANSLATION OF EXTRACT 4:

- Ja: Don't you use them now?
 T: I think they don't use them any more. Now they are tourist attractions. Of course . . . the whole area of La Mancha . . . because . . . is . . . erm . . . exploited as a tourist attraction. Don Quixote mentions La Mancha . . . El
 5 Toboso . . . well . . . when you go to the village of El Toboso . . . well . . . they tell you . . . Dulcinea's house . . . but Dulcinea . . . well . . . she didn't exist. So it is impossible. But as you do this in Spain . . . you also do in Italy . . . right? . . . also in England. In Italy . . . for example . . . when you go to Verona . . . right? . . . where *Shakespeare
 10 set *Romeo and Juliet* . . . they tell you . . . this is Juliet's balcony

But how can it be Juliet's balcony . . . if Juliet did not exist ?

Ja: Where she dropped her little handkerchief

T: What? . . . well Juliet's balcony is there. But *in Spain we do the same. In El Toboso there are many things . . . well . . . dedicated to Dulcinea of

- 15 El Toboso . . . it's normal. It's a tourist exploitation . . . right? . . . If you can get some money . . . it's a way of commercialising the thing . . . why not ? . . . And since Don Quixote is a universal masterpiece . . . that everybody knows . . . even better . . .right? . . . much better

6. CONSTRUCTING STANDARD SPANISH

The teacher stated in the interview: “procuro cuidar mi español, el único español que oyen los alumnos es aquí y cuando van a España” (“*I try to be careful with the language I use because the only Spanish that the pupils are exposed to is here and when they go to Spain*”). There were two main ways the teacher, in line with school policy, was clearly helping her pupils to construct the standard variety of Spanish by a) censoring the non-legitimate language choice of the pupils and/or b) evaluating and correcting the learners' Spanish.

6.1 CENSORING THE NON-LEGITIMATE LANGUAGE CHOICES OF THE PUPILS

Codeswitching was not a frequent practice in the lessons that I observed. Most of these three lessons unfolded in Spanish. In the interview I had with the teacher, she said that on such occasions she would indicate the pupil that using English was not the legitimate language of the classroom by making a metacomment, “eso no es español” (“that is not Spanish”). I observed this practice when dealing with other parts of the lesson, for instance, classroom management as Extract 5 illustrates.

EXTRACT 5: Lines 637-643

- T: ¿Has entregado tu cuaderno de apuntes?
 P: Sí . . . [unclear] . . . **interview** que tengo mañana.
 T: ¿La interview? . . . ¿qué es lo que tienes mañana? [jokingly]
 P: La entrevista.
 5 T: La entrevista
 Dale con la interview . . . la entrevista . . .

TRANSLATION OF EXTRACT 5:

- T: Have you handed in your Spanish notebook?
 P: Yes . . . [unclear] . . . **entrevista** that I have tomorrow
 T: La entrevista? . . . What do you have tomorrow? [jokingly]
 P: The interview
 5 T: The interview
 There she goes with the entrevista again. . . the interview

6.2 EVALUATING AND CORRECTING THE LEARNERS' SPANISH

The teacher corrected the pupils on a number of occasions, on phonological, grammatical or lexical level, or with a focus on register (standard/non-standard form). In Extract 6 below, a pupil was corrected because he used the non standard form “fuertísimo” (Line 10), instead of the standard “fortísimo”. The teacher elicited the correct answer through a fill-in-the-gap type of question (Line 11), where the teacher started a word and the pupil was expected to finish. The pupil responded and then, she asked him to repeat the answer (Lines 12&13). The teacher’s insistence on correct answers and continuous repetitions was a recurrent practice in the Spanish class.

EXTRACT 6: Lines 550- 566

- T: Vosotros pensad que don Quijote . . . además . . .
era un hombre extremadamente delgado . . . delgadísimo . . . ¿eh?
muy delgado. Podía haberlo levantado perfectamente. Se ve que don Quijote es
una novela . . . que siempre hay una parte de ficción muy grande. Pero en este
5 caso a mí no me extrañaría nada que esas aspas pudieran levantar a un
hombre perfectamente. Desde luego a un niño lo levantan con facilidad . . . ¿eh?
Con facilidad. Hombre . . . siempre que las aspas se estén moviendo . . . claro.
Se estén moviendo. Si ese día es un día en calma . . . que no hay viento . . . las
aspas no se mueven.
- 10 Ja: Pero el viento tiene que ser fuertísimo para levantar esas aspas.
T: For . . . For - - -
Ja: *Fortísimo*.
T: *Fortísimo* . . . no se puede decir fuertísimo . . . fortísimo
Ja: *Fortísimo*.
- 15 T: Pues claro . . . por eso muy inteligentemente la gente que construyó estos
molinos los construyó encima de unas lomas.

TRANSLATION OF EXTRACT 6:

- T: *Just think that D. Quixote . . . besides . . .
was an extremely thin man . . . very thin . . . right?
very thin. It might well have lifted him up. You can see that D. Quixote is
a novel . . . and there is always a part of fiction in it. But in this
5 case I would not be surprised if those sails could lift a
man perfectly well. Of course they can lift a child easily right?
easily. Well . . . provided that the sails are turning . . . of course
turning. If that day is calm . . . there is no wind . . . the
sails don't turn*
- 10 Ja: *But the wind has to be extremely strong to make these sails move*
T: *stro . . . stro - - -*
Ja: *Extremely strong*
T: *Extremely strong . . . you can't say extremely strong . . . Extremely strong*
Ja: *Extremely strong*
- 15 T: *Of course. . . that's why the people who very intelligently built those
mills they built them on hill tops*

7. FINDINGS

I will summarise the main findings of this discussion by returning to each of the research questions introduced at the beginning. I will first examine the ways the teacher and learners dealt with the bilingual and bicultural situation in which they were immersed. Then, I will discuss the ways in which the legitimate language of the classroom came to be constructed in the lessons under study.

7.1 ORIENTING TO DIFFERENT CULTURAL WORLDS

The teacher was clearly aware of her pupils' bilingual and bicultural background and made intellectual and textual links between the two cultural worlds. There was very little evidence of codeswitching in the teacher's discourse in this Spanish/English bilingual school in London. This finding stands in striking contrast to the findings of other studies: take, for example, the study carried out in Jaffna by Canagarajah (1995). In this study, there were frequent episodes where teachers and learners used codeswitching as a means of "negotiating cultural relevance" (1995:188).

In her lessons, I observed a preference for linking the pupils' life-worlds and focusing on similarities and for long asides where cultural phenomena in Spain were explained. The teacher drew on the learners' knowledge of life in Britain. In addition, the teacher occasionally oriented to a Galician world, since many of the pupils were from families that had their origins in Galicia. However, I did not observe, in these lessons, any reference to the Galician language in those lessons or switches into Galician. Presumably, this was because the school policy only catered for Spanish and English.

The learners lived the experience of different linguistic and cultural worlds within the school on a daily basis, moving back and forth across linguistic boundaries and participating in different cultural practices. Like the teachers, the pupils themselves made comparisons between their two cultural worlds in their discourse practices around the text. Spanish-dominant learners had an advantage in the Spanish cultural spaces of the school and vice versa with the English-dominant learners. They helped each other with the weaker language in order to construct knowledge in those lessons.

7.2 BILINGUALISM VIA TWO MONOLINGUAL PATHS

In this section, I will focus on the ways language boundaries were maintained by the teacher through the censoring of pupils' language choices and evaluations of the learners' language use.

When dealing with the academic content of the lessons, the teacher did not allow pupils to use the non-legitimate language. The pupils would receive negative sanctions in the form of metacomments such as "eso no es español" ("*this is not*

Spanish”), since the focus was on teaching languages. As reported in the interview, the Spanish teacher had considerable respect for the pupils’ language choices in other social spaces in the school such as the courtyard. This attitude of the teacher contrasts sharply with the situation in the French language minority school in Toronto, Ontario studied by Heller (1994), where the teachers were more strict with the pupils’ language choices. The highly politicised situation in Canada differs from the context of this study, that of the Spanish “residentes” in London.

The teachers evaluated the linguistic performance of the pupils. The evaluation of pupils’ performance ranged from commentary on the use of incorrect register in the Spanish class to corrections at the phonological, lexical or grammatical level. The teacher insisted on “the correct” use of Spanish, the legitimate language of this class, following the school policy of bilingualism through two monolingual streams.

8. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The results of the analysis show that despite a strict observance of the school policy of “bilingualism through two monolingual streams”, the teacher not only drew on the learners’ knowledge of Britain but the pupils themselves made comparisons between their two cultural worlds in their discourse practices around the text.

9. TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

INTERLOCUTORS

T:	Teacher
P:	Non nominated/identified pupil
Ba:	Nominated/Identified pupils will be given fictitious names and their initials
Ps:	More than one pupil speaking simultaneously

LINGUISTIC CONVENTIONS

- - -	Incomplete utterance or cue word that the teacher starts and pupils are expected to complete
“ “	Teacher or pupil reading from textbook or other instructional materials
^	Overlapping speech
*	Cultural references
. . .	Pause

Underlining Some sort of stress or emphasis

Character format:

- plain font Utterances in the language of instruction
- Bold Codeswitching from English into Spanish or vice versa
- italics Translations into English

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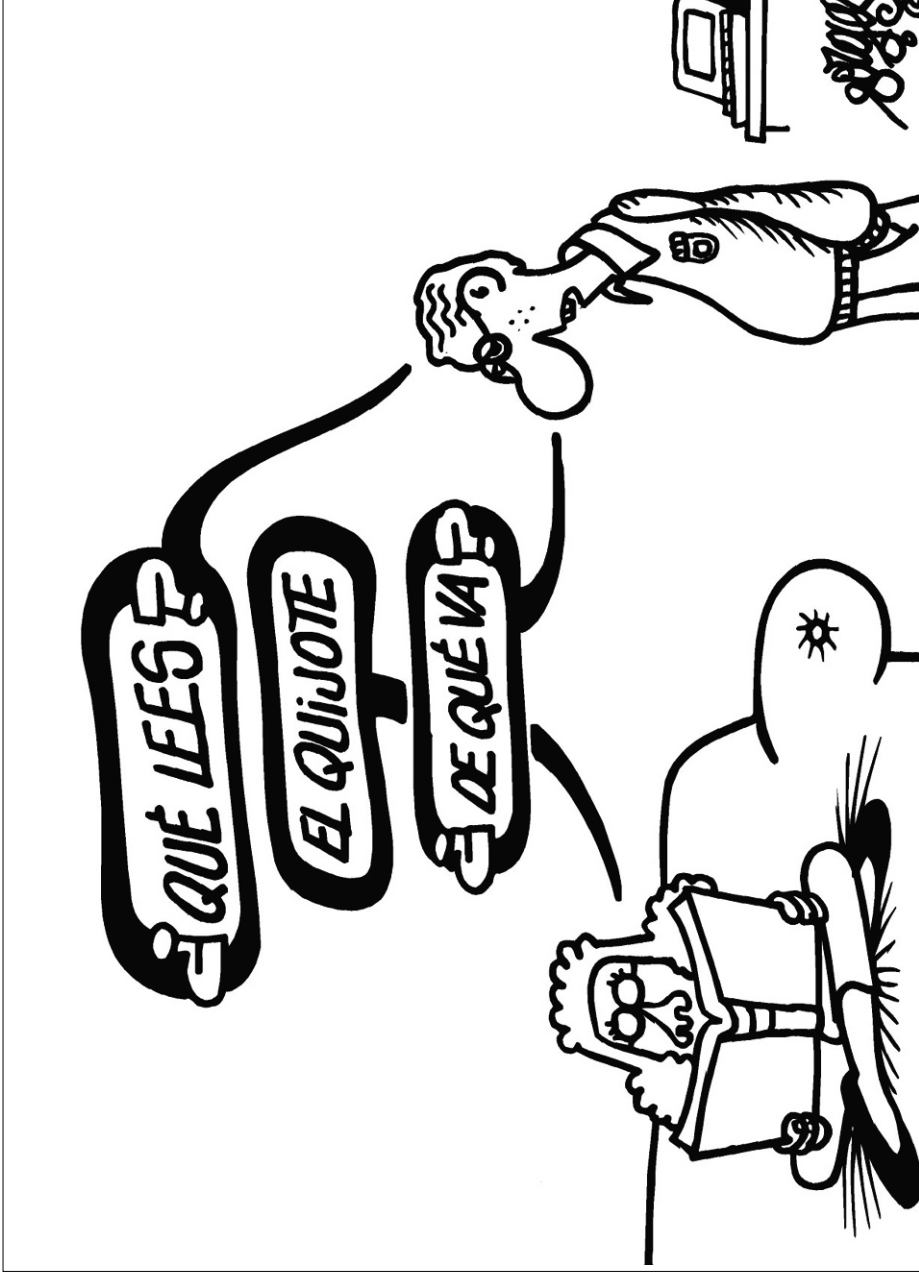
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