A stylized, light brown illustration of a plant with several leaves and small, round buds on thin stems, positioned on the left side of the slide.

THE MAKING OF MULTILINGUAL SCHOOLS IN A MONOLINGUAL CITY

Lisa M. Dorner, Ph.D.

University of Missouri-Columbia

The Researcher

- Assistant Professor of Educational Policy (www.lisamdorner.com)
 - Language policy and planning
 - Educational policy implementation
 - Immigrant family integration and identities
- Community Partner
 - English-as-a-Second-Language programs
 - “Strong” forms of bilingual education (Baker, 2006)

The Research Context

- Midsized Midwestern city
- Population around 300-400,000
- Residents identified on 2010 Census as:
 - Black or African-American
 - White or Caucasian
 - Foreign-born (5-7%)
- State-wide
 - Education for English Learners = English as a Second Language
 - No state certification in bilingual education

The Research Site

- One-way language immersion school
 - At least 50% of instruction in target language
 - Three goals:
 - Bilingualism
 - High academic achievement
 - Intercultural competence (Tedick, Christian, & Fortune, 2011)
- Spanish Immersion Elementary School (SIES)
 - 80-100% of instruction in Spanish
 - Serving ~85% monolingual English speakers
 - One of few such schools in the area
 - Charter school



The Research Questions

- Overall, what cultural scripts are employed in planning local multilingual education in monolingual areas?
- What goals and values were voiced by SIES leaders, as they recruited students?
- How did parents respond, and what were their goals?



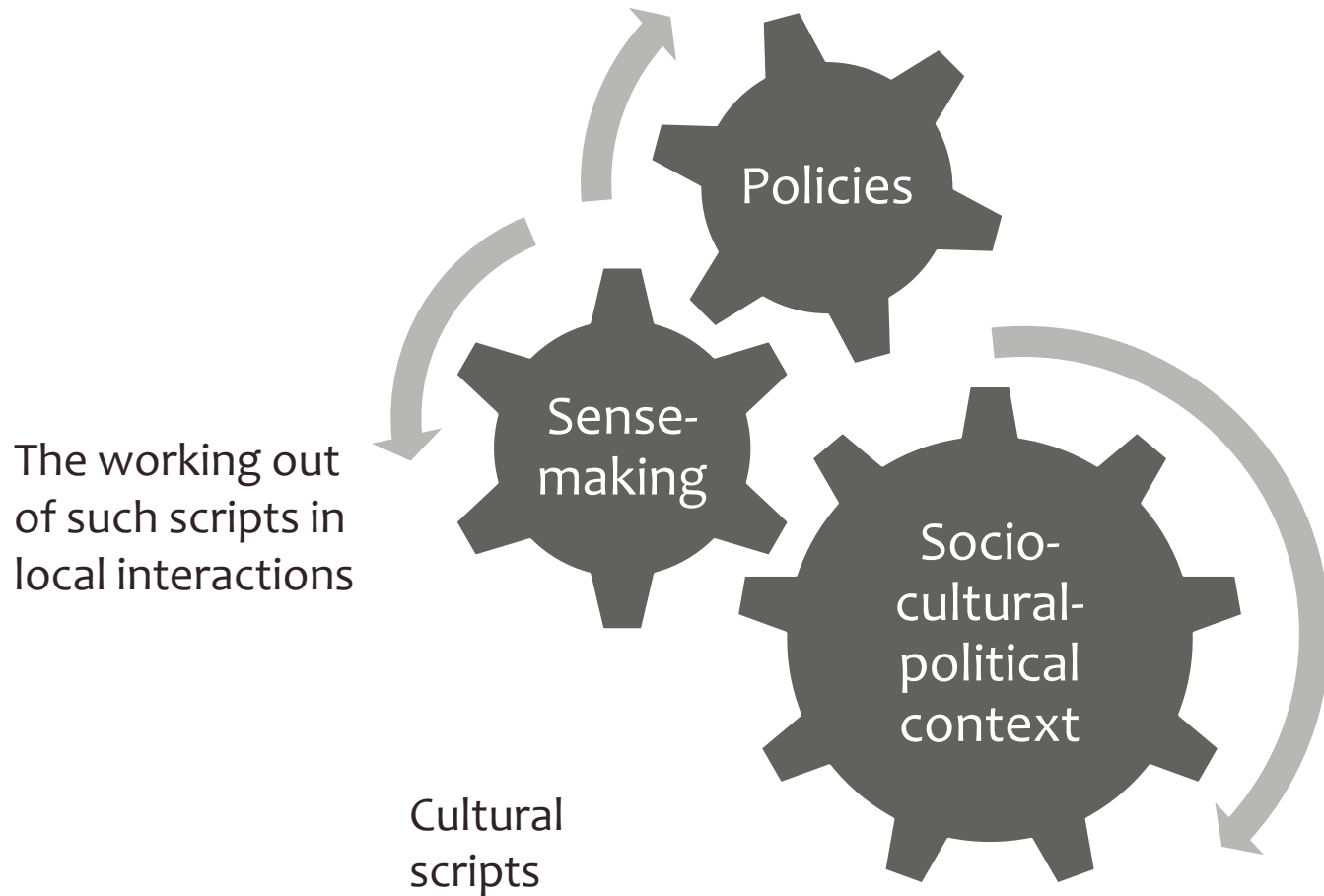
www.google.com/imgres?start=100&hl=en&tbo=d&biw=1024&bih=512&tbn=isch&tbnid=...ch-Immersion-Day1-260x208.jpg&w=260&h=208&ei=7Lv-U0CnNMnx2QXujICgDw&zoom=1

The Theoretical Framework

1. **Organizations/policies are shaped through local interactions.**
 - Neo-institutional theory (Colyvas, 2012)
 - Bottom-up studies of language policy and planning (Hornberger, 2003)
1. Local interactions are strongly shaped by “**cultural scripts**” (meta-narratives or storylines).
1. Individuals employ these cultural scripts as they **negotiate their organizations’ objectives/policies** (Hamann, 2011), as they **make sense** of their work (Spillane, 2004).



The Theoretical Framework



The Theoretical Framework

- Language (bilingualism) as a **problem** (Ruiz, 1984)
 - English-only initiatives in CA, MA, AZ
 - “Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs” → “Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students”
 - See also Dorner & Layton, 2013
- Language (bilingualism) as a **right and resource** (Ruiz, 1984)
 - Parents choose bilingual programs for integrative/instrumental reasons
- Language as a marker of **identity** (Orellana, et al., 1999)
 - Children (and adults) recognize languages reflect particular identities, and allow them to interact in new ways with a variety of people.

The Methods: Data Collection

- Longitudinal ethnography (18 months)
- **Participant observation**
 - 36 recruitment/enrollment events
 - 18 board meetings
 - 17 parent meetings
 - Artifact collection (SIES promotional brochures/videos)
- **Interviews**
 - 10 parents (4 African-American/Black, 4 White/Caucasian, 2 Mexican)
- **Survey** of parents, Year 1 (n=60)

The Methods: Data Analysis

- Constructivist approach to grounded theory (Charmaz, 2010)
 - Open coding, axial coding, memo writing
- Constant comparison among:
 - Goals/values of school leaders
 - Goals/values of parents
 - Goals/values from the literature review

Findings

1. Multilingualism was viewed as a right and future instrumental resource by both parents and leaders.
 2. However, parents also valued multilingualism as an immediate cognitive resource for their children, and a marker of identity.
 3. In addition, parents valued the choice they had for safe, socializing spaces for their young children.
- In summary:
 - *Cultural scripts beyond those about language shape the bottom-up language planning of new, multilingual schools.*

1. Leaders' Cultural Scripts

- Language as a right and future resource:
 - Multilingualism
 - Global Access
 - Social Equity



1a. Leaders & Multilingualism

- **SIES' first television advertisement:** *Welcome to [our state's] first International Baccalaureate schools with a total language immersion curriculum. What does that mean? That means a real world-class education for all of our children, where they learn their entire elementary curriculum in at least two languages.*
- **SIES recruitment presentations:** *Students will learn all of their course work in a second language from native and near native speakers.*

1b. Leaders & Global Access

- **IBO mission:** *to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.*
- **SIES recruitment presentations:** *citizens of the world*
- **SIES mission:** *to position all children for success in local and global economies.*

1c. Leaders & Language (Rights) for All

- **SIES school board meetings:** *Continual conversations about how to recruit low-income families, who may not otherwise seek out specialized charter schools*
 - 50% African-American/Black students
 - 30% White/Caucasian
 - 10% Latino/Hispanic
 - 10% Multiracial/Other
 - 50% Low-income

2. Parents' Cultural Scripts

- Language as a right and future resource
- Language as a cognitive resource
- Language as an identity marker
- Schools as safe, socializing spaces



2a. Parents & Language as a Right

- **One Spanish equated learning in Spanish with the very opportunity to learn:** “*Me gusta mucho para que ellos van a tener más oportunidad de aprender.*” (I like a lot that they [my children] are going to have more opportunity to learn).
- **Another Spanish-speaking parent said:** “*Me interesó mucho porque está en español y en inglés, que es lo que más batallo con mi hijo mayor, que no sabe leer en español.*” (I was very interested [in SIES] because it is in Spanish and English, which is what was so challenging for my oldest son, who cannot read in Spanish).

2b. Parents & Language as a Future Resource

- **One survey respondent's expected SIES to provide:** “the best education possible to equip my daughter for a global workplace.”
- **An African-American mother explained that SIES would:** “Give [students] a greater opportunity [...] because if you notice, you look in a paper, a lot of things are veering toward, it's better to have a second language. So if you're bilingual, that's a plus” (Ms. D).

2c. Parents & Language as a Cognitive Resource

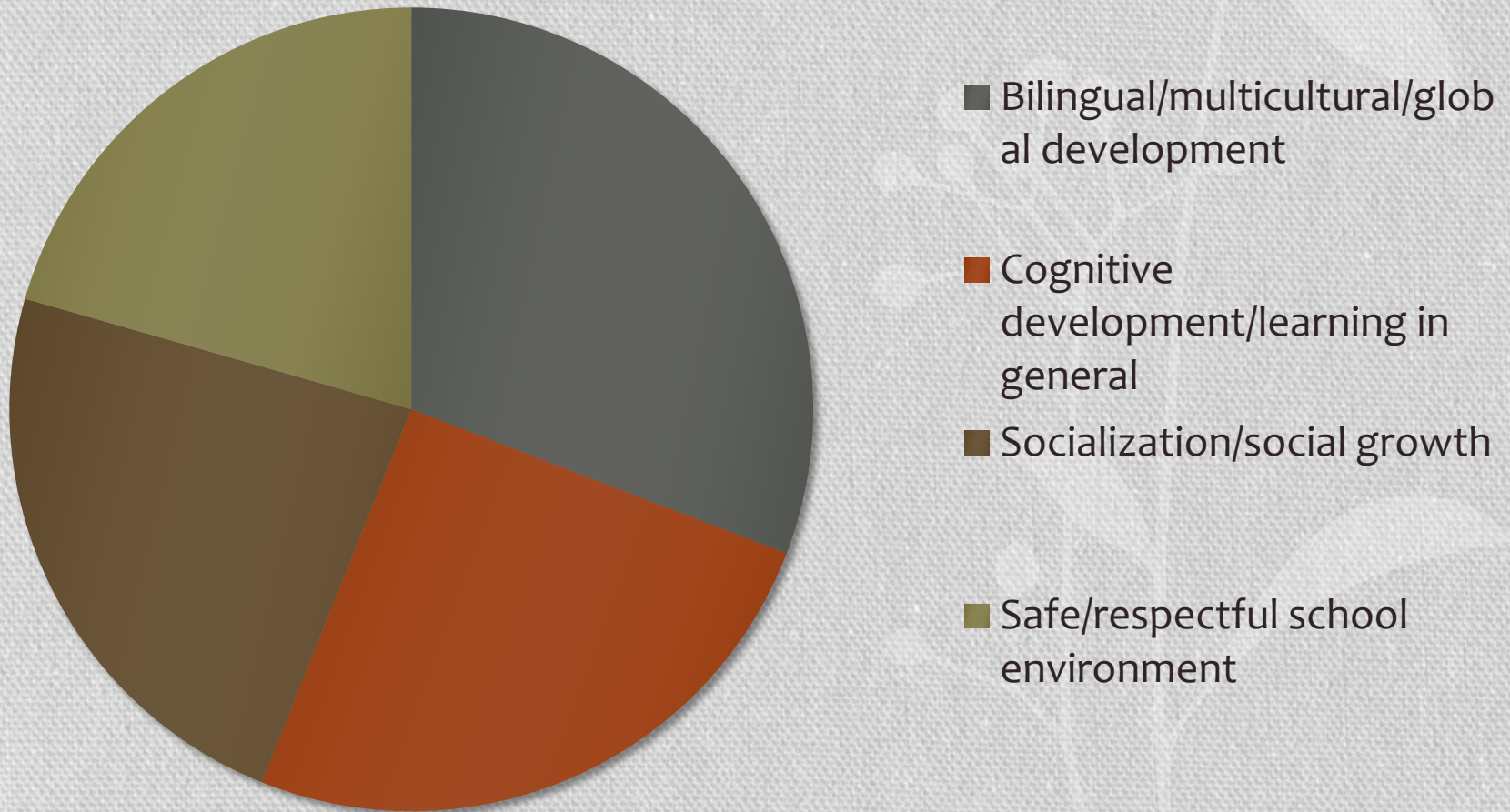
- “Language immersion provides both a valuable lifelong skill and critical brain development” (Mr. C).
- Language immersion is important for my “gifted” children (Ms. K).
- I want my children “challenged” by learning new languages (Ms. J).

Parents & Language as an Identity Resource

- “My [L1 English-speaking] husband speaks Spanish, so I’ve had a lot of interaction with immigrant families,” and I want that for my children as well. (Ms. E)
- “We’re very committed in terms of—my husband’s family almost primarily speaks Spanish—and so we’ve been very committed to ensuring that [our daughter] speaks Spanish as well.” (L1 English-speaking White mother, Ms. K)
- “My husband is Hispanic and came from a small border town in south Texas. . . it was very important to us that the children be raised in both of our cultures and in both languages.” (Comment on school poster, L1 English-speaking mother)

2d. Parents & Choices for Safe Schools

In answer to the question: What do you expect from SIES?



2d. Parents & Choices for Safe Schools

- Half of the respondents highlighted either expectations for positive social growth/socialization or safe school environments:
 - *I am expecting SIES to provide a safe and secure environment.*
 - *We expect our son will feel safe and he will be protected both physically and emotionally.*
 - *We hope SIES will provide a structured and respectful environment where she will be encouraged to do her best as a student and an individual.*

Conclusions

- Multilingual schooling **can be planned** in monolingual areas.
 - Multilingual schools like these can be critical in creating welcoming communities for newcomers.
- Multilingual schools (and diverse groups of parents want them to) **provide more than multilingualism/global access/future job opportunities.**
 - Schools that open doors to diverse, integrated groups of students are important *socializing* spaces.
 - Schools that value global/international perspectives prepare youth for transnational interactions and identities (not just economies).
- Must consider **contextual cultural scripts** in policy planning.

Questions, Comments?

- **Dorner, L.** (In press). From global jobs to safe spaces: The diverse discourses that sell multilingual schooling in the U.S. *Current Issues in Language Planning*.
- See more related research at www.lisamdorner.com.

Acknowledgements

- This research was supported by a University of Missouri Research Board Award (2009-2010).
- The project was also made possible by the kind participation of SIES school leaders and families; graduate student assistants Tom Bober, Jesús Díaz, and Emily Hager; and feedback from colleagues and the entire research team: Sarah Coppersmith, Emily Crawford, Sujin Kim, Angela Layton, Rhodesia McMillian, Jeffrey Pauls, Heather Quach, and Alina Slapac.

References

- Baker, C. (2006). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism* (4th ed.). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Charmaz, K. (2010). Grounded theory: Objectivist and constructivist methods. In W. Luttrell (Ed.), *Qualitative educational research: Readings in reflexive methodology and transformative practice* (pp. 183-207). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Colyvas, J. A. (2012). Performance metrics as formal structures and through the lens of social mechanisms: When do they work and how do they influence? *American Journal of Education*, 118(2), 167-197.
- Dorner, L. & Layton, A.* (2013). What makes a "good" school? Data and competing discourses in a multilingual charter network. In D. Anagnostopoulos, S. Rutledge, & R. Jacobsen (Eds.), *The infrastructure of accountability: Mapping data use and its consequences across the American education system*, pp. 145-162. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Hamann, E. T. (2011). The Anglo politics of Latino education: The role of immigration scripts. In D. L. Leal & K. J. Meier (Eds.), *The politics of Latino education*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Hornberger, N. H. (Ed.). (2003). *Continua of biliteracy: An ecological framework for educational policy, research, and practice in multilingual settings*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Orellana, M. F., Ek, L., & Hernández, A. (1999). Bilingual education in an immigrant community: Proposition 227 in California. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 2(2), 114-130.
- Ruiz, R. (1984). Orientations in language planning. *NABE Journal*, 7, 15-34.
- Spillane, J. P. (2004). *Standards deviation: How schools misunderstand education policy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.