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### Taxonomic Coding of Teachers' Instructional Behaviors and Language of Instruction in Head Start Classrooms serving Spanish-speaking Children

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# Taxonomic Coding of Teacher's Instructional Behaviors and Language of Instruction in Head Start Classrooms serving Spanish-speaking Children

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## Discussion

## Previous Research

- ❖ **Dual Immersion (DI):** a type of dual-language education that enforces a strict division of time spent on each of the paired languages (Poza, 2016).
- ❖ While DI education aims for immersion and fluency in both languages, it lacks in its flexibility between the two languages that ultimately supports comprehension and fluency in multilingual learners (Palmer, Cervantes-Soon, Dörnyei, & Heiman, 2019).
- ❖ **Translanguaging:** integrates use of two or more languages among multilingual speakers (Sánchez, García, & Solorza, 2017).
- ❖ Language practice preferences occur based on context, subject matter, tone, and background of the speaker among others (Creese & Blackledge, 2010).
- ❖ **Expansion:** a tool used by language educators repeat words or phrases used by students with correct grammar, but do not add any additional information. (Mackey & Philp, 1998).

## Research Questions

- ❖ What language practices are actually happening in the classroom?
- ❖ Are teachers separating languages?
- ❖ What types of taxonomic uses do we see in each language?
- ❖ Are there any language practices we did not anticipate?
- ❖ What is the frequency and language of instruction when educators use expansion?

## Method

- ❖ 5 transcripts of bilingual Head Start classrooms (students aged 3-4) were obtained from current Boston University research on classrooms serving Spanish-speaking preschooler children.
- ❖ These transcripts featured teachers leading an activity with a small group of four or five students.

### CLASSROOM CHARACTERISTICS

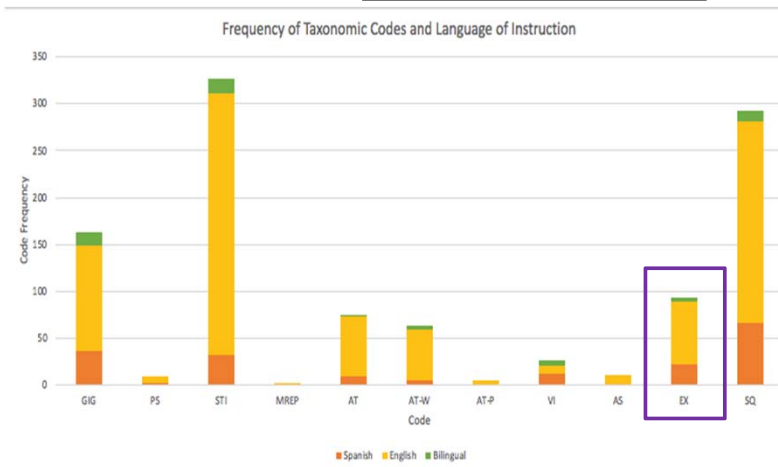
	Percent of Participants
<b>Mean Years of Teaching Experience</b>	7.25 yrs (SD = 2.68)
<b>Language of Teacher</b>	
English	100
Spanish	80
<b>Language of Students</b>	
English	80
Spanish	100

A new code, EX, was created based on this research. EX is distinguished by GIG and SQ such that it is only used when the teacher repeats a word or a phrase used by a student for the purpose of grammar or vocabulary instruction. For example, if a student says "they is good students," and the instructor responds, "Yes, they *are* good students," this would be coded as expansion.

## CODES

- Assistance (AS):* provision of assistance to a student with a particular task
- Attention regulation (AT):* direction to students to where their attention should be focused
- Attention reward (AT-W):* reward of a student's focus
- Attention punishment (AT-P):* reprimand of a student's focus
- Expansion (EX):* repetition of word or phrase used by the student for grammatical accuracy
- General Information Giving (GIG):* presentation of new factual information
- Massed Repetition (MREP):* direction to students to perform an activity in unison
- Prospective Summary (PS):* description of upcoming events
- Simple Question (SQ):* presentation of a question with a specific answer or one-word response
- Specific Task Instruction (STI):* instruction for a particular activity
- Vocabulary Instruction (VI):* instruction regarding the meaning of a particular word or phrase

## Results



- ❖ EX was coded 93 times across the 5 transcripts accounting for 9.45% of the total codes. It was used 23.66% in Spanish, 72% in English, and 4.3% in both languages. EX was the fourth most frequently used code behind STI, SQ, and GIG.

Any questions? Please contact me at [enagler@clarku.edu](mailto:enagler@clarku.edu)

- ❖ Expansion was found to be a frequent tool of teachers during instruction among the defined codes which suggests that "expansion" could be a potential addition to taxonomic classifications of instructor language usage given its known value to language acquisition.

### Future Directions

- ❖ This method would ideally be used in a classroom setting to obtain more information about the context and routine of the learning environment.
- ❖ Visual and/or auditory information could be added to enhance the interpretation of the dialogue.
- ❖ More participants and coders would be needed to expand upon and improve the validity of these findings.
- ❖ As classrooms become increasingly more virtual, future taxonomic research can be conducted to understand the way instructional behavior is adapting to the new environment and if one-on-one teaching methods (like expansion) are being used with more or less frequency.

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