

## WEBINAR

# “The Making of Multilingual Elementary Schools in a Monolingual City”

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Wednesday, February 19, 2014

12pm – 1pm (EST)

11am-12pm (CST)



**Presentation:** Across the U.S., educational leaders and policymakers today struggle to develop language programs and explain the benefits of multilingualism. To examine these challenges at the local level, this study analyzed data from an 18-month ethnography documenting the development of an elementary (K-5) language immersion school in a predominantly monolingual city. Analyses focused on leaders’ and parents’ cultural scripts, or the discourses they employed during bottom-up planning processes. Findings demonstrate that the majority of leaders and diverse parents valued multilingualism as a right and resource for all students; however, parents’ discourses also stressed the importance of language as a marker of identity, as well as the importance of having quality academics and safe, secure schooling. In other words, cultural scripts beyond those about multilingualism shaped the implementation of—and parents’ choices for—language schools. Such results have implications for how school leaders establish, and sell, multilingual programming.

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**Lisa M. Dorner**, Assistant Professor at the University of Missouri-Columbia, received her Ph.D. in Human Development and Social Policy from Northwestern University. Her research centers on language policy and planning, educational policy implementation, and immigrant families, especially their integration in “new” spaces. In her work, she uses both qualitative and quantitative methods and has published in a variety of academic outlets, including: *American Educational Research Journal*, *American Journal of Education*, *Educational Policy* and the *Journal of Educational Change*. She also works with local agencies and educators to develop online curricula and conversations about the immigrant experience (see [www.lacesproject.org](http://www.lacesproject.org)).

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