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Editorial Introduction

The *Journal of Bilingual Education Research and Instruction* is committed to the exchange of educational data, studies, ideas, practices and information with researchers, practitioners, and policymakers in this public forum. It is published once a year and can be accessed by going to the TABE website homepage, TABE.org.

In this issue of the Journal, readers are invited to in-depth examination of research topics that frame our work as bilingual educators. The lead article, *Effective Vocabulary Instruction for Spanish-Speaking Students*, authored by a number of outstanding researchers including Elizabeth R. Howard from the University of Connecticut and Diana August from the American Institutes for Research, discuss the Vocabulary Instruction and Assessment for Spanish-speakers (VIAS) program that was initiated in order to develop and test the efficacy of three academic vocabulary interventions for Spanish-speaking ELLs across the grade levels, from K-8th grade. The second article, *Literacy Achievement in Two-Way Immersion: A focus on Majority Language Speakers*, Jeanne Sinclair, doctoral student at the University of Toronto, discusses a project that sought to create a literacy profile for non-ELL students in Two-Way Immersion (TWI) programs by examining between-group differences of non-ELL students in mainstream English programs and ELL students in TWI programs. The third article, *Literacy Discussions About Racial Discrimination and Segregation Among Bilingual Korean Kindergartners: Possibilities and Challenges*, So Jung Kim and Josefina Tinajero present proof from a study on how young bilingual Korean children can comprehend the social significance of racial discrimination and racial segregation.

The next set of articles of this issue examines pedagogical practices that have proven to be effective for EL and non-EL learners. Leading this section is an article by Allison Briceño from Texas Woman's University that explores the academic language development practices that three elementary teachers employed, in both English and Spanish, in a low-income, hypersegregated Dual Immersion program. Next, Carmina M. Martin, from The City College of New York, CUNY, focuses on *Bilingual Education in The New York State Spanish Spelling Bee* where she explores the discourse surrounding the New York State Spanish Spelling Bee as a case of practice regarding language policies. Next, Iliana Alanis and Maria G. Arreguin-Anderson from the University of Texas at San Antonio discuss the significance of interactive word walls for vocabulary development in early childhood Spanish/English dual language classrooms in their article, *Developing Spanish Word Walls: Three Adjustments to Consider*. Finally, Arthur Borgemenke and Melissa Arrambide from Texas A&M University-Commerce and Jennifer Miley, Garland ISD, examine the achievement gap of ELs compared to the Caucasian mainstream counterparts using a quantitative, causal-comparative analysis of BE and ESL programs in their article, *Analyzing English Language Learner Instruction Programs Using Standardized Student Achievement Test Scores*,

The issue concludes with a recently added section, "Research Briefs" that consists of short seminal pieces of research on Bilingual Education issues, research and concerns. Dr. Stephen Krashen,

Professor Emeritus, University of Southern California, who conceptualized and proposed this section for inclusion in the Journal, and Christy Lao, a student at San Francisco State University, contributes *Language Acquisition without Speaking and without Study*. The subject, in fact, disdained study! This manuscript represent our desire to continue to promote research-oriented briefs consistent with the emergent national emphasis of the *Journal of Bilingual Education Research and Instruction*.

The presentation of articles in the *Journal of Bilingual Education Research and Instruction* would not be possible without the dedicated professionals involved with the journal. Special thanks are due to all the members of the Editorial Review Board for their assistance in reviewing submitted manuscripts in a timely manner. Thanks are also due to the Editorial Assistant, Diana M. Bernal, to Margaret Carr, Technical Editor, and Jerry Urquiza, Technical Assistant. In addition, this issue would not be possible without the individuals who submitted manuscripts for publication consideration and those who were successful in having their manuscripts accepted for publication—a 30% acceptance rate for this issue. This issue reflects a broad depth of expertise in quantitative, qualitative, theoretical and pedagogical methodology all focused on enhancing the quality of bilingual education for children in the classroom.

Another TABE Journal issue on bilingual education research and practice will appear again in fall 2015. We encourage readers to join the growing number of scholars and practitioners from around Texas and the nation who are conducting research on the effectiveness of innovative approaches to teaching and learning for English learners in a wide variety of contexts, documenting the processes and impacts and disseminating their findings with others in this public forum.

Finally, if you will be attend the forthcoming 2014 Texas Association for Bilingual Education annual conference in McAllen, Texas, we would like to invite you to an *Information Session on TABE's Journal of Bilingual Education Research and Instruction* on Friday. Please check the conference program for date/time and place. Members of the editorial team will be there to answer any questions about the submission and review process. We would also like to invite interested scholars and educators to join our editorial advisory board. As part of our continued membership and emerging bilingual education professionals, doctoral students are especially welcome to conduct reviews and to also submit articles for review for publication consideration. We're looking forward to seeing you there.

Dr. Josefina V. Tinajero, Editor
The University of Texas at El Paso



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial Introduction by Dr. Josefina V. Tinajeroi

Effective Vocabulary Instruction for Spanish-Speaking Students
 Elizabeth R. Howard, Mariela M. Páez, Diane August, Igone Arteagoitia,
 Lianna Pizzo, Jennifer D. Green, Eileen M. González, & Lauren Artzi1

**Literacy Achievement in Two-Way Immersion: A Focus on Majority Language
 Speakers** Jeanne Sinclair.....17

**Literacy Discussions About Racial Discrimination and Segregation Among
 Bilingual Korean Kindergarteners: Possibilities and Challenges**
 So Jung Kim & Josefina V. Tinajero46

**Instructional Practices for Academic Language Development in Spanish and
 English in a Hypersegregated Dual Immersion Program**
 Allison Briceño.....77

Bilingual Education in The New York State Spanish Spelling Bee
 Carmina Makar Martin99

Developing Spanish Word Walls: Three Adjustments to Consider
 Iliana Alanís and Maria G. Arreguín-Anderson125

**Analyzing English Language Learner Instruction Programs Using Standardized
 Student Achievement Test Scores**
 Arthur J. Borgemenke, Melissa Arrambide and Jennifer Miley.....134

Research Brief
Language Acquisition Without Speaking and Without Study
 Christy Lao and Stephen Krashen.....146



Effective Vocabulary Instruction for Spanish-Speaking Students

by

Elizabeth R. Howard, University of Connecticut

Mariela M. Páez, Boston College

Diane August, American Institutes for Research

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Abstract

The populations of Latinos and English language learners (ELLs) in U.S. schools continue to grow, but both groups continue to experience notable achievement gaps, particularly in the domain of reading comprehension. Among all students, including ELLs, vocabulary has been found to be a key determinant of reading comprehension. In light of this finding, the Vocabulary Instruction and Assessment for Spanish-speakers (VIAS) program was initiated in order to develop and test the efficacy of three academic vocabulary interventions for Spanish-speaking ELLs across the grade levels, from kindergarten through 8th grade. All three interventions share the same three core features of the Graves four-part vocabulary framework, sheltered instruction, and native language support. In this paper, the authors provide an overview of these three features and discuss how they were incorporated in each of the three interventions.

Introduction

As authors Patricia Gándara and Frances Contreras stated in the introduction of their book, *The Latino education crisis: The Consequences of Failed Social Policies*, “Latinos are the largest and most rapidly growing ethnic minority in the country, but academically, they are lagging dangerously far behind” (Gándara & Contreras, 2010, p. 1). According to the U.S. Census Bureau (Ennis, Rios-Vargas, & Albert, 2011), from 2000 to 2010, the Latino population grew by 43%, compared with a 9.7% overall rate for the United States. Latinos currently constitute 16% of the population of the United States and it is projected that by 2050, this group will make up 30% of the population. Because Latinos are a growing segment of our population, it is especially concerning that Latino students struggle academically. Only about 50% graduate from high school, and a mere 10% have college degrees (Gándara & Contreras, 2010).

Along with the ongoing increase in the U.S. Latino population is a parallel increase in the population of English language learners (ELLs), or students who speak a language other than English at home and are in the process of acquiring proficiency in English. Between 1997 and 2009, the school enrollment of ELLs in the U.S. grew by 51%; whereas, the total school enrollment during the same time period grew by only 7% (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition [NCELA], 2011). This parallel increase in the population of ELLs and Latinos in the United States is not surprising, as the largest group of ELLs by far is Spanish-speakers, comprising 80% of the total ELL population (National Education Association [NEA], 2011). As is the case for Latinos, there is a substantial and well-documented achievement gap for ELLs. The results from the 2009 NAEP show that only 26% of 8th grade ELL students scored at or above basic proficiency in reading (the lowest percentage since 1998), compared to 78% of non-ELL students (the highest percentage in the same period of time; National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2009).

The struggle with reading interferes with the ability to do well academically because success in school requires the ability to read and comprehend a wide variety of materials. One key component of reading ability is vocabulary knowledge (Anderson & Freebody, 1981; Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2008; Chall, 1987). Students with more

extensive vocabularies tend to be better readers and achieve higher levels in school (Dutro & Helman, 2009). Consequently, students with limited vocabulary skills are more likely to struggle academically.

In examining the five areas of reading promoted by the National Reading Panel (2000), Goldenberg and Coleman (2010) determined that vocabulary is a key challenge for ELLs at all grade levels, frequently resulting in difficulty mastering academic content. Research has shown that vocabulary knowledge is fundamental for reading comprehension in a second language (Droop & Verhoeven, 2003; Lervåg & Aukrus, 2010; Nakamoto, Lindsey, & Manis, 2008; Proctor, Carlo, August, & Snow (2005); Proctor, August, Carlo, & Snow, 2006; Snow, Porche, Tabors, & Harris, 2007). For example, Proctor and colleagues (2005) conducted a study with fourth-grade Spanish-speaking ELLs and found that although English decoding skills (alphabetic knowledge and fluency) played an important role in predicting these students' English reading comprehension outcomes, they were less predictive than English vocabulary and English listening comprehension. In a second study with fourth-grade Spanish-speaking ELLs, the authors found that Spanish vocabulary also played a significant role in English reading comprehension (Proctor et al., 2006). The documented high correlation between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension for bilingual students points to the need for an instructional focus on vocabulary development.

Hiebert and Lubliner (2008) maintained that vocabulary students need to access content area material consisting of three forms of academic language—general academic, content-specific, and literary. General academic language is defined by these authors as the body of academic words “used for general academic functions such as analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating information across disciplines—words such as *observe*, *conclude*, *system*, and *process*” (p. 4). General academic vocabulary is not content-specific and is rarely a part of subject area instruction, even though these words often change their meanings, parts of speech, and morphological forms in different subject areas (Lubliner & Hiebert, 2011).

Because of the documented achievement gaps for Latinos and ELLs, the importance of vocabulary development in the attainment of reading skills, and the lack of interventions targeting academic vocabulary in particular, the Vocabulary Instruction and Assessment for Spanish speakers (VIAS) research initiative (www.cal.org/vias) developed three vocabulary interventions for native Spanish-speaking students in Grades K through 8. One intervention, the Kindergarten Language Study (KLS), focused on kindergarten students and explored the impact of an intervention curriculum delivered by classroom teachers alone or in conjunction with a linked family literacy program. The second intervention, Acquisition of Vocabulary in English (AVE), promoted the development of high frequency general academic vocabulary in primary grade ELLs through activities before, during, and after shared interactive reading of rich children's literature. The third intervention, Enhancing Vocabulary through Cognate Awareness (EVoCA), was a cognate-based academic vocabulary intervention for middle school students who explored the effects of monolingual English delivery versus cross-linguistic delivery with Spanish support. The curricula and measures for all three linked projects were developed, piloted, and refined in ongoing consultation with senior advisors, culminating in quasi-experimental trials.

All three VIAS interventions were based on the same three theoretical pillars: Michael Graves' four-part framework for vocabulary instruction (Graves, 2006; Graves, August, & Mancilla-Martinez, 2013), sheltered instruction for ELLs (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2012), and the role of first language skills in the development of English language and literacy skills for second-language learners (Cummins, 2000; Nagy, García, Durgunóglu, & Hancin-Bhatt, 1993).

First, the Graves four-part vocabulary instruction program consists of the following components: (a) frequent, varied, and extensive language experience; (b) teaching individual words; (c) teaching word-learning strategies for independent vocabulary acquisition; and (d) fostering word consciousness. The interventions across the three projects addressed all of these components by providing repeated exposure to the target words through a variety of activities and language modalities; teaching individual words in each unit; teaching the word learning strategies of morphemic awareness (roots and affixes), contexting, and cognate awareness; and helping students appreciate and value words through word play.

Second, sheltered instruction is a constellation of instructional practices that serve to scaffold learning for ELLs. A number of these practices were consistently found in the three intervention curricula, such as building background through connections to students' prior experiences and prior learning, including language objectives as well as content objectives, incorporating multimedia as well as the use of visual images and manipulatives, increasing the use of cooperative structures that enable students to talk with and learn from each other, and making explicit connections to the native language.

Finally, research on the acquisition of English language and literacy by Spanish-speaking ELLs has shown that a strong foundation in the native language can facilitate the development of second language and literacy skills (August & Shanahan, 2006). The use of students' native language skills was an integral part of the three VIAS interventions. For example, the KLS intervention connected a Spanish family literacy program with an English classroom curriculum by focusing on the same academic vocabulary and literacy skills in both languages. The AVE program taught young children about cognates and gave them practice in recognizing cognates they encountered in stories. The EVoCA program focused entirely on words that are cognates in English and Spanish and investigated the effects of instruction delivery solely in English or with Spanish support. By capitalizing on students' first language knowledge and skills in the English language arts classroom, the three interventions highlighted the role of the native language in the academic development of Spanish-speaking Latino students in the U.S.

The Kindergarten Language Study (KLS): Improving the Language and Literacy Skills of Spanish-English Bilingual Kindergarten Students

The Kindergarten Language Study (KLS) vocabulary enhancement program is unlike other early childhood intervention programs as it connects an English-language classroom curriculum with a Spanish-language family literacy program. These two separate intervention components are linked conceptually through focusing on targeting language and literacy skills in both languages and practically by attaching language and literacy development to the use of the same storybooks and vocabulary in English at school and Spanish at home.

The KLS classroom curriculum consists of four thematic units that were designed to be culturally relevant, link vocabulary instruction to rich context through the use of read-alouds, and provide multiple exposures to vocabulary words through review and reinforcement. In the quasi-experimental trial, the classroom teacher delivers this 16-week program four times a week for 20 minutes. Each lesson focuses on pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading activities designed to maximize the children's exposure to new words while also providing many opportunities for practice with expressive language tasks. Pre-reading activities include pre-teaching complex and simple vocabulary words by activating background knowledge relevant to the book being read. During-reading activities focus on reinforcing definitions, enhancing comprehension, and practice retelling stories. Post-reading activities include discussing vocabulary words between partners, engaging in multisensory activities related to word meanings, and enhancing word consciousness.

The KLS family literacy curriculum focuses on introducing parents to language and literacy concepts such as vocabulary, phonological awareness and decoding, extended discourse, and narrative retelling, while at the same time providing opportunities to engage in authentic language and literacy activities that naturally fit into the home context. The importance of rich language environments in the home is a prominent theme, encouraging parents to expose their children to frequent high quality language in Spanish.

This program took place once a month for two hours at the school site and was conducted by the researchers. Families were given the same vocabulary words and books used in the classroom, only in Spanish, and provided time to practice authentic strategies for using these materials to promote oral language development. For example, parents had an opportunity to read the book in small groups, to discuss new vocabulary words, and to make connections between the stories and their everyday lives.

Framework for Vocabulary Instruction

The first component of the Graves (2006; 2013) four-part vocabulary program, providing frequent and varied experiences, is an essential foundation for understanding new vocabulary words and concepts. The KLS classroom curriculum used high quality children's literature to provide these rich experiences. Vocabulary words were selected from culturally relevant books, engaged in discussion over multiple readings, and used pre-, during-, and post-reading strategies to build connections to context and promote rich discourse around words. Finally, multiple and varied reinforcement activities were provided as review for the vocabulary words taught.

The second component, teaching individual words, requires explicit and direct teaching of vocabulary. As most vocabulary exposure in early childhood is through implicit learning, this curriculum had to build a direct instruction component that teaches word definitions in an accessible format for young bilingual children. Pre-teaching words was the keystone approach to teaching new words. The pre-teaching activity utilized a seven-step process for exposing children to the word for the first time. This process relied on pictures to support child-friendly definitions and discussions of definitions within a particular context promoting children's understanding and use of words and their

meanings. In addition to explicitly teaching vocabulary words, there were intentional teaching strategies to reinforce these meanings through the read-aloud process.

Teaching word learning strategies, the third component, was incorporated in two ways: relying on first language strategies and promoting phonological and morphological awareness. For this curriculum, a certain percentage of the vocabulary words that were selected were cognates, or words that were similar in both Spanish and English. In addition, the seven-step pre-teaching vocabulary process included identification of the beginning sound of the word promoting phonological awareness. Finally, this process also included clapping out syllables of words to promote early morphological awareness.

The last component, developing word consciousness, requires promoting interest and excitement about words and their meanings. The KLS classroom curriculum promoted word consciousness through targeted review activities designed to play games with words interactively with children. Based on developmental theory, these games were tailored to young children by making the words meaningful to their own personal experiences.

Sheltered Instruction

The KLS program reflected a sheltered instruction framework through an explicit focus on language and strategies that help ELLs learn new vocabulary and understand the books that are being read while increasing students' academic language skills. First, an important aspect of this approach includes building background knowledge so that students can better understand the themes and story content for the different books. The teachers start every new book with a conversation regarding some key themes that would be encountered during the reading. For example, when reading the book *Click Clack Moo: Cows that Type*, the teacher asked students about a time when they really wanted something and what they did in order to get what they wanted. This led to a discussion that prepared students for understanding how in the story the cows go on strike and give an ultimatum to the farmer in the book. Second, in addition to building background knowledge, the intervention program provides specific instruction of vocabulary words, which comprises the language objectives for each lesson. Vocabulary words were taught using multiple strategies, including the use of visual scaffolds, activities to encourage students to talk about the words and their meanings, multi-sensory reinforcement of word meanings (e.g., kinesthetic, visual and auditory activities), and collaborative learning experiences (e.g., partner-based activities and whole group discussions). Third, teachers were trained in identifying students' needs and building on their home experiences to provide the scaffolding students require for successful comprehension of the books (Hansen-Thomas, 2008). Teachers could connect learning for students who read the book in Spanish at home and could support learning for all students by discussing the story and content of the books in the classroom.

Native Language Support

Finally, there was a focus on building on students' first language skills by promoting Spanish language use and reading in Spanish at home. As previously described, the KLS intervention connected a Spanish family literacy program with an English classroom curriculum through a focus on the same academic vocabulary and literacy skills in both languages. The intervention program used the same books in English and Spanish and the same vocabulary words were targeted in both languages. In addition, one third of the vocabulary words targeted during the program are cognates in Spanish and English. Students whose parents participated in the family intervention component had an opportunity to read the books in Spanish prior to classroom instruction with the same book in English. Teachers reported that students' exposure to the book in their home language increased participation and the level of conversation that these ELL students could have regarding the story plot and comprehension questions. In this way, the vocabulary program built on transfer from Spanish skills and reading in Spanish at home to English reading and comprehension at school.

Summary

Given the unique nature of this school and home-linked program, research was conducted examining the intervention program at three levels: children who received the linked classroom and family program, children who only received the classroom program, and children who received neither (control). Results from this research work support the effectiveness of this intervention program as students in the linked classroom and family program performed much better than the other groups (i.e., classroom only and control students). Additionally, we found that parents eagerly sought support to use Spanish at home; they increased the frequency of reading with their children at home after participating in the intervention program. These findings suggest that connecting the home and school contexts to maximize language exposure and explicit vocabulary instruction is a powerful, albeit underutilized, educational tool in an increasingly complex early childhood landscape.

Acquisition of Vocabulary in English (AVE)

The AVE program is a primary grade program designed to promote the development of academic vocabulary that appears frequently in grade-level text. The curriculum consists of five daily lessons per week delivered over eight weeks. Each 40-minute lesson is composed of two segments. The first segment focuses on content words such as *impression*, *survive*, and *delicate*; and the second segment focuses on connectives such as *because*, *meanwhile*, and *if*. In this article we focus on the first segment of the curriculum, in which four types of vocabulary words were taught: abstract non-cognates (e.g., *pride*, *profit*), abstract cognates (e.g., *impression*, *attitude*), concrete non-cognates (e.g., *motionless*, *fierce*), and concrete cognates (e.g., *delicate*, *singular*).

Three methods for helping ELLs acquire content vocabulary were used in this intervention—extended instruction, embedded instruction, and incidental learning, all of

which build on prior research with English-proficient students. Extended vocabulary instruction is characterized by “teaching that includes both contextual and definitional information, multiple exposures to target words in varied contexts, and experiences that promote deep processing of word meanings” (Coyne, McCoach, & Kapp, 2007, p. 74). In the AVE program, extended instruction consists of clear, student- friendly definitions and explanations for target words; questions and prompts to help students think critically about word meanings; examples of how words are used in other contexts; visual aids illustrating the meaning of words in authentic contexts other than the book in which the word was introduced; encouragement for students to pronounce, spell, and write about words; and opportunities for students to compare and contrast words. In embedded instruction, students are given access to word meanings through child-friendly definitions of the target words and in some cases a sentence that contextualizes the words’ meanings, but do not engage in the other activities associated with extended instruction (Penno, Wilkinson, & Moore, 2002). In the AVE program during embedded instruction, students listen to and read simple definitions of target words that were placed next to the target words (e.g., Rita started laughing and pointing as Chrysanthemum applied her name tag to her shirt. *Applied* means to put on. That means Rita started laughing and pointing as Chrysanthemum put on her nametag.). Incidental learning refers to learning some specific linguistic feature (e.g., vocabulary; morphology) when the listener or reader is primarily focused on understanding spoken speech or text rather than on acquiring vocabulary (Ellis, 2008). In studies that explore incidental learning, students are exposed to target words but do not receive explicit instruction (Elley, 1989). In the AVE program, words in the incidental learning condition were not directly instructed as words were in the extended condition, nor defined in context as words were in the embedded condition, but were just inserted into the text without additional attention.

Framework for Vocabulary Instruction

The first component of the Graves (2006) and Graves and colleagues (2013) four-part vocabulary program is providing rich and varied language experiences. In the AVE curriculum, all words were taught in the context of shared interactive reading of high quality, authentic children’s literature. There were many opportunities for teacher-student and student-student interactions about words before-, during-, and after-book reading. For example, before reading the books, teachers engaged students in conversations about target words; during reading, students answered questions about the text that required them to use the target words in context; and after reading, word meanings were reinforced through engaging activities like singing songs, playing games, and writing about the target words.

The second component, teaching individual words, entails explicit and direct teaching of vocabulary. In AVE, target words were pre-taught using picture cards. Each picture card included a teaching routine in which the target word was defined in English and Spanish, students repeated the word, and the teacher explained the connection between the meaning of the word and the picture, and then modeled the use of the word in a new context. Students worked in pairs to answer a question about the word and were given a sentence starter to help ensure they used the word in their response. In addition, target words were defined in context, as in the example above for the word *applied* and

reinforced through visual glossaries (which included a visual for the word, the Spanish translation, a sentence stem to encourage conversation, and a space for the student to draw a picture) and matching games.

Teaching word learning strategies, the third component, was incorporated by developing students' ability to transfer first language knowledge to understanding the meanings of English words that share cognate status with the corresponding Spanish words. Half of the words selected for instruction were cognates. Students learned about cognates through mini-lessons, during pre-teaching of target words when words were translated into students' first language, and through ongoing questioning about whether target words were cognates.

The last component, developing word consciousness, requires promoting interest and excitement about words and their meanings. In AVE, students were asked to "touch their nose" when they heard the word read aloud. Engaging reinforcement activities also helped promote excitement about and interest in words.

Sheltered Instruction and Native Language Support

Sheltered instructional techniques were used to support ELLs' understanding of content presented in their second language. Visuals and gestures were used to help ELLs understand word meanings; storybook pictures and ongoing questioning during read-alouds were used to support comprehension of connected text; and sentence starters and frames were used to support students' writing. Native language support was also an important component of the program. All target words were translated into Spanish, and students had opportunities to listen to some of the English stories read in Spanish through audio-taped recordings.

Summary

In summary, the AVE program made a valuable contribution to the research by exploring the efficacy of three different techniques of vocabulary instruction with young Spanish-speaking ELLs. There has been limited experimental research focused on developing vocabulary in ELLs (August & Shanahan, 2006) and no previous research that investigated the comparative efficacy of ELL vocabulary instructional techniques that require differing amounts of teacher instructional time. Findings from several experimental studies that tested the effectiveness of these three instructional methods found that extended and embedded instruction were successful with second grade ELLs from elementary schools with high concentrations of poverty. In the first study, ELLs made statistically significant gains in vocabulary knowledge in the extended and embedded conditions, but not when they were simply exposed to the words as was the case in the incidental learning condition. In addition, there were small to moderate gains on word decoding and word knowledge subtests of a standardized measure of reading (August, Artzi, Barr, & Carlson, in preparation). In the second study, ELLs in classrooms where teachers used extended and embedded techniques outperformed control students in classrooms in which teachers read the same books but did not employ these AVE instructional techniques (August, Artzi, Barr, & Carlson, in preparation). Findings from the studies have practical implications; although extended instructional techniques were

more effective in developing vocabulary in ELLs, the embedded instruction with multiple exposures was also relatively effective. This is important because there are many words ELLs do not know and embedded techniques require less instructional time.

EVoCA: Enhancing Vocabulary through Cognate Awareness

Responding to the need to promote the academic vocabulary development and reading comprehension of adolescent native Spanish speakers, the EVoCA project developed *Words in Motion*, a cognate-based, middle school curriculum that introduces academic vocabulary in meaningful contexts and promotes strategies for academic vocabulary acquisition (Howard, Dressler, & Martínez-Alvarez, 2012). Three versions were developed: (a) a monolingual English version, in which all of the words and activities were delivered entirely in English and there was no reference to the fact that all target words were cognates; (b) a cross-linguistic version, in which the Spanish counterparts of target words were taught alongside the English words, and explicit cognate awareness strategy instruction was provided; and (c) a bilingual version, in which the curriculum was taught bilingually, with alternating instruction in English and Spanish (for more detailed information, see Howard & González, 2013).

Using *Word Generation* (<http://wg.serpmedia.org/>) as a point of departure, *Words in Motion* was developed as a six-unit curriculum in which words were presented through student-centered topics, such as bullying or paying students to do well in school. Each unit introduced 10 target words, all of which were general academic vocabulary words and all of which were cognates in English and Spanish. The curriculum was carried out during language arts or a supplementary reading period, for approximately 50 minutes per day. With the exception of the first unit, which was a three-day introduction to word study, all of the units followed the same seven-day sequence. The sequence started with the smallest word parts (roots and affixes) and then introduced the whole words, along with strategies for figuring out the meaning of unknown words. Students were then guided to use the target words to explore and discuss the unit topic and to create and present a final product such as a public service announcement about bullying or a presentation to the principal about paying students to do well in school. Each unit ended with a review activity and a quiz, thus allowing teachers to monitor student performance and incorporate frequently missed words into the activities of subsequent units as well. The curriculum concluded with two days of comprehensive review, for a total of 40 days of instruction.

Framework for Vocabulary Instruction

Like the KLS and the AVE curricula, *Words in Motion* is based on Graves' four-part vocabulary framework, starting with the first component of rich and varied language experiences. The target words were introduced in context through integrated oral language, reading and writing activities, providing multiple opportunities for students to work with the words orally (e.g., debates) and in writing (e.g., persuasive essays) through a series of themes that were chosen to be engaging to Latino adolescents in particular. The intervention also made use of multimedia and incorporated songs, poems, and videos to increase the students' exposure to the target words through a variety of channels.

For the second component, teaching individual words, *Words in Motion* focused on explicitly teaching ten words per unit that were carefully selected based on their cognate status and their membership in the Academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000).

Furthermore, an attempt was made to select words that were higher frequency in Spanish than in English so that the Spanish-speaking students could leverage their knowledge of Spanish to help them unlock the meaning of the English words. Glossaries provided a student friendly definition for each word, the part of speech, and an example of the word in context with an accompanying picture. The cross-linguistic and bilingual versions of the curriculum provided this information in both English and Spanish.

Words in Motion incorporated word learning strategies related to cognate status, word parts, and context clues. Cognate strategy instruction helps students build their awareness that words in different languages are related in meaning (and sound and spelling as well) and that they can draw on their knowledge of Spanish to help unlock the meaning of words in English. Considering that cognates account for up to half of the vocabulary of an educated English speaker, teaching Spanish-speaking students about cognate awareness can be extremely powerful. The cognate strategy instruction was most evident in the cross-linguistic and bilingual versions of the curriculum, which taught the target words in both languages and explicitly addressed their cognate status. In addition to the teaching of whole words, the *Words in Motion* curriculum also focused on the teaching of word parts, namely Latin roots and affixes. Each unit started with an introduction to two new affixes and two new roots, and then went on to make connections between morphemes and whole words. Teaching students to pay attention to word parts to infer the meanings of words is another powerful approach for helping students increase their vocabulary and learn about the grammatical role of words (i.e., part of speech). Ideally, once students have learned the meaning of some of the most common roots and affixes and can identify them in text, their vocabulary will increase to include many additional words from the same families. It is this generative power of morphological awareness that makes it an extremely valuable strategy for students who may be lagging behind in vocabulary knowledge.

Using context clues to infer the meanings of unknown words was the final word-learning strategy taught in *Words in Motion*. Unit topics were introduced in context through a short video designed to activate background knowledge about the topic followed by a reading passage that used the words in context and provided practice with a specific context clue (e.g., synonym).

Finally, word consciousness was promoted in *Words in Motion* by selecting unit topics that were culturally and developmentally relevant to adolescent Latino students, incorporating multimedia and interactive activities throughout instruction, and encouraging students to make note of target words used outside of the classroom. These techniques were all employed to promote student engagement and lead to greater understanding and retention of the target words.

Sheltered Instruction

The *Words in Motion* curriculum relied heavily on a number of sheltered instruction techniques, including the incorporation of language and content objectives, attention to comprehensible input, a variety of grouping strategies, and the use of all four language modalities. First, all lessons included both content and language objectives that were shared with the students orally and in writing at the beginning and end of each lesson. Scaffolds such as sentence stems and graphic organizers were provided to

enhance attainment of language and content objectives. Second, efforts were made to ensure comprehensible input through the use of multimedia, visual aids, manipulatives, and in the case of the cross-linguistic and bilingual curricula, explicit connections to Spanish. Third, a variety of instructional approaches was used, ranging from whole-class, teacher-led instruction and modeling to small group work, pair work, and individual practice and assessment. Finally, throughout each unit, students were called upon to use the target words repeatedly through all four language modalities.

Native Language Support

The main goal of the EVoCA intervention was to make use of the native language resources that students bring to the classroom in order to enhance their learning experiences. As such, building on students' native language skills was an integral part of the *Words in Motion* curriculum and the project as a whole. Although the primary purpose of the study was to help Spanish speakers use their home language skills to support their English academic vocabulary development, the cross-linguistic and bilingual curricula promoted the development of Spanish vocabulary as well.

Summary

A quasi-experimental study was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the monolingual and cross-linguistic approaches relative to one another and to a no-treatment control group. Findings to date indicate that neither approach is more effective than the other, but both approaches are more effective than the no-treatment control in improving student knowledge of vocabulary in general and the words in the curriculum in particular (Howard, Arteagoitia, & McCoach, 2012). Moreover, participating teachers reported high levels of satisfaction from the sustained, year-long professional development activities that accompanied the implementation of the curriculum (Green, González, López-Velásquez, & Howard, 2013).

Conclusion

The VIAS program of research involved a variety of methods for developing the vocabulary of Spanish-speaking students beginning in kindergarten and extending through the middle grades. Across the programs, the approaches shared a number of core characteristics. First, they were multifaceted, incorporating all four components of the Graves model for effective vocabulary instruction. Fourth, although the interventions all built on effective practices for native-English speaking students, they also incorporated techniques found to be essential for ELLs, such as a greater emphasis on background knowledge and the use of cooperative learning structures to promote language practice. Third, the interventions capitalized on students' first language strengths and worked to make students aware of ways in which oral language and literacy skills in Spanish can serve them as they acquire English. In addition to these three core features that were the focus of this paper, the interventions were also intensive and required several months for full implementation. Finally, they were developmentally appropriate, with careful consideration given to the ages of the children involved. Given the noted findings of the

three VIAS interventions, these core characteristics seem essential for vocabulary instruction for Spanish-speaking students across the grade levels.

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**Literacy Achievement in Two-Way Immersion:
A Focus on Majority Language Speakers**

by

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Abstract

This project sought to create a literacy profile for non-ELL/LEP students in TWI programs by examining between-group differences of non-ELL/LEP students in mainstream English programs and ELL/LEP students in TWI programs. The STAAR data selected for this study were from students enrolled in either TWI or mainstream classrooms of students who were in third, fourth, or fifth grades in the 2012-2013 school year. The data included each student's STAAR score, education program (TWI or non-TWI), ELL/LEP status, grade level, and socioeconomic status. The first question asked, Do the majority language TWI participants perform at the same level as their monolingual (mainstream classroom) peers? The results were $p < .001$ with TWI performing at a higher mean ratio score. There was more than a 6-point mean ratio score difference, with non-ELL/LEP TWI students equaling 78.87 and non-ELL/LEP in mainstream classrooms equaling 72.49. The second question asked, *How do majority language students compare to the minority-language students in the same program?* Of all 54 ELL/LEP students in the TWI program whose data were analyzed, only one of these students met the advanced standard, compared with approximately 40% of all non-ELL/LEP students in the TWI program ($n = 25$). Also asked was *How are students from different socioeconomic backgrounds performing?* Findings revealed that the TWI program appeared to improve non-ELL/LEP literacy achievement and allowed them to make considerable gains in reading achievement compared with their economically disadvantaged peers in non-TWI settings.

Introduction

The number of two-way immersion (TWI) programs, also known as two-way dual language programs, has grown substantially over recent years, numbering over 400 throughout the U.S. as of 2007 (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2007). These programs integrate students from diverse language backgrounds and instruct the curriculum in two languages (in the case of this project, Spanish and English). Approximately half of the students in TWI are classified as English Language Learners/Limited English Proficient (ELL/LEP)¹, which indicates that they have not yet acquired grade-level English language and literacy. The rest of the students in the TWI program are majority language speakers (or non-ELL/LEP), students whose home language is English, and/or their English abilities are on par with their grade level.

Relatively few investigations to date focus on the latter group's literacy. This paper provides a numerical profile (Ford, Cabell, Konold, Invernizzi, & Gartland, 2013) of third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade non-ELL/LEP students' literacy in one Central Texas

¹ Of special note is the use of the term *ELL/LEP, English Language Learner*. *ELL*, is the term currently in use for Texas students who are learning English as a second language and who have not acquired English proficiency. However, the older term, *Limited English Proficiency*, remains in use by government agencies and so it is present in the data. Wherever possible I have used *ELL/LEP* to be inclusive of both terms so as to avoid confusion. Chapter 29 of the Texas education Code uses the term *LEP*; Chapter 89 of the code changed it to *ELL*. To avoid confusion this study used both (Dr. Monica Lara, personal correspondence).

school district's TWI program. I analyzed these students' scores on the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) reading tests and compared them with ELL/LEP students in the same program, as well as grade-level peers in English-only settings. My analysis asked the following questions: *Do the majority language TWI participants perform at the same level as their monolingual (mainstream classroom) peers? How do majority language students compare to the minority-language students in the same program?* I also investigated the socioeconomic data trends by asking, *How are students from different socioeconomic backgrounds performing?*

Literature Review

Two-way immersion (TWI) programs are a type of a strong, or additive, bilingual model, designed to build on a student's language repertoire by developing both languages through immersion style content instruction (Genesee, 1987). This is in contrast to subtractive programs such as English as a second language (ESL), structured English immersion (SEI), and transitional bilingual education (TBE) that seek to remediate what some educators wrongly view as minority language students' "language deficits" (May, 2008). TWI is the only educational model developed specifically to meet ELL/LEP students' needs that purposefully integrates equal numbers of minority and majority language speakers in a single classroom to develop bilingualism and biliteracy, learn academic content, and develop cross-cultural competence (De Jong, Barse, Tedick, Christian, & Fortune, 2011; Lindholm-Leary, 2001).

TWI requires teachers who have a specially developed skill set to build on such theoretical foundations as the Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) between first and subsequent languages (Cummins, 1981, 2000), the relationship between deep and surface language teaching (Shuy, 1981), academic language and basic interpersonal communication (Cummins, 1981), and the role of language monitoring and feedback (Krashen, 1981; Lyster, 2004). Because there are opportunities for authentic language use and students are language models, less language fossilization and plateauing occur than in a traditional foreign language classroom (De Jong & Howard, 2009). Many research studies (Barnett, Yarosz, Thomas, Jung, & Blanco, 2007; Cobb, Vega, & Kronauge, 2006; De Jong, 2004a; Dow, 2008; Lindholm-Leary & Block, 2009; Lindholm-Leary & Hernández, 2011; Lopez & Tashakkori, 2006; Nakamoto, Lindsey, & Manis, 2010; Pérez & Flores, 2002; Schouten, 2006; Thomas & Collier, 2002, 2004) describe the academic achievement for ELL/LEP students in TWI programs, at a minimum, to be at least as high as subtractive programs, and commonly higher.

In documenting TWI programs, Howard and Sugarman (2007) found successful programs are not "one size fits all"; they can vary in terms of the proportion of each language used in content instruction along with the language used in the sequence of literacy instruction (see also Christian, Montone, Lindholm, & Carranza et al., 1997; Cummins, 2000; Lindholm-Leary & Hernández, 2001).

Some scholars have posited that learners from both language groups in TWI programs can be taught literacy in both languages in the early elementary years (Cummins, 2000; Escamilla et al., 2013). In sum, successful TWI programs "reflect both differences in community needs as well as the population served by the schools"

(Christian et al., 1997, p. 116). The key for a successful program seems to be that student needs drive program decisions (Howard & Sugarman, 2007).

Culture and TWI

In the United States, assimilation is a metanarrative of the “authentic” American experience, exemplified by the “melting pot” analogy (Nieto, 2009). However, assimilation can cause feelings of frustration, a disconnection between generations, and the silencing of students’ cultural experiences and linguistic resources in schools. TWI allows minority language students to maintain, celebrate, and develop their home language and culture by striving “to promote positive multicultural environments and attitudes” (De Jong & Howard, 2009, p. 84), offering an opportunity for minority language students to maintain and promote their cultures in the school environment, thus majority language students can become more culturally aware. Block (2012) found that minority language students in TWI indeed “grew substantially in their relationships within a Spanish-speaking family and their communication with community members during their years in elementary school” (p. 252).

Cross-cultural understanding is a main tenet of two-way immersion. Ladson-Billings (1995) argued that when students feel that their cultures are valued, student engagement and learning grows. Teacher preparatory programs that emphasize diversity training and the development of culturally relevant pedagogy can help teachers fully meet the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students (Flores & Smith, 2009; Sheets, Araujo, Calderon, & Indiatsi, 2010). TWI is designed to do more than simply provide a single space for diverse learners to come together. These classrooms can provide a third space in which the invisible tensions between minority and majority languages become visible: students “confront, speak about, and interactively redefine the relationship between the two languages” (Hadi-Tabassum, 2006).

Regardless of cultural background, the majority of TWI participants share one motivation in common: the desire to be bilingual and biliterate (Whiting & Feinauer, 2011). However, Genera (2010) found that students from minority language families are motivated to maintain their heritage language and cultural identity; whereas English-speaking families, on the other hand, tended to be motivated by financial opportunities, such as access to jobs that require bilingualism. In light of these differences, gaining cross-cultural competence is difficult to achieve. Bourdieu’s theory of cultural capital predicts that students of dominant culture are successful academically at least in part because their culture aligns with teaching and the testing culture (Lee & Bowen, 2006). Currently, the majority of U.S. ELL/LEP students served by bilingual education programs are Spanish-speaking immigrants, approximately half of whom live in poverty (Capps, Fix, Murray, Passel, & Herwantoro, 2005). Thus cultural differences among participants are compounded by class differences. Due to the cultural nature of schools and tests, even TWI programs that are designed explicitly for the benefit of diverse learners may not address deeper cultural mismatches.

Biliteracy

A recurring debate in U.S. educational policy for ELL/LEP students centers on monolingual versus bilingual literacy instruction. In search of conclusive results, five meta-analyses in the past 30 years have focused on this theme (Greene, 1997; Rolstad, Mahoney, & Glass, 2005; Shanahan & August, 2006; Slavin & Cheung, 2005; Willig, 1985; all cited in Goldenberg (2010).

These meta-analyses all found that second language (L2) literacy is indeed supported by literacy development in the primary language (L1). Goldenberg (2010) stated that literacy development in the primary language may be one of the strongest findings within the broad spectrum of educational research (p. 22). High L1 literacy and academic knowledge strongly predicts L2 literacy and academic achievement (Cummins, 2011; Genesee & Lindholm-Leary, 2012; Riches & Genesee, 2006). The use of minority L1 in classrooms remains controversial despite the ample literature demonstrating its benefits. Cummins (2011) recommended a concerted, explicit effort to use and promote L1 in the classroom, which “challenges the devaluation of [immigrants’] language and culture within the wider society” (p. 1987).

As difficult as it is to learn to read one’s first language, the process of becoming literate in two languages is even more complicated (Shanahan & August, 2008). Yet TWI programs have to navigate even more complex factors; not only are ELL/LEP students learning to read in two languages (e.g., Spanish as L1 and English as L2), but non-ELL/LEP students are simultaneously learning to read in two languages (e.g., English as L1 and Spanish as L2). These students’ bilingualism and biliteracy abilities are “highly complex and fluid” (Hornberger & Link, 2012, p. 264) as they progress along the continuum of biliteracy.

Assessment in Multilingual Settings

Of great concern is the achievement gap between ELL/LEP students and non-ELL/LEP students (Abedi & Gándara, 2006; Borsato & Padilla, 2008; Choi & Wright, 2006; De Jong & Howard, 2009; Fairbairn & Fox, 2009; Sánchez et al., 2013; Sandberg & Reschly, 2010; Solano-Flores, 2008; Young et al., 2008). Current federal law mandates that all students must participate in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) high-stakes assessments, ostensibly “so that schools can address [ELL/LEP students’] needs and raise their achievement to at least adequate levels” (Gándara & Baca, 2008, p. 213).

Although addressing minority language students’ plight is noble, it has served to further discriminate against these students. Many researchers have argued that the current testing paradigm conflates content assessment and language assessment; and because of construct-irrelevant variance, in which the construct actually assessed (language) is different from the construct intended for assessment (content), a student’s language abilities affect academic performance in complex ways (Abedi, 2004a; Cummins, 2000; Fairbairn & Fox, 2009; Solano-Flores, 2008, Sanchez et al., 2013;). Thus, a given assessment may lack validity, as “verbal and quantitative reasoning skills are measured less precisely for ELL/LEP students than they are for non-ELL/LEP students” (Lakin & Lai, 2012, p. 151).

A full linguistic profile in all four domains (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) in the two languages is necessary to understand ELL/LEP students' progress on the continuum of biliteracy, yet it is rarely done (Solano-Flores, 2008). The current testing paradigm is "one size fits all" (Abedi, Hofstetter, & Lord, 2004b) regardless of language background, even though ELL/LEP students require between four and seven years to reach grade-level standards in English literacy achievement (Bialystok, 2002).

Most assessments taken by ELL/LEP students are constructed for native English speakers (Borsato & Padilla, 2008) using monolingual standards, and are usually normed on English-speaking students (Solano-Flores, 2008); thus minority language speakers tend to score lower on English standardized tests than monolingual peers. Sometimes these "inaccurate" results (Borsato & Padilla, 2008) are used to make retention decisions, and minority language speakers are disproportionately penalized for failing (Menken, 2011), framed as "problems" by the results and interpretation of these scores (Koyama & Menken, 2013), and even identified for special education (Borsato & Padilla, 2008, Sanchez et al., 2013).

Although some states do offer primary language assessments, test development tends to start with the English version; its mere translation to the minority language can reduce the test's validity and reliability (Lara, 2010). Cultural capital may be represented in assessment, despite translation or even transadaptations, as indicated by Nelson-Barber and Trumbull (2007), "Standardized tests can lack validity for many students from non-dominant communities who do speak English [as an L1]" (p. 138). Whereas the current testing mentality sees cultural background as a "nuisance variable" in validity testing (Abedi & Gándara, 2006), Solano and Trumbull (2003) argued that "culture-free tests cannot be constructed because tests are inevitably cultural devices" (p. 9). These scholars argued for cultural awareness to be a critical aspect of the entire assessment process (Del Rosario Basterra, Trumbull, & Solano-Flores, 2010).

STAAR Test

According to the Texas Education Agency (TEA, 2011), STAAR is a "rigorous program" that focuses on making sure that students are ready for "subsequent grades and courses and, ultimately, for college and career" (STAAR General Brochure). Texas mandates STAAR assessments for all Texas public school students in Grades 3 through 12. Students in Grades 3 through 8 take the STAAR tests in reading and math every year, writing in Grades 4 and 7, science in Grades 5 and 8, and social studies in Grade 8. The third-grade test has 5 to 6 passages, 48 questions, and a total reading load of approximately 3,400 words. The fourth-grade test has 6 to 8 passages, 52 questions, and a total reading load of approximately 3,900 words. The fifth-grade test has 6 to 8 passages, 54 questions, and a reading load of approximately 4,100 words. All exams test students' ability to read and understand the genres of fiction, literary nonfiction, poetry, expository, procedural, and media literacy. The fourth- and fifth-grade tests include a dramatic passage, and paired passages of multiple genres that treat the same theme (STAAR Reading Test Designs, Grades 3, 4, and 5).

Any Spanish-speaking ELL/LEP is eligible to take the STAAR reading exam in Spanish in Grades 3 to 5. Non-ELL/LEP students who are in TWI programs are also eligible for Spanish-language testing (Texas Education Agency, 2011, Student

Assessment Division, Training on the LPAC Decision-Making Process for the Texas Assessment Program). Spanish-language tests are transadaptations, rather than translations, designed to create a less culturally and linguistically biased assessment.

STAAR reliability. A test’s reliability is the expectation that multiple administrations of the same test yield similar results. The TEA provides reliability data in several ways, but the primary method is by measuring internal consistency, which correlates students’ responses to questions of the same construct within a single test. In other words, if a student understands sensory language, it is assumed he or she will correctly answer most of the questions on that construct. This aspect can be measured with Cronbach’s alpha; values of 0.8 to 0.9 are good, and those above 0.9 are excellent. From the results of internal reliability for the 2012 spring administration, overall, as seen in Table 1, STAAR reliability coefficients are good or excellent. However, in all groups, White students had higher reliability ratings than Hispanic students.

Table 1

STAAR 2012 Mean p-Values and Internal Consistency Values by Reporting Category and Content Area

	Grade 3	Grade 4
English Reading–Total Group	.891	.890
English Reading–Hispanic	.879	.877
English Reading–White	.884	.880
Spanish Reading–Total Group	.869	.885
Spanish Reading–Hispanic	.869	.884
Spanish Reading–White	.901	.926

Other reliability data provided by the TEA are classic standard error of measurement, which measures chance error such as student guessing; conditional standard of measurement, which measures how accurate the band score is for the number of correct answers; and accuracy of classification, which identifies how accurately the scoring system classifies students based on their test scores (i.e., advanced, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory). Because correlations between students’ scores on STAAR and other tests are not provided, and because the test is completely confidential, one cannot assume that the commonly understood definition of reliability applies, in other words, that a test is “consistent and dependable” (Abeywickrama & Brown, 2010, p. 27).

STAAR validity. TEA provides validity evidence in five categories. *Test content* validity is the extent to which a test measures the content it purports to measure. The evidence TEA provides for content validity is the process of the development of the test: to write items and build tests on pre-defined criteria; review items more than once for appropriateness of content and bias; and perform field tests on items and review the field test data (STAAR Technical Digest, p. 66).

Response processes are the cognitive processes necessary to answer a test item. Unlike reading tests in the upper grades, elementary reading tests are exclusively given in multiple-choice format, which the TEA unconvincingly claims is given “because it most

closely resembles what students typically experience in classroom testing” (TEA, Chapter 4, p. 112).

If the internal consistency (reliability) is high for all subpopulations, the TEA states that the *internal structure* has a high level of homogeneity and therefore is valid. TEA states that there is high comparability between the Spanish and English language versions of the Texas assessments. However, the 2007 reference cited by TEA in support of this claim (Davies, O’Malley, & Wu, 2007) may not be accurate, as Texas overhauled the previous assessment system (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, or TAKS), which began by STAAR in 2012.

An analysis of the relationship between scores on two measures is known as *criterion-related validity*. TEA cites research the agency has performed on the relationships between STAAR and the SAT and ACT, grade correlation studies, the correlation between STAAR EOC (end-of-course) and college courses, the relationship of exams in a given grade across content areas, and STAAR-to-TAKS comparisons. However, the actual research studies were not named nor were available as of the time of writing on the TEA website or via any of the links; the only information available is the timeline of the process of standards-setting, which ends in Fall 2014.

The final factor in test validity provided by the TEA is *consequences of testing* (also known as *washback*). TEA claims that STAAR is designed to have an intended consequence on “curriculum, instructional content, and delivery strategies” (Standard Technical Processes, p. 68); however TEA also claims it is too soon to study unintended consequences (such as curriculum narrowing) which “typically occurs after a program has been in place for some time and is intended to continue in future years” (STAAR Chapter 4, p. 118).

In sum, the information on the TEA’s website about the five measures of STAAR validity do not, in their current state, suffice to clearly demonstrate this test’s validity. Despite these concerns, this study uses STAAR data to develop a literacy profile of TWI participants because it is an assessment administered consistently across the state, which plays an important role in students’ school careers.

Methodology

This study tested the following non-directional null hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: There will be no statistically significant difference in STAAR reading scores between English-speaking students in TWI programs and monolingual English programs.

Hypothesis 2: There will be no significant difference in STAAR reading scores between students who are ELL/LEP students and those who are not ELL/LEP students.

The following directional hypothesis was also tested:

Hypothesis 3: There will be a statistically significant difference in STAAR reading scores between students who qualify for free or reduced lunch and those who do not qualify.

Research Setting and Participants

The sites for data collection were selected using “typical case sampling” (Teddle & Fen Yu, 2007). The research sites were three elementary schools in a suburban Central Texas school district. The STAAR data selected for this study were from students enrolled in either TWI or mainstream classrooms of students who were in third, fourth, or fifth grades in the 2012-2013 school year. The data included each student’s STAAR score, education program (TWI or non-TWI), ELL/LEP status, grade level, and socioeconomic status. All this information is housed in the Texas’ Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) database.

Variables

The dependent variable in this study was the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) scores. The independent variables were the educational program (TWI or non-TWI), ELL/LEP status, and socioeconomic status.

STAAR reading score. STAAR provides three different types of scores: raw, percent, and scale scores. The TEA states that the scale score takes into account the difficulty of the questions, by using the Rasch scale (TEA, 2011-2012 Technical Digest, “Chapter 3, Standard Technical Processes”). By analyzing responses in field-tested questions the agency decides each question’s difficulty and sets the scale accordingly. The Technical Digest states that scale scores may be used “across forms and test administrations” (p. 49), and can follow an individual student’s progress, or compare the same grade level from year to year. What remains uncertain is the accuracy of the scale score. For example, whether a third grade student answers the 20 most difficult questions correctly, or the 20 easiest questions correctly, he achieves a 1331 scaled score; thus, it is unclear how the scaled score does actually adjust for difficulty level. Perhaps the scaling process assumes that a student who answers the 20 most difficult questions correctly *also* answers the 20 easiest questions correctly, although this is not addressed in the STAAR Technical Digest.

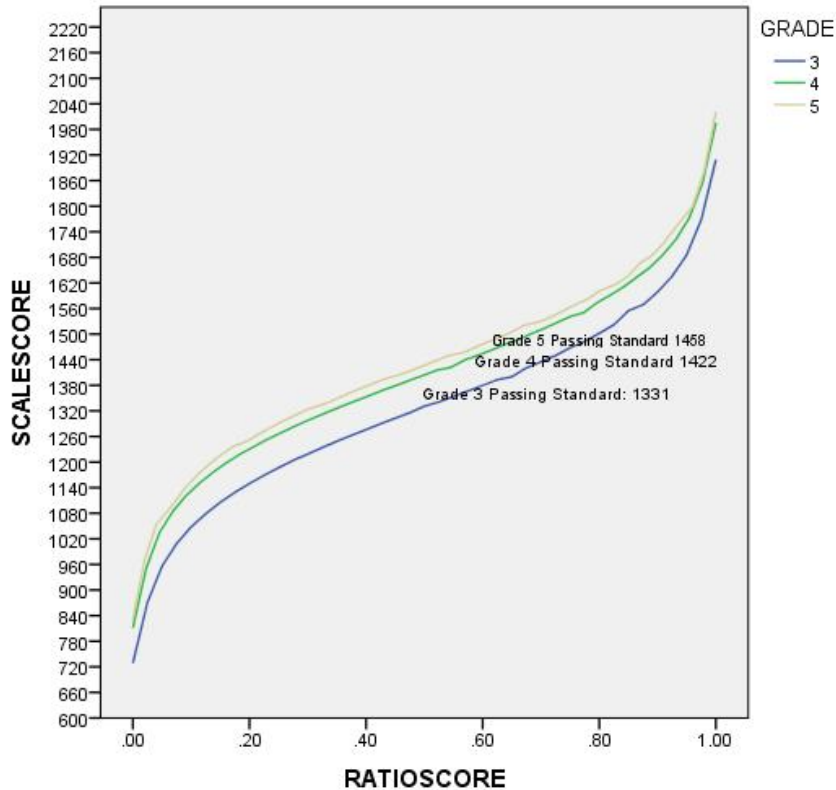


Figure 1. Relationship between STAAR reading scale scores and ratio scores

Beyond the ease/difficulty issue, scale values are not appropriate for use when grouping data across grade levels/cohorts (for example, creating a subgroup of students in Grades 3 through 5), because the range of the scale and the relationship between the ratio score and scale score change across grade levels. Figure 1 is a graph created from the Grades 3-5 Raw Score Conversion Tables and demonstrates the relationship between ratio score (x-axis) and scale score (y-axis). At the outer ends of the ratio curve, the curve is steeper than the middle, meaning that there is a larger difference in the scale score at the outer range. For example, in third grade a student gains 10 scale points between getting her 20th and 21st question right. However, she gains 83 scale points between the 38th and 39th question. The nature of the scaling process results in a lack of compatibility with means analyses (*t*-tests and ANOVA) of multi-grade groups, as outliers can create more influence in the means analysis than desired. Thus, STAAR percent test scores were treated as ratio scores for the purpose of this study. Data can be classified as ratio when the measuring proportion, magnitude, or count has an absolute zero, that is, the absence of what is being measured (Stevens, 1996). In essence, there are no negative scores. Using percent test scores as ratio scores allows for a continuous value that can be analyzed across grade levels. Although ratio scores may have some undesired variability in terms of test form and test administration difficulty, they are utilized here because of their relatively consistent values.

Education program. The PEIMS database has data on students' participation in educational programs. For non-ELL/LEP students, participation is coded as Dual

Language Immersion/Two-Way or Parent or Guardian Has Requested Placement of a Non-ELL/LEP Student in the Bilingual Program. For ELL/LEP students in the mainstream English classroom, the participation is coded as Parent or Guardian Has Approved Placement of an LEP Student in The Bilingual Program, or Student Does Not Participate in the Bilingual Education Program.

ELL/LEP status. According to the TEA, ELL/LEP students are those whose “primary language is other than English and whose English language skills are such that [they have] difficulty performing ordinary classwork in English.” Students are identified as ELL/LEP when they enroll in school and if they indicate on the home language survey that a language other than English is spoken at home. They are also identified if they score below proficient on a norm-referenced English Oral Language Proficiency Test (OLPT). The student was attending a Grade K through 12 classroom and also scored below the 40th percentile on an English reading test in Grades 2 through 12. The ELL/LEP status is classified in the PEIMS database under “LEP Indicator Code.” These analyses do not include students who are ELL/LEP or in monitoring status

Socioeconomic status (SES). Students who qualify for free or reduced lunch are considered to be of a low socioeconomic status (SES). In Texas, this is an income of up to 185% of the federal poverty guidelines, or an annual income below \$49,969 for a family of five. Students’ SES status is available in the PEIMS database under Economic Disadvantage Code.

Analysis Plan

A *t*-test examines between-group differences of non-ELL/LEP students in TWI and mainstream classrooms. A second *T*-test examines between-group differences of ELL/LEP and non-ELL/LEP students in TWI programs. Finally, a two-way ANOVA examines between-group differences to determine main effects of program (TWI/non-TWI) and/or socioeconomic status (EcoDis / non-EcoDis) on STAAR tests. Because there are multiple *t*-tests and ANOVAs, to reduce Type I error Bonferroni’s adjustment is used to determine the *a priori* alpha level, $p < .0125$, which is the original alpha level ($p < .05$) divided by the number of tests, which is four (Bland & Altman, 1995). To be significant, the result must be less than the adjusted level of $p < .0125$.

Analysis

This project sought to create a literacy profile for non-ELL/LEP students in TWI programs by examining between-group differences of non-ELL/LEP students in mainstream English programs and ELL/LEP students in TWI programs. It also examines the effects of low socioeconomic status. Specifically the research questions are: Do majority language TWI participants perform at the same level on a state reading assessment as their non-ELL/LEP peers in a mainstream English classroom? How do non-ELL/LEP students’ reading scores compare to the ELL/LEP students in the TWI program? Are students from different socioeconomic backgrounds performing at similar levels? The findings are presented in this order.

Program Differences (Non-ELL/LEP Students in TWI and Mainstream Classrooms)

The first analysis looked at between-group differences on STAAR ratio scores of non-ELL/LEP students in both TWI programs and monolingual English programs. Total students in this analysis were $n = 761$, with $n = 63$ students in TWI and $n = 698$ in mainstream classrooms.

An independent t -test was run with the education program as the independent variable and the ratio score as the dependent variable. Levene's test showed that equal variances could not be assumed ($p < .01$), so the appropriate t -test results were used. The results, as shown in Table 2, were significant ($p < .001$) with TWI performing at a higher mean ratio score. This result supported a rejection of the null hypothesis and suggested more than a 6-point mean ratio score difference, with non-ELL/LEP TWI students' = 78.87 and non-ELL/LEP in mainstream classrooms = 72.49.

Table 2

*T-Test Results for Non-ELL/LEP students in TWI and English classrooms
(independent variable: education program, dependent variable: ratio score)*

Group Statistics	Two-Way		<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	Std. Error				
	Dual					Mean				
Ratio Score	No		698	72.49	17.124%	0.648%				
	DL Imm/2w		63	78.87	11.704%	1.475%				
Independent Samples Test	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		<i>t</i> -test for Equality of Means							
	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i> (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
Ratio Score	Equal variances assumed	11.893	.001	-2.898	759	.004	-6.384%	2.203%	-10.709%	-2.060%
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.964	87.981	.000	-6.384%	1.611%	-9.585%	-3.183%

The number of students in both groups who met the passing standard and the advanced standard are presented in Table 3. The percentage of TWI participants who met the passing and advanced standards appeared to be at least 10 percentage points higher than the non-TWI students, with the exception of one group: a greater percentage of non-TWI students met the advanced standard in Grade 4 than did TWI students.

Table 3*Percentage Meeting Passing and Advanced Standards and Mean Ratio Scores*

Non-TWI and Non-ELL/LEP	<i>N</i>	Met Passing Standard	Met Advanced Standard	Mean Ratio Score
Grade 3	231	87%	25%	70.64
Grade 4	210	83%	32%	73.48
Grade 5	257	84%	28%	73.35
TWI and Non-ELL/LEP	<i>N</i>	Met Passing Standard	Met Advanced Standard	Mean Ratio Score
Grade 3	24	96%	38%	76.67
Grade 4	22	100%	27%	77.55
Grade 5	17	94%	59%	83.71

Language Background Differences (ELL/LEP and non-ELL/LEP in TWI classrooms)

The next independent *t*-test analysis explored the performance of ELL/LEP and non-ELL/LEP students in TWI classrooms, with language background as the independent variable and ratio score as the dependent variable. This analysis included students who took the STAAR in English or Spanish. An assumption was made that these were equivalent tests. Total students in this analysis were $n=109$, with $n=46$ ELL/LEP students and $n=63$ non-ELL/LEP students.

In examining the results, the Levene's test shows that equal variances cannot be assumed ($p < 0.05$), so the appropriate *t*-test results were used. The independent *t*-test (Table 4) results appear to show a between-group difference ($p < .001$) between the two groups of language speakers and a 28-point mean difference between the two groups. This supports a rejection of the null hypothesis.

Table 4

*T-Test Results for ELL/LEP and Non-ELL/LEP Students in TWI Program
(Independent Variable: ELL/LEP Status, Dependent Variable: Ratio Score)*

Group Statistics	ELL/LEP	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
Ratio Score	No	63	78.87	11.704%	1.475%
	ELL/LEP	46	50.87	16.601%	2.448%

Independent Samples Test	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
Ratio Score	Equal variances assumed	7.825	.006	10.333	107	.000	28.003%	2.710%	22.631%	33.376%
	Equal variances not assumed			9.800	76.298	.000	28.003%	2.857%	22.313%	33.694%

The number of students in both groups who met the passing standard and the advanced standard are presented in Table 5. The percentage of non-ELL/LEP students who met the passing standard is at least 44 percentage points higher than ELL/LEP students. A full 100% of the non-ELL/LEP students met the passing standard in the fourth grade; whereas, only 37% of ELL/LEP students did. It appears that 38% of third grade non-ELL/LEP students and 27 of fourth grade non-ELL/LEP students met the advanced standard while only 4% of third grade ELL/LEP students and 0% of fourth grade ELL/LEP students did. Fifth grade TWI/LEP results were provided but could not be included in the comparison because insufficient fifth grade ELL/LEP student scores were available ($n=2$).

Table 5*Percentage Meeting Passing and Advanced Standards and Mean Ratio Scores*

TWI and Non-ELL/LEP	<i>N</i>	Met Passing Standard	Met Advanced Standard	Mean Ratio Test Score
Grade 3	24	96%	38%	76.67
Grade 4	22	100%	27%	77.55
Grade 5	17	94%	59%	83.71

TWI and Non-ELL/LEP	<i>N</i>	Met Passing Standard	Met Advanced Standard	Mean Ratio Test Score
Grade 3	35	52%	4%	52.04
Grade 4	19	37%	0%	48.95
Grade 5	2	50%	0%	50.67

Socioeconomic Background Differences (Non-ELL/LEP Students in TWI and Mainstream)

This ANOVA analysis was of between-group differences of non-ELL/LEP students from economically disadvantaged (EcoDis) and non-economically disadvantaged (non-EcoDis) backgrounds in TWI classrooms and mainstream classrooms. The total number scores was $n = 761$.

Table 6 show n means for groups as well as means and standard deviations by group. Non-ELL/LEP economically disadvantaged students in the TWI program were the smallest group, with $n = 10$, but this group was large enough to merit analysis ($n > 5$).

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for non-ELL/LEP Students (independent variables: EcoDis/TWI, dependent variable: ratio score)

TwoWayDual	EcoDis	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
No	No	76.19%	14.777%	507
	Yes	62.67%	18.995%	191
	Total	72.49%	17.124%	698
DL Imm/2w	No	80.49%	10.802%	53
	Yes	70.30%	13.132%	10
	Total	78.87%	11.704%	63
Total	No	76.59%	14.494%	560
	Yes	63.05%	18.796%	201
	Total	73.02%	16.829%	761

The two-way ANOVA (Tables 7 and 8) appears to show that for non-ELL/LEP students, only socioeconomic status is significant after Bonferroni's correction. Being economically disadvantaged (EcoDis) is a statistically significant factor with $p < .001$, and partial eta-squared, $\eta_p^2 = .023$, which can be interpreted as having a small effect size (Grimm & Yarnold, 2003; Stevens, 1946) and an observed power of 0.989. The interaction effect of economically disadvantaged and TWI participation was not statistically significant ($p = 0.551$). The degree of significance and the strength of the power support the acceptance of the directional hypothesis that there is a significant difference between the performance of low-SES students and non-low-SES students on the STAAR reading exam, when the scores of only non-ELL/LEP students are taken into consideration. The ANOVA is followed up by a post-hoc t-test (Table 9) which confirms the results of the ANOVA by finding that socioeconomic status is statistically significant in the analysis of non-ELL/LEP students' performance.

Table 7

Between-group Effects (ANOVA) of Non-ELL/LEP Students (Independent Variables: EcoDis and TWI, Dependent Variable: Ratio Score)

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	28578.014 ^a	3	9526.005	38.633	.000
Intercept	665440.524	1	665440.524	2698.742	.000
TwoWayDual	1129.456	1	1129.456	4.581	.033
EcoDis	4458.101	1	4458.101	18.080	.000
TwoWayDual * EcoDis	87.777	1	87.777	.356	.551
Error	186656.764	757	246.574		
Total	4272502.000	761			
Corrected Total	215234.778	760			

Table 8

Partial Eta Squared and Observed Power of Non-ELL/LEP Students (Independent Variables: EcoDis and TWI, Dependent Variable: Ratio Score)

Source	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^b
Corrected Model	.133	115.900	1.000
Intercept	.781	2698.742	1.000
TwoWayDual	.006	4.581	.570
EcoDis	.023	18.080	.989
TwoWayDual * EcoDis	.000	.356	.092
Error			
Total			
Corrected Total			

These data appear to demonstrate that TWI students who come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds score 7 points greater than their EcoDis counterpart in the mainstream classroom. These data also appear to show that the EcoDis/TWI (mean ratio score 70.30) group gains more than 50% of the difference in mean ratio scores between their non-TWI/EcoDis counterparts (mean ratio score 62.67) and non-TWI/non-EcoDis students (mean ratio score 76.19) by participating in the TWI program ($76.19 - 62.67 = 13.52$ points difference in mean ratio scores between EcoDis

and non-EcoDis students in mainstream classrooms; 50% of 13.52 is 6.76 points. The EcoDis/TWI students appear to score 7.63 points higher than their EcoDis peers in the mainstream classroom).

Table 9

Post-hoc T-test of Non-ELL/LEP students (EcoDis Is Independent Variable, Ratio Score Is Dependent Variable)

(I) EcoDis	(J) EcoDis	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. ^b	95% Confidence Interval for Difference ^b	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
No	Yes	11.854 [*]	2.788	.000	6.381	17.327
Yes	No	-11.854 [*]	2.788	.000	-17.327	-6.381

Discussion

To review, the project goal was to test the non-directional null hypotheses that state that there will be no significant difference in STAAR reading ratio scores between non-ELL/LEP students in TWI and non-TWI settings, and also no significant difference between TWI participants who are ELL/LEP and those who are not ELL/LEP. It also tested the directional hypotheses that stated that there would be a statistically significant difference between TWI students who qualify as economically disadvantaged and those who do not qualify.

Hypothesis 1. *There will be no statistically significant difference in STAAR reading ratio scores between English-speaking students in TWI programs and monolingual English programs.*

This analysis appears to show that the literacy rates of English-speaking participants in TWI were not impeded by the study and use of two languages; rather, their literacy achievement appeared to be higher than those who were in monolingual settings. In almost every category of analysis, TWI participants appeared to have outperformed the students in the mainstream English classroom. The percentage of students passing in the TWI group was at least 10% more than the non-TWI group in each grade level. The percentage of students in TWI who met the advanced standards was 50% greater than the non-TWI group in third grade, and twice as great in fifth grade (although it was slightly less in fourth grade). The *t*-test indicated a statistically significant finding. The finding led to a rejection of this null hypothesis.

Although a possible explanation for the between-group difference is merely hypothetical for this project, it deserves mention. In the existing literature there is evidence that “the two-way immersion classes have more than their fair share of supportive middle class parents” (Scanlan & Palmer, 2009, p. 402). In other words, parents from English-speaking homes must opt for their child to be in this special language enrichment program, which requires a certain level of sophistication. If parents who have the resources to elect for TWI do so—whether for financial, cultural, or other

reasons—then fewer “supportive” parents are involved in the mainstream English classes. If parental support is a key element for student success, then this may be a possible explanation for the TWI students’ higher scores. Another possible explanation is that non-ELL/LEP TWI students are able to access higher cognitive thinking and language skills due to exposure to two languages, although this benefit usually takes more time to realize (Thomas & Collier, 2002).

Hypothesis 2. *There will be no significant difference in STAAR ratio scores between TWI program participants who are ELL/LEP students and those who are not ELL/LEP.* This analysis appears to indicate that non-ELL/LEP students substantially outperform their ELL/LEP classmates in TWI settings. Total mean STAAR ratio scores were 28 points higher for the non-ELL/LEP group than the ELL/LEP group. Whereas virtually all of the non-ELL/LEP students in the TWI program met the passing standard, approximately half of ELL/LEP students did so in third grade. Fewer than four out of ten ELL/LEP students met the passing standard in fourth grade. Of all 54 ELL/LEP students in the TWI program whose data were analyzed, only one of these students met the advanced standard, compared with approximately 40% of all non-ELL/LEP students in the TWI program ($n=25$). The t -test indicated statistically significant results and supported the rejection of the null hypothesis.

There are several possible factors that may have led to the results in the findings. For one, the design of the program at this district is unknown. It is possible that the program uses very little Spanish instruction, which might lead to the results seen here. Instructional time spent in the native language (Spanish) can lead to more academic success for ELL/LEP students. The program may be a 50/50 model, or a 90/10 model, or something else. Additionally, there is the question of program fidelity. It can be the case that a program designed to teach the majority of the content in Spanish, actually, in practice, does not. Some teachers or administrators choose to implement the language proportions in different ways than the program is designed.

Another possible factor is the ELL/LEP students’ background. If the community is composed mostly of recent immigrants, it is possible that they are unfamiliar with the culture of U.S. schools and the culture of standardized testing. Such lack of familiarity would impede these students’ ability to perform at a high rate on the STAAR test.

Yet more factors worth considering concern the teachers’ backgrounds, the curriculum, instructional materials, and assessment. Does the teacher have adequate training and understanding to successfully implement the dual-language program for minority language speakers’ success? Is her philosophy one of inclusiveness? Are the curriculum and assessment culturally relevant? Does the curriculum adequately address the learning needs of students from diverse backgrounds? Are the lessons, instructional materials, and assessments designed in a way that minority language students can sustain meaningful engagement? These are some of many possible factors for the substantial underperformance of the ELL/LEP students in this study. However, because there are no classroom observations or other qualitative data available, it is not possible to indicate what may be contributing to this discrepancy.

Hypothesis 3. *There will be a statistically significant difference in STAAR ratio scores between students who qualify for free or reduced lunch and those who do not qualify. Those who qualify for free or reduced lunch will score significantly lower than those who do not qualify.*

This portion of the analysis focused on the between-group differences for students who qualify as economically disadvantaged and those who do not. The directional hypothesis postulated that there would be a statistically significant difference between the ratio scores of the two groups (EcoDis and non-EcoDis); the ANOVA confirmed the hypothesis.

The ten students in the study sample who were economically disadvantaged, non-ELL/LEP, TWI participants had a mean ratio score of 70, which as mentioned earlier, makes up about 50% of the “distance” between their economically disadvantaged and non-economically disadvantaged peers in the mainstream English classroom. These ANOVA results would lead to the conclusion that TWI program participation did not inhibit literacy achievement (STAAR ratio score) for non-ELL/LEP economically disadvantaged students. Importantly, the However, this analysis is only of non-ELL/LEP students so the analysis cannot be generalized to other subgroups.

In terms of conceivable factors that might be contributing to these results, it is possible that these economically disadvantaged non-ELL/LEP students are influenced by classroom peers of a higher socioeconomic status whose home culture is reflected in the school environment and who may be more readily able to navigate the classroom environment. Through their interaction, perhaps they are able to take advantage of the enrichment instruction. As mentioned earlier, the size of this group is small ($n = 10$), so the data may be misleading due to sample size.

In summary, participation in the TWI programs appears to have different outcomes for different groups. For non-ELL/LEP students, outcomes are favorable when participating in TWI compared to mainstream classrooms. Although EcoDis non-ELL/LEP students did not perform as well on the STAAR exam as their non-EcoDis peers, the TWI program appears to be a favorable factor for this subgroup. However, ELL/LEP students, for whose benefit these programs were originally designed, and for whom schools receive extra funding (Texas Education Agency School Finance 101: Funding of Texas Public Schools), did not appear to perform nearly as high as their majority language peers. This is a travesty that we must seek to address.

Implications

TWI programs in the U.S. have had to navigate the current political climate, standardized testing pressures, the continued marginalization of minorities, and lack of professional development. Of foremost concern is that the benefits of the TWI program should extend equally to both minority and majority language speakers. In theory, this is happening, but the “sociopolitical context of ELL schooling and differences in acquisition contexts” undermine the possibility for equitable education, even in a program specifically designed to be equitable for all (De Jong & Howard, 2009, p. 86). There is evidence for these concerns in this study’s findings.

Although one of the main goals of TWI is cross-cultural competency, there is evidence that schools still “reflect the societal power structure ...[and] reinforce the lies, distortions, and occasional truths upon which national and dominant-group cultural identities are built” (Cummins in Valdes, 2011). Pimentel (2011) explains that “dual-language programs may operate from a Whiteness frame of reference, wherein Latina/o students’ language and cultural practices come to be perceived in positive terms only

because they serve as commodities that can be enjoyed by “White, English-speaking students” (p. 351). TWI seems to offer the best of both worlds for minority speakers – an environment in which to acquire literacy in the native language, and access to school and community support (Valdés, 2011). However, the perceived equity between languages (as in, “we’re all second language learners here”) may gloss over actual unequal access to power (Fitts, 2006).

Some research shows that TWI classrooms can give disproportionate focus to the language development of the majority language students. Valdes (2011) and De Jong and Howard (2009) also found the Spanish used in the TWI classroom to be “watered down” to accommodate the English-speakers. Teachers can use short sentences, basic comprehension questions, and “impoverished teacher input, teacher-student interaction, questioning and lesson pacing as a result of accommodating for the presence of (beginning) second language learners” (De Jong & Howard, 2009, p. 89). Further research is needed about the teachers, the curriculum, and the classroom/school interaction that cause the less-than-ideal learning environment described here.

These examples are provided to start a discussion and hopefully inspire future research that can help to improve the educational experience for all students. Despite these challenges, TWI programs remain a viable alternative to subtractive educational programs. Many successful TWI programs exist, in which teachers and the community work in cooperation to create cross-cultural understanding and provide powerful education experiences for all students. However, these programs are viable only to the extent that political will wants to keep them alive.

Limitations

This study has a convenient sample size of $n = 810$, from which one cannot broadly generalize. Additionally, these data are from a single, suburban school district; without data from urban and rural sites, it is even less generalizable. I could not locate data on ELL/LEP students who are in mainstream English classrooms to run a two-way ANOVA using ELL/LEP status and educational program as independent variables, which would have provided deeper insight into the effect of these factors by themselves and also in interaction. Moreover, to truly create a “literacy profile,” it would be ideal to include a more holistic assessment of literacy, including reading fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, engagement, grammar, writing, etc. STAAR tests are relatively consistently administered and so make ideal data for comparisons; however, the literacy performance of a student cannot be fully measured by this single test. Finally, the education program variable can vary widely, even under an individual category. For example, the PEIMS code “Dual Language Immersion/Two-Way” does not provide information about the actual instruction in the classroom. It could mean 90% of the instruction is in Spanish, or 50%, 20%, or none. Without qualitative data such as observations or interviews, it is impossible to know how the program is actually being implemented.

Conclusion

This analysis appears to show that the literacy achievement rates of majority language participants appear to be higher than both non-ELL/LEP students in monolingual settings and ELL/LEP students in TWI settings. Educational program and language background are both statistically significant factors, and socioeconomic status also appears to be a main effect for majority language speakers. However, future research is needed. Statewide data are available that would provide a much fuller picture as to the literacy profile of students in TWI programs. Longitudinal studies could provide much more information about how student groups progress over time in relation to each other. Qualitative research could provide insight into the TWI classroom experience. Finally, research on assessment is critical to determine a more effective way to assess emerging bilingual students. Would it be feasible for the state to create academic and language standards and assessments in two languages for TWI students?

The original purpose of two-way dual language programs was to meet the cultural and linguistic needs of minority-language speakers. Future research is needed to investigate how educators can realize this important goal. Is there a way to integrate the dual purposes of dual-language education?

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**Literacy Discussions About Racial Discrimination and Segregation
Among Korean Kindergartners: Possibilities and Challenges**

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Abstract

Even though professionals have created important dialogues about teaching social justice in adolescent contexts, little attention has been paid to racial discrimination and racial segregation issues in preschool and kindergarten contexts. This study observed six kindergarten Korean children affluent in both English and Korean attending a Saturday morning class during which a Korean teacher read to them children's literature on racial themes. The children's responses to *Henry's Freedom Box* and *Sarah, Rides a Bus* are proof that young Korean children can comprehend the social significances of racial discrimination and racial segregation. Of particular significance was Jimmy's drawing of a "white-only rainbow rocket" and a "white-only jet plane," on which he wrote, "not fair." His understanding of racial discrimination was further substantiated when he deliberately, as reported by his mother, making a Black friend his own age in his neighborhood.

Introduction

There are very few studies that exist addressing bilingual children's discussions about race. For example, Martínez-Roldán (2000) investigated second-grade, Spanish bilingual students' responses to multicultural literature dealing with the issue of discrimination. The findings suggested that small group literature discussions about books with difficult social issues provided young bilingual children with valuable opportunities to think about critical issues such as race and discrimination. Martínez-Roldán and Lopez-Roberson's (2000), who explored the role of bilingual literary discussions in a first-grade classroom, claimed these studies helped bilingual children develop their critical stances toward issues of racial discrimination and segregation.

Although these existing studies have provided important insights as to the significant role of literary discussions about segregation and discrimination in bilingual contexts, these studies were conducted with school-aged, Spanish-English bilingual children. A comparison of studies concerning Spanish-English bilingual children with those of Korean bilingual children shows there has been a startling dearth of studies examining Korean bilingual children's literary discussions about racial issues. The lack of previous studies is particularly challenging when considering the historical and cultural backgrounds of Korean educational philosophies.

Evolution of Teaching Race to Children

According to the Korean Statistical Information Service (2012), the Korean immigrant population accounts for approximately 1% of the immigrant population. Even though the vast majority of immigrant population is that of Korean ethnicity, Korea is still among the most ethnically homogenous nations in the world (Choe, 2009; Park, 2007). Choe argued that many Korean people are unprepared to accept a multiracial Korean society because the Korean people have been taught to take pride in their "ethnic homogeneity." As a result, teaching racial diversity, discrimination, and equality have

been considered less important at most schools in Korea and the Korean Heritage Language Schools (Korean HL Schools) in the U.S.

In stark contrast to Korean beliefs, cultural and racial diversity have increased through integration of diverse cultures into the mainstream culture. As a result, many researchers are paying attention to modeling a democratic classroom in a racially and culturally diverse society (Allen, 1997; Enciso, 1997; Garcia, 2003; Hosang, 2006; Lewis-Charp, Yu & Soukamneuth, 2006; Sherrod, 2006). These professionals claim that it is important to create a classroom where students understand racial/ethnic/cultural diversities in order to develop critical attitudes needed in a democratic society. Additionally, even though professionals have created important dialogues about teaching social justice in adolescent contexts (Hosang, 2006; Lewis-Charp et al., 2006; Sherrod, 2006), little attention has been paid to racial discrimination and racial segregation issues in preschool and kindergarten contexts.

Dresang (2003) argued that the paucity of previous studies should be understood within ideological discourses of children/childhood. According to Cunningham (1995), the notion of children/childhood is constructed in different historical and ideological contexts. For example, in ancient Europe, children were regarded as physically weak, mentally incapable, and morally incompetent. During the Middle Ages, children were seen as a crucial source of labor in the family economy. Also, “to be a child” came to be an honored state as Christian beliefs emphasized that young children have a soul (LeVine & White, 1992). With the establishment of industrialization by the middle of the 20th century, the vision of childhood started to focus on their dependence because they were no longer economic necessities (Cunningham 1995). Dresang (2003) also argued that the most prevalent image of children during the 20th century was “children-as innocent-and in-need-of-protection” (p. 21). Given the idealization of children, many contemporary teachers and educators still think that difficult social issues should not be discussed in young children’s classrooms.

However, children do understand racial differences at an early age when distinguishing themselves from other racial and ethnic groups (Aboud, 1987; Clark, Hocevar, & Dembo, 1980; Morland & Hwang, 1981). For example, Van Ausdale and Feagin (2001) claimed that Pre-K children understand racial/ethnic differences as “independent actors and constructors” (p. 26). Eder (1990) also argued that preschool children acknowledge the differences of skin colors and also place values upon different skin colors. Augoustinos and Rosewarne (2001) supported this argument by pointing out that even three-year-old children can be aware of skin color differences. These existing studies challenge the pervasive view that preschoolers do not understand racial and ethnic differences.

Literary Discussions about Race: Related Literature

As a pedagogical approach to help young children develop positive attitudes toward racial/ethnic/cultural differences, many researchers and educators have paid attention to the significant role of multicultural literature (Bishop, 1992; Brooks & McNair, 2009; Copenhaver, 2000; Harris, 1992). They argued that children’s literature is not simply an aesthetic literary work but “a literary vehicle in understanding the

historical, political, spiritual, and sociological experiences” (Brooks & McNair, 2009, p. 141). As a medium to teach children racial and cultural diversity, multicultural literature has been emphasized during the last few decades (Bishop, 1990, 1992; Cai, 2002; Desai, 1997; Harris, 1990, 1992, 1997; Nieto, 2004; Spears-Bunton, 2009). These existing studies claim that multicultural literature provides children with valuable opportunities to contact the outside worlds around them, resulting in valuing many different cultures. More recently, a growing number of studies have highlighted the role of literary discussions about race with young children (Copenhaver, 2000; Copenhaver-Johnson, Bowman, & Johnson, 2007; MacPhee, 1997; Moller & Allen, 2000; Reissman, 1994). For instance, MacPhee (1997) examined first-grade children’s reading historical nonfiction books that featured African Americans as the central characters. The study suggested that it was important to create spaces for race-oriented talk by employing children’s literature that challenges normative race assumptions.

The importance of creating space for discussions about race is also highlighted by Copenhaver’s (2000) study, which examined how third-grade African American children responded to literature with race themes. The author claimed that teachers should encourage children to have discussions about social issues by utilizing culturally and ethnically conscious literature. Copenhaver-Johnson’s (2006) study supported this notion by arguing that literary conversations about race and other social issues facilitate children’s early understandings about “the contemporary racism that they *already* had experienced” (p. 18, emphasis in original). Taken collectively, these existing studies provide the educational possibilities associated with discussions about race with young children. Yet, because all these studies were conducted in a school-aged monolingual children’s context, little is known about bilingual children’s discussions regarding race. In particular, nothing has been documented about literary discussions about racial discrimination and segregation in preschool bilingual contexts because earlier bilingual studies have focused on vocabulary acquisition and sentence completion in two language contexts (Hu & Commeyras, 2008; Lei, 2006; Reyes & Azuara, 2008).

Purpose

This qualitative study examined how literary discussions as a result of reading race-themed books help Korean bilingual children develop early understandings about racial justice, such as racial discrimination and segregation. As part of a longitudinal study, the current study focused on six Korean kindergarten-aged bilingual children at Ms. Park’s classroom at the Korean Language School (KLS) in the U.S. This study addressed the following two research questions:

1. How are the children’s responses to race-themed books shaped within their social contexts?
2. How do race-related discussions help the children develop their early understandings of racial discrimination and segregation?

To answer each of the questions, the study laid out its theoretical framework drawing on different schools of thought. First, in order to understand the nature of literary discussions within social contexts, the study adopted reader-response

perspectives, especially Beach (1995) and Fish's (1980) notion that reading is a social and cultural act. Also, the study drew on a sociocultural theory to gain insights into the roles of social interactions during reading activities. In addition, the diverse works of previous researchers and scholars who investigated multicultural education and multicultural literature were drawn upon.

Definition of Race and Racial Justice

In this study, race-themed picture books included books that deal with race issues such as racial diversity, friendships between children with different skin colors, the civil rights movement, racial segregation, discrimination, freedom, and equality. In regards to the definition of race, a critical race theory was adopted, particularly Zatz and Mann's (2002) notion that "race is not a fixed identity" (p. 2), and it is closely linked to social, political, and economic power. Based on this notion, this study considered race as socially constructed and produced "through sociopolitical meanings that arise from perception and are maintained through social interaction" (Soest & Garcia, 2003, p. 37). By approaching race as not being a biologically determinant, the facial feature of race becomes an unimportant factor. The importance is placed on the social significance within the context of power and privilege.

In defining racial justice, the study adopted Kubota and Lin's (2009) notion that people of all racial heritages have equal power and opportunities. In particular, the study focused on issues of racial discrimination and segregation. By investigating the above two research questions, the study aimed to fill the gap in the academic literature related to children's responses to literature, multicultural literature, reading literature in a bilingual context, and the role of literary discussions about race and social justice. A fundamental goal of this study was to pursue educational equity and quality by providing a more democratic vision for teaching and learning literature in young bilingual children's classrooms.

Methods

Qualitative researchers believe that each participant has unique stories to tell; they look for the details of interaction with its specific context, focusing on particular participants (Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Stake, 1995). The current study adopted a qualitative case study method because the goal of this study was to suggest alternate approaches for teaching literature, rather than to establish cause-effect relationships. A qualitative study approach was necessary to understand the dynamics of the participants' discussions about race within their social contexts. The context-specific approach also helped to capture the complexity of the children's interactions with books in a bilingual setting and gain an in-depth understanding of their literature-related experiences.

The Context

The Korean Heritage Language (KHL) schools were established in 1974 by several Korean people who were highly interested in teaching the Korean language to Korean bilingual children. Park (2007) indicated that in 2005 there were 1,021 Korean

HL Schools, 8,352 teachers, and 57,744 students. The setting for this particular study was in Ms. Park's classroom at a Korean Language School (KLS), one of several Korean Heritage Language schools located in a Midwestern state. At the time of the study, there were a total of 12 classes, 14 teachers, and 85 students attending classes at this location. Most classes at the school began 10:30 in the morning every Saturday, with each class session lasting three hours. All teachers were Korean, and most of them were former teachers in their native country.

Of these teachers, Ms. Park's classroom was considered for this study because she had a formal reading time called Story Time, during which she read children's literature that focused on racial themes. Ms. Park, in her mid-40s during the time of this study, was a former teacher who majored in art in Korea. Her first language was Korean, and she spoke English at a communicative level. Ms. Park joined KLS in 2011, and since then has taught language and literacy skills to preschoolers.

Ms. Park acknowledged the urgent need for multicultural education, particularly for her students of Korean-origin, because she noticed some Koreans' negative attitudes toward other racial groups. Because of her strong belief on the importance of teaching diversity, she often read books to her students that dealt with racial, ethnic, and cultural issues to her students of Korean-origin.

The Participants

The participating children included three girls and three boys. These students were primarily kindergarteners who attended private schools and lived in White-dominant areas. All participating children's parents had a higher education degree. The following are descriptive narratives that were formed through observations, audio-recordings of open-ended interviews, and conversations with parents of each participating child.

Grace. Grace was a five-year-old Korean American girl who was born in the U.S. Compared to the other children with developing language abilities, Grace was a proficient speaker of both Korean and English. She spoke in both languages during class, but she mostly used English when talking with her peers. In the interview with Grace's mother, she indicated that Grace's family moved to the U.S. six years ago because of her father's studies. Grace likes to read books, but her mother acknowledged she had not read any race-themed books to Grace.

Jimmy. Jimmy was born in Korea. When Jimmy was two-years old, his family moved to the U.S. in 2006 to further his father's academic career. Jimmy spoke dominantly Korean in both formal and informal contexts at the beginning of the study, but he started to use English more frequently as the semester progressed. Jimmy's mother indicated that she usually read science books about insects and dinosaurs to Jimmy because of his preference for this kind of subject matter. She had never read race-themed books to him.

Katie. Katie was a Korean American girl who was five years old. Katie spoke English more frequently, and her Korean reading and writing skills were not as fluent as those of her peers. In terms of Katie's family background, her family moved to the U.S. in 2001. After moving to the U.S., Katie's father received his doctoral degree in the

Engineering Department of the local university. According to Katie's mother, Katie likes realistic stories that can happen in real life such as friendships or human relationships. She never read race-themed literature to Katie.

Sam. Sam was a five-year-old Korean American boy who was born in the U.S. Although Sam spoke both Korean and English, it seemed that his dominant language was Korean because he used Korean more often. Sam's family moved to the U.S. in 2002 so his father could pursue his doctoral degree. Sam's mother indicated that although she acknowledged the importance of reading a variety of books, she had not read race-themed books to Sam.

Sue. Sue was a five-year-old Korean American girl, who used English more dominantly, although she spoke more fluently both Korean and English compared to the other children. She was also very active in responding to books. She seemed to enjoy every book and become engaged in most stories while reading. Sue lived only with her mother without siblings because Sue's father moved to a foreign country after receiving his doctoral degree in the U.S. Sue's mother usually read to Sue Korean books that she possessed at home. She had never read books that dealt with issues of racial or cultural diversity to Sue.

Young. Young, a five-year-old Korean American boy, was capable of switching languages from Korean to English and English to Korean without any difficulty. Young's family moved to the U.S. 10 years ago on account of his father's studies in the U.S. Young was very active in reading books. Young's mother indicated that she read him a variety of books regardless of genres. She never read to him any race-themed books.

Focal Reading Activity: Story Time

The focal literacy activity was Story Time, which occurred from 11:40 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. every Saturday. During this time, Ms. Park read aloud literature in a whole group setting, and discussed the story with her students, talking mostly in Korean. When she read the books, Ms. Park allowed her students to use both languages when talking to peers about their thoughts. She also tried to help her students make connections with the text based on their backgrounds and experiences, instead of simply decoding the text. In addition, she asked questions before, during, and after reading. For example, before reading, she often allowed the children to look at the cover of the book and asked them to determine story clues based on the book's title and picture. During reading, Ms. Park encouraged her students to be actively involved in reading and sharing their responses by asking thought-provoking questions, such as why the character acted or felt in a certain way, how they felt about the main character, and what they would do if they were in the character's situation. After reading, she asked what the story was about, what they liked or disliked about the story, and how the story made them feel.

Book Selection

During the five-month observation period, 12 race-themed books were read. They ranged on topics of racial diversity, racial segregation, human equality, equity, racial discrimination, slavery, and freedom, which the researcher video-recorded, took

field notes on, and collected the children’s artifacts. The 12 books were written in either Korean or English, and they were selected based on the following criteria:

- If the plot, setting, style, and theme were interwoven to create a convincing story in an age-appropriate manner;
- If the books dealt with race themes, such as racial diversity, racial segregation, human equality, equity, discrimination, slavery, and freedom.

Tables 1 lists the books read by Ms. Park to the children; Table 2 provides a summary of each book:

Table 1

Twelve Selected Books

Title of Book	Author	Publication Year	Language
그레이스는 놀라워 [<i>Amazing Grace</i>]	Mary Hoffman	2005	Korean
인종이야기를 해볼까? [<i>Let's Talk about Race?</i>]	Julius Lester	2007	Korean
헨리의 자유상자 [<i>Henry's Freedom Box</i>]	Ellen Levine	2008	Korean
정말 그런 인종이 있을까? [<i>Do We Really Have That Kind of Race?</i>]	Silvia Roncaglia	2001	Korean
<i>The Story of Ruby Bridges</i>	Robert Coles	1995	English
<i>Chocolate Me!</i>	Taye Diggs	2011	English
<i>Jamaica and Brianna</i>	Juanita Havill	1993	English
<i>Visiting Day</i>	Jacqueline Woodson	2002	English
<i>Bessie Coleman</i>	Eric Braun	2002	English
사라 버스를 타다 [<i>Sarah, Rides a Bus</i>]	William Miller	2004	Korean
<i>Tar Beach</i>	Faith Ringgold	1991	English
자유 노래 [<i>Song of Freedom</i>]	Moo Hung Kang	2009	Korean

Table 2*Summary of Each Book*

Title of Book	Summary
<i>그레이스는 놀라워</i> [<i>Amazing Grace</i>]	The book tells the story of a black girl named Grace who wanted to play Peter Pan in her school play. The message of the book is that all children are capable of doing remarkable things regardless of gender, race, and culture.
<i>인종이야기를 해볼까?</i> [<i>Let's Talk about Race?</i>]	The book introduces people with different skin colors. The main message of the book was that everyone deserves to be treated with respect because all human beings are the same regardless of their skin color.
<i>헨리의 자유상자</i> [<i>Henry's Freedom Box</i>]	The story of a young African American boy, Henry Brown, who escaped from slavery in 1849. The book portrays themes about family, freedom, cruelties of slavery, and other depressing events of slave's lives.
<i>정말 그런 인종이 있을까?</i> [<i>Do We Really Have That Kind of Race?</i>]	The book introduces people with different races with the message that all human beings are created equal regardless of skin color.
<i>The Story of Ruby Bridges</i>	The story of a girl named Ruby who attended a whites-only school in New Orleans during the 1960's. It talks about racial persecution at school as the perils of a major event in U.S. history.
<i>Chocolate Me!</i>	The story of a boy who was ridiculed by his peers because of his darker skin, curlier hair and bigger nose. The main theme of this book is self-acceptance and self-esteem regardless of skin color.
<i>Jamaica and Brianna</i>	The book talks about two young girls, a young African American girl named Jamaica and her Asian-American classmate. It deals with the friendship between an African American girl and a girl with an Asian background.
<i>Visiting Day</i>	The book talks about the special day each month for a young black girl who narrates the story. It chronicles the special preparations for a journey with her grandmother to see her father in prison.
<i>Bessie Coleman</i>	The story of Bessie Coleman who became the first African American female pilot. The book conveys the message that, with faith and determination, anybody regardless of skin color is able to overcome obstacles such as racism, gender discrimination, and poverty, and achieve his/her dream.
<i>사라 버스를 타다</i> [<i>Sarah, Rides a Bus</i>]	The story of an African American girl, Sarah, who was not legally allowed to sit in the front seats in a bus.

Table 2 (continued)

Summary of Each Book

Title of Book	Summary
<i>Tar Beach</i>	The story of Cassie who imagines flying over the city lights, wearing the George Washington Bridge as a necklace. With creative and colorful illustrations, the book depicts African American people/culture.
<i>자유의 노래</i> [<i>Song of Freedom</i>]	The story of Martin Luther King and African American people's fight for freedom.

Among the 12 books, the current study focused on *헨리의 자유상자* [*Henry's Freedom Box*] by Ellen Levine (2008) and *사라 버스를 타다* [*The Bus Ride*] by William Miller (2004). These two books were selected because the children had more active conversations with their peers and the teacher about racial segregation and racial discrimination, which helped to answer the research questions.

Research Procedure

Including the five-month observation period, the data were collected over a period of six months by audio-recordings of open-ended interviews with the children, their parents, and the teacher; use of children's artifacts; and taking observational field notes. The children's conversations were recorded during the whole class session (three hours), which became the primary data.

The formal interviews that were conducted in Korean with parents (two times for 40 minutes each time) and the teacher (five times, 30 minutes each time) were also important to have in-depth understandings of their racial attitudes. Although interview questions were created in advance, the researcher often asked several follow-up questions based on each participant's answers. Some informal interviews with the children were also conducted in casual situations (e.g., during breaks) whenever the need arose. The total time of transcription for both formal and informal interviews that were collected during the observation period was 3,200 minutes (approximately 53 hours). In addition, field notes were created to note feelings and physical expressions of the participants. After collecting the children's artifacts and some related materials, the researcher created portfolios to keep track of the children's written texts and their conversations related to those texts.

In order to analyze children's responses to the books, Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw's (1996) coding methods were adopted. First, the researcher transcribed the children's conversations, transcribed their oral responses to the books during the read-aloud sessions, and transcribed the interviews with the parents and the teacher. Then, using analytic coding, the researcher categorized each literacy activity, including series of episodes, and subcategorized each category based on themes such as race, gender, culture, prejudice, injustice, fairness, family, segregation, equality, equity, resistance,

freedom, and friendship, particularly looking at the themes of racial segregation and discrimination. If some of the themes were unrelated to each other, they were broken into subthemes such as racial prejudice and gender prejudice. Then some of the literacy events were selected based on the research questions aforementioned. After identifying the focal activities, the completed set of notes was reviewed to capture some important changes occurring over time. In order to gain fresh insights to reinterpret certain events, series of episodes were also reorganized based on each student's interviews.

In an effort to verify and validate the data analysis, constant comparative methods were employed. First, the triangulation method was adopted to increase "the consistency of information derived at different times and by different means within qualitative methods" (Patton, 2002, p. 559), and to reduce the potential bias. The triangulation method included the use of interviews, observations, journaling, and conversations with both the children and the parents. In addition, in order to ensure the credibility of the findings, *prolonged engagement* and *persistent observations* were used, which are often emphasized in a qualitative study (Creswell, 1998). As a participant observer, one of the researchers spent a large amount of time at the research site to build close relationships with the participating children and their parents. The extended time with the same children increased their trust in the researcher, which contributed to the trustworthiness of the data.

Findings

Exploring Racial Discrimination

헨리의 자유상자 [*Henry's Freedom Box*] (2008) is a Korean translated version of *Henry's Freedom Box* written in English by Ellen Levine (2007), a Jane Addams Peace Award-winning author, and illustrated by Kadir Nelson. Although both original and translated books did not get attention in Korea, the original book won many awards and honors in the U.S., such as the Caldecott honor, the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBE) best-of-year award, and Pennsylvania Young Readers' Choice Award. The book was based on the story of a young African American boy, Henry Brown, who escaped from slavery in 1849 by mailing himself in a wooden crate to the North. When Ms. Park presented the book, most of the children seemed uninterested in the book. The cover of the book shows a straightforward stare of a young boy with dark brown skin.

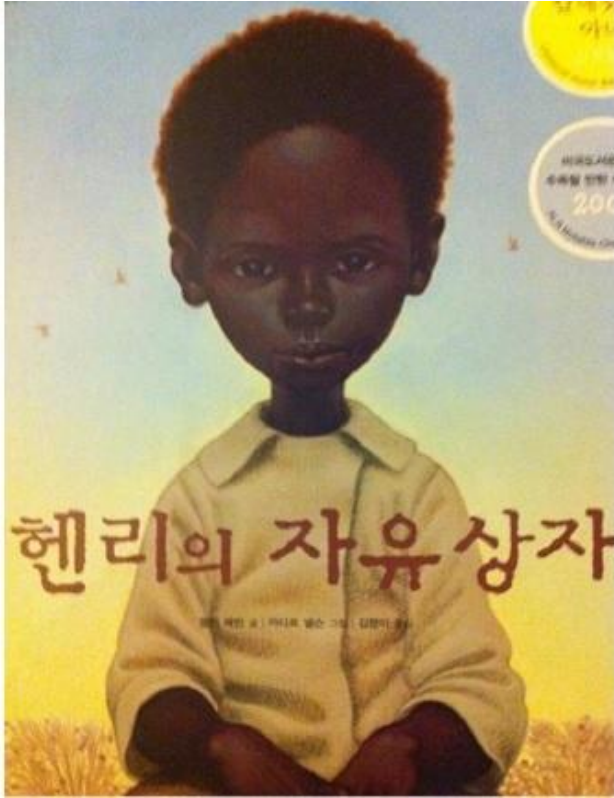


Figure 1. The cover of *헨리의 자유상자* [Henry's Freedom Box]

Most of the children seemed to not pay attention to the reading at the beginning; however, as the story developed, more children seemed to engage in the story. While reading, Ms. Park often asked the questions about what they read. Their literary discussions using both Korean and English gave the children opportunities to think deeply about the text.

When the children read through the scene that described how Henry's wife and children were sold, the teacher asked the questions about what happened to Henry, and the children started to emotionally engage in the book:

Teacher: 어? 큰일났다. 헨리 wife랑 아이들이 팔려갔데. 근데 팔려간게 뭐야? [Oh. No! Henry's wife and his children got sold. So, what does “팔려가다” mean?]

Young: They got sold.

Jimmy: 왜? [Why?]

Teacher: Master가 wife랑 애들을 팔았데. [Their master sold his wife and children.]

Jimmy: 왜요? [Why?]

Teacher: 왜냐면 개네들은 노예잖아. 노예들은 자기 맘대로 할수가 없어 Master가 노예를 내 물건처럼 팔수 있었어. 우리는 내 물건 맘에 안들면 다른 사람한테 줄수도 있고 팔수도 있지. [Because they were slaves. Slaves were not able to do as they wanted. Master could sell their slaves like their own possessions. Like we sell or give our stuffs to other people, if we don't like them anymore.]

As the children confronted the situation in which Henry's wife and children were sold, some students expressed emotional responses such as sadness, sympathy, and surprise. Katie seemed to be particularly engaged in the story when she looked at the corner of the picture that showed Henry squatting down.

When looking at the scars on Henry's back, Katie revealed her sympathy for him, saying "He is so poor." It seemed that Henry's tragic story became somewhat painful for Katie. Moller and Allen (2000) adopted the term *engaged resistance* to describe that children's emotional responses to literature dealing with social issues are not always comfortable. Sipe and Mcquire (2006) argued that engaged resistance plays essential roles in reading literature because it is often associated with "the development of critical capacities in readers" (p. 10). As the children emotionally engaged in Henry's depressing story, they were able to indirectly experience the lives of slaves and develop more responses.

The children's emotional engagement in the story provided them with the chance to speculate about the lives of slaves. The following is the conversation between the teacher and children when the children read the scene that described some people poking Henry with a stick at the factory:

Teacher: 우리도 이렇게 막대기로 쿡쿡 찌르면 어떨까? [How would you feel if some people poked you with sticks like that?]

Sue: 아파요 [Feel hurt.]

Jimmy: (With an angry face) I hate it!

Teacher: (To Grace) Grace 는 어떨것 같아? [What about you, Grace?]

Grace: (Thinking) . . .

Teacher: Henry는 노래도 마음대로 부르지 못했어. 우리는 기분좋으면 노래도 부르고 그러는데 노예를 그렇게 못했나봐. 그러면 슬플거 같지 않아? [Henry even could not sing songs as his liked. We often sing songs if we feel good but slaves couldn't do that. Don't you think that it would be very sad?]

As the children became more engaged in Henry's story as a slave, they started to respond more frequently and ask more critical questions utilizing both Korean and English. For instance, when reading the scene in which some people were sold just like belongings, Katie asked critical questions such as why Henry's family had to be sold, and Jimmy also asked why Henry was not able to resist the situation. As the children imagined the life of a slave, the children were able to think about some fundamental questions, including why some people were treated differently in U.S. history, which helped them to better understand notions of racial discrimination and racial segregation.

Exploring Racial Segregation

According to Young (1990), racial segregation is the separation of humans into racial groups in some activities, such as eating in a restaurant, using a public toilet, and attending school. *사라, 버스를 타다* (2004) [*Sarah, Rides a Bus*] was the Korean translated version of *The Bus Ride* (2001), which was written by William Miller and illustrated by John Ward. This fictional book, inspired by the real story of the bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama from 1955 to 1956, dealt with the story about the brave act of Sarah, who was not legally allowed to sit in the front seats in a bus. While reading the book, the teacher attempted to create an atmosphere in which the children could share what they thought about Sarah's unfair situation. It helped the children develop the notion of segregation. This was particularly obvious when the children read the scene that described the bus driver stopping the bus and calling the police due to Sarah's refusal to go to an allowed seat. The illustration showed the irritated bus driver and Sarah sitting in the front seat of the bus.

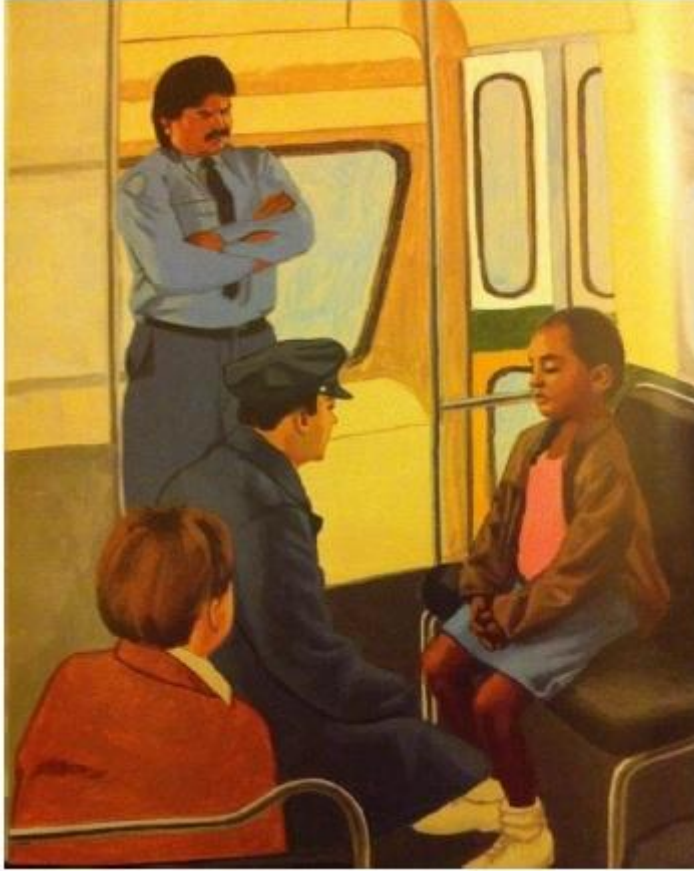


Figure 2. Police officers and Sarah in the bus

While reading the scene, most children seemed to understand that Sarah was in trouble, but they looked perplexed about what caused Sarah to be in trouble. As the teacher noticed the children's confused faces, she stopped reading and tried to help the children understand what happened on the bus. For example, the teacher asked the children many thought-provoking questions, and it provided them with a chance to think deeply about why Sarah was not allowed to sit on the front seats:

Teacher: 근데 왜 아저씨는 앞자리에 앉지 말라고 했을까? [Then, why was the bus driver not allowing Sarah to sit in the front seats?]

Children: (Thinking) . . .

Teacher: 지금 사라는 왜 버스아저씨한테 혼나고 있는거 같아? 버스 앞자리에 앉는 일은 나쁜거야? [Why do you think that the bus driver is angry at Sarah? Is it a bad behavior to sit in the front seats?]

- Young: (Pause) I think he is angry, MAYBE because she didn't yield the seat.
- Teacher: 아! Yield 하지 않았어? Yield를 누구한테 안했는데? [Oh! So, she didn't yield the seat? She didn't yield to whom?]
- Young: To older people!
- Teacher: 아 그럴구나! 와 Young이 아주 멋진 생각을 했구나. 근데 한국에서는 어른한테 자리를 양보해야 되는데 옛날 미국에서는 자리를 어른한테 yield 하지 않는다고 문제가 되지는 않았데. [Oh. I see! Wow, your idea is great! That is right. In Korea, you should yield your seats to elderly people, but a long time ago in the U.S., your refusal to yield your seat to them did not make any problem.]

It seemed that the children had difficulty in understanding Sarah's problem, because according to their background knowledge, sitting on the front seats was not a negative behavior. Because the children were not able to understand the situation, they tried to apply a different background knowledge acquired from different cultural frames. For instance, because Young was confused about why Sarah was in trouble and in order to understand Sarah's situation, he attempted to make sense of Sarah's situation by using schema brought from the Korean culture. In the Korean society, young people are often encouraged to offer their seats to elderly people because Koreans are strongly influenced by Confucianism that teaches to respect elders. As a member of a Korean community, Young seemed to acknowledge this Confucian value; and by applying this knowledge to the bus context, he recreated the story. In his new story, Sarah's problem was not simply caused by her sitting in the front seat, it was caused by her refusal to yield her seat to elderly people in the bus.

In order to help the children understand the unfair condition in the bus, the teacher encouraged the children to reflect on their own bus-related experiences as follows:

- Teacher: 우리 버스 타본적 있는 사람? [Do any of you have a chance to ride a bus?]
- Jimmy: (Raising a hand) Sometimes 버스타. [(I) sometimes ride a bus.]
- Sam: 나도!! [Me too!!]
- Teacher: 버스 탈때 우리 앞에 앉아도 돼? [When we ride a bus, are we allowed to sit in the front seats?]
- Jimmy: (With a loud voice) 난 앞에 앉았어요!! [I have sit in the front seats!]

- Teacher: 그치. 우리는 아무데나 내가 앉고 싶은 자리에 앉아도 돼. 근데 옛날에는 이렇게 White people은 앞자리에 앉고 Black people은 뒤자리에만 앉을수 있었어. 버스에서만 그렇게 아니라 식당에서 밥먹을때, 파운틴에서 물먹을때, 화장실갈때, 학교에서도 흑인이랑 백인은 이렇게 따로 있어야 됐었데. 우리는 이렇게 얼굴 색이 검다고 식당에도 못들어가게 하고 그러면 기분이 어떨까? [Right. We can seat wherever you want. But, a long time ago, Black people were to sit only in the back of the bus, while White people sit in the front of the bus. Black and White people also should be separated in other situations such as eating in a restaurant, drinking from a water fountain, using a public toilet, and attending school. How would you feel if you are not allowed to go to a certain restaurant because you have a dark skin color?]
- Young: Sad.
- Sue: (With a quiet voice) 나빠요 [feel bad.]

By asking questions related to the children's own experiences on the bus, the teacher attempted to help them better understand the issue of racial segregation. When the teacher described that Black people should be separated from White people traveling on the same public transportation, sharing public accommodations, using recreational facilities, and attending the same schools, the children attentively listened to the teacher's words. The children looked somewhat serious when the teacher asked them questions about how they would feel when something was forbidden because of their skin colors.

Creating Written Texts About Racial Segregation

The children were able to better understand the notion of racial segregation as they created written texts after reading. For instance, Young drew "a white-only jet plane." In his drawing, Young tried to apply a racial segregation issue by creating the story of a white-only jet plane. In his imaginary world, only White people were allowed to ride his jet plane. Like Young, Jimmy created the story about "a white-only rainbow rocket." Jimmy's rainbow rocket was similar to Young's jet plane from the perspective that only White people were allowed to ride it. Yet, there was a noticeable difference between Jimmy's and Young's drawings. Both Black and White people in Young's text had smiling faces and seemed to be satisfied with a white-only jet plane; however, a Black person in Jimmy's text seemed displeased with a white-only rocket. Jimmy drew the Black person with a frowning face. Also, in Young's text, Black people were making a pleasing *whaaaa* sound (*whaaaa* is *wow* in Korean, Figure 3). However, in Jimmy's text, a White person was making laughing sounds, "ho ho"; whereas, a Black person was complaining, saying "not fair" (Figure 4).



Figure 3. White-only rainbow rocket, drawn by Jimmy.



Figure 4. White-only jet plane, drawn by Jimmy

The examples above indicate that the children, using two languages, were able to better understand what racial segregation was as they shared their views with the teacher and peers. Although the children shared their own understandings of the text, they sometimes recreated their stories by incorporating resources around them. In this process, they were able to deeply examine Sarah's story, which provided them with an opportunity to learn that it is an unscrupulous attitude to treat people differently according to physical differences. Literary discussions also helped the children open their minds to other racial groups.

In the interviews with the parents conducted at the beginning of the semester, most parents indicated that their children usually played with either Korean or White friends. However, they revealed different views during the interviews at the end of the semester. The following is an example of this (note: all Korean interviews were translated into English):

Jimmy's mother: Most times, he is still hanging out with Korean and White friends, but these days, it seems that he is getting along with other friends as well, including Black friends. Actually, a few days ago, Jimmy talked about his Black friend in his school.

Jimmy's mother's explanation seemed to indicate that Jimmy put in action what he learned as the result of the literary discussions on racial segregation and racial discrimination.

Ms. Park also indicated that the children seemed to open their minds to making friends with people with different skin colors as they consistently read books that dealt with racial themes. She pointed out that making friends with different skin colors would be one of the greatest benefits of reading race-themed books to young children.

Ms. Park: It seemed to me that the children's prejudice [to people with dark skin] was much reduced. They seemed to start to think that they should make friends not based on *color* or *image* but on personality. I think that they were able to open their minds to people with different skin colors as they had chances to experience other people's lives through reading literature. Although those were indirect experiences, I think that that still provided the children with a valuable chance to experience other people's lives and open their minds to them.

As Ms. Park pointed out, reading race-themed books provided the children with a chance to be familiar with Blacks and to reduce their biased attitudes toward them. It also helped them learn particularly the issues of racial discrimination and racial segregation. Most importantly, it opened the children's minds to making friends regardless of skin colors.

Discussions About Race With Korean Bilingual Children

The study investigated the role of literary discussions about race-themed books among kindergarten Korean bilingual children. Through an in-depth investigation, the study found that using two languages in the children's literary discussions helped them develop emergent notions of racial segregation and racial discrimination. Young children's learning cannot occur without actively participating in social and cultural activities with their community members (Dyson, 1993; Hymes, 2001). In particular, bilingual discussions about books with difficult social issues help young bilingual children develop their early understandings about racial segregation and racial discrimination (Martínez-Roldán, 2000).

The children, using two languages, at Ms. Park's classroom were able to have valuable opportunities to explore the notion of racial discrimination and segregation while reading race-themed books and exchanging their responses and thoughts about books. For instance, when the children had discussions regarding Sarah's problem on the bus, they shared their ideas by freely switching their languages from Korean to English and English to Korean. In this process, they were able to be deeply engaged in literary

texts and have deeper levels of conversation about racial segregation. Also, through literary discussions using two languages, the children were able to think about the unfair treatment to Black people in U.S. history, which helped them develop their emergent notions about racial equality and equity. In this sense, bilingual discussions about race-theme books have the potential to help young bilingual children be more engaged in authentic discussions about race and foster their critical awareness about racial justice. This finding enhanced the previous findings that emphasized the significant role of race-related talks with young children in both monolingual and bilingual contexts. However, it also suggests that literary discussions about race-themed books can help kindergarten-aged bilingual children deepen their thoughts on literary texts and develop their early understandings of racial justice.

Reading as a Situated Activity

Reading is not just a matter of simply extracting from texts but it also involves readers' emotional experiences, such as anger, sadness, envy, fear, and love (Rosenblatt, 1978). Because reading is a dynamic interaction between text and reader, readers have a critical role during a reading process (Iser, 1978; Rosenblatt, 1978). During diverse reading activities, the children in Ms. Park's classroom were actively interacting with texts using their experiences, prior knowledge, and imagination, as they tried to make sense of the text using their schematic connections. However, for these children, reading was not a solitary act because it involved the "interdependence" of the individual and the context. They were continuously negotiating meanings within social contexts. For example, when reading *해리의 자유상자*, the children did not simply decode letters and words. Instead, they socially created meanings with peers and the teacher about the lives of slaves and the notion of discrimination. In this process, they navigated among multiple voices, which helped them deepen their literary understandings and widen their views about racial discrimination and racial segregation.

The findings of the study reinforce the reader's response to the view that reading is a not a solitary practice but a complex social act. Many reader response theorists claim that reading involves the interdependence of the individual and the community (Beach, 1995; Bleich, 1978; Culler, 1997). Because readers' responses to literature are socially constructed through their social interaction during a reading activity, "texts, readers, and contexts are each inseparable from the other" (Beach, 1990, p. 66). This finding suggests that young bilingual readers' responses are constituted by the interaction of readers, texts, and contexts in a bilingual setting.

Limitations of the Study

This study asserted the significance of race-themed picture books in a young bilingual classroom. Yet, in making this claim, there is a limitation in this study. First, the results may not be applicable to children from different racial, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds. In this study, the focal children were from economically affluent families with college-educated parents. Because the findings in this study were specific to the particular case, the relevance of the findings may not extend directly to different

contexts. Thus, further research is needed in this area in different bilingual settings. However, despite these limitations, this study provides teachers and educators with a chance to think about the importance of teaching race in young children's classrooms, particularly in bilingual contexts. Also, because there have been startling limited studies about the role of social interactions with community members to support children's early understandings about race, the study may be valuable for teachers and educators interested in the social nature of reading.

Implications for Practice

The findings of this study add several important insights about how we can teach literature in young bilingual children's classroom. First, it is critical that teachers create a space where young children can share their responses and broaden the range of their responses "as ways of forging strong links between stories and children's lives" (Sipe, 2002, p. 482). Copenhaver (2000) argued that simply reading alone does not help students to be active and critically participate. Moller and Allen (2000) also claimed that teachers should encourage students to freely apply their cultural knowledge, experiences, and cultural backgrounds to literary texts by creating a space where they feel secure in their diverse responses. Children are able to express their own spontaneous and honest reactions to texts only when children feel safe in expressing and sharing their responses with peers (Copenhaver-Johnson, 2006; Martínez-Roldán, 2000). By creating an interactive space where young children freely share their diverse perspectives, teachers can help young children broaden their responses and explore various facets of their reading.

In this study, the children were able to express their different thoughts about racial discrimination and segregation because Ms. Park created a comfortable atmosphere where the children shared their responses to the books. Although the children were sharing their views with the teacher and peers in two languages, they were able to have a chance to speculate about racial discrimination and segregation, which helped them better understand racial justice.

The study suggested that merely attempting to provide bilingual students in literature classrooms with dual language/literary skills is not sufficient to help young bilinguals grow up as empowered participants of global communities. Darder (1995) pointed out that being bilingual means more than speaking two languages because it involves "bicultural identity" and "bicultural voices" (p. 324) with different social norms and worldviews. In order to create more supportive literary surroundings for young bilingual children, it is important for teachers to provide bilingual children with the opportunity to critically think about real-world problems that they meet in their everyday lives. To this end, the goal of a literature program in a bilingual classroom has to be that the students learn not only bilingual skills but also learn about dynamic "human experiences."

Second, the findings of this study suggested that it is crucial for teachers to provide bilingual children with the opportunity to share their literary responses using two languages. In this study, Ms. Park allowed the children to use both Korean and English while reading literature; and as she also created an atmosphere where the children were

able to share their responses utilizing two languages, they were able to be more engaged in reading and developing their critical attitudes toward racial diversity and equality that are needed in a democratic society. Sharing responses with two different languages also helped them increase their literary understandings and broaden their responses. Thus, it is important that teachers assist young bilingual children in being engaged in authentic discussions about books by allowing them to utilize two languages.

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**Instructional Practices for Academic Language Development
in Spanish and English in a Hypersegregated Dual Immersion Program**

by

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Abstract

Increasing school segregation is leaving Dual Immersion programs without sufficient numbers of native English speakers to constitute a traditional Dual Immersion model. This study explored the academic language development practices three elementary teachers employed, in both Spanish and English, in a low-income, hypersegregated Dual Immersion program in which most of the students were Latino English learners. Research data included three months of classroom observations and monthly interviews with teachers in kindergarten through fourth grade. Findings revealed that teachers strategically implemented a variety of language development practices in both Spanish and English, such as choral practices, instructional conversations about language, and turn-and-talk. However, these practices did not seem to foster critical thinking. Integrating critical thinking and language development, rather than teaching them sequentially, is crucial in hypersegregated settings to prepare bilingual students for college and careers.

Introduction

English learners (ELs) have experienced success in U.S. schools in a number of ways: building on that success may be critical to improved educational experiences and outcomes for an increasingly large and diverse group of students. Two well-documented avenues to academic achievement for ELs have been through acquisition of academic English (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008; Valdés, Bunch, Snow, & Lee, 2005) and through well-implemented 90-10 Dual Immersion (DI) programs (Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Lindholm-Leary & Block, 2010; Lindholm-Leary & Hernández, 2011; Thomas & Collier, 2002; Verde Peleato, 2011). However, as ELs are attending increasingly segregated schools (García, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008; Gifford & Valdés, 2006), the resulting “linguistic hypersegregation” (Valdés et al., 2011, p. 6) adds to the complexity of educating Spanish speakers in a community in which English is an optional language and where the teacher may be the only native English speaker. Because such schools are becoming increasingly common, the importance of considering what effective teaching and learning might look like in these contexts is growing.

The current study builds on the research base evidencing academic success of native Spanish speakers (NSSs). The research question guiding the study asked, How do DI teachers facilitate NSSs’ acquisition of academic language, including reading, writing, listening and speaking, in Spanish and English, in a hypersegregated setting? Because all ELs in the study were also NSSs, the terms are used interchangeably. This study expands the definition of academic language to include academic Spanish and pushes at our understanding of DI programs, which were not originally intended to be implemented in homogeneous settings (Lindholm-Leary, 2001). Although it could be argued that DI programs in linguistically hypersegregated schools are not “dual” at all without English-speaking students, they are being marketed to parents using the DI research base. Instead of ignoring programs such as these because they do not fit a researcher’s lexicon, I call for research that helps to support students and teachers in these schools.

Academic Language in a Hypersegregated Dual Immersion Context

Academic Language

Academic language has been found to be important for positive achievement outcomes in school—particularly for English learners (ELs)— as language is the foundation of instruction and literacy (Delpit, 1992; Gentile, 2003; Valdés et al., 2005). Suárez-Orozco et al. (2008) evidenced the importance of academic language in English in a large-scale study of over 400 immigrant students, finding academic English to be the single-best student level predictor of academic outcomes on achievement tests and GPA. Academic English accounted for at least 75% of the variance in achievement test outcomes and had three times the predictive value of all other student variables combined. However, there is no clear definition of academic language (Valdés, 2004), as “what counts as academic language is an utterly social phenomenon” (Aukerman, 2007, p. 629) and is therefore dynamic and changing. The research literature primarily refers to academic English (exceptions include Alvarez, 2011, 2012; Guerrero, 2003; Potowski, 2007; Valdés & Geoffrion-Vinci, 1998), due to the prevailing hegemonic view that ignores students’ primary language as a knowledge-base and resource.

Without a clear definition of academic language, how do educators know when students understand and produce it? Too often ELs are held to the English monolingual norm, and accuracy is lauded over depth of linguistic understanding (Alvarez, 2011, 2012; Cook, 2002). Schools maintain certain language requirements that can interfere with EL students’ academic success; yet without a clear understanding of academic language, expectations are often vague and typically not communicated to students (Valdés et al., 2005). In fact, academic language is often not explicitly taught in classrooms as teachers tend to assume it is acquired naturally. This assumption may privilege mainstream students who learn academic language at home, while disadvantaging those who do not (Alim, 2005; Delpit, 2001; Valdés, 2004).

I use the broad definition of academic language that Suárez-Orozco et al. (2008) employed to define *academic English*, but I expand it here to include other languages, specifically Spanish. For this study, academic language is the register required for success in schools and is operationalized as the ability to comprehend instruction, “extract meaning from written text, and to argue a point both verbally and in writing” (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008, p. 41). This definition includes the receptive acts of listening and reading, along with the productive acts of speaking and writing. Similarly, Alvarez (2012) and Bunch (2006) argued for a broad definition of academic language that is not dichotomized with conversational language. Academic language is not decontextualized, as some researchers have argued (Riches & Genesee, 2006; Scarella, 2003), but highly contextualized in the learning process.

90-10 Dual Immersion Programs

A 90/10 DI program model requires approximately 50% native English speakers (NESs) and 50% NSSs, or one-third bilingual students, one-third Spanish speaking, and one-third English speaking (Lindholm-Leary, 2001). Accordingly, much of the research on DI programs has been done in mixed communities in schools with both English-speaking and Spanish-speaking students (de Jong & Howard, 2009; Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Lindholm-Leary & Borsato, 2002; Potowski, 2004, 2007).

Some researchers contest the success of the DI model and the equity it claims to foster. For example, Amrein (2000) argued that NSSs are consistently underserved as compared to their English-speaking and bilingual peers. Valdés (1997) and de Jong and Howard (2009) expressed concern that the needs of NSSs are not met in DI classrooms during either English or Spanish instruction. They argued that English instruction is not sufficiently scaffolded for English learners, and Spanish instruction is “impoverished” (de Jong & Howard, 2009, p. 10) for the sake of easy accessibility for native English speakers. Opportunities for language development were found to be inequitable, with Spanish questions being less cognitively challenging and requiring less linguistically complex answers than questions asked in English (Gort, Pontier, & Sembiane, 2013). Similarly, Rubenstein-Avila’s (2003) case study found that DI programs “have not eliminated the gap between majority and minority students; majority students (mostly white and middle class) are the ones to profit the most from such programmes” (pp. 86-87); also Potowski (2007) found that NES did not achieve Spanish fluency in DI programs.

Other researchers have evidenced success of 90-10 DI programs. Both NES and NSS do as well as or better than their peers in English-only classes on standardized tests in English (Bikle, Billings, & Hakuta, 2004; Lindholm-Leary, 2001, 2012; Lindholm-Leary & Hernández, 2011; Thomas & Collier, 2002; Valentino & Reardon, 2014), including in low-SES, predominantly Hispanic schools, in both English language arts and math (Lindholm-Leary & Block, 2010). Verde Peleato (2011) found that 94% of DI students scored proficient in English language arts and 97% in math. DI students are also more likely than their monolingual peers to pass the high school exit exam (Lindholm-Leary, 2010), be reclassified as fluent English proficient (Umansky & Reardon, 2014), and want to go to college (Lindholm-Leary & Borsato, 2002). Lindholm-Leary and Hernández (2011) found that students who were reclassified as English proficient closed the achievement gap with NESs, demonstrating that EL students’ level of academic English is an important factor in their success.

Each group of students was shown to perform better on tests in their own native language (Howard, Sugarman & Christian, 2003); in the post-NCLB environment the English assessments are the only ones that count. The Spanish speakers’ strength—their native language—is simply not valued as highly as English, which in turn affects how their achievement is assessed and thus perceived.

In DI classrooms the role of language is central to instruction, as educators must teach both Spanish and English while teaching *in* each language. DI programs should build on Latino students’ linguistic “funds of knowledge” (Moll, Amanti, Neff, &

Gonzalez, 1992, p. 132), as their home language is an important component of the program. However, schools tend to devalue students' colloquial registers of Spanish, not regarding them as "academic" (Valdés & Geoffrion-Vinci, 1998).

Hypersegregation

School segregation along racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic lines is thought to exacerbate educational inequalities (Reardon & Owens, in press). NSSs are often densely populated in a small number of urban schools that tend to have large proportions of ELs and little access to English-speaking peers (García et al., 2008; Gifford & Valdés, 2006). In fact, 70% of ELs are in just 10% of schools due to the high degree of housing and linguistic segregation in the U.S. The schools ELs attend are low performing; in California 72% of students attending schools in Program Improvement² status are Latino, compared to only 11% of White students (Gifford & Valdés, 2006). Although not all Hispanic³ students are ELs, attending low-performing, linguistically segregated schools would not help any student to acquire academic English. In addition, a dearth of exposure to academic language has been found in classrooms with high percentages of English learners (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008). Linguistic isolation may impact students' acquisition of English (Valdés, et al., 2011) and their achievement as measured by standardized tests (Gifford & Valdés, 2006). In hypersegregated environments the language acquisition process can "go awry" (Wong Fillmore & Snow, 2000, p. 24), as ELs do not have sufficient access to native English speakers. The language learning process in DI programs in particular is based on students from different linguistic backgrounds learning from each other (Lindholm-Leary, 2001). Without a sufficient number of native English speakers, the process can be one-sided.

Hypersegregated schools are all but ignored by the current research base (Valdés et al., 2011), yet the topic is becoming increasingly important as school segregation increases. Capitelli (2009) and Valdés et al. (2011) called for research to be done in linguistically segregated schools in order to better understand teaching and learning in these settings. As a result, this study aims to contribute to the literature by adding this neglected educational reality.

Theoretical Framework

The importance of social interaction and dialogue can be easily forgotten in discussions of academic language, as reading and writing are emphasized in schools—particularly as assessment measures—over listening and speaking. However, all four language areas (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) are critical to learning. Students comprehend aurally as well as through reading, and use speech and writing to deepen

² If a school does not meet its Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) goals, determined by state assessment scores, it goes into Program Improvement (PI) status (California Department of Education).

³ *Hispanic* is the term used by Gifford and Valdés (2006). I used *Latino* instead of Hispanic throughout this study.

their learning as well as to show its evidence. Young students write and comprehend text using oral language structures with which they are familiar (Clay, 2004; Dyson, 1983). Dialogue deepens learning while simultaneously expanding students' language registers.

Authentic discourse in the target language is imperative for learners to acquire language. Long's (1996) interaction hypothesis states that discussion facilitates language acquisition. He wrote, "Negotiation for meaning, and especially negotiation work that triggers interactional adjustments by the [native speaker] or more competent interlocutor facilitates acquisition because it connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways" (pp. 451-452). A productive DI classroom for NSSs would require NESs to be interaction partners during English time so students could negotiate content together. Peer interaction with a NES is typically not possible in hypersegregated schools.

Swain (2000) argued for the output hypothesis, emphasizing the importance of interaction from the perspective of what the learner is able to produce. When producing language, the learner controls the language, allowing her to notice a "hole" (p. 100) in her language when it exists. Learners may attempt to fill the linguistic void through a variety of avenues, including "collaborative dialogue" or "dialogue in which speakers are engaged in problem solving and knowledge building" (p. 102). The concept of collaborative dialogue is similar to the interaction hypothesis in that they both build on the sociocultural concept that language mediates learning. In collaborative dialogue one learns via language, both input and output (Swain, 2000). Of course, the input must be comprehensible, which depends on many factors, both linguistic and individual-specific, such as background knowledge of a topic. Similarly, a language learner's output will represent her current ability to produce a certain level of language on a certain topic.

When two languages are not learned together from birth, as is often the case for EL students, the second language (L2) may develop differently than the first (L1; Cook, 2002; Vygotsky, 1986). An L1 is learned orally, in a natural context, whereas an L2 is often learned through rules in a classroom. Alvarez (2011, 2012) and Valdés and colleagues (2011) argued that it is not appropriate to compare ELs to the monolingual norm in either language. Educators can maintain high standards for EL students in both languages while emphasizing the content (ideas) rather than the form. The primary focus of output can be communicating important ideas effectively; form would be a result. All students can be held to high expectations for ideas, but expectations for form would depend on the student's individual proficiency at a certain point in time.

Academic language—in any language—could be taught as an additional register rather than as a replacement for students' home language for two reasons: to enhance the implicit value of the first language, and to improve ELs' chances of academic success (Alim, 2005; Baker, 2002; Christensen, 2011; Compton-Lilly, 2009; Delpit, 1992; Valdés, Brookes, & Chávez, 2003). Academic registers in both English and Spanish may be new to NSSs in the U.S., as students may speak a non-standard register of Spanish or a different register than what is spoken in their home country (Alvarez, 2011). Regardless of the register NSSs bring to the classroom, their language is a strength; DI programs should build on NSSs' linguistic "funds of knowledge" (Moll et al., 1992, p. 132) as their native language is an important component of the academic program.

Methods

Setting: Jackson Avenue Academy

Jackson Avenue Academy (JAA) reflects the current trend toward increased segregation in schools, resulting in linguistic segregation: 99% percent of the students were students of color, 98% were low socioeconomic status (as measured by free and reduced lunch), and 84% were classified as ELLs. The level of parent education at JAA was similarly homogeneous: 87% of parents had no more than a high school degree and 62% had less than a high school education. At the time of this study, JAA was tied for the ninth lowest performing school in the state (California Department of Education, 2011).

Sample

I selected a purposeful sample (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003) of three elementary Spanish-English dual immersion teachers. The sampling criteria included educators who exhibited high levels of academic Spanish and English with success in teaching academic language to ELs as determined by state testing results in the 2009-2010 and 2010–2011 school years. All participants held a California bilingual teaching certification and were Latina. Table 1 provides a summary of the participants.

Table 1

Information About Study Participants

Participant	Gender	Age	Nationality	Number of years teaching	Current grade level
Claudia Ramos	F	44	Mexican	21	2/3 combo
Isabel Gonzalez	F	28	Mexican-American	3	K
Lauren Sandía	F	27	Mexican-American	5	4

The teachers spanned kindergarten through fourth grade so I could explore how the language demands of the classroom, teachers' language, and students' language changed across the grade levels.

Data Collection

Data collection included interviewing teachers; observing classrooms; writing field notes and memos; and collecting pictures, student work, and documents from March through May, 2012. I held formal, semi-structured interviews (Meriam, 2009) with

participants approximately once per month and I audio-taped and transcribed all the interviews. I conducted hour-long classroom observations weekly for a three-month period, intentionally observing the teachers at different times of the day and on different days of the week in order to get a holistic understanding of their instruction across various times, languages, and subjects. I used an observation guide or “contact summary sheet” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 51) to focus my observations. The goal of my observations was “thick, rich description” (Patton, 2002, p. 437). I used field notes and recording devices to help accurately capture data, thereby increasing descriptive validity. I transcribed much of the classroom instruction based on the audio files, usually within 24 hours of the observation. In May I began using a second observation guide that I had developed from the data that had been collected to that point. The two observation guides helped me to realize that I had reached a point of data saturation.

Data Analysis

Following Charmaz (2006) and Merriam’s (2009) suggestions, I began data analysis during the data collection phase, re-reading data, and writing memos. Once the data collection phase ended, I read through all the data at various times and made notes on different themes that were emerging. I conducted a discourse analysis on my transcribed classroom observations to examine teachers’ language and classroom talk (Clarke, 2005). Using the concept of “data reduction” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 10), I created a Microsoft Word table for each of the instructional strategies. The tables helped me realize that while I was separating the instructional practices from each other for analytic purposes, in practice they were often used in conjunction with each other. For example, the teacher would provide a sentence stem and then ask the students to turn and talk and use the stem. While the process of identifying and naming the individual practices was important, I realized that equally important would be putting them back together in a natural, holistic manner to reflect classroom implementation. After completing the data reduction tables, I returned to coding, which was an iterative process.

To ensure theoretical validity, I triangulated the data from interviews, observations, and student output (written and oral) and performed member checks with the participants throughout the study, asking for feedback on the concepts in development (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). I also actively searched for confirming and disconfirming evidence. Finally, I closely monitored and carefully reported the data analysis procedures to ensure transparency (Merriam, 2009).

Findings: Instructional Practices Supporting Language Development

Claudia, Lauren, and Isabel used a variety of practices to teach academic Spanish and English. Six practices were used most often: choral practices, turn and talk, intentional language expansion, explicit instructional conversations about language (EICALs), and a broader category that includes visuals, total physical response (TPR) and realia. I presented the practices as separate in order to discuss each one and its role in academic language development. However, in doing so, I oversimplified the instructional complexity, because most often the teachers used multiple practices

simultaneously, in a coherent, intentional effort to expand students' academic language register.

Table 2 presents the frequency with which key language development strategies were observed in each classroom. The percentages reflect the number of times the strategy was observed, divided by the total number of observations.

Table 2

Percentage of Times Instructional Strategies Were Evidenced During Classroom Observations

	Isabel Kinder	Claudia 2 nd /3 rd	Lauren 4 th	Weighted Avg.
Choral Practices				
Songs / chants	60%	13%	9%	28%
Choral repetition	90%	50%	73%	72%
Choral response	90%	25%	64%	62%
Choral reading	40%	25%	73%	48%
Turn & Talk	90%	25%	55%	59%
Intentional Language Expansion (ILE)				
Sentence Stems	80%	25%	55%	55%
Prompting for ILE	70%	75%	36%	59%
Visuals, TPR, Realia	90%	63%	82%	79%
Explicit Instructional Conversations about Language (EICAL)	50%	88%	64%	66%
Writing	50%	75%	18%	45%

I observed most of these practices in over half of the classroom observations, but each teacher had her favorites. Songs and chants, for example, were observed in 60% of the observations in Isabel's kindergarten class, but were used less frequently in the upper grade classes. Overall, the category encompassing visuals, TPR, and realia was most commonly observed (in 79% of all observations), with choral repetition being a close second (in 72% of observations).

Choral Practices

In this study choral practices provided a safe environment for students to try to pronounce new words, attempt new language structures, or read a text that may be more difficult than they could read independently. Choral practices scaffolded higher level vocabulary and syntax. Teachers used choral practices to provide students with opportunities to practice language while securing student engagement. Lauren stated,

I really love to choral everything because it keeps them all engaged. . . . and it also gives them a chance to practice. You reach so many more kids with that than just cold-calling one kid. I just think it's a lot more productive for your time, and they're getting a lot more practice. (Lauren, Interview, March 26, 2012)

Four different forms of choral practices were common: songs and chants, choral repetition, choral response, and choral reading. Choral response and choral repetition were observed at the word, phrase, and sentence level.

Songs and chants. Teachers used songs and chants as scaffolds to remember facts and processes. For example, the kinder students in Isabel’s class chanted when they formed open Spanish syllables: “*La ‘m’ con la ‘a’ dice ‘ma;’*” and “*La ‘t’ con la ‘o’ dice ‘to.’*” The ‘m’ and the ‘a’ says ‘ma;’ and “the ‘t’ and the ‘o’ says ‘to’” (Field notes, March 6, 2012). Because the name and sound of the vowel are the same in Spanish, they always rhyme. This same chant was used to spell “yo” (“I”), one of the most commonly and most frequently misspelled words kinder students write.

Songs were also used to reinforce complex concepts. Isabel’s kinder students daily chanted and sang about the weather. The song changed slightly depending on the day’s weather:

<i>Hoy en día está soleado, está soleado, está soleado.</i>	Today it is sunny, it is sunny, it is sunny
<i>Hoy en día está soleado, mañana cambiará.</i>	Today it is sunny, tomorrow [the weather] will change. (Field notes, April 22, 2012)

This song allowed students to verbally engage with the language related to weather and also reinforced the concept that weather changes daily, a California science standard for kindergarten.

Choral repetition. Choral repetition provided oral language opportunities in a safe environment and was most commonly used to allow students to practice new vocabulary and language structures. Students were consistently asked to chorally repeat words, phrases, and sentences that included academic language.

In the following example, Lauren used choral repetition as a scaffold to extend her students’ sentences and to help them remember content:

T:	Ancestors are the people who came before us. Say “ancestors” with me.
Ss, chorally:	Ancestors
T:	clap the syllables
Ss, chorally:	(clap syllables) an-ces-tors, three
T:	repeat after me, “ancestors”
Ss, chorally:	Ancestors
T:	are the people
Ss, chorally:	are the people
T:	who came before us

Ss, chorally:	who came before us
T:	all together
T & Ss, chorally:	Ancestors are the people who came before us

Note. Fieldnotes, April 17, 2012

Lauren’s students practiced saying the vocabulary word and using it in context. This process was highly scaffolded, as the students were asked to say one word, then a few words, and finally the entire sentence. She also had them break *ancestors* into syllables so that students could hear all its component parts. At the time, Lauren had just received a new student from Guatemala and may have been using especially high levels of scaffolding to support his integration into the classroom. This example shows all three types of choral repetition observed: the word (“ancestors”), phrase (“are the people”) and sentence levels (“Ancestors are the people who came before us.”).

Choral response. Choral response differs from choral repetition because the students must chorally answer a question rather than repeat the teacher. Claudia, Lauren, and Isabel often used choral response to practice academic language in a safe environment, at the levels of word, phrase, and sentence. In the following example, Lauren asked her fourth graders a question about fractions and pointed to the denominator to provide visual support:

<i>M:</i> ¿Adónde nos tiene que fijar primero? <i>Es, en coro:</i> Al denominador.	T: Where do we have to look first? Ss, chorally: at the denominator.
---	---

Note. Fieldnotes, March 6, 2012

Lauren wanted the students to practice saying *denominador* (denominator) so that they would learn the academic term and not refer to the denominator as simply the number at the bottom of a fraction. She was teaching both the word and the process simultaneously. Choral response provided students with practice saying the vocabulary word, in context, reinforcing the language and the concept.

Choral reading. Choral reading allowed students to read in unison with their peers, relieving individuals of the pressure to make every word and phrase sound “right.” Much like shared reading⁴, choral reading also allowed students to hear what fluent, accurate reading sounds like, and the scaffold of many other voices permitted students to read texts that may have been above their independent reading levels. For example, one selection from the fourth grade textbook, an excerpt from *The Diary of Anne Frank* (Scholastic, 2014), had a lexile level of 1080, according to Scholastic⁵, which correlates

⁴ The primary difference between shared and choral reading is in the intended purpose of the instructional strategy. Shared reading is intended to support literacy (Swartz, Shook, & Klein, 2004); whereas, choral reading primarily supports language and content learning. However, the practices often look similar when implemented, and it could easily be argued that shared and choral reading support both language and literacy.

⁵ <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/book/anne-frank-diary-young-girl>

to sixth through eighth grade according to the Common Core State Standards (Common Core State Standards, 2010; Appendix A). This text would likely have been too difficult for many of Lauren’s students to read independently, so she used choral reading to scaffold the text (Fieldnotes, April 17, 2012).

Turn and Talk

Turn and talk is a participation structure in which students are expected to face a partner and converse about a specific prompt. Lauren and Isabel used turn and talk as a way for all students to participate, practice using academic language, and share what they had learned, while simultaneously developing academic language. For example, Lauren provided a specific sentence stem that she wanted students to use to answer a math question:

<i>M: Usando esa oración, “La longitud de este segmento de recta es,” digan la respuesta a tu pareja.</i>	T: Using the sentence, “The length of this line segment is “tell your partner the answer.”
<i>Note.</i> Fieldnotes, March 20, 2012	

Lauren explained that she intentionally used turn and talk to have students use academic language, explaining,

With the turn and talks, I think that it’s a great way for them to practice structures, right after we’ve practiced them all together and a chance for them to verbalize what they’re learning, because when you talk about it, you cement it better in your mind. (Interview, March 26, 2012).

Talking to a partner served the dual purpose of practicing academic language and solidifying new content. Students had the opportunity to practice academic language one-on-one with a peer with a high level of language support.

Intentional Language Expansion

Intentional language expansion occurred when Claudia, Lauren, and Isabel purposefully elongated students’ utterances. They did this in two primary ways: using sentence stems and prompting students to expand what they said.

Sentence stems. Sentence stems were typically used as a scaffold to help students begin a sentence and/or use a complete sentence rather than a fragment. Stems were used in a variety of content areas to allow students “to express their ideas in a more sophisticated way,” and were occasionally differentiated for various levels of language learners (Interview, March 26, 2012). All three teachers frequently used verbal stems and occasionally preplanned and posted written stems. In the following example Lauren scaffolded a difficult stem to foster academic language:

<i>E: Los dos tienen en #</i>	S: The two have in #
<i>M: = común</i>	T: = common
<i>E: =común, el, # la coordenada X</i>	S: = common, the, #, the X coordinate.
<i>M: Muy bien, la coordenada X.</i>	T: Very good, the X coordinate.

Note. Fieldnotes, March 20, 2012

In this instance both math and language were being developed simultaneously. The stem was slightly challenging for the student, as evidenced by the need for help with the word *común* (common), but Lauren supported the use of the stem because acquiring this language was necessary for understanding the content she was teaching. The student said the difficult word at almost the same time as the teacher, so the stem was likely appropriate.

Prompting. Intentional language expansion (ILE) also occurred when teachers prompted students to elaborate. Because prompting for ILE is responsive to students' utterances, it can and should be even more highly individualized than sentence stems. Prompting for ILE was evidenced frequently during the daily dictation exercise in Claudia's second-third grade combination class. For example, Claudia asked a student to use *corriendo* (running) in a sentence:

<i>E: Ese niño está corriendo.</i>	S: That boy is running.
<i>M: ¿Por dónde está corriendo el niño?</i>	T: Where is he running?
<i>E: Ese niño está corriendo por el parque.</i>	S: That boy is running in the park.
<i>M: ¿Y qué tipo de niño?</i>	T: And what type of boy?
<i>E: Ese niño alto está corriendo por el parque.</i>	S: That tall boy is running in the park.
<i>M: ¿Y cómo se llama?</i>	T: And what's his name?
<i>E: Ese niño alto #</i>	S: That tall boy #
<i>M: = llamado</i>	T: = called
<i>E: llamado # Víctor.</i>	S: = called Victor
<i>M: OK, dínos la oración por favor.</i>	T: OK, tell us the whole sentence please.
<i>E: Ese niño, ese niño alto llamado Víctor está corriendo en el parque.</i>	S: That boy, that tall boy named Victor is running in the park.

Note. Fieldnotes, March 23, 2012

On the first try, the student used a simple sentence. Knowing the student's linguistic ability was higher than his initial sentence evidenced, Claudia then prompted as to "where?" The student added the prepositional phrase "in the park." The teacher then asked for a detail about the character in the sentence and was told he was tall; an adjective was added to the sentence. When asked for his name, the student, with Claudia's help, added an adjective phrase "*llamado Víctor*" (called Victor). The final sentence was "*Ese niño alto llamado Víctor está corriendo en el parque*" (That tall boy called Victor is running in the park) is significantly more complex than the student's initial sentence, and the utterance length increased from four to ten words. Prompting for more details in this context expanded both written and oral language. In this study, teachers' prompts for ILE were both contextualized and appropriate for the individual students.

Visuals, Total Physical Response (TPR), and Realia as Language Scaffolds

Teachers used visuals, TPR, and realia as language scaffolds. Students could refer back to the visual or realia to help them remember the associated language. Similarly, TPR was used to help students remember language, especially vocabulary words.

Visuals. In the fourth grade class, Lauren made a useful visual, an anchor chart, about comparing fractions. The students chorally read the rules from the chart. Then when students were asked to turn to their partner and explain the rules for comparing fractions, at least one student had to refer back to the chart to accomplish the task. The content, the language or both, were difficult for him, but the chart provided a scaffold to help him be successful (Fieldnotes, March 6, 2012).

TPR. Isabel used TPR in her kinder class, in both Spanish and English. For example, during an English lesson on spring, the words *buds*, *flowers*, *bloom*, and *hatch* all had TPR movements to support the learners. During a Spanish lesson on things birds need to survive, the vocabulary included *aire*, *refugio*, *agua*, *alimento y comida* (air, shelter, water, and food) was again supported with TPR (Fieldnotes, March 27, 2012). The body movements helped the students understand the vocabulary and scientific concepts and provided a kinesthetic way to remember the words.

Realia. Realia was similarly used as a scaffold for vocabulary. For example, during a Spanish lesson on compound words, Claudia brought in a number of items to help students identify compound words that they already might have known, as they were common household items, including: a superhero (*superhéroe*), glasses (*anteojos*), a picture frame (*portarretrato*), a potato peeler (*pelapapas*), stain remover (*quitamanchas*), paper holder (*pisapapel*), nail cutter (*cortauñas*) and corkscrew (*sacacorchos*). The realia helped to cement the concept of compound words in the students' minds (Fieldnotes, March 6, 2012).

Explicit Instructional Conversations About Language (EICAL)

Teachers used EICALs to explicitly draw students' attention to an aspect of language, including morphology, vocabulary, grammar, syntax, pragmatics, synonyms, antonyms, and homophones, words with multiple meanings, and other linguistic

concepts. EICALs were also a form of linguistic apprenticeship in Claudia’s second and third grade combination class. She explained that students would “*Empezar a pensar como yo pienso*” (“Begin to think like I think”) and imitate her consistent modeling of talking about words, synonyms, antonyms, and how to make sentences interesting (Interview, May 3, 2012). She tried to *presionarles más para que ellos mismos piensen y busquen la palabra que puede significar lo mismo, que le pueda dar un matiz más interesante a su oración, y [para que] se den cuenta de la riqueza que tiene cada idioma* (Pressure them more so that they think and look for the word that means the same that can make their sentence more interesting, [so] they realize the richness that each language has” (Interview, May 3, 2012).

Claudia modeled thinking about language using EICALs, and often used EICALs to correct students’ language use. For example, during a spelling lesson focused on words that end in *-ido* and *-ado*, Claudia found that, regardless of their ability to spell these words, a few of her students were misusing the words or the helping verbs, as in the example below:

<i>E: Yo ha</i>	S: I has
<i>M: No puede decir “yo ha recogido.” Yo “he” recogido. Yo he recogido una basura del piso. O del suelo, son sinónimos.</i>	T: You can’t say “I has picked up.” I have picked up. I have picked up garbage from the ground, or from the floor. They’re synonyms.

Note. Fieldnotes, March 23, 2012

This is one example of many that evidenced the need for Spanish academic language development in a class full of NSSs. For example, in a single, hour-long observation, Claudia conducted multiple EICALs with her students regarding the difference between *porque* (because) and *por qué?* (why?); the multiple meanings of the word *selección* (selection); different ways to ask someone to speak more loudly, *habla recio, fuerte, con volumen de voz alta* (speak up, loudly, with a high volume); and how to transform a declarative sentence into an interrogative one in Spanish (Fieldnotes, April 13, 2012).

Writing

Writing was used to develop language in a variety of ways. First, all three classrooms practiced transforming oral language to written language. Isabel’s kinder class orally rehearsed and wrote daily news; Claudia’s second and third grade combination class did a daily dictation exercise that included the students and/or teacher dictating oral sentences for students to transcribe; and Lauren consistently asked her fourth grade students to orally rehearse what they were going to write.

Second, writing was used to teach students how to encode language about the differences between written and oral language. For example, Isabel’s kinder students explicitly discussed strategies for encoding words, including clapping syllables, saying the word slowly to hear the sounds, using the word wall, and rereading their writing to

check it (Fieldnotes, April 12, 2012). Kinder students also learned about word boundaries through writing. When a student wrote “*mier mano*” for “*mi hermano*,” Isabel clarified the word boundaries, which are difficult to distinguish aurally (Fieldnotes, April 12, 2012). An attempt at an English translation might be “mybro ther” for “my brother.” In writing, knowing where one word ends and another begins is necessary and important for communication.

Third, teachers used writing as a model to get students to use more complex language. Both Isabel and Claudia used language expansion prompts with students before they wrote in order to obtain longer oral and written utterances (e.g., Claudia’s multiple prompts to expand a sentence that was used in a whole-class dictation exercise in the ILE section). Finally, the kinder and fourth grade teachers modeled the type of language they expected in their students’ writing. Based on a Venn diagram, Lauren wrote one paragraph comparing two things and another paragraph contrasting them. She then identified the signal words in her writing that showed transitions, similarities, and differences, and related it back to the Venn diagram, supporting students’ use of the compare-contrast structure and transitions in both oral and written language. Table 3 summarizes the instructional practices and their purposes.

Table 3

Summary of Language Development Practices and their Purposes

Instructional Practice	Purposes
Choral Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn or practice academic language • Pronounce new words • Increase engagement—all students participate • Lower the affective filter; create a safe environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Songs / chants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scaffold memorization of facts and/or processes • Reinforce complex concepts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choral repetition (word/phrase/sentence) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try out new academic language (vocabulary and/or language structures) • Remember content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choral response (word/phrase/sentence) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice new academic language (vocabulary and/or language structures) • Remember content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choral reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scaffold complex text; practice reading fluently • Learn how to read and pronounce new words • Remind students of academic and behavioral expectations • Internalize processes through oral repetition • Draw attention to text or aspects of text

Table 3 continued on next page

Table 3 (continued)*Summary of Language Development Practices and their Purposes*

Instructional Practice	Purposes
•	
Turn and Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice using academic language in context • Formative assessment for teachers, as teachers listened to what and how students shared • Scaffold student writing—share ideas • Explain a process or solve a problem
Intentional Language Expansion (ILE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence stems (oral or written) • Prompting for ILE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand students’ oral or written utterances • Provide differentiated support for language development • Support increased complexity of language • Practice using academic language • Help students begin or expand an oral or written sentence
Visuals, TPR, Realia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scaffold vocabulary • Support memory
Explicit Instructional Conversations about Language (EICAL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicitly teach linguistic concepts; correct students’ language • Draw students’ attention to particular aspects of language • Help students to appreciate the richness of language • Use what is known to learn something new
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show the reciprocity between oral and written language • Teach the encoding process • Teach the organization of writing and linguistic signals in different types of writing • Increase the complexity of students’ language

Discussion

Although the linguistic and cultural isolation of JAA from White, middle class, standard English speakers reflects the reality of the schools many ELs attend (García et al., 2008), generalizability was not a goal of this study. Likewise, the small sample of Latina, Spanish-speaking teachers was not representative of all teachers or DI teachers. Rather, the goal of this study was to identify instructional practices that effective teachers use to develop academic language in Spanish and English in a hypersegregated setting.

Academic Language Development in Spanish and English

The need for academic language development in both Spanish and English was apparent at JAA, adding to the complexity of teaching in a homogenous DI classroom. A child’s language develops over time, even in the home language. Clay (2004) noted,

“Discovering how to vary language, how to rearrange the bits, how to capture a new phrase and use it to the point of tedium are all part of language learning from the preschool years throughout life” (p. 7). Additionally, the language children bring to school—their home registers of Spanish or English—may not be valued in school (Alim, 2010; Dandy, 1991; Delpit, 1992; Valdés & Geoffrion-Vinci, 1998). Therefore, Spanish language development, even in a hypersegregated context is important for students to cultivate bilingualism and biliteracy.

“Collaborative conversations” (kindergarten through second grade) and “collaborative discussions” (third through twelfth grades) are an expectation as part of the Common Core Speaking and Listening Standards (2010). Implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) will increase student performance expectations, thus emphasizing language, as performance is expressed through speaking or writing. “Teachers will need to *evaluate* the content and language demands” (Santos, Darling-Hammond, & Cheuk, 2012, p. 6) and scaffold those demands in an integrated way so that all learners, including ELs, will have access to grade-level texts and rigorous coursework.

Critical Thinking

The practices presented in the findings section are valid and necessary, but they are an incomplete set of tools for developing students’ language and critical thinking simultaneously. In this study, when the language being taught was new or academic, the teachers might have purposefully kept the thinking task easier so that students did not struggle with both the language and the content simultaneously. However, thinking skills on the higher end of Bloom’s revised taxonomy (Anderson et al., 2001), such as analysis, evaluation or synthesis, were essentially absent from the data. Teachers skillfully scaffolded both Spanish and English but generally did not require critical thinking, thus illuminating the need for instructional practices that can be used for both language development and higher order thinking skills. Turn and talk could be one, as the teacher’s prompt can require critical thinking skills.

Walqui and Heritage (2012) argued that language and cognition develop together, each supporting the other’s development. As concepts become more complex, the language required to talk about them becomes more advanced. Similarly, as a student’s language advances, s/he is able to express more sophisticated ideas. Teachers must match the increasing demands, scaffolding the complexities of both content and language simultaneously.

One result of the teacher’s emphasis on choral practices was a general lack of authentic communicative needs. If, as Abrar-Ul-Hassan (2011) and Krashen (1981) claimed, second language acquisition is motivated by authentic linguistic needs, choral practices would be less effective for language acquisition than genuine communication. Repeating or responding on a teacher’s command, for example, reflects a “nonconversational style of instruction” (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988, p. 100) rather than an authentic need to communicate, as the students’ linguistic participation is teacher-directed rather than student-initiated. Therefore, balancing choral practices with situations that require deeper thinking is crucial for academic success.

Maloof Avendaño and Housset Fonseca (2009) provided a number of definitions of critical thinking, including one from Paul and Scriven's (2007) book, *The Critical Thinking Community*, that defines critical thinking as "the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action" (pp. 38-39). This definition echoes Anderson and colleagues' (2001) description of Bloom's higher order thinking skills and includes purposes for critical thinking—belief and action—that make it an empowering pedagogy, as students learn to act on the results of their critical thinking. In other words, students who think critically consider from multiple perspectives the implications of their learning, make thoughtful well-informed judgments about the learning, and act on those judgments.

One example of a missed opportunity for integrating language and critical thinking occurred during a lesson Lauren delivered on writing a compare-contrast essay. Lauren scaffolded the language of compare and contrast masterfully using choral reading and visuals, including a Venn diagram and an example of a compare-contrast essay that was color coded to show transition words, words used to compare, such as *alike* and words used to contrast, such as *different from*. Lauren then asked her students to compare and contrast two characters in a novel. She provided a word bank for the students, again scaffolding language, but there was never a discussion about why understanding character traits was important or relevant to students' lives. Lauren could have explained that readers make inferences based on characters' actions and then use those inferences to better understand the book as they continue to read, predicting characters' future actions and drawing on what they know about characters to understand why they do certain things.

For example, one character played a mean trick on another character to get revenge for something the second character had done earlier in the text. In a conversation with one student, however, I learned that he thought the character was just mean for no reason. Understanding that the character is vengeful provides a different and more complex reading of the text than simply thinking that the character was mean. It allows one to ask questions about justice, such as, "Who has a right to deliver justice?" And, what happens when people take justice into their own hands? Thinking that a character is just mean, however, introduces a sense of randomness rather than developing the concept that characters' actions are a result of prior experiences and beliefs. Because students can relate questions of justice to their own lives, critical thinking provides students with deeper, more meaningful understandings that can connect the academic content to their lives.

Implications

Teacher education. Teacher education programs can better prepare teacher candidates to teach the CCSS with an emphasis on integrating academic language development and critical thinking. Teacher educators will need to equip teachers with the ability to identify, evaluate, and teach the content and language required in a lesson so that all learners, including ELs, will have access to grade-level work and texts of increasing difficulty. Additionally, the CCSS requires all teachers, including math and

science teachers, to include reading and writing in their courses. A focus on pedagogy that integrates language development with deep content learning will be necessary across all methodology courses in teacher preparation programs.

Future research. Research comparing the instructional practices and academic outcomes of two bilingual contexts, NSSs only and a mix of NESs and NSSs, might open the discussion of practices that are most effective in one or both settings. An exploration of students' beliefs about learning Spanish and English in a context in which all, or almost all, their peers speak Spanish would serve to identify how they perceive the role of bilingualism and biliteracy in their future. Finally, although research shows the effect of socioeconomics and caregivers' language on children's language acquisition (Fernald, Marchman, & Weisleder, 2013; Hart & Risley, 1995; Huttenlocher, Waterfall, Vasilyeva, Vevea, & Hedges, 2010), less evidence connects teachers' language to students' language development. Considering the linguistic apprenticeship model used by Claudia and the language-focused instruction in this study, future research might include an exploration of possible relationships between teachers' and students' language use.

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Bilingual Education in the New York State Spanish Spelling Bee

by

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Abstract

This paper explores the discourse surrounding the New York State Spanish Spelling Bee as a case of practice regarding language policies. In the current context of increasing emphasis on English-only policies in schools across the United States, this paper explores how the Spanish Spelling Bee organizers and keynote speakers rallied for bilingualism. Findings illuminated the Spanish Spelling Bee as a site where Bilingual education is used against backlash pedagogy. Spanish, seen as a marker for Latino identity and linguistic hierarchies within Spanish, is evidenced. In the context of English-only movements, bilingual education emerges as an issue of social justice.

Introduction

La historia pertenece a aquellos quienes la escriben, y la historia se ha escrito siempre por los vencedores. Ahora nosotros tenemos las plumas. Ahora nosotros tenemos las palabras. Ahora, la historia les pertenece. A cada uno de ustedes.

[The story belongs to those who write it, and the story has always been written by the conquerors. Now we have pens. Now we have words. Now, the story is yours. Every one of you.] (Alma Flor Ada's address to students, Spanish Spelling Bee Competition, June 4, 2011)

This paper explores discourses addressing New York State's Spanish Spelling Bee as seen through keynote speeches delivered in the finals of the statewide competition. This paper draws from a larger data set that was part of a comprehensive exploration on the New York State Spanish Spelling Bee. The focus for this piece is the discursive emphasis on bilingualism for social justice embedded in the spirit and words of the competition's organizers and speakers. I argued that the New York State Spanish Spelling Bee is not about spelling but about historicizing language as a social practice, thus empowering students and their families to reclaim their languages and their identity. I use institutional discourse analysis to make the case that the spelling competition and the official presence of New York City Department of Education officials set the discursive tone that legitimizes bilingual education.

Background

New York City schools serve almost a million students, out of which 41% speak a language other than English at home (New York City Department of Education, 2012). The initial concern for this study was motivated by understanding how an official initiative of such a large scale as New York State's Spanish Spelling Bee could clarify the relationship between the languages spoken at home and the practices that occur in schools with an increasingly diverse population of students of Latin American and Caribbean origin.

According to the New York City Department of Education (2013), there are 176 languages spoken in New York City's public schools. A large number of students are of Latin American and Caribbean origin, as revealed by data from the New York State Department of Education (2012), stating that 39.95% of the students in New York City's public schools are Hispanic⁶ (New York City Department of Education, 2012).

A prominent characteristic in New York City's classrooms today is a mismatch between the diversity of our students and the standardization of curricula (Dyson & Genishi, 2012). Standards-based reforms have significantly shaped the way teachers and students are learning and working together. In their work on the narrowing of curriculum in New York City schools, Margaret Crocco and Arthur Costigan (2007) asserted:

As a result of the curricular and pedagogical impositions of scripted lessons, mandated curriculum, and narrowed options for pedagogy in many New York City (NYC) middle and high schools, new teachers find their personal and professional identity development thwarted, creativity and autonomy undermined, and ability to forge relationships with students diminished. (p. 513)

Against the backdrop of the No Child Left Behind act (NCLB), Race to the Top, and the Common Core State Standards, the standards-based movement brings different challenges to teachers and students. Arguing against the standardization embodied by NCLB, Race to the Top, and similar measures, Dyson and Genishi (2012) called for a shift that takes into account students and their complex learning processes.

In a recent letter to the *New York Times*, Stephen Krashen (2012) stated,

The new Common Core Standards call for an astonishing increase in testing. NCLB requires standardized tests in math and reading at the end of the school year in grades 3-8 and once in high school. This will be expanded to testing in more subjects (social studies, science and maybe more), and in more grade levels. There will also be interim tests given during the year and there may be pretests in the fall to measure growth through the school year.

This means about a 20-fold increase over NCLB, more testing than has ever been seen on this planet. There is no evidence that all this testing will improve things. In fact, the evidence we have now strongly suggests that increasing testing does not increase achievement.

In addition to standards-based practices and the mismatch between diverse populations and homogeneous curricula, English-only movements continue to grow and seep into educational policy, curricula and practice, threatening the use of students' native languages. Gutiérrez (2005) called this current wave of educational policies clothed as reform *backlash pedagogy* and asserted linguistic difference is at the center of the backlash. Gutiérrez argued that backlash pedagogy blames the educational crisis on students who speak languages other than English, which promotes language of reform

⁶The New York State Department of Education uses the term *Hispanic* to refer to students of Latin American and Caribbean origin, as stated in their 2012 annual report. However, I employ the term *Latina/Latino* to include non-Spanish-speaking populations in Latin America and the Caribbean.

that both devaluates Spanish and other languages, their utility, and thus their communities.

Indeed, the historical and political structures behind the embodiment of English-only discourses are compounded with theorizing that considered Spanish-speaking children are to all intents and purposes disadvantaged by speaking Spanish. This view has been called in the literature as *deficit theorizing* or *deficit paradigms* (Flores, 2005). Deficit approaches as embodied in standards-based movements and English-Only movements are the backdrop for this study given they have a significant impact on the way students' languages are viewed and used in schools.

Review of the Literature

There are multiple ways in which students are taught and prompted to develop their literacy skills. A common strategy used in literacy development is the use of vocabulary and spelling. Spelling instruction in U.S. schools had been traditionally implemented on the basis of memorization. In addition, because of the diligence and hard work involved in spelling as a school subject and Spelling Bee contests, values have been placed on their accomplishments (Hodges, 2000). Although traditional definitions of spelling refer to it as the process of converting oral language to visual form by placing graphic symbols on some writing surface, advocates of the benefits of spelling argue that writing systems or orthographies, are inventions, and thus they vary with respect as to how a particular language is graphically represented.

Spelling ability involves more than the spelling of individual words. Researchers' observations reveal that spelling ability is a developmental achievement gained through interaction over time with the orthography in both writing and reading. With experience, children learn much about the general structural properties of English words—about their sounds, graphemes, roots, affixes, and so on. Learning to spell, in short, involves learning about words over a long duration and in a variety of contexts. (Hodges, 2000, p. 3)

Indeed, a reconceptualization of the benefits of spelling in its association to other arenas of language and literacy development has prompted more schools to use spelling drills as part of their reading development strategies. “With states increasingly testing students on their writing skills, spelling has gained importance again. Rather than relying on word lists, school districts are taking a different, more holistic method to spelling instruction” (*New York Times*, 2009, p. 3A).

The New York State Spanish Spelling Bee has been modeled after the English Spelling Bee, working under the same system of rules and structure. In order to understand how the contest has evolved, I will briefly describe the history of the English Spelling Bee in the context of the U.S.

In his detailed account of the “Spelling Schools” published in 1941, Allen Walker Read traced the beginnings of the Spelling Bee, or Spelling Schools as they were called at the time, to the practices found in Elizabethian Schools, in England. In 1596, Edmund Coote, a schoolmaster at Bury St. Edmunds, recorded a method of how the teacher would

direct his students to *oppose* one another. This mechanism of “opposing“ consisted in a duel of spelling between two classmates, each spelling out the word and explaining why it was spelled this way.

In 1661, a schoolmaster at St. Dunstons in New England portrayed his pupils as similarly engaged and in 1753 James Buchanan asserted that “a student must be tested and cross-examined in order to learn his spelling” (Walker, 1941, p. 496). These spelling contests were at the height of their popularity during the first quarter of the 19th century; and then as New England became more sophisticated, spelling events lost ground to other forms of entertainment. However, the spelling tests, examinations, and contests in the New England states evolved into the western frontier’s “simpler environment.” The spelling school was referred to as one of the original winter amusements in this county, occurring “once in a fortnight and with the power to draw out all the young people for miles around, arrayed in their best clothes and holiday behavior” (Walker 1941, p. 504). Thus the origin of the Spelling Bee is social in nature, used as a way to get students from different schools to come together. Some authors suggested that the term *bee* was used to refer to the social nature of the competition, as the term *bee* is often used to describe group gatherings and social events, such as a *quilting bee* or a *corn husking bee* (Maguire, 2006). The practice evolved and turned into a strongly marketed product with multiple movies, books, and media coverage that includes ESPN’s primetime coverage of the final competition. Whitsitt’s (2010) essay, “The Spelling Bee: What Makes it an American Institution?” explores the Spelling Bee as an icon of American culture. In this context, a Spelling Bee in Spanish was set up against a social paradigm with specific cultural norms and expectations. The following section describes the New York State’s Spanish Spelling Bee and its model.

The New York State Spanish Spelling Bee History

The first efforts in hosting a Spanish Spelling Bee in New York began in the 1970s, as the brainchild of dedicated teachers. Ms. Dayanira, a bilingual teacher in the Bronx, remembers these efforts as isolated instances that arose in schools across the state, with little communication between them and no institutional support. The *New York Times* would feature these competitions, and the earliest edition that chronicles the competition is from 1977. Throughout the years, the initiative gained popularity until the New York State Department of Education officially adopted it in 2004. Every public school across the state receives an invitation to participate; and according to Spelling Bee official Tania Tomeni, although the response has been extremely positive and increasing every year, 30 schools in 2011 withdrew a month prior to the big state final due to testing pressure (T. Tomeni, Personal Communication, June 2011). The contest is organized by the New York State Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies and supervised by a dozen local officers who organize and judge the different competitions year-round.

Schools participate voluntarily. If a school responds to the call to take part in the Spelling Bee, they must pick a coordinator who will be attending meetings throughout the year and working with the students and teachers. At the school level, students are

recruited or asked to voluntarily participate. This varies by school. In some schools, teachers choose which students would compete within their classrooms, and then they would go on to compete with other students from other classrooms in a school-wide final. In other schools, each classroom had a classroom-wide competition, and the winner went on to the school-wide finals.

Spelling coordinators work with teachers, students, and their parents to prepare them by providing word lists and comprehension strategies. Competitions start at the classroom level, when a group of students compete and move through to the school-wide competition, the next level. At this level, the winning student competes against others in the district to become the district winner who goes on to the state-wide final in either May or June of each year. Initially, the competition was divided into two categories: fourth through fifth grade and sixth through eighth grade (middle school). As of 2011, there has been one single category that includes students from fourth to eighth grade. There is a committee made up of Spelling Bee officials who establish rules and pronunciation guidelines, which are revised every year. The officials are teachers, scholars, children's authors, cultural attachés, and representatives of academic institutions, among others.

Spelling judges are not the same people as on the Spelling Bee committee, but also come from similar fields. Judges are present during the final competition to oversee the contestants, listen to the spelling of the words, and to determine a verdict in cases in which a word or pronunciation is contested. The spelling process is as follows. Students are all seated on stage. The pronouncer calls the first student up to the podium. The pronouncer then gives the student the word; and the student must repeat the word, spell it out, letter by letter, and then say the word one last time. Students are allowed one question and to hear the use of the word in a sentence. When a letter has an accent, students must include the accent when pronouncing that letter, for example, "a con acento" or "o con acento." The findings describe this process in more detail. During my observations, I found the role of the judges to be necessary, given that sometimes there would be confusion if the student mumbled or there was anything that interrupted the spelling. The judges are in place to provide a ruling in each case. Even though local school-wide competitions vary in duration, the final state-wide competition is an important event that brings together students from all over the state, along with their families and their teachers. The final state-wide competition is a day-long celebration that includes multiple keynote speeches prior to the actual competition. These keynote speeches are at the discursive heart of this paper.

National Spanish Spelling Bee

Over the course of the study, I saw other Spanish Spelling Bees emerge in Wisconsin, Oregon, New Mexico, Florida, and Massachusetts. In addition, the first National Spelling Bee was launched in New Mexico in August 2011. In an interview with its founder and organizer, David Briseño, he related,

I started thinking about it in 1998 or 1999. It took years of hard work to bring everyone together, but we have done it, and I hope ever year the contest continues

to grow and reach out to more and more students” (D. Briseño, personal communication, June 2011).

When asked why he had pursued a nation-wide Spanish Spelling Bee, Briseño stated that it served several purposes, such as bringing students together and raising the status of the Spanish language: “We continue to see that it elevates the status of the language because it brings it to a national exposure. I was really surprised with the media coverage that it got, not only across the country but internationally” (D. Briseño, personal communication, August 2011).

Some Considerations Regarding Spanish Language

Indeed, per David Briseno’s observation, there was significant media coverage for the national Spanish Spelling Bee as well as the New York State’s Spanish Spelling Bee. There were eight television crews on site the day of the final competition. However, Spelling Bee officials reported that a common reaction to the contest was disbelief that the competition could actually work because “Spanish is so easy, and spelling should be even more since it is phonetic” (Slater, personal communication, May 2010). Misconceptions about Spanish and its structures are quite common, because there is a generalized perception that to spell in Spanish, students need only work their way phonetically through it. Another misconception is that different varieties are mutually incomprehensible. Reinforced in the contest were factors that it is not easy to speak or spell in Spanish and that Spanish has an important tradition as an academic language.

The diversity of the student populations who participate in the Spelling Bee is reflective of the linguistic spectrum alive in Latin American countries. Although there are more than 500 million Spanish speakers worldwide (Gordon, 2005), different variants of Spanish exist as a result of its historical and geographical evolution, whose origins begin with the linguistic development of Vulgar Latin and cut across history until the rise of Spanish with the colonization of the Americas at the end of the 15th century. Except for Brazil and French Guyana, Spanish is the official language of all of the Latin American and Caribbean countries; the six countries of Central America and Mexico; Cuba; the Dominican Republic; and Puerto Rico. In addition to Spain, Spanish is also spoken in the Balearic and Canary Islands, in parts of Morocco and the west coast of Africa, and also in Equatorial Guinea. In the United States, Spanish is widely spoken across many states, particularly Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, New York City and southern Florida (Penny, 1991), although there an increasing number of states who boast large communities of Spanish speakers, whose numbers continue to grow. In its recent edition of the Encyclopedia of Spanish in the U.S., the Instituto Cervantes of Spain asserts that the U.S. has more Spanish speakers than in any country other than Mexico; the numbers amount to an estimated 50 million in the United States. The case of Latin American communities in the U.S. and in New York City, in particular, illustrates a specific set of unique language practices that result from three main features of this population: (a) their proximity to the border in the case of Mexicans, or strong connections to their homeland in the case of other groups, and thus their potential transnational condition/practices; (b) their rapid and steady growth that accounts for a larger number of recent newcomers;

and (c) the presence of other indigenous languages such as Mixteco, which account for an heterogeneous set of language practices and identities within seemingly homogeneous Latino communities. This linguistic identity is conceived under the broader context of their national identity and the language practices that make up the region. In most Latin American countries, the state has played a fundamental role in the construction and promotion of national identities, a process by which racial and ethnic groups have been excluded from the national narrative. In this context, both indigenous languages and the Spanish language in New York have been a subject of academic scrutiny in order to explore if there is indeed a particular standard for “New York Spanish.”

Garcia and Otheguy (1997) described four main characteristics of Spanish in New York: (a) the variety of countries of origin among Latinos in New York and thus the absence of a norm that serves as a foundation for the creation of a New York standard; (b) a variety in the linguistic stratification of the national variants in New York City; (c) multilingualism of many Spanish speakers, many of whom are proficient in English and other languages, thus the absence of a monolingual standard; and (d) the variants of English with which Spanish speakers interact or come in touch within the city.

These characteristics point to the high degree of diversity in the Spanish spoken in New York City, and particularly the high variance of English as well. Many New York city neighborhoods are spaces in which Spanish interacts with Chinese, Haitian Creole, Hindi, Urdu, Russian, Arabic, and others. In this context, Zentella (2001) described how the variety of Spanish is an important marker of individuality but at the same time the most powerful unifier thanks to 100-plus years of colonization, the proximity of nations in Latin America, and the efforts of the Royal Academy of the Spanish language in promoting the “correct” use of the language. These language planning efforts, whether overt or covert, are explored in depth in the literature surrounding language policy. In the following section, I address the context for education language policy that is relevant to the understanding of this paper.

Language Policy

When school language policies are put into action, they are linked with power and social justice (Corson, 1992). Thinking and acting upon language are thus not neutral. How, then, are current views on language in U.S. classrooms navigated and reinterpreted? Based on their work on language policy, Bernard Spolsky (2004) and Thomas Ricento (2006) argued that language policy research remains national in scope with a focus on top-down policies. Spolsky (2004) described the standard purpose of language policy is to explore the language practices, beliefs, and language management of a community, that is, which languages will be the official or national language, or which languages will be taught in school. Shohamy (2006) called this explicit policy, but there are overt policy-making processes enacted every day. She argued that schools and communities are significant sites to explore the negotiation, interpretation, and contestation of language policies, most particularly through the eyes of teachers, students, and their communities. Margaret Sutton and Bradley Levinson (2001) reconceptualized the notion of language policy as a complex social practice, “an ongoing process of normative cultural production constituted by diverse actors across diverse social and

institutional contexts” (p. 1). It is within this scope of policy-as-practice that I situate this study.

Spolsky and Shohamy (1999) described the differences between language policy, language ideology, and language practice. They posited that standard language policy is commonly seen in the form of labeled statements in official documents. Policies may take the form of a clause in a constitution or a law. However, they argued oftentimes that language policies emerge and are circulated within different groups outside any explicit documents. The authors considered it policy if the maker of the policy not only holds a particular belief, but also acts upon it. Language ideologies, on the other hand, refer to an individual’s or a community’s generally accepted beliefs toward language. Finally, language practice refers to the implicit rules that underline the language use of a defined community. The authors posited that these three levels do not always coincide and that these are constantly evolving processes that are socially and politically mediated.

Sociolinguists and language planners refer to language policy that is concerned with the structure of the language itself (corpus planning) and to language planning that is concerned with decisions on language use and choice (status, acquisitions, and diffusion planning (García & Baetens, 2009). In the context of language policy and language planning, bilingual education in the United States is a necessary reference to understand current language debates and practices in schools all over the country.

The radical discourses regarding English-only movements and the stigma attached to bilingual education have seeped into different social and educational structures in the country that are absorbed by families and their children. The plight of parents not wanting their children to speak their home language for fear that they will not learn English, or the ambivalence of students as to speaking their languages for fear of being made fun of at school are examples of how backlash pedagogies are historically internalized and rooted in a range of language ideologies today. The New York Spanish Spelling Bee was set up as an official initiative with explicit views on language. Seen from a planning perspective, the use of Spanish in a spelling competition that has traditionally been a marker for social mobility in the U.S. is a move towards raising the academic status of Spanish language while advancing an agenda of bilingualism. In order to capture the covert and overt language ideologies embodied by this institution, this paper draws from institutional discourse analysis, which is detailed in the following section.

Methods

Data for this paper are drawn from a larger case study on New York State’s Spanish Spelling Bee, carried out from 2009 to 2012. The larger case study sought to explore the sociocultural dimension of the New York State’s Spanish Spelling Bee and uncover the practices that undergird the grapho-phonemic nature of the competition.

Dyson and Genishi (2005) described the process by which researchers “amass information about the configuration of time and space, of people and of the activity in their physical sites” (p. 19) that will enable them to transform general questions into specific queries for their study. They call this work *casing the joint*. Casing-the-joint phase for the larger study included teachers, parents, and students as research

participants, as well as the competition organizers, spelling bee judges, and special guests who were featured as keynote speakers

Data for This Paper

Data sources for this paper are the interviews and fieldnotes from participant observations conducted across the different spheres of the competition and in the final state-wide competition of May 2009, May 2010, and May 2011. Participants include spelling bee organizers, judges, and keynote speakers. The names throughout this paper are all pseudonyms, including education officials.

Data Analysis

The analysis was informed by Mora's (2002) use of Greimas' semiotic square, which allows the researcher to see beyond the natural configuration of the pieces and sheds light on the hidden relationships and oppositions, which arise from the phenomena as a dynamic object of study. To generate the final categories used in this paper, I used institutional discourse analysis with thematic coding within the dataset. The semiotic square, developed by Julien Greimas, is a means of refining oppositional analyses by increasing the number of analytical components that emerge from a given opposition of two symbols. The semiotic square is designed to be both a conceptual network and a visual representation of these concepts, usually depicted in the form of a square. The square is made up of four terms and four meta-terms. The first two terms form the opposition (the contrary relationship) that is the basis of the square, and the other two are obtained by negating each term of the opposition (Mora, 2002). To assist in my analysis of the New York State's Spanish Spelling Bee as a discursive unit, I used a semiotic square to help me see categories and relationships I could have overlooked in the process of open coding. I used Spanish and English as my main terms, given the predominance of the concepts in the corpus of my interviews with spelling officials and keynote presentations. In order to analyze the ways in which the contest was discursively constructed, I deconstructed the competition into smaller units for analysis. The heart of the contest is in the final state-wide competition in May. The organizers, the judges, the spelling officers, and school spelling coordinators are all there. The keynote speakers represent the values embedded in the contest, and the message is projected outward through its speakers and through the media covering the competition. The following section outlines the findings that have been structured around three main categories: bilingualism against backlash pedagogies, Spanish as a marker of Latina/o identity, and Spanish as a standard.

Findings

Framing the Findings

The keynote presentations are a symbol of the Spelling Bee's institutional discourse (Agar, 1985) as they represent the values and views of a competition that has become an institution through the rituals and legacies it embodies (Miller, 1994). The

presenters interact with the audience, sharing and informing the participants' views on language, but also advocating for them to engage in bilingual practices. For Sutton and Levinson (2001), this is an example of policy as practice, as participants come together in a critical dialogue regarding their own views on language.

To support an understanding of the competition as a site of policy-as-practice, I am also informed by the work of scholars such as Menken (2008), Spolsky (2004), Shohamy and Gorter (2008), and Sutton and Levinson (2001) who have recently addressed emerging sites for the design and reconstruction of language policy as practice. In particular, they posited that policy is increasingly put together at a micro level and that we see language policies enacted everyday in schools and classrooms through the work of teachers, principals, and other actors who navigate and position languages through their daily practices.

In this view, language policy includes language planning, which is concerned with what languages are taught in schools, which languages are afforded an official status, and how government and communities shape the use of these languages, as well as language status and language hierarchies, which address the power differentials given to different languages as they interact with each other in a given community (May, 2001; Ricento, 2006). Although language planning efforts were historically linked to the emergence of nation states (May, 2001), exploring language policy under the current context of immigration flows and demographic shifts in New York City calls for a dynamic conception of how language policies are collectively shaped across the borders. I therefore adhere to the above-mentioned views on language policy that include all language practices and beliefs of a given community. Informed by this view, I argue that the New York State's Spanish Spelling Bee is a site for language policy in the way it positions, informs, and collectively constructs language values in dialogue with students and their families. The following three categories emerged as policy-as-practice:

Bilingualism Against Backlash Pedagogy

In her keynote address for the 2011 New York State's Spanish Spelling Bee competition, children's author Alma Flor Ada welcomed students and parents with the following words: "*Cada uno de estos niños ya nos superan a nosotros en que desde el principio y a su edad, son bilingües, enhorabuena niños, enhorabuena!* (Applause) ["Everyone of these kids have surpassed us in how, from the beginning and at their age, they are bilingual. Congratulations kids, congratulations!" (Applause)] Alma Flor Ada, keynote speaker, June 2011).

Bilingualism became a recurring concept in the rest of the presentations that day. Dr. Juan Alarcón, Director of the Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies of the New York State Department of Education, started his keynote with the following question to the students:

I want to ask the students here if they are bilingual, that is, do you read, speak, listen, and write in two languages or more? Who can read, write, listen, and speak in two languages? (All the students' hands go up.) OK, good, the majority of you can (Applause). Today is a celebration and you are all winners; there are no

losers. You have heard this from your parents and your teachers. You have already won because you speak two languages. But it doesn't stop here; it is good that you are here, but you have to continue developing those skills, I encourage you to use both of your languages, you have to be proud that you speak two languages! (J. Alarcón, keynote speaker, June 2011)

Dr. Alarcón then addressed students' families and praised their efforts in supporting them. He asked them to continue demanding bilingual programs in their schools:

Parents! You need to demand from the school system good quality bilingual programs. You need to demand them. We see now a decrease in bilingual programs. Why? Because there are so many political issues, and so many other things; but at the same time, there is a push. Where do you see the push? It's not from administrators like myself, it is from parents like yourselves. You as a parent demand, demand from your schools that there are good bilingual programs or programs that develop the native language of your kids. (J. Alarcón, keynote speaker, June 2011)

In this particular passage, Dr. Alarcón's definition of bilingualism was narrowed down to reading, speaking, listening, and writing in two languages. Isabel Campoy, who has written children's books alongside Alma Flor Ada, expanded on that notion of bilingualism with her words to the students:

El que ustedes estén aquí, los niños que han competido, los padres que los han guiado e inspirado en la vida y los maestros que los enseñan, representa algo mucho más profundo, representa que ustedes reconocen el valor del idioma. El lenguaje es la creación más importante de los seres humanos. Por el lenguaje, nosotros podemos reflexionar sobre la vida, podemos conocernos mejor a nosotros mismos, podemos conocer a los demás, podemos establecer amistades y relaciones, podemos unirnos en proyectos, porque los seres humanos han creado lenguaje. Cada generación está enriquecida por el conocimiento de las generaciones anteriores.

[For you to be here, children that are competing and parents that have guided and inspired you in life, and the teachers that educate them, represents something deeper. It represents that you acknowledge the value of your language. Language is the most important creation of human beings. Thanks to language, we can reflect about life, we can know ourselves a little better, we can know the others, we can establish friendship and connections, we can come together in projects, because we as human beings have created language. Every generation is enriched by the knowledge of our previous generations.] (I. Campoy, keynote speaker, June 2011)

The passages above complemented each other. They spoke to the dynamic and historicized nature of language as a legacy of generations before us, as an ever-evolving

root of our identities and its different manifestations such as reading and writing, at home and in our schools. In addition to reflecting on what language is and enables us to do and be, the benefits of bilingualism were emphasized from different perspectives. Speakers highlighted the cognitive benefits of learning two languages, such as those described by Luisa Madero, Director of the Office of English Language Learners of the New York City Department of Education:

Le doy gracias a mis padres hoy, porque, por ellos, puedo hablar español hoy. Ellos se dedicaron, ellos vinieron a este país y dijeron: “Mis hijos van a ser bilingües, eso es lo más importante en la casa.” No dejen nunca que nadie les diga que, sabiendo su propio idioma, no van a avanzar en inglés, porque, ésa, no es la realidad. El idioma natal de uno ayuda y tiene beneficios para aprender el inglés. El que domina su idioma puede dominar cualquier otro idioma. Y el saber dos idiomas, como ya lo dijeron los demás, nos hace mejores estudiantes. Nuestros cerebros aprenden cosas más complejas. Todo eso está estudiado y los beneficios son claros.

[I am grateful to my parents today, because, thanks to them I can speak Spanish today. They were devoted; they came to this country and said, “My children are going to be bilingual, this is the most important thing at home.” Never let anyone tell you that knowing your own language will hinder your progress in English, because that is not true. Our native language helps and has benefits to learn English. He who knows his language can learn any other language. And knowing two languages, as everyone else has said, will make us better students. Our brains learn more complex matters. It is documented and the benefits are clear.] (L. Madero, keynote speaker, June 2011)

The speakers all addressed the cognitive implications of knowing two languages, both because it “makes our brain better” and because it also helps in learning English. In addition to this, bilingualism was showcased as opening up the doors for job opportunities, as described by Univision’s main anchor, Rafael Pineda:

Yo llegué aquí hace 50 años, sin nada. Con la ropa que tenía puesta. Hoy tengo la oportunidad de trabajar, no sólo para el medio hispano más importante en los Estados Unidos, que es Univisión. Si he logrado hacerlo, es a través del idioma, del español, el idioma más romántico que hay sobre la faz de la tierra. [aplausos]

[I arrived 50 years ago, with nothing, with the clothes I was wearing. Today I have the opportunity to work for the most important media channel in the United States, Univision. If I have been able to do it, it is thanks to the language, Spanish, the most romantic language on the face of the earth] (Applause) (R. Pineda, keynote speaker, June 2011)

Although the speakers talked about how speaking two languages had cognitive advantages and opened the doors for future opportunities, the overarching emphasis was

placed on identity: what you are when you are bilingual and what it means to speak Spanish. The following passage from Alma Flor Ada's addressed to participants in the Bee serves to illuminate this point:

Se ha hablado mucho de los valores del bilingüismo porque son tantos. Indudablemente, hace a las personas más inteligentes, más flexibles, más comprensivas, pero a mí me gusta pensar que quien aprende dos lenguas, quien sabe dos lenguas, puede hacer en la vida el doble de bien. Puede ayudar al doble de personas, puede comprender al doble de individuos. Yo quiero que ustedes piensen que ustedes ya han triunfado en la vida, por aceptar este valor del idioma, y ahora, este tesoro que tienen y ahora ese idioma, lo usen para expresar amistad a otros, para expresar cariño, para divertir y alegrar a alguien cuando le hace falta un poco de animación en la vida, para dar optimismo, para dar apoyo, para dar consuelo, para saber que con el idioma, podemos apoyarnos, podemos, cada día, ser un poquito mejor que el día anterior.

[Much has been said about the value of bilingualism, because it has so many benefits. No doubt, it makes people more flexible, smarter, more understanding. But I like to think that he/she who learns two languages, can do, in life, twice the good. He can help twice the people, understand twice the number of human beings. I want to you to think about how you have already succeeded in life, acknowledging the value of language, and know this treasure that you hold, this language. Use it to express friendship to others, to express love, to make someone smile when they need a little bit of laughter in their life, to give optimism, to give support, to comfort, to know that with our language, we can support each other, and we can, every day, be a little bit better.] (A. Flor Ada, keynote speaker, June 2011)

Alma Flor Ada's words highlighted the power of bilingualism and bilingual education to think about ourselves in relation to others. Most significantly, she emphasized the power of bilingualism to support, to do "twice the good." Her encouraging words came at a time when many members of the spelling community were trying to make it through the negative backlash the competition brings. Extensive media coverage of the competition prompted voices of protest from people who expressed their concern against a growing population of Latinos, an increase of Spanish speakers, and the fear of Spanish language being taught in schools. Online forums or press releases would feature responses, such as "Why is there a spelling bee for *mojados*?" "These people are now using our taxes to copy our spelling competitions, which by the way doesn't even make sense for them" or "Go back to Mexico: B-E-A-N-E-R-S" (Digital fieldnotes, 2010, 2011). In the context of the tension between English and Spanish, and the underlying clash of assimilation forces, keynote speakers in the final state-wide competition shared stories about how their families had forbidden them to speak in Spanish. Rafael Malone, a teacher of Spanish and Portuguese, who also addressed students with a keynote presentation, talked about growing up in an environment in which Spanish was sanctioned:

Mi padre me prohibió, me prohibió, hablar en Español. Me sentó en la cama y me dijo: “De ahora en adelante, solo quiero que hables Inglés, me entendiste? ” Aunque no nos pudiéramos comunicar, así lo hizo.

[My father forbade me, he forbade me to Speak Spanish. He sat me on the bed and said, “From now on, I just want you to speak in English, do you understand me?” Even if that meant we wouldn’t understand each other, that is how he did it.] (R. Malone, keynote speaker, June 2011)

A salient strategy to advocate for bilingualism was to acknowledge the role of family support in maintaining Spanish as the native language. Two opposing forces emerged: backlash pedagogy represented as a stifling deficit movement and the potential of families and communities to defeat it. The keynote speakers came together as an army of advocates to empower families, by attempting to give them discursive tools to advocate for their children, to “demand” bilingual programs in their schools, to acknowledge the value of Spanish as part of their culture and their identity, to recognize that bilingualism has cognitive and professional benefits, and to remind them they are not alone, they are all part of a community and it is time to share their story.

Keynote speakers did not talk about English-only policies as part of the past; but rather repeatedly asking parents and students to remember the value of the language and to never let anyone tell them Spanish would make them less. They actively challenged English-only discourses that have seeped into many of the schools and classrooms today.

In her opening message, the first words Mandy Ramos, general coordinator of the Spelling Bee, said were “*El regalo más importante que uno como padre le puede dar a sus hijos es su idioma y su cultura.*” [The most important gift a parent can give to his children is his language and his culture.] Spanish was thus viewed as an important legacy and a treasured gift from generation to generation, from parent to child. Parents were praised for the choices they made. Examples of families who have been resistant of speaking Spanish to their children came up:

Quiero felicitar a los padres que tomaron la decisión de hablarles en español. Nosotros tenemos muchos padres Latinos que dicen “no quiero hablarles a mis hijos en español”, porque no entienden el valor y los beneficios que esos programas les van a dar a los niños. Así que quiero darles las gracias a los padres. Quiero que se pongan de pie, y quiero darles un aplauso (loud applause interrupts) porque este día, es tanto para ustedes, como para sus hijos.

[I want to congratulate parents who made the decision to speak to you in Spanish. We have seen many Latino parents who say, “I don’t want to talk to my children in Spanish,” because they don’t understand the value and benefits these programs will give their children. So I want to thank all parents. I want you to all stand up and give you a big round of applause (loud applause). This day is as much for you as it is for your children.] (L. Madero, Keynote speaker, June 2011)

In this case, Luisa Madero illustrated a common concern for many Spanish-speaking families. These families prefer not to speak to their children in Spanish for fear it will hinder their English. The parents, however, are not to be faulted. The words above (*“porque no entienden el valor y beneficio de los programas que les dan a los niños”*) suggests that it is out of the parents’ own ignorance that they choose not to enroll their children in bilingual programs, when in fact they have been driven to think this way by insistent, constant, proactive pressure on behalf of schools, policies, and other circulating deficit discourses (Flores, 2005) that mislead and misinform parents. In conversations with me, Luisa Madero shared how some school principals and teachers themselves have been shown to praise bilingual programs, but only up to a certain point in lower elementary school, after which schools have a tendency to phase out the programs after third grade when testing starts becoming a significant force within schools. If teachers and schools themselves are not consistent and convinced of bilingual education that goes beyond an enrichment program and continues throughout a student’s education, it is no fault of the parents that they are acting upon what they believe is in the best interests of their children.

The words of the speakers in the competition echoed how the process of valuing a language is co-constructed between parents and their children. In their personal stories, the speakers shared how their experiences over the years shaped their families’ evolving perceptions of their languages:

Cuando yo llegué a la universidad y me puse a estudiar esa lengua [Asturiano] en serio, mi mamá me decía: “con lo que a mí me ha costado que la olvidaras.” Pero ahora, cuando ella me ve que yo escribo sobre esa lengua, se siente muy orgullosa, porque se da cuenta de que realmente, ahí, había una parte suya que ella estaba negando, y es un poco lo que les pasa a estas familias: que creen que para que sus hijos triunfen, tienen que renunciar a algo tan propio como la lengua. Es que tu lengua eres tú mismo, es tu cultura, es tu forma de organizar el pensamiento, eres tú, tu lengua. Y, de repente, se dan cuenta de que no es necesario, no es necesario renunciar al español y no sólo eso, sino que puede ser una herramienta para que tu hijo triunfe. Entonces, es como una revelación, es la resurrección de los muertos, es algo que yo he matado y de pronto no sólo sirve, sino que, además, sirve para el éxito.

[When I went to college and started to seriously study that language [Asturian], mi mother would tell me, “After everything I tried for you to forget it.” But now, when she sees that I write about that language, she feels very proud, because she knows, really, that there was a part of herself she was denying. This is a little bit what happens to these families; they think that for their children to succeed in school they have to get rid of something as personal as their language. Your language is you, it’s your culture, your way of organizing your thoughts, you are your language! And, suddenly, they realize that it is not necessary, they don’t need to get rid of Spanish; and not only that, but it can be a tool for their child to succeed. So, it is like a revelation, it’s the resurrection of the dead, it is something

I have killed and suddenly, not only does it live, but it is a tool for success.] (A. González, keynote speaker, April 2011)

The image of personally killing a language and then working to have it come alive again is a profound parallel of the struggles many families go through as they fight the backlash and navigate their identity in a context that devalues their language. Ana's emphatic use of "you are your language!" furthered her plight to acknowledge this inseparable duality, which is why the competition is so deeply significant—it is not about spelling, it's about who you *are*.

Spanish as an Identity Marker for Latinos

In her school-wide spelling bee final, teacher Mrs. Dayanira stated the following: *Vamos a empezar, primeramente, por reconocer que nosotros somos Latinos. Y que los Latinos hablamos español, y que el español es nuestra lengua materna*". Y como tal, nosotros la debemos cultivar. Cultivarla significa practicarla, cada vez que podamos, en la casa, en la calle, ayudando a alguien a hacer una traducción, como sea. Pero siempre debemos permanecer practicando nuestro idioma, sentirnos orgullosos de ser Latinos y de hablar español. Practicamos dos idiomas: español e inglés y debemos sentirnos orgullosos de que hablamos ¿cuántos idiomas? ¡¡Dos!! ¡Dos lenguas! español e inglés.

[Let's start first by recognizing that we are Latinos. And that as Latinos we speak Spanish and that Spanish is our mother tongue, and as such we have to cultivate it. Cultivate it means practicing it, every time we can, at home, in the street, helping someone to translate something, whatever. But we must always keep practicing our language, feeling proud to be Latinos and speaking Spanish. We use two languages: Spanish and English, and we must feel proud of speaking, how many languages? Two! Two languages! Spanish and English.] (Mrs. Dayanira, personal communication, March 3, 2011)

The majority of the contest participants listed Spanish as their home language. One percent of the students participating in the Spanish Spelling Bee were dominantly White English. In addition, there were students who came from households who spoke other languages, such as French, Portuguese, Chinese, Haitian Creole, and Mixteco. This category of analysis points to the challenges in acknowledging the diverse population of students grouped under the term *Latin American*. The analysis also points to the growing population of students who are learning Spanish as a second language and adds to an understanding that this competition allows for a fluidity of identities and languages, as stated by Alma Flor Ada, "*Pero además s ustedes han visto que aqui llegan de todas las edades, de todos los colores, y todas las herencias culturales.*" [You have seen that students here come from all ages, colors and cultural heritages.]

Mrs. Falcon, a student's mother, mentioned to me that when her Chinese daughter first came up to the microphone to spell, a lady in front of her exclaimed, "*Ay mira, una chinita*" [Oh, look, a Chinese girl]. Mrs. Falcon was amused by the comment and stated,

“Ella estaba sorprendida de ver una chinita, yo estaba sorprendida de ver un niño Haitiano, todos estábamos sorprendidos de ver aquello” [She was surprised to see a Chinese girl. I was surprised to see an Haitian boy. We were all surprised to see all that (laughter)] (Mrs. Falcon, personal communication, December 2011). With the apparent diversity in the pool of students, district officials in the audience were surprised to hear from media outlets that 99% of the students had identified as Latinos or Latin American descent. “But they don’t look Latino!” (P. Clover, personal communication, May, 2010) or “It can’t be that many; not all of them speak Spanish” (J. Laum, personal communication, May 2010). In this context, it was assumed that Latinos speak Spanish, and they have the same ethnic background.

Makoni and Pennycook (2006) warned against relying heavily on quantitative measures to assess the power of a language: “By rendering diversity a quantitative question of language enumeration, such approaches continue to employ the census strategies of colonialism while missing the qualitative question of where diversity lies” (p. 16). In essence, the authors warned against essentializing based on blanket categories that may not account for the nuances in the language and complex identities of the populations in question.

To assist me in critically framing the population of the New York State’s Spanish Spelling Bee, in which the majority of the participants were Spanish-speaking students who identified as having Latin American and Caribbean origin, I was informed by Suzanne Oboler’s (1995) work, *Ethnic Labels, Latino Lives: Identity and the Politics of (Re)presentation in the United States*. Oboler documented the perpetual tendency to view Latinos and Hispanics as a single homogeneous group. In this context, she stated,

People of Latin American descent do not necessarily share social, national, or historical backgrounds, [and] it cannot be assumed that all believe they have a common identity. . . . Differences in social and racial backgrounds, personal life experiences, and political beliefs are key to understanding not only the label of Hispanic but also Latinos’ decisions to participate actively under an umbrella term in movements for social justice in the United States. (p. 13)

What makes Oboler’s (1995) work relevant for these findings is her aim to develop a framework that

might contribute towards disentangling our personal and cultural identities as Latinos in the United States from the need to forge the political unity of our various groups under one umbrella term in the search for full citizenship rights and social justice. (p. 19)

This aim is consistent with a critical approach that acknowledges the diversity within Latina/Latino populations and warns against essentialist notions, while recognizing, as well, that the tendency to view Latinos as immigrants furthers their difficulty in seeking citizenship.

In the contest of exploring the nuances regarding Spanish as a marker for identity, a parallel and complimentary category emerged: the issue of standard Spanish and the

resulting hierarchies that ensued. The following section expands on this section's premise of recognizing the diversity within Latina/o groups and incorporates the additional variable of language hierarchies within Latina/o populations.

Spanish as a Standard: Playing by the Rules

In 2009, I witnessed one of the students lose in the first round of the final competition the following way:

Pronoucer: The word is *barbarie, barbarie*.

Student: *Barbarie, B-A-R-B-A-R-I-E, barbarie*.

(Sound of the bell, ding, ding)

Pronoucer: *Lo siento, no dijiste cual "Be" era. Es Be larga. [I'm sorry, you failed to specify which Be, it was, Be larga.]*

The student was disappointed and there was a disapproving murmur from some of the parents. One of the judges took the stand to remind the parents that students *had* to explicitly identify the letter they were using: *be larga* for *b*, *v corta* for *v*. In 2010, I witnessed a similar incident with a student who was disqualified because he spelled *avion* (plane) the following way: *A-Ve chica-I-O-N*. Although *ve chica* is common usage in Mexico, the rules clearly stated the way to pronounce *V* is *v corta*.

When a student is told she/he must pronounce *Be* as *Be larga*, what kind of Spanish is being used as the standard to develop these rules? Whose voice is being privileged? To address this question, I sat in the meetings where a committee of teachers, scholars, and community organizers worked to hone the rules for the competition. Since I attended these meetings in 2010 and 2011, I saw how the process was put together and how it evolved.

According to Karina Gomez, one of the teachers on the committee, the main goal of these regulations was to provide common ground for the spellers and judges to work together at the time of the competition: "*A veces los niños están un poco tímidos, hablan bajito, o tartamudean, y nosotros como jueces tenemos que tomar la decisión si la palabra es correcta o no, por lo que entre más claras sean las reglas, mejor para todos*" [Sometimes kids are a little shy, they speak in low voices or stutter, and as judges we have to decide if the word will be correct or not, so the more rules are clear, the better for everyone.] (K. Gomez, personal communication, September 2010).

The way these rules came to be agreed upon has not been a simple task, as I witnessed meetings that took over two hours, in which the committee discussed the different perspectives surrounding the rules and the larger logistics of the competition. They used the guidelines of the Latin American and Spanish language academies as a general framework from which they drew the rules, and they modified them based on what they observed in the contests and what they deemed to be the needs of the children, the judges, and the competition at large.

Every year there were lessons learned and rules changed. The committee would listen to recordings of the previous years and take note of issues that had arisen. In 2009, one of the rules was that *r* was to be pronounced *ere* and *rr* would be pronounced *erre*. The committee later acknowledged this rule was problematic because students pronounced *r* in Spanish very differently in each case, so the following year that rule was immediately eliminated (Fieldnotes, Committee Meeting, December 2010).

Ana González was a key organizer in the competition. She coordinated teachers' professional development sessions as well as many of the meetings with judges. She came from the Spanish Embassy and worked in tandem with the Spanish Spelling Bee organizers and staff from the Office of the Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies of the New York State Department of Education. When discussing the rules, she stated her view on the subject to the teachers as follows:

¿Qué criterio vamos a aplicar? Obviamente en Nueva York no vamos a aplicar la norma Española, porque la población escolar tanto docente como estudiante Española es muy pequeña, entonces, no tiene sentido que sea yo la que imponga mi tradición pedagógica, ni de nombres de las letras.

[What standard are we going to use? Obviously in New York we are not going to use the rules from Spain, because the number of teachers and students from Spain is very small. So it doesn't make any sense for me to impose my pedagogical tradition or that of the names of the letters.] (A. González, personal communication, March 2010)

People in the committee engaged in dialogue around the ways they each thought the rules should be built and the way Spanish was represented. Some were happy to use the rules of the Latin American language academies. Others stated it made no difference because it was only for the purpose of the competition. One person on the committee advocated for no regulations at all, letting the children pronounce how they wanted. Although the committee praised the notion of having students pronounce the spelling words in their own ways, they argued that it was not logistically feasible because the judges would need to be frequently pausing the contest every time they did not recognize the pronunciation, thus interrupting the students' process, and perhaps prompting more debate among the parents, who would want to know what the standards were. The idea of having clear but flexible rules was thus agreed upon by everyone in the committee.

In conversations with me, Ana later expressed that there was always a risk in choosing one standard over the other:

Este riesgo nos trajo cosas muy buenas, nos trajo la reflexión y nos trajo también la sensibilización de los maestros, el respeto hacia la tradición pedagógica de los demás maestros y a la experiencia previa que los niños estaban aportando a la escuela.

[This risk brought us good things. It brought us reflection and awareness as teachers, and respect towards the pedagogical tradition of every teacher, as well as

the background and previous experience that the kids bring to the school.] (A. González, personal communication, April 2010)

My observations in these meetings as well as my conversations with the committee members revealed that the design of these rules had opened up a space for dialogue that problematized the use of the language vis-à-vis different Spanish-speaking countries. Although the organizers acknowledged that they did not intend to purposefully exclude any language variance or privilege any language, my concern lay not in what was done purposefully, but in what becomes “normalized” and seen as natural within a hegemonic order (Makoni & Pennycook, 2006).

Exploring Spanish and English languages within the competition elicited questions around Spanish language versus English language in the context of the United States, but it also revealed the construction of language hierarchies from within: Spanish versus Spanish, as the competition sheds light on the role of language academies, dictionaries, and grammar to colonize and sustain a hegemonic role in environments in which languages other than Spanish were annihilated (Makoni & Pennycook, 2006). The committee did rely heavily on the use of dictionaries and took guidance from language academies to establish the rules. They were transparent in how the rules were just used for the purpose of clarity and avoiding chaos in the competition. To guarantee an inclusive process, the committee included teachers, parents, organizers, New York City Department of Education officials, and others, who all had a say in how to best approach the issues. In my observations, I corroborated Ana’s statement regarding how this process brought about reflection, because the conversations around rules evolved in the years I was there. I could see members of the committee try and make sense of the differences not only in pronunciation but in pedagogical practices in the teaching of Spanish. Consulting with members of the Language Academies gave the committee insights regarding the linguistic structures of different regions of Spanish-speaking countries, and also gave way to deeper and more nuanced understandings of political and historical forces surrounding their language and history. In the 2010 New York State’s Spanish Spelling Bee state-wide final, Dr. Gerardo Piña offered a keynote speech in his capacity as Director of Academia Norteamericana de la Lengua Española. He opened with the following statement:

Es importante que los jóvenes y los padres tengan una conciencia no sólo de tipo lingüística sino de tipo histórica. Hay que tener en cuenta, siempre, que la primera lengua europea que se habló en lo que hoy constituyen Estados Unidos, no fue el inglés, fue el español [applause]. Es decir que, hablar de extranjeros, para el hispano, para el latino, no tiene ningún sentido.

[It is important that youth and parents have an awareness not only about language but about history as well. We must remember, always, that the first European language that was spoken in what today is the United States, was not English, it was Spanish. This means, to speak about foreigners, for Hispanics, for Latinos, does not make any sense.] (G. Piña, Keynote speaker, May 2010)

Dr. Piña introduced this idea to the audience and handed them the power to historicize their lives and their identity by saying, “You are not foreigners, and Spanish belongs to us.” He was reaffirming a claim for citizenship. This quote epitomizes the underlying spirit of the final statewide competition in May, which has been labeled as a celebration, a critical celebration that moves parents and their children to claim their identity and their language by acknowledging their bilingual condition as a restorative practice. I argue this is fundamentally about social justice.

Conclusion

The body of data that resulted from the keynote speeches reveals a discursive emphasis on the right to receive an education in both languages, and the responsibility as bilingual learners and educators to critically advocate, as a matter of social justice, for the common good from our identity as bilingual speakers. The discourses of the organizers and keynote speakers were cohesive and aligned to a particular value for language and education. This way, the keynote presentations represented and made visible an underlying assumption about language, which I came to see as way of shaping language policy as practice. The competition came alive as a site that brewed language values as a result of critical community initiative.

Ana Gonzalez emphasized the mission of the competition in this regard:

Y te lo digo con absoluto énfasis: No es un ejercicio de lecto-escritura, este Spelling Bee. En español no se aprende a escribir así, es otra cosa. Es un ejercicio de celebración del español y es un ejercicio de trabajo sobre el español. La lecto-escritura, ya lo sabemos que en español no se aprende a leer así, en español se aprende a leer silabeando y se aprende a escribir conociendo cada letra y aprendiendo como se combinan.

[And I say this with absolute emphasis: This spelling bee, it is not an exercise of reading and writing. In Spanish you don’t learn like that, it’s a different thing. It is an exercise to celebrate Spanish and it is an exercise about Spanish. We know reading and writing. In Spanish, you don’t learn to read like that; in Spanish we learn through syllables and you learn to write by learning each letter and learning how to combine them.] Gonzalez, Keynote Speaker, March 2011)

This paper described New York State’s Spanish Spelling Bee as a complex representation of language values. The contest showcases the fluid nature of Spanish in New York. It shows traces of the history of colonial apparatuses through the use of grammar, dictionaries, and language academies as control devices (Makoni & Pennycook, 2006) in the context of colonization, as seen in the way spelling coordinators problematized language hierarchies when they reflected on the Spanish language vis-à-vis other Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition, the competition showcased Spanish in its relationship to English as it resists backlash pedagogies. These two perspectives allowed for a dynamic reflection of the power differentials of Spanish in Latin America and Spanish in the United States.

In this paper, I used scholarship on language policy as practice (Sutton & Levinson, 2001) to argue that the contest shapes language policy through the way Spelling Bee organizers, special guests, and keynote speakers advocated for bilingual programs and the use of Spanish while at the same time promoting language attitudes embedded in pride that gives back to the students their language, culture, and identity. The contest evidenced a collective way of shaping language policy that is consistent with the fluid borders of the United States in which the concept of nationhood is reinvented and new configurations of cultural citizenship emerge.

What can we learn as educators of diverse populations from this paper? The power of dialogue and the support for a common cause are carving new spaces for language and identity in an environment that has been challenging for Spanish-speaking children and their families. Rafael Pineda's final words captured the spirit of the participants: "Le vamos a demostrar a todo el mundo, que lo que hoy es un sueño, mañana lo podemos conseguir en la realidad más hermosa." [We will show everyone that what today is a dream, tomorrow can become the most beautiful reality.] That is, there is hope. Beyond all that seems lost, beyond languages that are obscured everyday, beyond deficit approaches that are circulated and implemented in classrooms all over the nation, there is also a growing wave of hope embodied in the efforts of the teachers, parents, and policymakers who populate sites such as the Spanish Spelling Bee, visualizing a future that is possible.

How does this study inform our work in the classroom? This paper paid particular attention to the necessary nuances in the teaching of Spanish, for any blanket standard within a language draws hierarchies. The discussions that took place in the context of the competition remind us that not all Latina/Latino students speak Spanish, and that there are increasing numbers of students from Latin America and the Caribbean in our classrooms who speak languages other than Spanish. Some of these languages are de facto disadvantaged indigenous languages within their countries of origin. In our efforts to be culturally responsive and strive for bilingual education models within our schools and our communities, this paper reminds us to be critical of the use of Spanish as a standard. That said, the spread of anti-Spanish/anti-bilingual education efforts calls for us to continue working with families and other stakeholders to advocate for bilingual education and support the use of students' native languages in the classroom, in their homes, and their communities.

Finally, this paper reminds us of the power of language, in the words of Alma Flor Ada, to make connections, to be happier, to help others, to know who we are, and what we do in this world. The opening quote, *The story belongs to those who write it, and the story has always been written by the conquerors. Now we have pens. Now we have words. Now, the story is yours. Every one of you*—an extraordinary effort to give back the power to those who can change the story.

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Developing Spanish Word Walls: Three Adjustments to Consider

by

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Abstract

Using examples from our work with early childhood teachers, we discuss the significance of interactive word walls for vocabulary development in early childhood Spanish/English dual language classrooms. We highlight differences between the Spanish and English language for building vocabulary understanding by focusing on three adjustments for Spanish word-walls: (a) the use of distinct colors, (b) the use of high frequency words with accents, and (c) the use of articles. Building and using specific word walls can provide opportunities for scaffolding students' vocabulary development in their second language by providing visual clues and visual support for the teaching of Spanish words.

Introduction

For the past decade, the authors of this article have collaborated with many Spanish/English dual language teachers to nurture biliteracy development for emergent bilingual readers. A common topic of inquiry has been vocabulary development using word walls. Questions such as, "How often should I add words?" or "Where should the words come from?" and "What if my students do not know English?" prompted us to reflect on teachers' understanding of the purpose of word walls in dual language classrooms. We propose that if teachers are going to provide a strong biliteracy foundation for English and Spanish speakers they need to take into consideration all of the resources available to them in order to best meet the vocabulary needs of young dual language learners. These resources include the use of Spanish word walls in addition to English word walls.

Using examples from our work with bilingual early childhood teachers, we discuss the significance of interactive word walls for vocabulary development in primary Spanish/English dual language classrooms. We focused, however, on three adjustments when using Spanish word-walls: (a) the use of distinct colors, (b) the use of high frequency words with accents, and (c) the use of articles. We also share interactive word wall activities to promote children's biliteracy learning.

The Importance of Word Walls

A word wall is an organized display of words that provides a visual scaffold that temporarily assists learners' reading and writing (Brabham & Villaume, 2001; Callella, 2001). These words are used by students during various activities to build their vocabulary, master high frequency words, and read with fluency (Jasmine & Schiesl, 2009; O'Kelley Wingate, Rutledge, & Johnston, 2014). For dual language learners, effective word walls,

- scaffold students' vocabulary development in their native and second language;
- provide visual clues and reference for language learners;
- allow a space for students to display words that are important to them; and

- promote independence in reading and writing by building vocabulary and word analysis skills.

Based on this notion, many kindergarten through second grade teachers begin with an ABC word wall that features English high frequency words written with a thick marker and placed under the initial letter of the word (Cunningham, 2000). Although frequently used words in English are phonetically irregular and need to be learned as sight words, frequently used words in Spanish are often phonetically regular (see Figure 1).

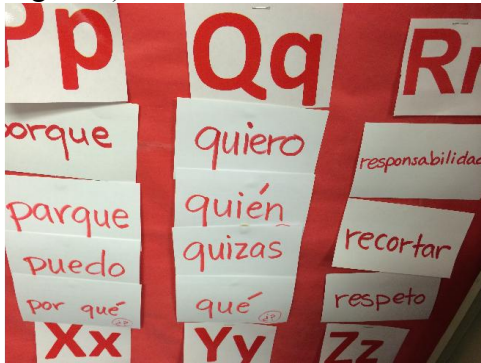


Figure 1. Photo 1.

Teachers in Spanish/English dual language classrooms need to consider the nature of the Spanish language when using word walls so that walls are adjusted for their use with dual language learners. The following are three easy adjustments teachers can use to facilitate Spanish vocabulary development.

Separation of Word Walls using Distinct Colors

Separating word walls based on language is helpful when learning two languages (Escamilla, 2000) and serves many purposes. First, in the early stages of second language acquisition, children are learning that there are two language systems and are learning to identify each system by its components. Separating the word walls and using two distinct colors helps children identify words in each language even when they cannot decode them. Many teachers we work with use the color red for Spanish words and blue for English words.

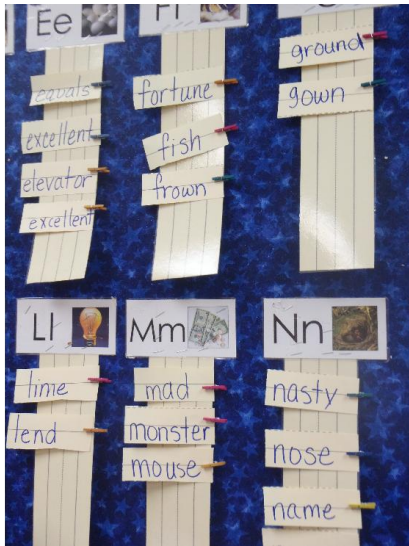


Figure 2. Photo 2

However, any two colors would work as long as teachers have explained the pattern to their students.

Second, having two separate word walls helps when there are words with similar spellings in Spanish and English but with different pronunciations or different meanings (e.g., similar or *similar*). Having two separate word walls also helps children see how the sounds of the vowels in each language are different. *E* in English (e.g., eagle) is not the same as *E* in Spanish (e.g., *enero*, January) just as *A* in English (e.g., apple) is not the same as *A* in Spanish (e.g., *avión*, airplane).

Finally an important reason for separation is to ensure that the minority language occupies the same status as the English language. Historically, it has been difficult for dual language teachers to apply equal status across languages because of the high status of English and the prevalence of English resources and English speakers in schools (Alanis, 2000; DeJong & Howard, 2009). Providing equal status to languages in dual language classrooms means the print environment must also give equal attention to both languages (DePalma, 2010). When children see both languages represented, it sends a clear message that their classroom environment honors and validates both language groups (Alanis & Rodriguez, 2008). One final thing to consider is the placement of the word walls. It is important to find two large surface areas, one area for each word wall that students can easily access both visually and physically (for further description see Jasmine & Schiesl, 2009).

Spanish Word Walls Using Accents

A second adjustment for word walls is the focus of accents within the Spanish orthography. At the early stages of biliteracy, teachers may help students learn about accents by having word walls that show specific words that utilize the accent. Accents in written Spanish are important because they change word meanings and are markers of time. For example, *cabra* means goat and *¿cabrá?* means Will it fit? or *tu* means yours

while *tú* means you. It is critical, however, that teachers help dual language readers and writers use accents in authentic meaningful contexts.

Ms. Sánchez a second-grade dual language teacher has students learning in bilingual pairs. Partners take words and clap the syllables that include a written accent (*publico/publicó*; public/published). She also has them come up with other words that fit the same pattern. They write words on sentence strips, identify how many times they clap, and cut the word into syllables and place them in the appropriate pocket.

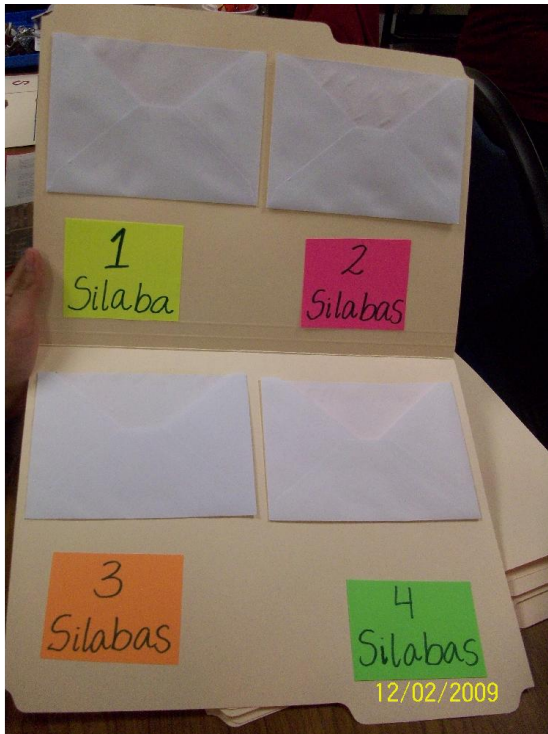


Figure 3. Photo 3

This type of activity gives students a sense of the word parts and helps them see where the stress lies as they learn the inherent accent rules. It also allows students to play with the language while developing their new vocabulary. Lastly, having them work in partners increases the likelihood that students will develop Spanish oral vocabulary as well as the written grammatical structures of the language.

Spanish Word Walls with Articles

Including articles on the Spanish word wall is important to help children who read and write in Spanish learn article/noun agreement (Escamilla, 2000). The use of articles in Spanish is associated with nouns because of gender and because of singular and plural usages (e.g., *el gato/la gata*, the cat; *el vecino/los vecinos*, the neighbor/the neighbors).

Article usage in Spanish has different rules based on language origin; however, there are exceptions to these rules (e.g., *el agua*, the water; *el problema*, the problem). Dual language teachers should include articles within their Spanish word wall to help students explore and actively discover the ways that written language works in different situations (Shagoury, 2009).

Mrs. Oliva has students act as “language detectives” in a fun and playful manner. Partners look for patterns and deduce the article rules based on the samples from the word wall. Pairs then compare their answers with other pairs. Mrs. Oliva asks different questions about the patterns; rules and exceptions are then discussed as a class.

By partnering students, Ms. Oliva allows them to apply conceptual and linguistic knowledge and integrate all language skills in a relaxed and fun environment. Students enjoy the strategy because it allows them to interact with other children in an informal and fun way (Alanis, 2011). Appendix A displays some helpful tables that highlight some rules for article usage and plurals.

Conclusion

If teachers working in Spanish/English dual language classrooms are going to provide a strong biliteracy foundation, they need to take into consideration the nature of the Spanish language to best meet the vocabulary needs of young dual language learners. This means they must be strategic about developing biliteracy in meaningful and interactive settings as they pay careful attention to strategic planning. This planning involves focusing on what children need to learn and how to effectively teach them.

Supportive learning environments engage children in meaningful language experiences that are cognitively and linguistically stimulating (Neuman & Roskos, 2007). Building and using Spanish word walls can provide opportunities for scaffolding students’ vocabulary development by providing visual clues and support for the teaching of Spanish words. Ultimately, allowing a space for students to display words that are important to them and time to practice biliteracy skills in settings that take into consideration the nature of the Spanish language will meet the vocabulary needs of young bilingual learners.

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Appendix A

The following tables highlight some rules for Spanish article usage and plurals along with a few exceptions to the rules.

Table A1

Spanish Article Usage-Masculine

The masculine is marked by the ending **-o** in singular

- el perro/dog, el asiento/seat, el zapato/shoe,

Nouns ending by **-i** and **-u** are mainly masculine:

- el colibrí/humming bird
- el espíritu/spirit

Nouns ending by **-l**, **-n**, **-r** or **-s** are mainly masculine:

- el árbol/tree, el rincón/corner, el pan/bread, el color/color, el mes/month

Important exceptions to rule are:

- el día/day, el mapa/map, el tranvía/tramway
- la mano/hand, la foto/photo, la radio/broadcasting

Nouns suffixed by **-miento**, **-dor / -or** (denoting an agent), **-al** are always masculine:

- el aborrecimiento/annoyance, el imperador/emperor, el temporal/tempest

Table A2

Spanish Article Usage-Feminine

Nouns suffixed by **-ón**, **-ión**, **-d**, **-dad**, **-tud** are feminine:

- la razón/reason, la nación/nation, la pared/wall, la libertad/freedom, la magnitud/magnitude

Nouns ending by **-z** are feminine:

- la cruz/cross, la luz/light, la paz/peace, la voz/voice

Sources: *Noun (sustantivo)*. Retrieved from

<http://www.orbilat.com/Languages/Spanish/Grammar/Spanish-Noun.html>

<http://www.spanishdict.com/topics/show/3>

Important exceptions to rule are:

- el avión/aircraft, el camion/truck, el bastión/stronghold, el césped/lawn, el huésped/guest, el sud/south

Important exceptions to rule are:

- el arroz/rice, el lápiz/pencil, el matiz/nuance, el pez/fish

Table A3

Article Usage for Nouns of Greek Origin

Masculine:

Nouns suffixed by -ma and -ta are masculine:

- el idioma/language, el telegrama/telegram, el clima/climate, el poeta/poet, el profeta/prophet, el cometa/comet

Nouns suffixed by -sis are feminine:

- la crisis/crisis, la hipótesis/hypothesis, la síntesis/synthesis,

Sources: *Noun (sustantivo)*. Retrieved from

<http://www.orbilat.com/Languages/Spanish/Grammar/Spanish-Noun.html>

<http://www.spanishdict.com/topics/show/3>

Feminine:

Words ending by -ma and -ta are feminine:

- la llama/flammé, la casta/caste, la rama/bough

Table A4

Forming Plurals in Spanish

When the noun ends in -z, you must change the -z to a -c and then add -es to the end.

When the noun ends in -c, you must change the -c to -qu. When the noun ends in -g, change it to -gu and add -es.

When the noun ends in an -s or -x and the last syllable is unstressed, only the article changes to plural. The object stays the same.

Sources: *Noun (sustantivo)*. Retrieved from,

<http://www.orbilat.com/Languages/Spanish/Grammar/Spanish-Noun.html>

<http://www.spanishdict.com/topics/show/3>

Examples:

la luz -> las luces

la paz -> las paces,

el pez -> los peces

Examples:

el frac -> los fraques

el zigzag -> los zigzagues

Examples:

el análisis -> los análisis

el jueves -> los jueves

el tórax -> los tórax



**Analyzing English Language Learner Instruction Programs Using
Standardized Student Achievement Test Scores**

by

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Abstract

As the Hispanic student population continues to grow in the state of Texas, educators are tasked with identifying effective methods of delivering core content instruction while providing students with second language acquisition learning supports. The Texas Education Agency (2011) indicated the Hispanic student population as the largest student demographic at 50.3% in the State of Texas. This study examined the achievement gap of English Language Learners (ELL) compared to their Caucasian mainstream counterparts. A quantitative, causal-comparative analysis of BE and ESL programs was conducted to determine the impact each had on ELL academic achievement as measured by the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). Information gained from this study provides further insight into Bilingual and ESL programming and data analysis of an educational approach used in school districts in Texas. As educators face the inequality of outcomes that currently exists for our ELL and Hispanic student population, we must act quickly to determine the best educational methods to bridge the learning gap for this student population.

Introduction

According to the Texas Education Agency (2011), the Hispanic student population is the largest student demographic in the State of Texas. Hispanic students accounted for 50.3% of the total Texas school enrollment for the 2010-2011 school year. The Texas Education Agency also reported that the number of English Language Learners (ELL) has grown 45.8% between 2000 and 2011. The number of students receiving services in an English as a Second Language (ESL) program and through bilingual programs also increased during this same time period to 56.4% (Texas Education Agency, 2012).

In the large suburban North Texas school district chosen for this study, the Hispanic student population has increased faster than all other sub-populations. Current demographic data show the Hispanic population grew from 28.8% to 47.8% over the last 10 years (Texas Education Agency, 2012). According to the 2010-2011 AEIS report, 22% of the district's Hispanic student population is Spanish-speaking and identified as English Language Learners (ELL). Because this group is growing at a fast pace, district leaders must continue to research the most effective ways to educate ELL students and evaluate the effectiveness of the current bilingual and ESL programs.

The growth in the ELL student population in United States motivates educators to search for effective instructional approaches to teach ELL students and to help close the achievement gap (Dominguez de Ramirez & Shapiro, 2006). According to the 2010-2011 AEIS report, Hispanic students in the district being studied performed below their Caucasian counterparts. Only 75% of Hispanic students met standards compared to 88% of Caucasian students on the sum of all grades tested (Texas Education Agency, 2012). The Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) report also reveals that only 67% of English Language Learners (ELL) met standards in the 2010-2011 school year (Texas Education Agency, 2012). Due to the achievement gap among the Hispanic, ELL, and Caucasian students, it is important to take a closer look at the bilingual and ESL programs to understand their effectiveness (Lopez & Tashakkori, 2006).

The state of Texas mandates all students complete a home language survey upon enrollment in public schools. Students who indicate a second language as spoken in the home are assessed by the school district to determine language proficiency. Students identified as English Language Learners (ELL) are eligible for participation in a bilingual education program (BE) or English as a Second Language program (ESL). Students who qualify must be enrolled in a BE or ESL program within 20 days of their enrollment in the district (Texas Education Agency, 2011). In Texas, bilingual instructional programs are mandated for students in the elementary grades (K-5) and are designed to provide content instruction in English and in Spanish. ESL programs are mandated for students in secondary grades (6-12) and provide all English instruction with specialized language support (Texas Education Agency 2012).

Programs that provide English language supports are necessary for ELL students because acquiring cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) in a second language can take the average learner five to seven years (Collier, 1995). Cummins (1979) coined the terms *BICS* and *CALPS* to reference the acquisition of a second language. The term *CALP* is used to refer to the acquisition of formal academic language as opposed to social or conversational language that Cummins refers to as Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS; Collier, 1995).

Examining Bilingual Student Educational Outcomes

Since the state strongly supports interventions for ELL students, a comparative analysis of BE and ESL programs may be useful to determine impact on academic achievement. Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) acquisition can take seven years to attain (Collier, 1995). Therefore, an analysis of the data from Grades 2 through 7 provided an opportunity for the researchers to review ELL student achievement data while allowing students sufficient educational opportunity to reach the higher levels of academic language proficiency.

Research examining the implementation of BE and ESL programming to educate English Language Learners (ELL) has yielded some confounding results in both the benefits and effectiveness of each program (Rhodes, Ochoa, & Ortiz, 2005). For example, Thomas and Collier (1997, 1999, 2003) found positive academic results for students who participated in the BE program. In addition, Ramirez (1992) concluded that providing students with instruction in their home language did not delay or interfere with their acquisition of English. In fact, the students that received the majority of their instruction in Spanish were able perform on grade level with their peers by sixth grade. However, Danoff (1978) did not find positive results for students who participated in a BE or ESL program.

The goal of this research was to examine the effects of specific BE or ESL instructional programs on Hispanic and English Language Learners (ELL) in a large ethnically and socioeconomically diverse suburban school district in North Texas. An analysis of standardized reading and language test scores of ELL students in second, fifth, and seventh grade was undertaken. A comparison of the test grades of Hispanic English Language Learners who enter the BE program versus Hispanic English Language Learners who enter the ESL program in first grade was analyzed. The achievement test

used for this study was the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). The ITBS is a broadly used achievement examination that has been normed on multiple populations of school-aged students in core content areas. The ITBS is administered in English and was used in this study to determine academic achievement in English among the specified population of ELLs.

Literature Review

Contextualizing BE and ESL Programming

Examination of the scholarly knowledge base revealed a wide range of theories and implementation of the ESL and BE programs to maximize student results. Studies comparing program models for ELL students and their effectiveness have yielded contradictory results (Clark, 2009). Research demonstrating increased student academic outcomes and reduced student academic outcomes resulting from participation in bilingual programs are presented in this literature review. This study did not seek to validate previous research, but simply sought to present the data gathered regarding the performance of ELL students in the target school district. Ramirez's (1992) four-year longitudinal study found that there was a substantial benefit in keeping ELL students in the BE program. His analysis showed ELL students could catch up to English-speaking peers by the sixth grade by participating in late-exit BE programs (Ramirez, 1992). In addition, Ramirez (1992) found that students provided with English-only instruction may fall behind their peers by the sixth grade.

Thomas and Collier (1997) conducted one of the largest longitudinal studies examining K-12 achievement scores. This longitudinal study revealed that all of the various BE and ESL programs showed initial short-term gains; however, for long term success, the study revealed that the longer a student is exposed and educated in his or her home language, the higher the student's gains will be throughout his or her academic career (Thomas & Collier, 1997).

Lopez and Tashakkori (2006) and Reyes (n.d.) compared BE and ESL programs and found no difference in students' achievement. Danoff (1978) also concluded that students in the BE program did not perform substantially different than what would have been expected had they not participated in the BE program. However, Clark (2009) and Dominguez de Ramirez and Shapiro (2006) concluded that there were differences in achievement, dependent upon the program.

Language acquisition is a factor that may be considered in all of the studies. Academic instruction takes four to seven years to reach full language proficiency (Collier, 1995; Feinberg, 2002). The mixed results of past studies and lack of studies that compare the successfulness of the two programs as measured by student success indicates that further examination of the various ELL program models is warranted.

There are few studies using ITBS scores to measure outcomes for Hispanic students who have been consistently enrolled in either a BE or ESL program without a program change. The district under study has met the requirements of NCLB and state accountability, but Hispanic student scores fall below their Caucasian counterparts in many content areas (Texas Education Agency, 2011). Comparing the achievement of students in the BE and ESL programs helped determine if the district under review was

more successful in implementing one program design over the other. This information provides school administrators to help determine if there is a need to make changes to the current program design and approach to educating Spanish-speaking, English Language Learners. The impact of this study is to benefit Spanish-speaking ELL students and to decrease the academic disparity between Hispanic students and other students.

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the Hispanic population increased by 15.2 million between 2000 and 2010. A review of the current census numbers indicates that the Hispanic population is the fastest growing group in the United States, with a 43% growth rate within the last decade. The explosive growth rate surpasses the total population growth of the nation, which was steady at 10% (Ennis, Rios-Vargas & Albert, 2011).

In the state of Texas, Hispanic growth has surpassed the fast paced growth of the United States. In 2010-2011, the TEA reported in its Academic Indicator Excellence System (AEIS) report, over half of the students in the state of Texas were Hispanic. During this same period, 16.2% of the total student population participated in a BE or ESL program. Hispanic students accounted for 796,795 students in the state. A review of the report also shows that the ELL population was 830,795 or 16.9% during the same period (Texas Education Agency, 2012). As the number of ELL students continues to rise, educators must look at effective means to educate and support the academic success of students learning English.

Language and Achievement Gap

Further review of the TEA 2010-2011 AEIS report shows that Hispanic students in Texas fell below the state average for all tests administered during this school year. These tests included reading, math, science, writing, and social studies at all tested grade levels (Texas Education Agency, 2012). These scores were consistent with reports that indicate ELL students are more likely to perform below standards and drop out of school (Tozer, Senese, & Violas, 2009).

Language minority students have additional struggles they must surmount in order to be successful in school. As Hawkins stated, “For children whose home languages and cultures differ significantly from those of the school, they must learn to negotiate very different social worlds, with differing norms, rules, expectation and values systems” (2005, p. 29). It is important that unique approaches are found to support ELL students as they are more likely to perform poorly in school and are at higher risk of dropping out (Tozer et al., 2009).

Bilingual Education Today

Currently, the federal government does not mandate bilingual education (Crawford & Krashen, 2007). In 2002, the BEA was officially renamed the English Proficiency Act and became part of the Title III No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Bilingual education or bilingualism is not mentioned in the new act; however, some states have laws that are still in effect that require some form of bilingual education (Crawford & Krashen, 2007). Legislation that is currently in place to address the needs of ELL

students is important “since at least 42% of all public school teachers have at least one ELL student in their classes” (Tozer et al., 2009, p. 425).

The BE program is one of the most widely debated educational programs with a variety of reasons for contention (Cummins, 2000; Valdes, 2004). Some of the political fire is fueled by very emotional sentiments about the country, its core values, and the American identity (Crawford & Krashen, 2007; Reyes, 2008). Polarizing the issue further are racism and fear of losing the English language. According to Valdes, “Opponents of bilingual education argue passionately that if children are not taught in English, they will not acquire the common public language” (2004, p. 102). Although issues of immigration may surround some of the controversy, ELL students are the ones caught in the crossfire (Crawford & Krashen, 2007).

Bilingual Education in Texas

The state of Texas addresses the needs of its language minority population in the Texas Education Code (TEC). Chapter 89 of the Texas Education Code details adaptations for special populations and lays out specific guidelines for language minority students in Texas public schools. In an effort to reach ELL students and provide native language instruction to large populations of same language speakers, §89.1205 of the Texas Education Code (TEC) requires Texas school districts provide bilingual education for each language when the enrollment reaches 20 or more students in the same grade level, district wide, for students in prekindergarten through fifth grade. State policy requires that all identified ELL students be provided with the opportunity to participate in a BE or ESL program (Texas Education Code, 1996/2012). In the school district studied, elementary, Spanish-speaking students who met requirements were offered bilingual education. Spanish-speaking students who entered an ESL program in elementary school in this district did so because their parents were denied bilingual education and so opted for ESL programming.

There are a variety of BE program models used throughout the United States to help students transition from their native language to English (Cummins, 2000). The state of Texas outlines the four types of BE program models that can be offered in schools throughout the state. Under §89.1210, the four BE program models are transitional BE early exit, transitional BE late exit, dual language immersion two-way, and dual language immersion one way. Goals and criteria are also comprehensive for the ESL program under this same subsection (Texas Education Code, 1996/2012). For purposes of this study, the BE program under analysis was a Transitional Bilingual Education Early Exit Program. The ESL program under analysis was content-based pull out and inclusion-based services. According to the TEC §89.1201, the goal of the bilingual education program is “to enable English Language Learners to become competent in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the English language through the development of literacy and academic skills in the primary language and English” (Texas Education Code, 1996/2012).

Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS)

The ITBS is frequently used in schools as a measure of academic achievement in English across the United States (Canivez, 2000). The validity and reliability studies make the ITBS a good choice for student data (Aguilera, 1994). The large compilation of norm-referenced data that has resulted throughout the years has “yielded significant indicators of trends in performance on the tests, in Iowa and nationwide” (Peterson, 1983, p. 227).

The ITBS continues to be a good choice to measure student performance because it provides uniform testing conditions and allows for a sample of students from the nation’s public and private schools (Dunbar et al., 2008a). The ITBS tests are also placed on a common score scale for all subjects. Using the common score scale means that student scores can be compared across subject areas equally to determine if the student performs better in math than in reading. As indicated in the ITBS manual, “Another important use of norms is to provide a frame of reference for interpreting the growth of students in various subject areas” (Dunbar et al., 2008, p. 1).

Theoretical Framework

This study is conceptualized and contextualized within a structural functionalist paradigm. Structural functionalism is “a macro-sociological perspective that examines the creation, maintenance, and alteration of enduring social practices, institutions, and entire societies” (Colomy & Ross Greiener, 2005, p. 128). As it relates to educational administration and the education of second language learners, structural functionalists view schools as legitimate social structures and assume that the roles and responsibilities of the school are valid and desirable. Not surprisingly, educational stakeholders do not always agree with all aspects of the public school experience, but large numbers of the populace find the institutions desirable. Parents affirm the legitimacy of the public school each day their children are in attendance. Voters validate the many roles and responsibilities of the local school district each time they elect new school board members and fund the social structure known as the public school. This research is guided by the functionalist paradigm that existing systems of education can be maintained in some significant measure of equilibrium while addressing challenges in schools, in this case, the achievement gap between Spanish-speaking students and their English-language counterparts.

Data and Findings

This quantitative, causal-comparative analysis of the BE and ESL programs allowed the researcher to analyze the impact of the programs on student achievement utilizing the ITBS in the areas of reading and language. ITBS reading and language scores were obtained for students who participated in the BE and ESL programs in second, fifth, and seventh grades for the 2011-2012 school year. The student standard score data were obtained from the target school district’s Planning, Research, and Evaluation (PRE) Department. Criteria for inclusion in the data set were limited to

Hispanic students enrolled in a BE or ESL program since first grade. The selected students did not have a change in program placement once their initial placement was selected. Students included in this research were in second, fifth, and seventh grade in the 2011-2012 school year. Additionally, ITBS test scores were available for each student for the 2011-2012 school year.

The data were analyzed using ANOVA. Student data were first sorted by grade level during the 2011-2012 school year. Data were further sorted into two categories based on program participation. The first group, “BE,” participated in a BE program. The second group, “ESL,” participated in an ESL program. Bilingual programming is not available at the middle school level in this school district. In order to classify seventh-grade students as “BE” or “ESL”, students were categorized based on their program participation in elementary school. The data analysis identified whether there was an impact on student achievement based on participation in the BE or ESL program. Data analysis also indicated whether there was an impact on student achievement as they progressed through seventh grade (see Table 1).

Table 1

2011-2012 ITBS Student Growth in Language for Second, Fifth, and Seventh Grade

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Second Grade BE	840	7.92	9.71	-3.147	.002
Second Grade ESL	175	10.49	10.24		
Fifth Grade BE	378	44.81	17.81	1.548	.122
Fifth Grade ESL	70	41.23	17.37		
Seventh Grade BE	139	19.38	19.64	.075	.941
Seventh Grade ESL	16	19.00	16.76		

Conclusions and Implications

The results of the data analyses indicated a statistically significant difference in achievement scores between the second grade BE and ESL cohorts. Additionally, results from the ANOVA and *t*-tests indicated no statistically significant difference in the achievement scores of students between fifth or seventh grade BE and ESL cohorts. During the 2011-2012 school year, ESL program participation was found to significantly influence student achievement in reading and language ITBS scores for students in the second grade. However, BE or ESL program participation did not significantly impact

student achievement on the 2011-2012 reading and language ITBS scores for students in the fifth or seventh grade.

Although the results of the data analyses indicate a statistically significant difference in the achievement scores between the second grade BE and ESL cohorts, the standard deviation for students in the second grade were high compared to the mean. Despite the fact that growth occurred, the data are scattered throughout the growth continuum, suggesting that some students thrived in the program and show exceptional growth, whereas other students showed no growth, or even negative growth. The same phenomenon occurred within the seventh grade data set. When looking at student growth, the seventh grade standard deviation was almost as high as the mean. Students either excelled in the BE or ESL program or showed little or no growth.

One could reasonably conclude from the results of this study that the difference between second grade BE and ESL student scores is due to the reduced amount of educational opportunities in English, thereby leading to a greater need for language support. Conversely, students in the fifth and seventh grades had more time to achieve academic language success and demonstrated success through performance data commensurate with their mainstream counterparts. Second grade English Language Learners typically present greater language needs than fifth and seventh grade students who have had multiple years of academic supports in the new language. According to this data, it is plausible to infer that the BE and ESL programs have a greater impact on the educational needs of lower grade students than students in upper grades as they transition into English. Student success was comparable for students in fifth and seventh grade in both reading and language ITBS comparisons.

Educational leaders are charged with the task of finding and evaluating programs to determine efficacious educational approaches for all students. The variety of information on programs and approaches to educating ELL students can be overwhelming and daunting to review. However, faced with our current crisis and the inequality of outcomes that currently exists for far too many Hispanic students, the time to act is now.

The information gained from this research provides an additional data set about the educational approach used in school districts in Texas for second language learners. Expanded research in multiple school districts across the state of Texas would provide more data upon which to base programming decisions for Hispanic and other English Language Learners. Studies focusing on the effectiveness of various types of BE and ESL programs for Hispanic and other second language learners should be areas for further research.

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**Research Brief:
Language Acquisition Without Speaking and Without Study**

by

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Abstract

This study describes a case of second language acquisition without speaking, without instruction, and without any kind of study. The subject, in fact, disdained study.

Introduction

Paul is a young man, now a teen-ager, growing up in a Cantonese-speaking family in California. His parents are both native speakers of Cantonese, but highly proficient in English, and his mother speaks Mandarin very well. His grandparents live with the family and speak Cantonese with Paul and his brother.

Cantonese and Mandarin are different languages. They are related, and share some common vocabulary, but they are not completely mutually comprehensible. With the help of context, Cantonese speakers are able to understand a limited amount of Mandarin and vice versa.

Today, as a teen-ager, Paul speaks Mandarin quite well, in addition to Cantonese and English. He has a Cantonese accent when he speaks Mandarin and makes only a few errors. When Mandarin-speaking guests are at his home, he has no trouble conversing on everyday topics, and on occasional visits to China with his family he is comfortable speaking Mandarin.

This paper describes how Paul did it. Nearly all of his exposure to Mandarin has been through media, through TV and CDs, with no classes, no study, and no interaction.

When Paul was a baby, his grandmother took care of him most of the time. Grandma liked to sing Paul lots of Cantonese and Mandarin songs and they watched Chinese MTV for children, which was in Mandarin.

Cartoons

Paul grew up watching Mandarin language cartoons. When he was a small child, and his parents were at work, a caretaker liked to turn on Mandarin cartoons, which Paul loved. Of course, Paul was interested in the cartoons, not in acquiring Mandarin. At age five, Paul and his grandmother watched all episodes of a Mandarin cartoon, *Ne Zha Conquers the Dragon King*. At six, he watched *The Winter of Three Hairs*, and at eight he watched *The Adventures of Tintin*, dubbed in Mandarin.

Jylha-Laide and Karreinen (1993) described the case of Laura, a 10-year old girl living in Finland who acquired an impressive amount of English over four years by watching cartoons on video. Laura, however, had the habit of stopping the video and replaying parts she wanted to see again or did not understand. Paul did not do this, but even without this advantage, cartoons supply rich extra-linguistic context and, of course, stories that young children find compelling. In addition, Paul's grandmother often watched the cartoons with him, and was a source of explanation.

Movies and Television Series

Over the weekend, Paul's father would check out Chinese (Mandarin) videos from the library and watch them with his sons. They watched at least one movie every weekend for more than four years.

When Paul was seven, he started watching the adult version of *Journey to the West*, and when he was ten he watched *Water Margin*. At about this time, he and his dad and brother started watching *The Romance of The Three Kingdoms*. All three were faithful viewers of this series and they watched every episode, often for two to three hours at a time. He also watched the entire *Hua Mulan* series. Paul loved TV so much he even watched the TV news in Mandarin with his grandparents every evening.

Books on Tape

Paul's mother bought a number of books on tape in Mandarin for Paul and his brother to listen to when they were in the car together. At first, Paul had difficulty understanding, but with the help of his mother, he soon became interested. Once, when Paul was eight years old, he asked his mother to stay with him in the car even though they had arrived at home so that he could finish listening to a story. His mother was very surprised because the story she was playing (*The Cock Crows at Midnight*, [半夜鸡叫视频连接地址](#)) was complex and presupposed historical knowledge that only those living in China would fully understand. Nevertheless, Paul was completely absorbed in the story.

Table 1 presents Paul's TV watching history for series, starting with cartoon series:

Table 1

TV Watching History

Age began	Title	# of episodes	Duration (min)	Total hours
5	<i>Ne Zha Conquers the Dragon King</i>	26	5 (minimum)	2
6	<i>The Winter of Three Hairs</i>	26	24	10
7	<i>Journey to the West</i>	25	45	19
10	<i>Water Margin</i>	43	45	64.5
10	<i>Romance of the Three Kingdoms</i>	84	45	63
10	<i>Hua Mulan</i>	48	48	38

The series totaled up to about 200 hours of viewing. If we add to this four years of watching movies (one movie a week, each movie estimated to last 1.5 hours), the total becomes 500 hours. This must be an underestimate of the amount of input Paul received in Mandarin, as he watched other programs in Mandarin, such as *Tin Tin* and the news, and, as noted earlier, he heard books on tape in the car.

Disdain for Mandarin Instruction

Paul has consistently resisted any kind of instruction in Mandarin. His mother had organized a literature and story-based Mandarin program that had been shown to be highly successful with heritage language Mandarin speakers and non-native speakers who had had some Mandarin instruction. Paul came to the program only to find comic books and participate in singing Mandarin songs. He and the other students got interested in Mandarin songs because of Chinese MTV.

A Natural Sequence

Our sparse description is sufficient to formulate the hypothesis of a natural sequence for listening comprehension, beginning with stories and cartoons and eventually progressing to movies and TV shows, leading from conversational language to a more sophisticated language.

Paul's Motivation

In none of these stages was Paul watching TV in order to improve his Mandarin. In fact, Paul had no obvious motivation to improve his Mandarin and has never shown a strong desire to identify with Chinese culture. At all times, his motivation was entertainment and interest in content. His acquisition of spoken Mandarin was a by-product, a result.

Self-selected and Narrow

None of Paul's viewing was "assigned" – Paul decided what he wanted to watch, and never felt compelled to watch a program to the end if he wasn't interested. He made no attempt to watch a wide variety of cartoons, movies and TV shows, but stuck to what he liked.

Conclusion

Superficially, Paul's path to Mandarin proficiency is not traditional. It is, however, fully consistent with current theory of language acquisition: The reasons for Paul's success are the same reasons certain methods are more effective than others: Paul had access to a great deal of highly interesting, comprehensible input (Krashen, 2003).

In one important way, the input that Paul had in Mandarin was superior to that generally found in even excellent language classes: It was compelling, so interesting that it engaged him fully, so interesting that he, in a sense, "forgot" that the input was in

another language. This kind of input may be optimal for successful language acquisition (Lao & Krashen, 2008). Paul's case is also consistent with an important corollary of the Comprehension Hypothesis: Talking is not practicing.

These kinds of cases are probably far more typical than educators realize.

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