The Journal of the Texas Association for Bilingual Education

Information About TABE

The Texas Association for Bilingual Education (TABE), founded in 1972, is a state advocacy organization for the rights of language-minority children. The TABE network is comprised of local school district and university affiliate groups representing all major geographical regions of Texas. TABE members include parents, early childhood education personnel, elementary and secondary school teachers and administrators, college students, professors, and university researchers. TABE is affiliated with the National Association for Bilingual Education.

Through a balanced program of research, professional development, and public education, TABE pursues the implementation of educational policies and effective bilingual-bicultural programs which promote equal educational opportunity and academic excellence for language-minority students. In keeping with this fundamental goal, TABE promotes consultations with the Texas Education Agency.

TABE has been organized to serve the following purposes:

- To serve as a professional association for persons interested in bilingual education;

- To review and analyze the state of bilingual-bicultural education in Texas schools and exchange ideas and practices for more effective implementation of programs;

- To study legislation at the state and national level affecting the educational needs of linguistically and culturally diverse learners;

- To exchange educational data, studies, ideas, practices and information with policy-making bodies, such as the Texas Legislature, the State Board of Education, the Texas Education Agency, and the United States Department of Education;

- To advocate for instruction which enables all students to master instruction in their native language so that they can succeed academically while learning the English language;

- To ensure Texas public schools provide language-minority students with a program of instruction and cultural development that enhances the student's sense of identity and fosters a positive self concept;

- To ensure that Texas public schools develop, through academic instruction, the native language skills of non-English background students, and afford all students with a meaningful opportunity to become proficient in English plus one or more languages;

- To ensure that language-minority parents are involved in the educational development of their children and included in decision-making processes affecting their children's education;

- To collaborate with institutions of higher education, the State Board of Educator Certification implementation of quality educator preparation programs.

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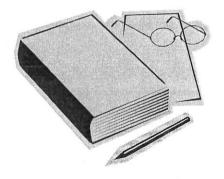| OFFICE ADDRESS HOME	NAME CITY & STATE FAX	WORK E-MAIL
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The Journal of the Texas Association for Bilingual Education

ESSAYS

RESEARCH ARTICLES

DE MAESTRA A MAESTRA

RESEARCH BRIEF

HISTORICAL PRESPECTIVE

ESSAY

MANY LANGUAGES — ONE VOICE

Josefina Villamil Tinajero
The University of Texas at El Paso

Welcome to El Paso! Welcome to this <u>beautiful</u> border city touched by the spirit of bilingualism--a spirit that values bilingualism; a spirit that sees bilingualism as an asset, a spirit that perceives bilingualism is an intellectual accomplishment! El Paso is truly touched by a spirit that understands that without strong bilingual education programs, our regional economy and the economy of the state as a whole will <u>NOT</u> be able to perform at its greatest potential. In El Paso, we are proud <u>champions</u> of both linguistic and cultural diversity. From Canutillo ISD at one end of the county to Clint and San Elizario and Tornillo ISDs on the other—and El Paso, Ysleta and Socorro ISDs in between—bilingual education is <u>thriving</u> in this community. Many of us in this room have put our hearts and souls into making that happen! I hope that you will agree that El Paso is a <u>GREAT</u> place for TABE 2000!

Beyond the school districts, the El Paso community as a whole embraces bilingualism and bilingual education. At its Education Summit last May, people from all walks of life—educators, businessmen, lawyers, bankers, legislators (including Senator Shapleigh—identified the following as the number one educational goal for this community: All students in El Paso will be required to complete a rigorous, college preparatory academic core curriculum, which includes literacy in two or more languages! Imaginense! I hope that you will agree that El Paso is a great place for TABE 2000!

Texas, too, is touched by a spirit of bilingualism. From El Paso, to Houston, to the Rio Grande Valley, to the heart of Texas—San Antonio and Austin and more—bilingual education is thriving in our wonderful state of Texas. While other states continue to question bilingual education and even <u>dismantle</u> their programs, much of Texas uses students' bilingualism as a resource in their learning process.

And while other states continue to generate <u>rancorous</u> political debates with many, many confusing claims and counterclaims concerning the value of bilingual education, and even use <u>children</u> to make a political point, Texas has moved ahead focusing on making sure that all children are served appropriately, that the programs that serve them are held accountable, and the students in them are held to high academic standards. <u>Anything less is counterproductive!</u>

Texas is poised to be <u>the</u> model—<u>the</u> leader—No, No! Texas IS the leader, a potential paradigm of excellence of what is possible when children's cultural and linguistic diversity are seen as the assets that they are. Our state and our nation can only grow strong if all our children grow up learning <u>atleast</u> two languages.

What I am saying here is that the rest of the nation should become more like Texas.

As a community of bilingual educators, we are the single most autho<u>ritative</u>, experienced and passionate voice for bilingual education in this nation. And people must listen to us! And when they listen, what <u>is</u> it they must hear us say? What is it they they must hear us say? What <u>is</u> the role that TABE must play in bilingual education?

I contend that TABE's role is to <u>preserve, proclaim, prepare</u> and <u>persevere</u>. That is, we must <u>preserve</u> cultural legacies and the languages that carry them. We <u>must</u> proclaim that bilingual education and excellence are synonymous. And we have to make that happen! We must <u>prepare</u> our children for the global America of the 21st century. And, and . . we must persevere—that is, we must continue to fight the fight. We cannot let our guard down! Our children depend <u>on us</u> to be their political voice. We must be there for them.

<u>First. Preserve.</u> We Must Preserve Our Children's Cultural Legacy. Our first prophetic message to society as bilingual educators and as a state organization, then, concerns the preservation of our diverse cultural legacies. According to Sabine Ulibarri, "Language is the very heart of preserving any cultural legacy. Language carries within it the history, the culture, the traditions, the very life of a people, the flesh. Language is people. We cannot conceive of a people without a language, or a language without a people. The two are one and the same. To know one is to know the other". Ulibarri, Sabine, 1973).

According to Kantrowitz (1973), genetics provides the raw materials for language development; parents, grandparents and other family members (hermanos, hermanas, abuelitos, tias y tios) inculcate traditional values and the language—the mother tongue. That mother tongue molds the spirit and the soul. The mother tongue is the language in which children learn to pray and to express themselves with a higher being. When children use their mother tongue, it is an expressive, aesthetic, cultural and transcendent moment for a human being, which does not lend itself to grammatical analysis! Language is the greatest <u>God-given miracle! And we must preserve it!</u>

The mother tongue colors children's view of the world. It shapes perceptions. It influences our thinking patterns. According to some linguists, language is an instrument of thought and self-expression. Embedded within this language we find the history, the culture, the traditions, the very *life* of a people, the flesh and even more, we find the moral and spiritual, <u>the supra-human dimension of language</u>.

Thus, our first message to society as bilingual educators and as members of this great organization—TABE--must be that *language is precious.* That language is the vehicle of all that a child knows, thinks and dreams. That it is one of the *most salient aspects of culture. That language is a miracle--a precious treasure!* For this reason, the mother tongue of our children must <u>not</u> be muted; it must <u>not</u> be silenced. Even when children learn a second or third or fourth language the

mother tongue must still be preserved and developed. It is the very essence of their being and must be cherished, preserved and given voice

Second. Proclaim. We must proclaim that quality bilingual programs promote academic success and excellence. We must proclaim that bilingual education and excellence are synonymous. And we must make that happen.

You know, is time America understands that bilingual education IS about academic excellence, that children whose first language is one other than English are NOT language-deficient. They are language-endowed! They are language-rich! Bilingual education is NOT a program for children with learning problems! It is NOT a program for those poor little kids who can't speak English!

Our children bear the gift of bilingualism! They have the potential to be bilingual, trilingual, multilingual. Bilingual education IS a program of excellence. IT IS for the gifted and talented. It is also for children whose first language is Spanish, or Vietnames or Hmong, or English and more. We must challenge our schools, and our parents, and our administrators to stop thinking in terms of remediation and start thinking about excellence for all children. Being bilingual, trilingual, multilingual is an enormous asset! It's an intellectual accomplishment! And it should be fostered as a national treasure!

In writing about bilingual education and about the intellectual power of bilingualism, Diaz (1989) maintains that bilingual children have linguistic and cognitive advantages over monolingual speakers, including superiority in concept formation, acceleration of the development of abstract thinking and mental flexibility. Children who have a level of balanced bilingualism have been shown to have an advantage in measure of concept development, creativity, meta-linguistic ability, semantic development and analytical skills. This is the power of bilingualism!

Third. Prepare. The third prophetic message to American society is that we must prepare all children for the global America of the 21st Century. We must educate every single child to meet world standards. And the best way to do that is through bilingual education. Bilingual education can promote academic success and marketability for all of our children by providing "world class" learning opportunities in two or more languages—a premier education for all.

As advances in communication and technology further shrink our globe, so grows the need for individuals who are competent in all academic areas and who are proficient in more than just English. We must prepare our students to function in a culturally diverse nation—in an economically interdependent and interconnected United States, a United States which is inevitably, and even eagerly, being drawn more and more into the global framework. Thus, our vision of excellence means educating ALL children globally—widening their access to the world so they can function knowledgeably in a world that is interdependent, interconnected AND international.

A world of this sort demands linguistic, cultural, technological and socio-psychological preparation. Our schools must teach the languages of the world

and the power of those languages along with world geography, world history and economics.

Our vision of excellence means that our children must be bilingual—even trilingual—perhaps multilingual in spoken languages and conversant in one or more cyber languages. To borrow a concept from cyberspeech, you could say that bilingualism is twice the bandwidth. Our children must be prepared as global children who communicate in a double-wide, or even triple-wide bandwidth!

Fourth. Persevere. Our fourth and final message is that we must persevere. This conference occurs at a time of tremendous change in educational policy and political thought. The struggle to protect our children's future continues. Just as we were making great strides in research on bilingualism, on literacy and biliteracy and on recognizing exemplary bilingual programs, in June 1998 California voters approved by reforandum, an initiative that has destroyed 30 years of work in that state. And although it was clear that the debate of Proposition 227 was never, ever about selecting the best way to teach children English, at least one other state (AZ) has approved a similar initiative week.

We cannot let our guard down, we must be ever vigilant, hyper-vigilant, in fact, lest the moral right to learn in one's own language as well as in English is shorn from school children across the nation. We must work both smarter and harder to defeat 227-like initiative and ensure that we can, in fact, "give children the world." TABE cannot stand by and not do something. These are targeted attacks to dismantle bilingual education that use our children to make a political point.

It was a very unfortunate situation in California. The approval of Proposition 227 was divisive. It was shortsighted. It cannot continue to happen. When it comes to our children, we cannot, we must not, we shall not give up. WE CAN NEVER, NEVER, NEVER, NEVER GIVE UP!

The saddest thing about California, I think, was that even before the election, even before the votes were counted, some people gave up in a sprit of defeat. At the end they didn't even try! In the face of what seems to be overwhelming odds, even then, we must never give up. We must continue to persevere. Only by perseverance will we overcome the odds and show proponents of 227-like initiatives that they are wrong! Perseverance requires that we use our greatest imagination and creatively to communicate proactively the essential nature of bilingual education as well as its critical role in the advance of our nation and the lives of our children.

We must strategize. We must share our convictions with other people. And we must do it together; we must do it with one voice. We must work with administrators and teachers and legislators and parents. Parents don't get in the way of their children's education as some people say. We need them. I call upon you each one of you present, both to persevere and to use your best imagination to move those whom you meet in the cause of bilingual education.

CLOSING

Ladies and gentlemen, together we can achieve great things for our children. We must shape a 21st century agenda of excellence, of responsibility and of activism. To do so we must preserve, we must proclaim, we must prepare and we must persevere--preserve our children's cultural legacy, proclaim that our programs must be programs of excellence; prepare our children for the future and most importantly, together we <u>must</u> persevere—together we <u>must</u> be many tongues but one single voice.

So here we ARE . . . with past success and endless future opportunities. We've got a lot of work to do. But we have each other. We have this great organization--TABE. Together we are strong. Together our one voice can be heard, and we <u>can</u>, we must succeed, we shall succeed. OUR VOICE CAN BE LOUD AND STRONG.

My fellow TABE members, TABE rises to the challenge of the future.

Let us have the courage to dream . . .

The foresight to plan . . .

. . . and the humility to keep our children's futures in mind.

I thank you. I wish you a MARVELOUS conference, and may the ROAR of our ONE VOICE rumble stronger than ever for our nation's future! Thank you!

END NOTE

[1]Dr. Tinajero delivered this paper as a keynote speaker at the 2000 TABE Conference in El Paso, Texas.

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RESEARCH ARTICLES

THE MIRACLE OF TAAS: URBAN REALITY OR LEGEND?
IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER PREPARATION

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ABSTRACT

This article critically examines the consequences of the TAAS testing frenzy on two learners, classroom students and preservice teachers. Unfortunately, preservice teachers are often not being exposed to best practices because of the narrowed TAAS-driven curriculum. Preservice teachers' self-reports indicate an ongoing inner struggle because of the lack of congruity between what they observe and what they have learned. In the long run, these types of experiences may disillusion preservice teachers from the profession or from assuming an upper grade position. The TAAS frenzy will likely perpetuate deficit thinking among teachers and future teachers alike. The TAAS legend has reinforced that poor, language minority children can learn basics only by rote and when given the answers to the test. To counter this legend will take a monumental task by all educators.

INTRODUCTION

At a recent staff development committee meeting at a local school, the topic of discussion was the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) campus results. In examining their disaggregated data, several issues came to light. While the majority White population had faired well on the TAAS, the minority population, which consists of mostly of Latino and African American students, had not performed at the same levels. What resulted out of this deliberation was the conclusion that the minority population had kept the school from being academically recognized and that in order to achieve that goal, decisions had to made to address these concerns. The majority of the committee concluded that their school must become test-driven and that specific curricular changes would be made to address the TAAS. Essentially, failing or potentially at-risk students would be placed in classes in which TAAS preparation would be the focus.

During the past couple of years scenarios like this one, reported to me by an upset minority educator, are becoming more commonplace. According to McNeil and Valenzuela (2000), school and central office administrators are making decisions similar to these across Texas. What these decision-makers fail to

consider is the type of instruction that is being offered to minority students is not and will not be comparable to that being offered to their majority counterparts, thus resulting in subtractive schooling for minority students. Conversely, the end product, passing the TAAS becomes the major goal for these students. Several researchers have warned the educational community of the pitfalls of subtractive schooling (Valenzuela, 1997;Valencia, 1991) and high-stakes testing (Valencia, & Aburto, 1991; Valencia & Guadarrama, 1995) for minority students.

Testing, as a means of accountability, has become a mainstay in today's educational system. In Texas, the performance outcomes on the TAAS test have been herald as one demonstrating that all Texas school children are achieving academically. Across the state, schools once classified as low-performance and in fear of being shut down are now earning reclassifications as "recognized" or "exemplary" based on their school's overall outcome on the TAAS test. In fact, the dramatic achievement gains are being touted as the Texas "Miracle."

Scheurich (1998) concluded that minority schools who had become successful had achieved by becoming a caring community that accepted "no excuses" for lack of success. These schools had core beliefs and values regarding students' ability to learn and also had accountability standards to assure that learning and success were indeed occurring. A recent study also concluded that low income, mostly language minority schools can be successful (Texas Education Agency, 2000). With recent pressures on TAAS in an effort to assure accountability, have some of these caring communities become test-driven?

In a recent newspaper article, one state board member surmised that the TAAS test had debunked the myth that poor, minority children can't learn. He stated, "Now we've taken the position that everyone can learn (Bernal, 2000 as cited by San Antonio Express-News). In addition, in discussing TAAS with four different minority principals, their remarks clearly indicated that the TAAS test had been successful because pressure on the low performing minority schools ensured that all students were learning. Even if it meant that they were just learning the "basics" — after all in some of these low performing schools, the "basics" were much more than minority students had previously been exposed to in school. "*At least the kids can read, I don't know if we could say that before…*"

Thus, the success of previous low-performing schools as measured by the TAAS may be more an urban legend than reality. We all know urban legends; legends or myths is a genre that has been around since the beginning of time, but as all legends go, the reality is often blurred as the story is retold. In the case of the Texas Miracle, this legend lacks close scrutiny of what is occurring in some of these schools to achieve this recognition. Thus, that minority students are not learning is not the question, but at what expense? And what is the focus of their learning? Moreover, what effects has the TAAS created on learners and teachers?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Most recently, Jones (1999) suggested that there is a lack of compatibility between national exams and educational reform and that such efforts would lead to the inhibition of constructive education reforms. Yet Texas has remain steadfast in its path to assure reform and accountability as measured by standardized testing. However, policymakers have failed to see that this path has lead to destruction. McNeil and Valenzuela (2000) clearly revealed the harmful impact of the TAAS on Texas school children specifically, low income, minority children. They suggested that the curriculum is forsaken in lieu of test preparation activities. Adversely affected by the TAAS system is the quality and quantity of curriculum and instruction. Hoffman, Assaf, and Paris' (2001) survey of Texas' reading teachers clearly revealed the overemphasis and harmful impact of TAAS.

McNeil and Valenzuela indicated that the focus on TAAS had widened the great divide between poor, minority children and privilege, mostly majority children. Haney (2000) confirmed that between 1994-1997 that while TAAS passing rates increased for Reading, Writing, and Math exit test, there was a decrease in performance on the college readiness test, i.e., the TASP (Texas Assessment of Skills Proficiency). Further, he reported that learning among secondary students had not really improved since the SAT scores had not shown any dramatic increases. Lastly, Haney (2000) and Klein, Hamilton, McCaffrey, and Stecher (2000) purported that the TAAS gains were not evident in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results.

Klein et al.'s (2000) major study confirmed that in fact the achievement gap had increased when comparing the gains made by black students with those of white students. While minority students have made gains on Math and Reading skills, according to the researchers, their gains as compared to white students become negligible for various reasons:

a) White students are not taking a hiatus while their counterparts academic performance rises; the academic performance of White students is improving also;

b) High scoring students may have topped out, because the test does not measure beyond a certain level;

c) Low performing schools are likely engaging in more test preparation, thus increasing the likelihood of passing the test.

These researchers also found that when comparing the TAAS data to other standardized test resulted in anomalous findings (Klein et al., 2000). The socioeconomic status (SES) of the school, as determined by the number of students eligible for free lunch, resulted in a strong negative correlation with the school's mean on the administered non-TAAS tests (e.g. Stanford). A lower mean performance on non-TAAS tests was detected for schools with a lower SES population. While, the opposite was found for schools with an affluent

population. The researchers observed that this finding was true regardless of the type of test administered (open or closed) or the content measured (e.g., science or math). Interesting, on the TAAS test, a curvilinear relationship between performance and SES was observed. Differences found on the non-TAAS tests were not evident in the TAAS. Moreover, when the school was used as the unit of analysis, while non-TAAS test highly correlated with each other, the TAAS tests did not comparatively correlate with the non-TAAS test. Despite the fact that the TAAS tests measure different content, the TAAS test did correlate with one other. The researchers concluded that the TAAS and NAEP results produced two different scenarios, further questioning the validity of the TAAS. In sum for the years between 1994-1998, with the exception of higher 4th grade TAAS math scores, the gains in TAAS were compatible with national gains, while the NAEP did not reveal these gains.

Valenzuela (2000) further described the long-term effects of the Texas TAAS-driven society as a loss of human and cultural capital. She noted that the TAAS test was discouraging minority students, specifically Mexican American and Mexican immigrant adolescents, from completing high school and in pursuing college. Valenzuela concluded that for these youths the TAAS was an insurmountable barrier in gaining educational, economical, and social access in the U.S.

METHODOLOGY

This current article will report on my own field observations and what my preservice teachers are describing to me in their field observation journals. As observers, preservice teachers are asked to keep a field journal of their observations and to take detailed notes of the daily activities of the classroom. They are also asked to reflect on their experiences within the classroom. The preservice teachers are placed in mostly bilingual or minority classrooms through a major urban city, with intent to place them in under-served areas in the community. These communities are often under-served because they have difficulty recruiting and retaining quality teachers, especially bilingual educators. Throughout the past two years, the pressure of TAAS has increasingly become more noticeable in my observations of classrooms and in my preservice teachers' journals. These field journals along with my own field notes were examined and triangulated for common themes. The intent of this article is to examine the types of experiences that learners and preservice teachers are exposed to within classrooms in which the majority of the students are ethnic and/or language minorities.

FINDINGS

Focus on Basics.

In examining the observational notes, it was evident that teachers are focusing on the basics, mainly reading and math. While the importance of reading and math can not be underestimated, focusing only on reading and math skills in isolation, does not help learners make connections across content or to reality of the world of tomorrow. As a fourth grade teacher stated, *"I am focusing on reading, I figure the rest will just fall into place."* Disconcertingly, the reality is that if teachers focus solely on reading, when will children acquire other knowledge? As one of the preservice teachers reflects on her observational journal:

> They (4th grade students) were behind schedule and missing out on important content learning.   This to me this (Math content) is very important; I am bothered by the emphasis on the glorious TAAS.

The reality is that they will not have the opportunity to access this knowledge. Moreover, the quality of experiences for the preservice teachers in these settings is being reduced.

Emphasis on Rote Skills.

In schools in which the majority of the population is minority, the type of teaching that most often occurs is rooted in behaviorism. Children are drilled in rote skills on a daily basis for most of the day. Observers recorded that half of the morning was spent on rote types of activities in language arts and the other half of the day was spent on math drills. Conversely, in other schools, especially in schools where the most of the children were majority learners, children were engage in active construction of knowledge, hypothesizing, synthesizing, and analyzing the how's and why's of the content matter. Karina, a preservice teacher, reports,

> I really don't like my (4th grade) placement this year; all I see is drill, drill, drill. Last semester, I was at a school in this same district, and the teacher taught the way we're being taught, in an interdisciplinary approach, active learning…not skill and drill.

Children not engaged in active construction of knowledge are not being given opportunity to become thinkers and life-long learners, much less being prepared for the workplace of the 21st century. In observing this type of activity, the preservice teacher finds herself at odds with what she has been learning and what she is actually observing in the classroom. To resolve this conflict, the likelihood will be that the preservice teacher, like her cooperating teacher, will succumb to these practices.

Teaching to the Test.

Consistently throughout the field notes, the observers indicated that on a daily basis, classroom teachers in minority schools were more likely to engage in test preparation activities. McNeil and Valenzuela (2000) also noted these practices. One preservice observer indicated that children were given worksheet after worksheet on TAAS skills. On her reflections, Marisol wrote,

> I am so sick of seeing so many worksheets; the kids just sigh, I didn't realize that there was such a heavy emphasis on TAAS practice test in the upper grades (3rd-5th). I just sigh too...

Another observer tries to find merit in what the teacher is doing, Nelda recounts:

> When she explained to me why the children do these exercises, she would refer to the TAAS and how those types of questions are on the exam. After that they had a TAAS packet in which they worked from everyday. The students seemed kind of bored, but she kept them in focus with her calling on them randomly for answers.

Valencia (2000) concluded that teachers were creating undue stress on young children because of the excessive focus on the TAAS test. Similarly, during a visit to a moderate-income school, a Latino parent engaged the current researcher in a conversation regarding the TAAS test. She revealed that her 4th grade son was terrified of flunking the TAAS and had recently been waking up with severe headaches and stomachaches. With tears in her eyes, the mother blamed herself for her son's inability to do well, because she had been a special education student. *"It is all my fault... I was stupid in school and now I have passed this on to my son."*

Undoubtedly, preservice teachers are beginning to question the quandary that they will find themselves once they begin teaching. After observing on several occasions in which TAAS is the major focus, Rebecca notes,

I sometimes stop and think of the challenges that a first year teacher will face if he/she is hired to teach in an upper grade? Will he/she be able to implement the knowledge gained during college courses?

These kinds of experiences will likely disillusion preservice teachers from the teaching profession or discourage them from assuming an upper grade teaching position.

English Only Focus.

The TAAS as an accountability system for the school has exacerbated this "English only" notion. Despite of recent research on the importance of allowing children to develop cognitive language proficiency prior to being transferred into English (Collier, 1992; Lindhom, 1995; Snow, 1990), the push towards English is still occurring even in bilingual classrooms. Bilingual teachers often expressed the need to hurry children into English and justified this decision based on the fact that the children would have to eventually take the TAAS. As a new first grade bilingual education teacher, Carla has felt the pressure from district mandates that requires bilingual education teachers to push children into English and that are contrary to her beliefs. Evidently this type of struggle leaves Carla powerless as she emotionally and tearfully revealed:

> As an educator... what I see... what I have seen and what hurts so bad that they (language minority students) are struggling and it's not fair for them to be struggling in that manner when it is not necessary to struggle in that manner. And that's where I sympathize with them; ...it's heartfelt that they can not do something and they **feel** (emphasis original)… "How can they expect me to do this when I don't even know the language" and that's what bothers me and I feel so bad; yet I have to do what is the curriculum (in English) ...and yea you can close the door, but now-a-days even when you close the door because if they walk in on you... then where do you stand?

Guadarrama (1993) also noted similar practices in which the principal encouraged the teacher to transition predominately Spanish speaking children into English rather than allowing the teacher to make this decision based on her professional judgment. Up until recently, the Spanish TAAS was not part of the accountability for schools. When the state decided that they would used the Spanish TAAS as part of the accountability, some schools were very concerned because they knew that they had not been teaching in Spanish. Often in these schools a recommendation was made that language minority children be tested in English because the school officials felt that their scores would fair better in

English because of the lack of instruction in Spanish. As a bilingual teacher discloses,

> ...some of the LEP (limited English proficient) children did well because we did daily drills and practiced the TAAS everyday, day in and day out...otherwise, I don't know what would have happened.

In schools where there was a strong bilingual program, the faculty welcomed the Spanish TAAS as a means to demonstrate that the children were learning. Evident within these classrooms is that children are engaged in Spanish literacy development. In these schools, the bilingual children tested in Spanish did outperform their counterparts tested in English. However, some classrooms, even within these strong bilingual schools, succumb to watering down of the curriculum and excessive TAAS preparation. Again, these types of experiences will likely cause conflict within the preservice teachers in which they will question the validity of teaching other content in the native language.

TAAS Driven Curriculum.

Unfortunately, the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) are not what guide the curriculum, much less drive what is taught, rather the TAAS test is the end all and be all in predominately poor, minority schools. Hoffman et al. (2001) survey results also indicated similar findings. Children are performing at the expected level because teachers are focusing on reading and math, emphasizing rote skills, and teaching to the test. What these activities have produced is a wash back effect. Conceivably, these methods have worked in an efficient and quick manner to create an illusion of change, when in fact there is no long lasting outcome. One new teacher captures this thought best, when she states,

> I don't know how this school got recognized, most of the kids still have problems with reading and math, and when it comes to critical thinking...well never mind that...

Perpetuating Deficit Thinking of Current Educators

One of the RAND (Klein et al., 2000) recommendations was that there be an examination of the effects of the testing program on the school curriculum and instruction. These examinations have already begun (McNeil & Valenzuela, 2000). There may be other unexpected effects, such as reinforcing deficit thinking among educators (see Valencia, 1997 for a discussion of deficit thinking). While the school curriculum can be changed, the method of instruction will be much more difficult especially when deficit-thinking teachers are delivering the content. Research has shown that teachers' instructional practices are influenced

by their daily experiences; while these experiences can be positive and lead to best practices, not always is this always the case (Flores, 1999). In the case of these test-driven schools, these teachers' daily experiences will have likely reinforced the notion that minority children learn best through rote memory. This notion will be difficult to dispel.

Reducing Quality of Field Experiences

Distressingly, the TAAS pressure is not only affecting our schools, it has begun to spill over to our realm as a teacher preparation institution. For example, last semester, several university students could not be placed or complete their fieldwork in a timely manner because many of the TAAS driven schools did not want university students in their classrooms. As one administrator retorts,

> I'm not about to commit hara-kiri; I don't want anything from keeping us from achieving our goal and when the (university) students are here, we can't focus on TAAS preparation. I want to make sure we get recognized...I can place her in kinder, but not in a TAAS grade.

Since university preservice teachers are often given specific tasks to help them develop best practices, thus, in some schools their presence was not seen in a positive light. Rather than wanting more adults present to work with their students, these schools see university preservice teachers as a burden that deterred them from their path. Moreover, I am concerned with the quality of placements for my preservice teachers. One preservice teacher sums it when he notes,

> I have been unable to teach any science or social studies lessons, because my (cooperating) teacher just focuses on reading and math. In fact, I have come at different times of the day as you suggested and not once have I seen a science or social studies lesson being taught.

This situation will likely get worse in Texas and has already begun to take its toll in other test-driven states. For example, in a recent Richmond newspaper article, the journalist, Stallsmith (1999) reported that college deans from four universities had raised concerns with the type of field experiences provided for their student teachers. In some schools, teachers were unwilling to supervise student teachers because of the test pressure. In sum, the "test frenzy" was hurting the preparation of their student teachers.

To deprecate the TAAS frenzy, open discussions with our preservice teachers are necessary on how to avoid these pitfalls. Even after observing the TAAS practices in her classroom, Rebecca's remarks indicates how she is critically reflecting about best practices contrary to what she is observing:

If I had to teach TAAS I would approach it differently. For example instead of drills I would probably reinforce TAAS objectives in learning centers or during cooperative learning. By following the curriculum, I think a teacher is able to squeeze as much as possible during meaningful and hands on activities which in turn would lead to motivating the students and providing information that interest them.

CONCLUSION

The intent of this paper was to explore the effects of the TAAS on learners and preservice teachers' experiences. The notion that the TAAS is more an urban legend than reality is especially evident for language minority children. Earlier I had posed that minority children are learning is not the question, but at what expense? And what is the focus of this learning? As the findings show, minority children are learning basic skills in a narrowed curriculum at the expense of not learning other content and not developing critical and higher order thinking. Moreover, rather than the TAAS system increasing equity for all students, the opposite has occurred. Essentially the TAAS as a means of accountability has indeed resulted in subtractive schooling for poor, minority students. The review of literature provided evidence that recent major studies have made similar conclusions. In the case of language minority students, the picture is further confounded because the narrowed curriculum has reduced the quality of experiences for learners at two levels, students and preservice teachers. Further, it has perpetuated deficit thinking for current and future educators. Moreover, we are losing a potential pool of bilingual and minority educators:

1. language minority youths are dropping out at record numbers; these youths may have become successful bilinguals who could pursue careers in education, and
2. based on TAAS driven field experiences, current preservice bilingual educators may be discouraged from entering the field.

This loss of human and cultural capital will be irreversible if we continue believing in the TAAS legacy.

These conclusions stem from my own and student's observation field notes over the past two years of various classrooms, mostly bilingual and/or minority, throughout a major urban city. While I have always held the importance of having all students exposed to a diversity of experiences in schools throughout the city, especially in under-served areas, I have begun to question as to whether my efforts are perpetuating deficit thinking in these future teachers. To counter, my colleagues and I become more selective in choosing field sites, unfortunately leaving some under-served schools without a university presence. In selecting field sites, we have become wary when a minority school is described as being "recognized" or "exemplary" because in some schools these labels simply reflect a test-driven curriculum and not best practices or quality education.

Nevertheless, it is important that teacher-educators keep in contact with TAAS-driven schools and perhaps assist teachers in making changes in their approaches to educating language minority children. An effective means would be to provide field-based graduate work or long-term professional development, in which exemplary approaches can be demonstrated. Unfortunately, the essence of the TAAS legend has reinforced that poor, language minority children can learn basics only by rote and when given the answers to the test. To counter this legend will take a monumental task by all educators.

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STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS IN A TWO-WAY BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

The desire to learn a second language is influenced by attitudes and perceptions about native languages, target language status and relationships with speakers of both languages. Attitudes however, are often overlooked in curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation. The data presented in this study are those related to students' attitudes and perceptions regarding their experience in two-way bilingual programs. Data suggests possibilities for the school system and for education policy makers in Texas. Students' feelings about their native language and target languages cannot be disassociated from their feelings about self as learners and members of society. It is therefore, important for educators to assess student attitudes perceptions and use that assessment to plan and teach in two-way bilingual classrooms.

> "I think it's cool because it gives you a chance to learn two languages." (fifth-grade student)

INTRODUCTION

There is a dimension in learning that is often ignored or overlooked in curriculum planning and implementation. It is however, an integral piece to learning. The desire to learn a new language is influenced by attitudes about native languages, target second language groups and relationships with speakers of both languages (Griego-Jones, 1994). The role of students' attitudes has been identified as significant for learning a second language (See Cummins, 1988; Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982; García, 1991; Gardner, 1985); it has not however, been used in instructional planning. Thus, when planning for instruction in two-way bilingual programs issues about students' attitude toward language and its power status must be addressed if students are to be truly successful.

This research piece is part of a larger study that examined academic achievement, language proficiency, and social perceptions of Texas fifth-grade students participating in two-way bilingual programs. The data presented in this study are those related to students' attitudes and perceptions regarding their experience in two-way programs.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Bilingual education programs are offered in numerous schools across the state. However, research theory and knowledge regarding effective schooling for this linguistically diverse population has not been transferred into effective schooling by decision-makers at the state and local levels (Thomas & Collier, 1997). As a result, English language learners (ELLs) have traditionally been under-served. Thus, ELLs are more likely to fall behind academically and/or drop out of school than are their Anglo, Asian, and African American classmates (Arias, 1986; Valencia, 1991).

For many ELLs, improving their access to quality bilingual education programs (Cummins, 1996; Ramirez, Pasta, Ramey, & Yuen, 1991; Thomas & Collier, 1997) can facilitate success in school. One way to address the needs of ELLs may be through two-way bilingual programs.   Two-way, or dual language bilingual education occurs when approximately equal numbers of language minority (e.g. Spanish Speakers) and language majority students (e.g. English Speakers) are in the same classroom. Two languages are used in the classroom for instruction and learning. Biliteracy is as much an aim as full bilingualism with literacy being acquired in both languages either simultaneously or with an initial emphasis on native language literacy (Baker, 1996). Texas has been slow to follow in its implementation of two-way bilingual programs; the majority of programs are transitional in nature. Consequently, only small proportions of bilingual programs in the state have the continued maintenance of the first language as an explicit goal (Directory of Dual Language Programs in Texas, 1996). Hence, many ELLs receive instructional programs that are too short-term in focus, fail to provide consistent cognitive development in students' first language, are not cognitively or academically challenging, or are poorly implemented (Thomas & Collier, 1997).

Two-way bilingual programs are an attempt to eliminate a minimalist form of bilingualism and to promote academic achievement for ELLs as well as foreign language immersion for English dominant students. The opportunity for students to become biliterate is increased by the two-way bilingual approach. ELLs benefit from retention and development of their native language while acquiring English, and ELLs, enjoy exposure to real speakers of the foreign language. The ultimate goal is full literacy in both the first language and the second language. More importantly, the first language in two-way programs is seen as a viable asset in overall cognitive and social development (Wong-Fillmore & Valdez, 1986).

The environment in two-way classrooms is by definition an additive one, where both languages are highly valued and supported. Lambert (1974) distinguished between "additive" and "subtractive" bilingualism. The additive case implies that an individual suffers no loss of the primary language and the associated culture, while the subtractive case implies that an individual undergoes a loss of primary language skills and general academic

performance. Lambert also drew attention to the roles played by attitudes, aptitudes, and motivation in second language learning. He believes that the degree of language mastery influences an individual's self-concept and sense of attainment of proficiency. These programs provide opportunities for English learners and English dominant students to learn and grow together.

The social interactional features of two-way bilingual programs support better opportunities for language development. Both first and second language acquisition are facilitated by interaction between the "novice" (the learner of the language) and "experts" (fluent speakers of the language). By integrating students from two language groups in a classroom, two-way bilingual programs offer the language learner access to native speaker models. This additive bilingual environment supports the ongoing development of the native language while a second language is learned (Christian, 1994). Recent research indicates that interaction with native English speakers may provide better input and feedback for language learners than interaction with other second language learners (Thomas & Collier, 1997). Ovando and Collier (1985) claim that two-way bilingual education may be the only way to reduce the language segregation in schools because minority children are no longer segregated from their English-speaking peers. It is the kind of access ELLs have to high-status knowledge, the same academic benefits, and the quality of instructional interactions in these two-way programs that define educational quality and promote greater equity. The programs provide an atmosphere that allows students to acquire a second language and learn about another culture without sacrificing their individual identity. In so doing, two-way bilingual programs are more responsive to the needs of children, the school, and the community.

Critical Attributes

Lindholm (1990), August and Pease-Alvarez, (1996) and Thomas and Collier (1997) have facilitated the identification of certain sociolinguistic and instructional factors that tend to contribute to successful two-way bilingual education programs. It should be noted that what is important is the frequency and consistency with which these factors are found in programs that promote high levels of first and second language competencies, academic achievement in both languages, high self-esteem, and positive cross-cultural attitudes. Some of these critical features are:

- Equal status of the two languages is achieved, to a large extent, creating self-confidence among ELLs (Thomas & Collier, 1996).
- The program should provide an additive bilingual environment where all students have the opportunity to learn an L2 while continuing to develop their L1 proficiency (Thomas & Collier, 1996).
- Positive interactions among students should be facilitated by the use of strategies such as small groups and cooperative learning (Thomas & Collier, 1996).

> The core curriculum is designed to accommodate a range of abilities, knowledge, skills, language proficiencies, and learning styles (Lindholm, 1990).

Central to a students' acquisition of language are all of the surrounding social and cultural processes occurring through everyday life within the student's past, present, and future, in all contexts—home, school, community, and the broader society (Collier, 1995). These factors have a strong influence on the student's response to the new language and can affect students' access to cognitive, academic, and language development (Collier, 1995).

By combining English language learners with English speakers in two-way bilingual programs districts can circumvent the resegregation issue and the inequality issue. This is possible because effective two-way classrooms promote a high degree of student involvement, (Ramirez and Stromquist, 1978; Strong, 1983) contextualize classroom discourse, (Wong-Fillmore & Valdez, 1986) and value students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds (García, 1986). In addition, the integrated activities typical of two-way classrooms can enhance cross-cultural attitudes.

There are few studies of students' attitudes toward their own bilingualism however, in two-way programs (Christian, Montone, Lindholm, & Carranza, 1997). Griego-Jones (1994), in a small study of 10 Latino kindergarten students in a two-way program, found that the students actually preferred English over Spanish, because English was perceived to be the language of high status and achievement. Looking at older students (fourth grade), Hayashi (1998) found that students in a two-way bilingual program and in a transitional bilingual program were equally enthusiastic about their bilingualism, as reported on questionnaires. In individual interviews, however, the students in the transitional program reported that they thought they did not need instruction in Spanish, because they already spoke Spanish. In contrast, the students in the two-way program all thought the time spent in Spanish instruction was valuable and necessary to their achievement in both languages.

STUDY DESIGN

The present study was conducted at two public elementary schools located along the U.S.-Mexican border: Carmen Elementary and Salinas Elementary, in Garciaville Independent School District (pseudonyms) located in west Texas. Garciaville is the largest city on the Texas-Mexico border with the total population exceeding 650,000. It is a financially impoverished district, however, with 57% of its families classified as low income. Of that number, the percent of students in bilingual education receiving free or reduced lunch exceeds 90%. The district's enrollment reflects its border location with a Hispanic student population of 76% (TEA Snapshot, 1996). These students are overwhelmingly of Mexican origin. The following two tables provide campus demographic data.

TABLE 1
RACIAL/ETHNIC BACKGROUND
OF PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

| | Carmen Elementary | | | Salinas Elementary | |
	Student	Staff		Student	Staff
African American	2.2%	0.0%	African American	1.0%	3.8%
Hispanic	61.1%	34.3%	Hispanic	97.7%	67.9%
White	33.0%	63.0%	White	2.2%	28.3%
Asian/Pac Islander	3.4%	2.7%	Asian/Pac. Islander	1.0%	0.0%
Native American	3.0%	0.0%	Native American	0.0%	0.0%

Source: Texas Education Agency (1997).

TABLE 2
MOBILITY, SES, AND LANGUAGE CHARACTERISTICS
OF STUDENTS

Carmen Elementary		Salinas Elementary	
Mobility (1995-1996)	15.6%	Mobility (1995-1996)	18.7%
Economically Disadvantaged	41.5%	Economically Disadvantaged	89.8%
LEP Students	28.3%	LEP Students	59.9%
Attendance	96.5%	Attendance	96.0%

Source: Texas Education Agency (1997).

Procedures

Each student in the fifth-grade was given a parent permission form and an assent form to read and sign. Students from each of the three fifth-grade classrooms were selected for focus group interviews. Students were selected based on their grades in the classroom. Four focus groups were composed of five students and one of six. Two groups were students whose grades indicated high ability, two groups were students whose grades indicated average to low ability, and one group was a combination of the two. Interviews followed a structured interview guide (Appendix A) and were conducted during the lunch hour in English and in Spanish based on student language of choice. The purpose of the focus groups was to gain students' view of the two-way program and students' perception of the two-way learning experience.

Participants

Of the 26 students who participated in the focus groups, 25 were of Mexican origin and one was of Korean origin. 10 were boys and 16 were girls. 15 were native Spanish-speakers and 11 were native English-speakers. These 26 students were at various levels of bilingualism based on Language Assessment Scores administered by district.

Instruments

The focus group questions (Appendix B) used in this study were selected from earlier evaluative research on the Amigos Program (Lambert & Cazabon, 1994). The questions gave a wide-ranging indication of their perceptions of the two-way language learning experience and the social world it provides. Questions included: How good are you in English and Spanish? Which do you read/understand better? What language do you speak at home? Has the two-way program helped you form new friends from other cultural groups? Do you prefer English-speaking or Spanish-speaking friends? What do you think of the two-way program? Do you want to continue learning Spanish?

FINDINGS

Student Attitudes and Perceptions

The reader should note that the small number of participating students makes the interpretation and generalization of the focus group results difficult. Certain trends, however, can be indicated. By the fourth-grade, students can answer questions and express their feelings, both favorable and critical, with little difficulty. For the 26 students who participated in the focus groups benefits of the program included: making new friends, learning about other cultures, learning in two languages, and future job opportunities. The students felt privileged, special, important, and excited about being in the two-way program.

It appears that for most of the students, Spanish was the language of the home. The majority of the students (54%) spoke both Spanish and English at home with their parents; 35% spoke only Spanish; 42% only spoke Spanish with their siblings, and 31% spoke both languages. This may indicate that students view Spanish as the home language and English as the school language. Through their responses, it was evident that students were aware of their progress in acquiring skills in both Spanish and English. Of these students, 69% felt they understood both languages well; 31% felt they were better at reading in English, as opposed to 35%, who believed they were better at reading in Spanish; 42% felt they wrote better in English and 31% felt they wrote equally

well in both. Responses did not differ between native English or Spanish speakers.

The students were aware of the benefits of the program and most wanted to continue learning Spanish (73%). Responses included, "I think its better to know both of the languages." "Its helps when you're on vacation." "Even for school you need two languages." Of the students interviewed, all were aware of the growing importance of bilingualism as a criterion for employment. Student responses included, "both are important because you need to know both for work." "If you speak both languages you can get a job. You can talk on the phone to people of different languages and they tend to like bilingual people more because they can count for two people."

Students interviewed showed sensitivity to other cultural groups and formed close friendships with members of the other language group. Students interviewed believed that the program had helped them make new friends and learn about different cultures. Here is one student's response to how the program helps him make new friends, "If we went somewhere and didn't know Spanish and we wanted to be their friends we couldn't talk to them but since we're in the two-way program we can speak to them in Spanish also." Another student responded, "We learn two languages and you can talk to your other friends in that language." All 26 students believed the program had helped them learn about how different cultural groups think and feel. They also believed it was a good idea to study other cultures as evidenced by their responses, "You can learn their traditions." "You can learn another language."

Academically, the majority of the students in the two-way program were satisfied with their level of English and Spanish proficiency and academic achievement. For example, the students did not feel that they were behind in English (96%). Of the 26 students, 42% believed they spoke English better than Spanish. (It should be noted that based on classroom observations teachers were utilizing more English than Spanish in the fifth-grade). Most of the students felt that they were better off than English-only students were because they learned everything in two languages. Student responses included, "I think that being in this program helps you learn because if another kid needs help with something and he only knows Spanish I could help him." "I think it helps us because sometimes we have to partner up with somebody and if that person doesn't know how to read we could help him." "…Sandra corrects me so she's another teacher."

Many students felt they were smarter than other students because of their bilingual skills. As one student said, "we may be smarter because when they grow up they (monolingual speakers) won't know Spanish." The majority of the students interviewed would not prefer to be in an all-English classroom (96%). Two students, however, did express the belief that English was more important than Spanish because most people in their social world already spoke Spanish. For example one student at Salinas Elementary responded, "I like learning English. I think it's better. I think a lot of people know how to talk Spanish so they don't need this program. So I think learning English is better." Another student at Carmen Elementary also believed English was more important, "Spanish is only in Mexico but a lot of other states talk English. We need English

for college." It appears that even in a setting where both languages are valued, Spanish and English speakers alike perceived English to be the more legitimate school language.

DISCUSSION

Recent research indicates that additive bilingualism positively affects concept formation, creativity, analogical reasoning, visual spatial skills, problem solving, and self-esteem (Diaz, 1985; Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982). The instructional goal at these two campuses was to create for the ELLs the same type of supportive sociocultural context for learning in two languages that the monolingual native English-speakers enjoyed for learning in English. From the observations it was evident that the participating students in the two-way programs, examined in this study, received affirmation and respect for their first language. Their bicultural experience was considered a knowledge base on which teachers built on. The two-way teachers created a sociocultural support system in the classroom that gave students the emotional security they needed to accelerate the learning process. The overall result was that the ELLs at Carmen and Salinas Elementary enjoyed a favorable sociocultural environment for learning all school subjects as was normally enjoyed by their native English-speaking peers.

From the focus group sessions it was clear to this researcher that placing importance on the learning of Spanish (as well as English) enhanced the positive self-esteem of ELLs in the two-way program. The psychosocial environment in which students are schooled is important for scholastic performance (Thomas & Collier, 1997). Additive bilingualism results in high levels of proficiency in two languages, adequate self-esteem, and improved cross-cultural attitudes (Lambert, 1984; Thomas & Collier, 1997). Educators who see their role as helping students to add a second language and culture are more likely to create interactional conditions of empowerment (Cummins, 1996). These positive interactions between two-way participants and teachers at these campuses resulted in improved educational outcomes for students.

Students

The attitude that the learner has towards members of the cultural group whose language she is learning, influences language acquisition (Garcìa, 1991). The students interviewed in this study had positive attitudes toward other linguistic and cultural students. All of the students interviewed, believed the program had helped them make new friends and learn about different cultures. The two groups of students did not show a linguistic preference for their choice of friends. The students felt strongly about having heterogeneous classrooms because it allowed them to "learn about other people's customs." Most of the students who participated in the two-way program used English as the language of choice. Student's background characteristics, such as, sociocultural

background, home communities, and existing levels of proficiency in both first and second language may have an affect on language development. For example, most ELLs have some English proficiency when they enter school. Most English speakers, however, are monolingual when they begin schooling. If most students in the classroom can speak in English it may favor greater use of that language (Christian, 1994).

School and Community

Although the programs under observation were situated in a border region of Texas, most students had a strong preference for English. Minority language students tended to participate in this shift, even at the expense of their native language. It may be that students felt that Spanish carried less "cultural capital" despite strong expressions of support for bilingualism. There were several routine school practices that conveyed the message that English was the language of power (e.g., the Pledge of Allegiance, Star Spangled Banner, and morning announcements were all in English.)

In addition, teachers stressed the English Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) for their students. Although ELLs were allowed to take the Spanish TAAS the English TAAS was signaled as more important for state accountability purposes. When interviewed, fifth-grade teachers exhibited pride when saying their native Spanish speakers would be taking the English TAAS and with good reason. English tests are the ultimate measure of attainment for eventual competition with native English speakers. These tests help parents and school administrators determine whether their children will eventually gain access to the same educational opportunities of native English-speakers (Thomas & Collier, 1997). The same was not true, however, for native English speakers who did not have the opportunity to take the Spanish TAAS. Teachers were less concerned with the Spanish literacy of their native English students.

To summarize the results reported here we could conclude that students in the two-way program valued both languages and expressed the desire to continue learning Spanish in the middle school. Whereas the Spanish-speaking students felt relatively comfortable and proficient in both languages, the English-speaking students felt more proficient in English and felt their Spanish reading skills were stronger than writing or oral skills. Most of the students, however, viewed Spanish as the language of the home, and English as the language of the school. If these students are to become truly biliterate they need to begin to choose Spanish as a language for the more academic tasks of literacy and content area learning, as well as, for social situations.

Attitudes toward language are an integral part of learning a second language and therefore should be an integral part of planning and teaching for second language learning. In addition, it may affect the motivation to learn a second language. Motivation and attitudes have been found to significantly influence second language learning (Gardner, 1985). Moreover, Schumann (1976) found that "Chicano children are more motivated to learn a second language if they do not perceive this learning process as alienation from their own culture" (cited in García, 1991, 104). The meaning and value that students

associate with school learning and achievement play a very significant role in determining their efforts toward learning and performance. Attitudinal and motivational factors are particularly critical inasmuch as learning a new language is not just a matter of acquiring new information. Learning a new language also necessitates a personal entry into another cultural group.

CONCLUSION

Although the results presented here are clearly only the beginnings of what may be found through studies of increasingly larger numbers of students, they do suggest several possibilities for the school system and for education policy makers in Texas. In a two-way bilingual program it is important to monitor teacher and administrator linguistic behavior. Educators need to be conscious about not limiting their use of Spanish. As the principal at Salinas Elementary commented, "The children would learn Spanish if we (educators) used it more." In many cases, children are motivated to learn English because they want to be like the teacher and like their classmates. The explanation lies in the functions that a second language plays in a particular society. This was evident in the Spanish dominant children who believed everyone already spoke Spanish and needed English to do well in college.

Willingness to learn a new language is influenced by attitudes about native languages, target language groups, and about relationships with speakers of both languages. Students' feelings about their native language and second languages cannot be separated from their feelings about self as learners and members of society. Therefore, it is important for educators to assess student perceptions and use that assessment to plan and teach in two-way bilingual classrooms (Griego-Jones, 1994).

Finally, it appears that even in a border-area Spanish dominant students are drawn to English and are less likely to improve their Spanish skills beyond the oral proficiency that is useful outside and in the school setting unless educators make a concerted effort to maintain Spanish at the upper elementary levels. The preservation and development of skills in a language other than English in school settings require focused attention. The degree of difficulty depends on a complex array of sociocultural and individual factors. Teachers may need to reinforce the learning and use of the target language more forcefully and effectively if students are to become truly biliterate, bicultural, and bilingual.

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APPENDIX A

STUDENT INTERVIEW GUIDE

Today is _____. I'm talking to _____(participants)

Introduction

1. Tell me your name and one thing you enjoy about your school?

Language Proficiency

1. Do you use Spanish/English outside school? What language do you speak with your parents, brothers, and sisters
2. Which language do you use on the playground? In the cafeteria?
3. How good are you in English? Spanish? Ex. Better in English than in Spanish
4. Which language can you understand better?
5. Which language can you read better?
6. Do you think too much time is spent on learning Spanish in class?
7. Do you want to continue learning Spanish when you leave this school?
8. Compare yourself to children without Spanish in school. Has the dual language program put you behind in English?
9. Do you think one language is more important than the other? Why?

Attitudes

1. What do you think about the dual language program?
2. ?Cual es su opinión sobre el programa de educación bilingue?
3. How do you feel about being in the dual language program?
4. What things do you like? Dislike?
5. What do you and other students do in the dual language program?
6. How would you describe the program?
7. Qué hace Ud. Y los otros estudiantes en el programa de dos idiomas? Cómo describirias el programa?
8. What do others say about the dual language program? Lets start w/ teachers. What do your parents say? What do people in the community say?
9. Qué comentan otras personas sobre el programa de dos idiomas? Por ejemplo, qué dicen los maestros, los padres, la gente de la comunidad?
10. How is the dual language program helping students learn?
11. Cómo el programa de dos idiomas ayuda a los estudiantes a aprender?
12. If you could change one thing about the program, what change would you make?
13. Si Ud. Pudiera cambiar algo en el programa de dos idiomas, que cambiaria?

Student Responses to Focus Group Questions

1. What language do you speak at home with your parents?
Spanish	9	35%
English	3	12%
Both	14	54%

2. What language do you speak with your siblings?
Spanish	11	42%
English	6	23%
Both	8	31%

3. In Speaking I am better in:
English	11	42%
Spanish	8	31%
Equal in Both	7	27%

4. In understanding spoken English/Spanish I am better in:
English	4	15%
Spanish	3	12%
Equal in both	18	69%

5. In Reading I am better in:
English	8	31%
Spanish	9	35%
Equal in both	9	35%

6. In Writing I am better in:
English	11	42%
Spanish	6	23%
Equal in both	8	31%

7. Do you prefer radio and TV programs in Spanish/English?
English	10	38%
Spanish	11	42%
No preference	5	19%

8. When talking with your friends what language do you speak?

      English   11   42%
      Spanish   1   03%
      Both   14   54%

9. Do you prefer English or Spanish speaking friends?

      English   4   15%
      Spanish   3   12%
      No preference   19   73%

10. Do you think you are behind in English compared to children at other schools who do not study Spanish?

      Yes   1   03%
      No   25   96%

11. Would you rather be in an all English classroom?

      Yes   1   03%
      No   25   96%

12. Does it confuse you when your teachers switch from one language to another?

      Yes   0   0%
      No   26   100%

13. In your opinion is too much time spent learning Spanish?

      Yes   0   0%
      No   26   100%

14. Is too much time spent learning English?

      Yes   21   81%
      No   5   19%

15. Do you want to continue learning Spanish?

      Yes   19   73%
      No   7   27%

16. Do you think your parents support the program?

>   Yes   26   100%
>   No   0   0%

17. Do you think the program has helped you make friends from other language groups?

>   Yes   26   100%
>   No   0   0%

18. Do you think one language is more important than the other one?

>   Yes   1   03%
>   No   25   96%

19. From your experience in school, do you feel you know how different cultural groups think and feel about things?

>   Yes   26   100%
>   No   0   0%

20. Do you think it is a good idea to have students from various backgrounds in the same class?

>   Yes   26   100%
>   No   0   0%

21. Describe how being in this program makes you feel?
    Responses varied but included:

>   Privileged
>   Special
>   Excited
>   Nice
>   Important
>   Good

TEACHABLE MOMENTS DURING CIRCLE TIME TAKE BILINGUAL KINDERGARTENERS THROUGH THE ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

This manuscript focuses on one bilingual classroom in which the majority of the children are Mexican and Mexican American Spanish-dominant and the teacher is a native English-speaker and has Spanish as his second language. There were approximately 20 children enrolled in this bilingual classroom that followed a transitional bilingual program in a Central Texas inner-city school. The activities that took place during circle time and that are discussed in this piece include sharing time, taking attendance, and story time. The intent of this manuscript is to show how teachers can utilize teachable moments during circle time activities to enhance the children's mathematical and reading skills. Teachable moments are significant because they are a strategy that teachers can use in the classroom to move children through the zone of proximal development.

"Okay, escuchen, ahorita vamos a guardar las libretas, siéntense en la alfombra...okay estoy buscando a los niños que estén bien sentados..."[Okay, listen, right now we're going to put our notebooks away, sit on the carpet...okay, I'm looking for children who are sitting down nicely...] If you come in to a kindergarten class around 8 o'clock in the morning chances are that you are going to find a teacher giving these type of directions. This time is what every early childhood teacher knows as "Circle Time." Circle time has been defined as a time in the early childhood classroom where the teacher and the children come together (in a circle) to follow a daily routine (McAfee, 1985; Furman, 1995). Most early childhood classrooms dedicate about 30 minutes to circle time in which the daily routine depends largely on the teacher, although most teachers focus on story telling, role-play (Van Hoorn, Nourot, Scales, and Alward, 1993), sharing time (Michaels, 1986), music, calendar, and some math skills (Harris & Fuqua, 2000). It is during circle time in which the teacher can take children through the zone of proximal development since they can observe the process of language. According to Vygostky (1978):

The zone of proximal development is the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving unders adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (p. 86).

Some researchers like Wortham (1996) claim that circle time provides the opportunity for verbal exchange between the teacher and the children. However, Michaels (1986) reminds us that most of the exchange that occurs during circle time is teaching children socially accepted behaviors. In other words, circle time becomes a teacher-dominated session as Dowling (1995) stated. For example, teachers spend a great percentage of circle time getting children to sit quietly forming a circle, to focus their eyes on the teacher, and to keep their hands to themselves. Although the teacher may lead during most circle time events, as a classroom event, circle time still provides ample opportunities to observe teacher-child verbal exchanges in the classroom those verbal exchanges can lead to teachable moments[1]. In the case of the bilingual classroom circle time presents an opportunity to use the native language for instruction and perhaps even the second language when used with appropriate English as a second language (ESL) strategies.

In this paper, I discuss some of the events that occurred during circle time in Mr. Steve's bilingual kindergarten classroom. Mr. Steve's bilingual classroom is in a school that offers a transitional bilingual program where the language of instruction in the early grades is the children's native language (Spanish) and only about 10% of the time is allotted for ESL instruction. The school is located at an inner-city community in Central Texas.

The children who participated in these observations are Mexican and Mexican American children whose first language is Spanish. The children's native language was used during circle time. In contrast, English, the children's second language, was not used frequently except to count or when the teacher commanded children to sit down and listen. Codeswitching interactions only occurred when Mr. Steve was providing some instructions for the children. Romaine (1994) defines codeswitching as "part of the normal process of growing up bilingually and acquiring competence in more than one language" (p. 56). Perhaps, one of the reasons that codeswitching did not occur was because Mr. Steve did not feel comfortable or did not know how to codeswitch. Mr. Steve is an experienced kindergarten teacher who considers his Spanish language proficiency to be "broken gringo Spanish" [interview notes], but when listening to him talk to the kids one can see that he is proficient in Spanish. There were several instances in which the children corrected Mr. Steve's pronunciation. I think that this is a powerful example of the roles being reversed twice, once in that the children correct the teacher, and second, the minority

correcting the majority. The Mexican children were correcting their White-Anglo teacher.

THE SETTING

Every morning Mr. Steve happily greets the children, gives them a "high five" and jokes around with them as they put their things away. This is an indication that the classroom ambiance is nurturing, warm, and friendly. As soon as the children are ready they start writing in their journals, shortly after this activity circle time begins. At this point, the children need to focus solely on the teacher who dictates the organization of circle time, "*Okay, muy bien mira como todos están listos para escuchar, bien.*" [Okay, very good, look how everybody is ready to listen, good.] When circle time began, Mr. Steve asks the children to sit on the carpet area to begin the daily routine activities, which include choosing new classroom helpers, taking attendance, reading the weather report, and listening during story time.

SHARING AND CALENDAR TIME

During sharing time and calendar time, Mr. Steve asks questions, the children respond and then Mr. Steve evaluates their responses. Mr. Steve is looking to see what type of information the children know in order to evaluate their knowledge. The teacher uses questions in order to search for information. Mehan (1985) describes this type of interaction as an Initiation/Reply/Evaluation (IRE) pattern in that the teacher asks a question, the student replies, and then the teacher evaluates the students' response. Mr. Steve does not follow this pattern all the time, he utilizes the calendar as a teachable moment for patterns because he changes the pattern daily. The following language sample shows how Mr. Steve used an IRE exchange during calendar time.

Mr. Steve: *…mira vamos a mirar este calendario a ver que patrón tenemos acá. ¿Quién puede decirme cómo se llama este patrón? Muy bien a ver Juan, ¿tu sabes cómo se llama?* [Let's look at this calendar to see which pattern we have. Who can tell me what pattern this is? Very good, let's see Juan, do you know the name of the pattern?]
Juan: *AAB* [in Spanish]
Mr. Steve: *Muy bien es el patrón de AAB* [Very good is an AAB pattern]
Mr. Steve: *Todos vamos a decirlo.* [We're all going to say it]
Children: *AAB* [loudly]
Mr. Steve: *Excelente, muy bien.* [Excellent, very good]
Mr. Steve: *Y, ahora ¿quién puede decirme qué color toca aquí próximo en el calendario? Estela ojos acá · por favor.* [And, now, who can tell me which color is next in the calendar? Estela, please, eyes over here.]
Mr. Steve: *A ver este Araceli ¿qué color toca aquí?* [Now, this Araceli, what color goes here?]

Araceli: *¿Anaranjado?* [Orange?]
Mr. Steve: *Anaranjado, ¡muy bien! es cierto.* [Orange, very good, it's true]

The repetitive IRE sequence is noticeable in this excerpt when the teacher asks about the pattern in the calendar, a child responds, and he evaluates by saying *¡muy bien!* or very good. The similar interaction occurs in the rest of the language sample. However, this pattern displays that it can be somewhat altered by Araceli, she responds with a question. Mr. Steve does not break the pattern and he verifies Araceli's response by repeating the proposed answer and enthusiastically saying again "very good!" Thus showing that the answer is correct. The teachable moment occurs because not only is the teacher practicing patterns with the children, but he is also assessing their language skills such as responding to questions and color recognition.

Although Mr. Steve appears to use circle time to reinforce different math skills such as number recognition and patterns he also integrates rules and regulations into the lesson by telling the children to look at him. Circle time is a special context where Mr. Steve can establish and reinforce the social norms of the school and society as a whole (Michaels, 1986; Riojas-Cortez, 2000) as well as cognitive skills. Mishler (1985) explains that "the classroom is a socializing context where children are expected to learn about "something and at the same time to learn certain rules of proper and appropriate behavior" (p. 280).

ATTENDANCE

Taking attendance can be time consuming for any teacher. Using attendance as a circle time activity empowers the children to feel connected with one another and at the same time to enhance their mathematical skills. For instance, in the following language excerpt that occurred during the circle time event labeled as attendance, we see Mr. Steve trying to reinforce rules and regulations.

> Mr. Steve: *Y ahorita vamos a contar los niños y las niñas. A ver un niño para contar las niñas. A ver uno que está sentado muy bien. Pues Daniel me gusta como estás sentado. Vas a contar las niñas. Puedes darle un* five [the children would go around the circle giving high fives]. *Pero como amigos. Vamos a contar espera, espera. Mira,* let's count in English today, okay? [Now we're going to count the boys and the girls. Let's see a boy to count the girls. One that is sitting nicely. Well, Daniel, I like the way you're sitting. You're going to count the girls. You can give them a "five." But like friends. We're going to count wait, wait. Look, let's count in English today, okay?]

In this example, Mr. Steve is indicating to the children that the way Daniel is sitting is the appropriate way because he "likes it." Daniel was sitting quietly with his legs crossed. Mr. Steve's words explain his approval of a social norm that should be followed during circle time--all children are expected to sit with

their legs crossed. In addition, Mr. Steve allows children to "give a five" but in a friendly manner. Mr. Steve implies that the touch of the hands should be friendly, which in the school regulations makes it appropriate. Furthermore, interaction between genders is also encouraged by letting the boys count the girls and the girls count the boys.

Another important comment that can be made regarding this language excerpt is Mr. Steve's codeswitching which was the only time that it occurred. From Mr. Steve's comment, it appears that sometimes the class counts in English and sometimes in Spanish, it depends on the teacher. In some bilingual classrooms, codeswitching is permitted, in others it is not. For many bilingual teachers, codeswitching or language mixing is considered a language hindrance rather than an asset and thus advice children not to mix English with Spanish (Riojas, 1996). In contrast, for other educators, codeswitching is allowed because it is valued not only as part of the children's language, but as a highly complex cognitive skill (Riojas-Cortez, 2001). I never heard Mr. Steve tell the children not to mix the languages perhaps because the children did not codeswitch during the time of the observations.

Mr. Steve not only evaluates the children's knowledge or teaches them appropriate social norms he also guides the children in the process of problem solving. Mr. Steve apparently counts the children not only for attendance purposes but also to give children the opportunity to practice math skills such as addition and subtraction. Teachers can use attendance to teach about addition and subtraction skills and almost everyday they will have a teachable moment. In this excerpt Mr. Steve asks the class to first count the boys and then the girls to see how many were present. After the class counted the children, they discovered the same number of boys and girls were present (10 each) and the teacher decided that this was the perfect time to reinforce and teach mathematical language such as more than (>), less than (<), and equal to (=). The following language sample shows Mr. Steve trying focus the children's attention on a problem and how to search for possible answers.

Mr. Steve: *Ahora, ¿quién puede decirme cual es más?* (Now, who can tell me which one is more?)
Julio: *Eso va a estar difícil.* (That's going to be difficult.)
Mr. Steve: *Mira, ¿cual es más?, quien puede decirme, Araceli, ¿cual es más?* [Look, which one is more, Araceli, which one is more?]
Araceli: *Diez.* (Ten)
Mr. Steve: *Diez, ¿pero cual diez? Los dos son diez ¿no? Así que ninguno es más ¿no?* [the children laugh] *Son ...* (Ten, but which ten? Both are tens, right? So neither one is more, right? They're...)
Enrique: *Cero.* (Zero)
Mr. Steve: *Son iguales. Nunca hemos tenido los niños y las niñas iguales pero hoy que si, y nadie sabe escribir que son iguales. ¿Alguien sabe escribir que son iguales?* [They're equal. We've never had boys and girls the same like

today, and nobody knows how to write that they're equal. Does somebody know how to write that they're equal?]

Esther: *Yo no.* [Not me.]

Azucena: *Yo.* [Me]

Ramón: *Yo sí.* [I do.]

Mr. Steve: *¿Tu sí? ¿Como lo escribimos? Pues ya sabemos escribir son más que (>) y son menos que (<) pero no sabemos escribir pues* [unable to understand] [You do? How do we write it? Well we know how to write more and less, but we don't know how to write well …]

Juan: *Son dos.* (They're two)

Mr. Steve: *¿Dos qué?* (Two what?)

Juan: *Dos de una…* (Two of one…)

Mr. Steve: *¿Dos bocas de cocodrilo? Así no se escriben que son iguales. Mira yo les enseño como lo escribimos. Mira es así, nada más que dos líneas. Estas significan que son iguales. Y ahora vamos a leerla. Lo leemos así: Diez son igual a diez.* [Two crocodile mouths? (the crocodile mouths were the more than > and the less than < signs) You don't write equals that way. Look, I'll show you how to write it. Look, it's like this, only two lines. That means that they're equal. Now let's read it. We read it like this: Ten is equal to ten].

Children: *Diez son… diez.* (Ten is…ten)

Mr. Steve: *Así, ninguno es más, son iguales. Yeah! Son iguales* [applause] [Nobody is more, they're equal. Yeah! They're equal]

Mr. Steve is clearly trying for children to solve the problem that occurred in this particular event of the day. The way that Mr. Steve prompts the children to think is by asking questions in which the children will have to use their problem solving skills. The teacher first uses simple language such as numerical concepts and then moves to more sophisticated structures by asking children to quantify both boys and girls. Mr. Steve scaffolds children's language by asking more complicated questions, which prompt a child to say *"esto va a estar difícil"* (this is gonna be difficult). The teacher accepted the children's knowledge and it was until the end when he actually told the children *"mira yo les enseño como lo escribimos"* (look I'll show you how to write it). He clearly took the children through their zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978) not only in their mathematical thinking but also in issues on gender *"ninguno es más, son iguales"* (nobody is more, they're equal).

READING OR STORY TIME

Story Time in Mr. Steve's class incorporated the use of children's problem solving skills. Before reading the story, Mr. Steve decided to show the children the book's illustrations. This step reflects a component of a guided reading lesson or a Reading Recovery lesson (Morrow, 2001). As Mr. Steve showed the

illustrations, he was asking the children to tell him what was happening in the story focusing mainly on the worm, one of the main characters.

> Mr. Steve: *Mira, aquí en esta página ¿qué pasa?* (Look, here on this page, what happens?)
>
> Baldemar: *Los niños se andan subiendo árbol.* (The children are climbing the tree)
>
> Mr. Steve: *Los niños se están subiendo al árbol. ¿Porqué? ¿Porqué se están subiendo al árbol?* (The children are climbing the tree. Why? Why are they climbing the tree?)
>
> Rosario: *¿Qué?, porque quieren…* (What? Because they want…)
>
> Mr. L.: *¿Quieren qué?* (What do they want?)
>
> Rosario: *Quieren agarrar a unas manzanas.* (They want to get some apples)
>
> Mr. Steve: *¿Quieren agarrar a unas manzanas? ¡Quizás! ¿Y qué pasa con esta manzana?* (They want to get some apples. Maybe! And, what happens with that apple?)

This language sample shows how Mr. Steve wants the kids to talk about what they think is happening in the illustration. Mr. Steve does not ask for the plot of the story because his main focus is to get the children to describe the illustrations in the book thus developing the children's expressive language. Of particular interest is the type of questions that Mr. Steve asks. For example, Mr. Steve begins asking children what is happening on a particular page in the book. Mr. Steve begins with basic questions that only prompt simple answers from the children. If he asks what is happening here, the children respond accordingly. Mr. Steve goes a step further when he asks the children "why" they think that particular action is happening in one of the illustrations. This is an example of how Mr. Steve engages children in higher order thinking. The children provide several answers and Mr. Steve responds with a "maybe" thus validating the children's answers without being too concerned about being "correct" or exactly what the author writes on the piece of literature. Part of the process of problem solving is to have children think about the possible answers that they can give to a specific situation.

CONCLUSION

Mishler (1985) notes that "the language used by teachers in classrooms can be analyzed in ways that yield information about important aspects of the educational-socialization process" (p. 296). Classroom events such as circle time allow teachers and children to actively engage in different types of communication. Most of the events that occurred during circle time in Mr. Steve's classroom were teacher-centered. The events focused on the teacher either searching for information, teaching the children social norms, or guiding the children through the process of problem solving. In talking with other bilingual early childhood teachers, I found that most of them consider circle

time to be teacher-centered because they have to convey and receive information to evaluate the children's cognitive knowledge including language (Riojas, 1996). In addition, most of the teachers in the study felt that the children viewed the place where circle time takes place as the "teacher's territory" because they had to follow the teacher's lead. Mr. Steve was definitely leading the children throughout circle time enforcing and enhancing cognitive and social skills. For some researchers and teachers this can be considered as an inappropriate practice, but I would argue that circle time has different purposes for different teachers and judging what is appropriate is an overgeneralization of the educational process. Furthermore, it is important to understand that circle time can be more than the weather and calendar. It is the children's time. It is the time for children to interact linguistically and socially. It is a time in which the teacher reinforces and/or introduces social norms of the classroom. It is a time in which children's linguistic and cognitive skills can be greatly enhanced. Teachers must find it within themselves to guide and facilitate learning and keep the IRE pattern to a minimum. Lastly, for bilingual classrooms remember that the native language is one of the greatest assets children have, use it to discover what the children know.

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ATTITUDINAL SHIFTS OF TEACHERS IMPLEMENTING A TWO-WAY BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

A Two-Way Bilingual Education model is proposed, whose aim is biliteracy, because it adheres to those identified program characteristics deemed necessary for the success of language minority children, and lays to rest the debate of instruction in the native language or English. This study examined pre-post surveys of PK & Kindergarten two-way bilingual education teachers assessing the attitudes of teachers regarding commitment, knowledge and understanding of two-way bilingual education and the program model. Results indicated that the experience teachers receive through direct classroom implementation of two-way concepts positively impacts both commitment and understanding of two-way bilingual education. Furthermore, there appears to be a direct correlation between teacher commitment or attitude and knowledge and understanding.

INTRODUCTION

The controversy that has surrounded Bilingual Education since its inception through the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, and the Lau decision of 1974, continues to marginalize the language minority child. No education field has been more widely debated than that of bilingual education (Baker, 1996; Cummins, 1981; and Porter, 1990). The true benefits of *bilingualism*, delivered through an effective bilingual education program, have traditionally not been enjoyed by its participants due to historical, societal and political limitations imposed upon them. Much of the debate comes from a lack of understanding of the purpose and methodology of bilingual education (Rong & Peissle, 1998).

Both proponents and opponents of bilingual education justify their positions on research findings and in terms of what they truly *think* or *feel* are in the best interest of children. Both groups' actions are based on good intentions. However, this debate has polarized these groups and consequently undermined genuine efforts for effective implementation of these programs.

To exacerbate the issue, there are additional factors central to the controversy that negatively influences the effective implementation of bilingual education programs. These issues are

1. the use of standardized testing in only in English for public school accountability;
2. the lack of educator knowledge regarding the transfer of knowledge and skills from the first language (L1) to the second language (L2) and/or the process of L1 or L2 development; c) the lack of *consistency* in language usage by bilingual teachers;
3. the negative and inferior community, state and national perceptions of non-English languages and cultures; and e) the inconsistent local, state and federal bilingual education funding sources for alternative bilingual education .

These limitations have greatly and negatively influenced effective bilingual program implementation and consequently perpetuated an erroneous societal belief that bilingual education *does not work*. In fact, findings by Thomas and Collier (1997) in their study on effective bilingual/ESL programs for language minority children concluded that *all* bilingual education programs are successful if they are well-implemented. They noted the following predictors found in effective bilingual programs that positively impact student academic success: (a) both L1 and L2 must be used in academic instruction, (b) authentic and interactive teaching approaches and (c) changes in the socio-cultural context of schooling.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

While the majority of bilingual education programs in the United States have implemented transitional bilingual education models, research on alternative program models is emerging. One such alternative model is the two-way bilingual education model. The purpose, characteristics and aims of transitional bilingual education and two-way bilingual education models will be discussed briefly.

Transitional Bilingual Education Program Models

The bilingual education debate has primarily centered on three main questions: (a) Should language minority students receive instruction in the L1 or L2 only? (b) How long should there be instruction in the L1? and (c) When is the appropriate time to mainstream into the L2 curriculum? A familiar and often adopted choice of bilingual program models is Transitional Bilingual Education

(TBE). As described earlier, factors continue to undermine the effective implementation of this model. It is a model that Ramirez et al (1991) found in their study had certain inherent limitations that impact its effectiveness. Their findings, and other research findings, have shown that language minority children in most bilingual programs rarely receive enough instruction in their native language, resulting in low levels of L1 and L2 proficiency. Traditionally, children are not provided the opportunity to achieve higher academic proficiency in their native language for appropriate and successful transfer into the English curriculum.

What is evident in all transitional bilingual models is the urgency for English acquisition regardless of the child's proficiency in the L1 or the research on the L2 development process. Although language proficiency in a given language does not necessarily ensure academic success, its absence does suggest the possibility of poor academic achievement.

Two-Way Bilingual Education Program Models

The whole discussion of TBE assumes that the ultimate goal of the program is a child that is academically successful in *English*. Even if transfer of skills and knowledge into the *English* curriculum were successful, due to a *late exit transitional program*, is monolingualism what we want for children? (Cummins, 1981; Baker, 1996) would argue that transitional bilingual programs are inherently flawed because of their disabling of language minority children in the educational process by not validating or fully developing the L1. Baker (1996) in his discussion of the rationale for the implementation of transitional bilingual programs presents it as a matter of "perceived priorities," suggesting that educators' urgency for English acquisition is the need for Spanish speaking children to *not* fall behind their English speaking peers. Thus, these programs are grounded on a <u>false premise</u> of *equality of opportunity* for language minority children. Equality defined as the same curriculum and in the same language with the same goal.

In contrast, a two-way bilingual/immersion model as described by Lindholm (1992, 1999), includes the following goals for *all* students: (a) high levels of academic proficiency in two languages; (b) academic success in both languages as determined by conventional measurements; and (c) high levels of cross-cultural understanding and psychosocial competence. Differentiating this two-way bilingual enrichment model from transitional models is the extent of positive academic and language enrichment received by *all* students involved. Recent research findings by Thomas and Collier (1997) conclude that language minority children schooled in well-implemented two-way bilingual programs attain greater *long-term* academic and linguistic success in English than their native English peers educated in well-implemented monolingual English programs.

The transitional model is based on *subtractive* bilingualism, that is, children are forced to set aside or subtract out their ethnic language and assimilate to the

more "prestigious" national language. Subtractive bilingualism states Lambert (1987) is recognized and highly related with low levels of second language acquisition, academic underachievement, and psychosocial disorders. On the other hand, the two-way bilingual model is based on additive bilingualism as a form of enrichment where children are given the opportunity to add one or more foreign languages while fully developing their own primary language. This "true bilingualism" says Lambert, allows students to not only greatly profit from the experience, but to also gain "cognitively, socially, educationally, and even economically." Additive bilingualism, therefore, is associated with high levels of proficiency in the two languages, positive self-esteem and positive cross-cultural attitudes.

As exemplified by the literature, transitional bilingual education models all to often rush LEP children into mainstream all English classrooms while not preparing them for the cognitive demands of an all English curriculum. The TBE approach, states Gomez (2000), denies an equal educational opportunity for limited English proficient children when compared to native English speakers. The best hope for effectively educating limited English proficient children and achieving equal educational opportunity is through a two-way bilingual education model.

Although Two-Way Bilingual education programs show great promise for the success of language minority children and for the development of biliteracy for all children, effective implementation of this model is just as crucial. There are several critical elements that must be in place if student outcomes are to be maximized. Of these essential elements, the commitment from all stakeholders to the development of bilingualism and biliteracy, and the understanding by teachers and administrators of the language and literacy development principles that guide two-way bilingual education models are of utmost importance. This study attempted to measure levels of perception/commitment and understanding/knowledge among teachers implementing a two-way bilingual education model.

METHODOLOGY

This study examined the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers' levels of commitment and understanding at two campuses implementing a two-way bilingual education program. The study focused on the first three years of program planning and implementation; year one (1995-1996) involved program planning and professional development for PK and Kindergarten teachers, and years two (1996-1997) three (1997-1998) involved implementation of the model. Pre-surveys measuring teacher's levels of commitment and understanding were administered after the completion of professional development (1995-1996), while post-surveys were conducted after two years of program implementation (1997-1998).

Program Model

The two-way bilingual education model was designed based on research examining effective two-way bilingual program models (Baker, 1996; Lindholm, 1992, 1999; Thomas & Collier, 1997). The current model included characteristics identified as being necessary for effective instruction: (1) cognitive and academic development in L1; (2) cognitive and academic development in L2, through sheltered English instruction; (3) classroom environments that are interactive and authentic; and (4) assessment that includes authentic processes.

Another important element of the model requires bilingual pairing of limited English proficient (LEP) and limited Spanish proficiency (LSP) students learning together during small group activities via two different languages of instruction. Languages are kept separate in that math and language arts are taught in English throughout the program, while science, social studies and language arts are taught in Spanish. Beginning in first grade, language arts instruction is in Spanish and English. The program model does not allow translation or clarification by teacher when instructing in the specific language of instruction. In addition, non-instructional language used by teacher (e. g. classroom routines, breaks, lunchtime, and informal conversation) is determined by the *campus-wide language of the day* that alternates daily. This separation of languages maintains equal delivery of instruction and validation of the two languages.

Contextual Setting

The two participating elementary schools were located in a region along the U.S./Mexico border. The encompassing area has a population that is predominantly Hispanic (85%) and a per capita income of less than $7, 000. Forty-one (41%) percent of the public school student population is identified as (LEP). As a result of the population in the encompassing area, the funding for this two-way program was provided by a U. S. Department of Education's Title VII Comprehensive Grant.

Participating Campuses

Prior to the implementation of the two-way bilingual education program model, LEP students at the two participating campuses were enrolled in a *transitional bilingual education* program model. During 1995-1996, Garcia Elementary (pseudonym) had an average enrollment of 490 (57% LEP) and Salinas Elementary (pseudonym) had an average enrollment of 700 (51% LEP). Each campus was staffed with two administrators, a principal and a facilitator. Garcia Elementary School's principal was male and the facilitator was female and Salinas Elementary School's two administrators were male. The two adjoining campuses were within two city blocks of each other.

Participating Teachers

During the first year of planning, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers received professional development and during years two and three implemented the program model. All eleven participating pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers were certified in bilingual education. Three teachers from Garcia Elementary had master's degrees in education. Years of teaching experience at the two campuses varied from two to twenty-five years, with the more experienced teachers at Garcia Elementary. At Salinas Elementary, one teacher had less than five years of teaching experience, while Garcia Elementary had no teachers with less than five years experience.

Participating Students

Parental permission was obtained for LEP and limited Spanish proficient (LSP) students who participated in the two-way program.   Due to the disproportionate number of LEP versus LSP students in some grade levels (see Table 1), the 50-50 balance needed for instructional grouping (bilingual pairs) was modified. Students identified as LEP with *some* English proficiency were categorized as LSP for instructional classroom grouping. This balance is necessary to document the program's efficacy. Table 1 depicts the total 1996-1997 LEP and LSP student enrollments in the two campuses.

TABLE 1
TOTAL NUMBER OF PRE-K & K PARTICIPATING STUDENTS
IN TWO-WAY BILINGUAL PROGRAM

Campus	Total PK	PK LEP	PK Non-LEP	Total KG	KG LEP	KG Non-LEP	Total Students PK & K
Garcia	100	68	32	49	19	3	149
Salinas	109	62	47	129	69	60	238
Total	209	130	79	178	88	63	387

Parent Meetings/Professional Development Meetings

Parental meetings were held in the evenings at the two participating campuses to provide an orientation for the new parents involved in the program and to update parents already participating in the program. These meetings focused on information regarding the characteristics and benefits of the program and were conducted in Spanish and English. These meetings included topics such as developmentally appropriate practices for reading instruction in kindergarten; language development for the 3 year old; Parent Advisory Council (PAC) two-way program updates; and sharing of results on degree of

parental involvement at the two-way campuses. These parent meetings were also attended by district administrators (superintendent, assistant superintendent) and community leaders (school board members, city commissioner) as well as the two-way bilingual program's Title VII staff.

Professional Development

During year one, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers, paraprofessionals, teacher strategists, Title VII project director, and campus administrators attended professional development sessions. These sessions dealt with instructional classroom techniques, use of L1 and L2, classroom management procedures and the two-way language enrichment curriculum. Professional development sessions were selected based on critical program elements needed to support teacher conceptualization and classroom application of a two-way classroom environment. Project personnel and external consultants conducted the professional development sessions. Some classroom teachers also enrolled in two university graduate courses on the *Foundations of Bilingual Education* and *English as a Second Language Theory and Methodology*. Participants evaluated each professional development session. Actual classroom implementation of the two-way model began fall 1996. During the 1996-97 and 1997-1998 school years, the two-way model was implemented by Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten teachers who participated in the professional development sessions conducted the preceding year.

Survey Instrument

To measure the levels of commitment and knowledge of program participants a survey was developed by project personnel. Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers were administered a twenty-seven (27) item survey; *PSJA-UTPA Two-Way Partial Immersion Language Enrichment Scale: Program Assessment/ Evaluation Scale* (see Appendix A). Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each of the twenty-seven statements by circling: 1 for strongly agree (SA), 2 for agree (A), 3 for disagree (D), 4 for strongly disagree (SD), 5 for no opinion (N/O) and 6 for not applicable (N/A).

Specifically, this survey hoped to gain insight on the following levels of commitment and knowledge: (1) two-way bilingual education and its philosophical premise, (2) two-way bilingual education model, (3) effectiveness of professional development, and (4) perception of campus and district support/commitment to two-way bilingual education.

Data Collection and Analysis

At the end of the 1995-1996 school year, the pre-survey was disseminated to participating personnel at the two campuses. Similar procedures were used for the 1997-1998 school year for the post-survey. In order to compare the levels of

commitment and knowledge *prior* to implementation and *after* two years of implementation, the survey responses of the participating pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers from the two campuses were analyzed.

Results

Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers' survey results were aggregated and analyzed based on changes in percentage(s) between pre-survey administration (prior to the implementation of the two way model) and post-survey administration (after 2 years of implementation). The changes in percentages are indicated in the (+/-) columns in the two tables that summarize the pre-post survey results.

Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers' responses at *Garcia Elementary School* suggested positive changes concerning their levels of knowledge/understanding of the two-way bilingual education program model. The positive shift was primarily reflected in the following knowledge/understanding items: #3 - training/orientation has been beneficial to understanding the program, #6 - maintenance of equal status/value of the two languages in the program, #11 - bilingual/bicultural environment requirement and #12 - effective development of the English language can be achieved through the program. The positive shift was evident to a lesser degree on one perception/commitment item, #19 - two-way bilingual education is overdue in the area. On this item, the majority of teachers' responses on the post-survey items were rated as agree or strongly agree. Note that only three items: #13 - parents/teachers have demonstrated enthusiasm for program, #24 - parental support/involvement crucial to success of the program and #25 - overall positive campus attitude about the program were rated as strongly disagree or disagree (see Table 2).

Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers at Salinas revealed positive shifts in their levels of understanding and knowledge. These changes were evident on the following understanding/ knowledge items: #12 - effective development of the English language can be achieved through the program, #17 - integration of computers benefits academic/linguistic success of students in the program, #18 - I have a good understanding of the educational benefits of this program and # 27 - I have a good understanding of theoretical concepts of this program. Note that only two items: #10 - district superintendent supports this program and #15 - this program ranks high on the district's list of educational priorities received ratings of disagree on the post-survey (see Table 3). Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers' responses at *Salinas Elementary School* also indicated positive shifts in their levels of perception/commitment. This shift is illustrated in the following items: #4 - district administrators support the program at my campus, #9 - program administrators kept staff/parents informed, #13 - parents/teachers have demonstrated enthusiasm for program, #14- training will prepare me to teach the first group of students in my grade level and #26 - program encourages continuous professional growth.

TABLE 2
PERCENTAGE OF AGREEMENT BY PRE-K & K TEACHERS ON THEIR COMMITMENT AND UNDERSTANDING OF TWO-WAY BILINGUAL AT GARCIA ELEMENTARY

Item	P/P SA	+ -	P/P A	+ -	P/P D	+ -	P/P SD	+ -	P/P NO	+ -	P/P N/A	+ -
#1: cognitive advantages to being bilingual/bicultural*	40/67	+27	40/33	-7	20/0	-20	-	-	-	-	-	-
#2: support of two-way bilingual education program**	20/50	+30	20/50	+30	40/0	-40	-	-	20/0	-20	-	-
#3: orientation/training has been beneficial to my understanding of two-way bilingual education*	0/50	+50	20/50	+30	40/0	-40	-	-	-	-	40/0	-40
#4: district administrators support the two-way program**	100/83	-17	0/17	+17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#5: LEP/Non-LEP students will benefit from program*	40/67	-27	20/33	+13	40/0	+40	-	-	-	-	-	-
#6: important element in two-way education equal status & value that must be maintained in two languages*	20/67	+47	80/33	-47	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#7: program success requires major commitment by all teachers, administrators, and parents involved**	80/100	+20	20/0	-20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#8: children should have opportunity learn two languages**	40/67	+27	60/83	-27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#9: program administrators kept staff and parents informed**	0/17	+17	40/83	+43	60/0	-60	-	-	-	-	-	-
#10: district superintendent supports this program**	-	-	20/67	+47	-	-	-	-	60/33	-27	20/0	-20
#11: two-way bilingual program requires bilingual/bicultural school and classroom environment*	40/100	+60	60/0	-60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#12: English language development can effectively be achieved in a two-way bilingual/bicultural*	20/100	+80	80/0	-80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#13: most teachers/parents demonstrate enthusiasm for implementation of this new program**	-	-	20/50	+30	40/17	-23	20/0	-20	20/33	+13	-	-
#14: I feel that with training I will be ready to effectively teach in a two-way bilingual program**	20/50	+30	20/50	+30	60/0	-60	-	-	-	-	-	-
#15: two-way bilingual program ranks high on the district educational priorities for my district**	-	-	80/17	-63	-	-	-	-	20/50	+30	0/33	+33
#16: children have opportunity to value culture & heritage**	40/67	+27	60/33	-27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#17: The integration of computers greatly benefit the academic and linguistic success of these students*	80/83	+3	20/17	-3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#18: have understanding of educational benefits for participating students, parents, and staff*	0/67	+67	40/33	-7	40/0	-40	-	-	20/0	-20	-	-
#19: Two-way bilingual education overdue in South Texas**	20/50	+30	20/50	+30	60/0	-60	-	-	-	-	-	-
#20: will/would place my child in two-way program**	40/50	+10	0/50	+50	-	-	60/0	-60	-	-	-	-
#21: feel confident that this program will be a success**	20/50	+30	40/50	+10	-	-	-	-	40/0	-40	-	-
#22: concerted effort made to involve/inform teachers, paraprofessionals, parents & administrators of program**	0/17	+17	80/83	+3	-	-	20/0	-20	-	-	-	-
#23: schools/teachers will have high expectations for students*	20/50	+30	20/50	+30	-	-	-	-	40/0	-40	20/0	-20
#24: Parent involvement and support is critical to success*	80/83	+3	20/0	-20	0/17	+17	-	-	-	-	-	-
#25: gen. attitude about program at my school is positive**	0/33	+33	40/33	-7	60/34	-26	-	-	-	-	-	-
#26: program encourages professional growth for teachers, paraprofessionals and administrators**	20/33	+13	80/67	-13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#27: have good understanding of theoretical concepts*	0/17	+17	0/83	+83	80/0	-80	-	-	-	-	20/0	-20

*indicates understanding and knowledge   **indicates commitment or perception

TABLE 3
PERCENTAGE OF AGREEMENT BY PRE-K & K TEACHERS ON THEIR COMMITMENT AND UNDERSTANDING OF TWO-WAY BILINGUAL AT SALINAS ELEMENTARY

Item	P/P SA	+ -	P/P A	+ -	P/P D	+ -	P/P SD	+ -	P/P NO	+ -	P/P N/A	+ -
#1: cognitive advantages to being bilingual/bicultural*	100/100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#2: support of two-way bilingual education program**	100/100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#3: orientation/training has been beneficial to my understanding of two-way bilingual education*	67/80	+13	33/20	-13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#4: district administrators support the two-way program**	50/80	+30	33/20	-13	-	-	-	-	-	-	17/0	-17
#5: LEP/Non-LEP students will benefit from program*	100/80	-20	0/20	+20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#6: important element in two-way education equal status & value that must be maintained in two languages*	100/100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#7: program success requires major commitment by all teachers, administrators, and parents involved**	100/100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#8: children should have opportunity learn two languages**	100/100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#9: program administrators kept staff and parents informed**	33/60	+27	50/40	-10	-	-	-	-	17/0	-17	-	-
#10: district superintendent supports this program**	17/20	+3	17/20	+3	17/20	+3	-	-	50/40	-10	16/0	-16
#11: two-way bilingual program requires bilingual/bicultural school and classroom environment*	100/100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#12: English language development can effectively be achieved in a two-way bilingual/bicultural*	67/100	+33	33/0	-33	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#13: most teachers/parents demonstrate enthusiasm for implementation of this new program**	33/60	+27	50/40	-10	17/0	-17	-	-	-	-	-	-
#14: I feel that with training I will be ready to effectively teach in a two-way bilingual program**	50/100	+50	33/0	-33	17/0	-17	-	-	-	-	-	-
#15: two-way bilingual program ranks high on the district educational priorities for my district**	16/20	+4	50/0	-50	17/40	+23	-	-	17/40	+23	-	-
#16: children have opportunity to value culture & heritage**	100/100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#17: The integration of computers greatly benefit the academic and linguistic success of these students*	50/100	+50	50/0	-50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#18: have understanding of educational benefits for participating students, parents, and staff*	67/100	+33	16/0	-16	17/0	-17	-	-	-	-	-	-
#19: Two-way bilingual education overdue in South Texas**	83/80	-3	17/20	+3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#20: will/would place my child in two-way program**	83/100	+17	17/0	-17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#21: feel confident that this program will be a success**	83/100	+17	-	-	17/0	-17	-	-	-	-	-	-
#22: concerted effort made to involve/inform teachers, paraprofessionals, parents & administrators of program**	50/60	+10	33/40	+7	17/0	-17	-	-	-	-	-	-
#23: schools/teachers will have high expectations of students*	83/100	+17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17/0	-17
#24: Parent involvement and support is critical to success*	100/100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#25: gen. attitude about program at my school is positive**	50/60	+10	33/40	+7	17/0	-17	-	-	-	-	-	-
#26: program encourages professional growth for teachers, paraprofessionals and administrators**	67/100	+33	33/0	-33	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
#27: have good understanding of theoretical concepts*	17/100	+87	50/0	-50	16/0	-16	-	-	17/0	-17	-	-

*indicates understanding and knowledge **indicates commitment or perception

As a whole, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers initially rated more items as strongly disagree and disagree. After two years of implementation, these same teachers' responses indicated significantly fewer (four items) as

strongly disagree and disagree items: #10 district superintendent supports this program, #13- parents/teachers have demonstrated enthusiasm for program, #15- this program ranks high on the district's list of educational priorities and #24 - parental support/involvement crucial to success of the program.

The survey results revealed overall positive gains in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers' levels of perception/commitment and understanding/knowledge after two years of implementing a two-way bilingual education model, leading to a positive correlation between teacher commitment and understanding. That is, teacher commitment leads to increased levels of understanding. The survey results also revealed the importance of perceived support and commitment from district administrative personnel and campus administrators (survey items #10 and #15).

CONCLUSION

This article looked at some crucial factors to consider in effectively implementing a two-way bilingual education program. Specifically, we examined teachers' commitment and understanding of two-way bilingual philosophy and instructional practice based on their training and program implementation over a two-year period. Based on our results, we can conclude that in order to implement an effective two-way bilingual education model, program leaders must consider the development of teacher's true level of commitment to *bilingualism for all students* through sustained professional development versus simply focusing on instructional strategies. Moreover, it is imperative that administrative commitment and support at all levels be *highly visible and consistent*. Lack of visible support by district and program leaders, regardless if it exists, impacts teacher's philosophical commitment and attitude toward bilingualism, toward the program and model, and its expected success. Furthermore, there appears to be a positive correlation between teacher commitment or attitude and teacher knowledge or understanding. It can also be concluded that knowledge and understanding by practicing teachers improves through actual implementation of program strategies. Thus, we can say that effective implementation of two-way programs is contingent not only on providing sound professional development initially, but on the experientially-based knowledge derived by the participating teachers as they implement the program.

It is recommended that the commitment, knowledge and understanding demonstrated by experienced two-way teachers be incorporated into the initial professional development process for the teachers beginning the implementation process in the subsequent grades. As more two-way programs are being implemented across America, it becomes imperative to ensure their success. Further research that examines factors that influence the efficacy of two-way programs is critical.

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STRATEGIES-BASED ASSESSMENT OF SCIENCE KNOWLEDGE FOR SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

The fastest growing sector of the school population is language minority students. Students who must learn science content through a language other than their native language are at risk when being assessed, since they must demonstrate knowledge in a language over which they have incomplete mastery. Many assessment instruments actually test both language ability and content knowledge, and teachers may not be sure whether a student does not know the material or is unable to demonstrate knowledge because of a language barrier. Embedding language building strategies into science lessons is one means of making academic language comprehensible, and such strategies provide many opportunities for authentic assessment. A number of strategies are outlined and a sample lesson is provided.

The fastest growing sector of the school population in Texas and the United States is language minority students. Today, nearly 20% of our schoolchildren speak a language other than English at home, and their number is growing rapidly (Short, 1993; Spurlin, 1998). These students, by definition, do not speak English as their primary language and are frequently limited in their English proficiency. In addition, many language minority students come from cultures that differ to some extent from the dominant American culture. These language and cultural factors influence how language minority students perform in school and on the various tests we typically use to assess them (Holman, 1997; Luft, 1998).

In common with most educators today, science educators endorse the constructivist perspective of knowledge and learning, i.e., that individuals construct their own conceptual framework to make sense of the world around them. Such construction requires that students actively integrate new information with the knowledge (both cultural and academic) already present in their cognitive structures (Driver & Bell, 1986; Novak, 1993). Constructing personal meaning and understanding depends on language as well as culture,

both for construction of knowledge and for internalization of such knowledge. Culture influences the prior experiences students might have and the filters through which they view new experiences, while language influences comprehension, communication, and internalization (Wheatley, 1991; Yager, 1991).

Language is an important element in science learning. Doing science in K-12 classrooms involves talking, observing, analyzing, reasoning, and communicating what has been understood. For a concept to be learned, it must be comprehensible to the learner and that means the language of instruction must be comprehensible to the learner (Spurlin, 1998). When planning, teaching, and assessing a science lesson for second language learners, teachers need to embed vocabulary building strategies so that academic language is comprehensible. As one student commented:

> I don't want to spend my time to listen to something I don't understand…
> When my words come through my brain, and I couldn't, like have time for
> me to understand? And then, when I take the time to understand, the he
> [the teacher] is speaking other stuff (Harklau, 1994, p. 249).

Based on oral proficiency tests and other measures, second language learners are frequently exited from bilingual programs before they are fully proficient in academic English (Short, 1993). Many teachers are misled by second language learners' apparent proficiency in English, as evidenced in conversations with other students. These second language learners have functional fluency in English, yet may have difficulty with the academic English used in science textbooks and classroom instruction (Spurlin, 1998). Summarizing the body of research on this issue, Richard-Amato (1996) notes that basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) may develop in 1-2 years, while cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) typically requires 5-7 years, or longer. With language central to the constructivist view of science learning, these differences in language proficiency have implications for science instruction and assessment.

ISSUES OF ASSESSMENT

Until recently, assessment of student learning in science was perceived primarily as a means of testing what the student had learned and thereby ranking student performance (National Research Council [NRC], 1996). The goal, however, is for science teachers to broaden their views of assessment to include "observations of student performance during instructional activities; interviews; formal performance tasks; written reports; and multiple choice, short-answer, and essay examinations" (NRC, 1996, p. 84). Rather than checking whether students have memorized bits of information, "assessments need to probe for

students' understanding, reasoning, and the utilization of knowledge" (NRC, 1996, p. 82).

The National Science Education Standards (NRC, 1996) reflect knowledge of the growing diversity in our classrooms and recognize that assessment practices must accommodate students, like the growing number of Hispanic/Latino students, who do not speak English as their first language:

> Assessment practices must be fair. Assessment practices must be appropriately modified to accommodate the needs of students with…limited English proficiency. Assessment tasks must be set in a variety of contexts, be engaging to students with different interests and experiences, and must not assume the perspective or experience of a particular gender, racial, or ethnic group. (NRC, 1996, p. 85).

The science standards recognize the need to accommodate second language learners, but because language and content are interwoven, it is difficult to isolate one feature from the other in the assessment process. Most assessment instruments actually test both content knowledge and language ability, and teachers may thus not be sure whether a student does not know the material being assessed or is simply unable to demonstrate knowledge because of a language barrier (Short, 1993). In addition, cultural differences may disadvantage the second language student due to, "curriculum test developers who are not knowledgeable about these students' experiences in and out of class. Thus, the tests do not enable many culturally diverse students to demonstrate their knowledge of science" (Luft, 1998, p. 114).

Viewed this way, culturally responsive instruction involves identifying features of both teachers' and students' experiences that can be drawn on and integrated to create educationally productive dialogue (Au & Carroll, 1997). Structuring the science classroom to encourage an atmosphere of inquiry and hands-on learning is one means of providing for a body of shared experiences, thus facilitating the construction of shared meaning (Hadi-Tabassum, 1999). This is especially critical when working with English as a second language (ESL) students who have had limited or interrupted schooling in their first language. The authors have both taught such students, who not only must learn in an uncomfortable linguistic environment, but must attempt to construct understanding without the cultural and academic background knowledge that their classmates use to process information. Providing some common ground is vital in such cases.

If science teachers are going to help their second language students become scientifically literate, they need to choose and develop assessments that will allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and ways of knowing. Assessments should, to the greatest extent possible, be locally developed by classroom teachers and used not only for summative evaluation, but to gather

information about the learning needs of their limited-English students and to assist the teachers in modifying their teaching strategies and curricula to better meet those needs in their science classrooms (Darling-Hammond, 1994).

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Students who must learn content through a language other than their native language are at risk when confronted with assessment, since they must demonstrate knowledge in a language over which they have only partial mastery. As noted previously, because language and content are intricately linked, it is difficult to isolate one from the other. One solution is to integrate language and content instruction, with content topics used as the scaffolding for instruction. The increased use of graphic organizers and other visuals that accompanies such an approach is of particular benefit to the student with limited English proficiency (Short, 1993). Integration of reading and writing activities has also been shown to be vital to the learning of science content for limited-English students (Bernhardt, Destino, Kamil & Rodriguez-Muñoz, 1995).

Bernhardt et al. (1995) also pointed to the efficacy of socially-based strategies in affording limited-English students the opportunity to demonstrate their science knowledge, while simultaneously practicing their oral English skills. Cohen (2000) and Hadi-Tabassum (1999) noted the benefits gained by incorporating cooperative learning methods, especially where the students comprising a group had differing levels of literacy and language proficiency, and thus had to negotiate meanings within the course of the activities.

Information that is new can be made more comprehensible if brought to the BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) level of understanding, so that students can call upon a comfort level of background knowledge. For science, as with other content area subjects, this is often accomplished through TPR (Total Physical Response) and then built to the intermediate or higher level of instruction through the Natural Approach, which encourages the use of games and activities (Richard-Amato, 1996). For students in middle grades and high school, the textbook reading that accompanies the lesson should be sheltered. Word wall activities and games will lower the affective filter and act as advanced organizers for the lesson (Richard-Amato, 1996).

But how do ESL teachers, or "regular" teachers with ESL students, assess the lesson? Many educators have come to recognize the importance of so-called alternative assessments as a means of gaining a dynamic picture of students' linguistic and academic development. Such forms of assessment employ strategies that ask students to show what they can do, rather than solely on what they are able to recall and reproduce (Huerta-Macias, 1995). Such assessments generally document individual student growth over time, focus on students' strengths rather than weaknesses, and give consideration to their learning styles, language proficiencies, and cultural and academic backgrounds. Bernhardt et al.

(1995) cautioned that such assessments may mask a student's true level of understanding, but noted the overall benefits of using such measures.

By carefully planning activities and by designing rubrics, teachers can "get the grades" authentically. These grades can be documented with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) objectives that are supported in the lesson plan. Before teaching the lesson, the teacher decides which skills to assess. Cooperation within the group and following the assigned roles may be included on the rubric, as well as skill mastery, which may be assessed as a whole group or from independent written work such as K-W-L charts or quartering exercises. Early in the lesson, the teacher places a rubric on the overhead projector for the large group to see. Each student is supplied with his/her personal rubric for reference, creating a framework for discussion and questions, and informing the students of evaluation criteria. ESL students, like all students, feel assured when they can see where the lesson is directed and what responsibilities they will have. The opportunity to ask questions before beginning the lesson, clarifies the process and allows students to practice oral English before a large group.

Either before or after displaying the rubric, the teacher begins to build the vocabulary essential to the foundation of understanding. This can be accomplished in several ways and may be assessed through writing sentences or reports in which students are asked to use the new vocabulary words, or perhaps by having students participate in dictionary research where they actually build their own word wall to display in the classroom.

Another effective vocabulary enhancement strategy is semantic mapping. Here the teacher displays a list of vocabulary terms from the lesson; students then guess the general topic and predict the word definitions. This is followed by searching a given article or section in the text, using context clues to discover if guesses were correct (Richard-Amato, 1996).

This semantic mapping activity can naturally springboard into an advanced organizer activity such as a K-W-L chart (Figure 1). Many teachers have success using such charts (what I know, what I wonder, what I've learned) to begin and end a unit of study in science. Such charts can be developed individually or as a whole-class activity. Before the unit, teachers can have students fill in the K and W columns, enabling the teacher to gain an awareness of students' background knowledge and interests. During the unit and afterward, the chart can help teachers assess the content material learned. By including an additional column (S, what I still wonder), students can follow up by researching areas of interest in the library (Carr & Ogle, 1991). If the teacher includes requirements such as "five facts under K" and "five questions under W" and "five newly learned facts under L", it is easy to get an assessment.

FIGURE 1.
SAMPLE K-W-L CHART.

K	W	L
Seeds are small.	Are all seeds the same?	
Seeds are inside a watermelon.	How can a big tree grow from a little seed?	
Seeds grow into plants.	What is the inside of a seed like?	
Seeds need water to grow.	Do all seeds need water?	
Grass seeds get stuck in your socks sometimes.	If a seed is inside a watermelon, how does it grow into a new melon?	

SAMPLE LESSON

This sample lesson depicts how strategies-based instruction and assessment can be put into practice in the science classroom. It incorporates suggestions previously outlined and it is presented for illustrative purposes only. Therefore, it has been abridged; no list of materials is included, for example. This lesson introduces students to the parts of a plant seed and can be adapted for use at either the elementary or secondary level.

PROCEDURE

The teacher lists several words on the overlay, e.g., embryo, monocot, dicot, and germinate. He/she asks students to tell her what topic these words describe and then lists every guess on the overlay. At this point the students may participate in a TPR activity such as a chant or another related action activity. Then the teacher asks the children to listen as she/he reads a short description of a seed. The children look once more at the words on the overlay and at the guesses. The teacher focuses students on the word list and restates the question, "What do the words describe?" The students (hopefully) agree that the topic is seeds and the teacher explains that today's lesson will be on discovering the parts of a seed.

Returning to the list of guesses, students decide which definitions are relevant. They keep the definitions that apply and discard the ones that do not apply. The teacher explains that students will work in table groups to fill out a K-W-L chart. For clarity of expectations, she shows the rubric for the K-W-L chart. For now, they will list what they know about seeds in the first section. Cooperative roles are assigned for this project. The activity serves to build students' interpersonal communication skills and serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson's academic requirements (Kagan, 1990). After completing the K section, students continue the activity by filling in the W section, i.e., what they wonder about seeds. This serves to advance their thinking to a higher level while continuing to practice their English skills. The teacher explains that at the end of each day's lesson, the table groups will meet to add to the L section of their chart ("what we have learned").

The teacher proceeds to the practical application section of the lesson by guiding the children throught the procedures, using the Natural Approach. (A detailed description of the procedures is not included here.) During this "hands on" activity, students will observe and make internal and external comparisons of a variety of common seeds, such as beans and corn. They will also germinate seeds and observe their growth over the next few days.

FIGURE 2.
SAMPLE FOUR-SQUARE ACTIVITY SHEET.

Draw a picture of your favorite part of the lesson.	Write the 4 vocabulary words and what you think they mean. 1. embryo 2. germinate 3. monot 4. dicot
Describe your picture in a sentence.	At the end of the lesson, check your meanings. Highlight the ones that were right; correct the others.
Draw the parts of your seed and label the parts.	Write a summary of what you learned. Talk about your summary with your table partner.

After the initial hands-on activity, students meet back in their table groups to discuss the lesson orally. Then the teacher places the four-square rubric on the overhead and passes out an activity sheet to each pair of students. (The table

groups may be divided into two groups or new groups can be assigned at this point.) The teacher models the steps for completing the quadrants of a four-square sheet (Figure 2): (1) draw a picture and describe it in a sentence; (2) write the vocabulary words and guess their meanings; (3) draw the parts of your assigned seed(s) and label them; and (4) write a summary of what you learned today.

After the activity is completed, the teacher explains that for several days this lesson or parts of it will continue. Each day, each student will be expected to record their observations in their own record book. This is not group work and it will be for a grade. The teacher passes out personal record books, shares the rubric that will be used, and models filling out the record book for today . The students fill out today's "record" and the books are stored for safekeeping.

EXPANSION

This lesson expands into a short unit, at the end of which students will have filled out a complete K-W-L chart and will have developed research questions for further study. The K-W-L chart is designed as a cooperative activity using table groups of four students. For each lesson, the ESL student will strengthen oral language skills and academic skills by filling out a four-square sheet with a partner. These two complementary activities provide language support and build a base knowledge for the lessons. For an individual assessment, the record book supplies several opportunities for the teacher to assess personal growth of students.

CONCLUSION

Students with limited English proficiency comprise an ever-growing sector of our school population. Such students are particularly at risk during assessment, because they must demonstrate knowledge in a language over which they have incomplete mastery. Furthermore, since content and language are intertwined, it is difficult to isolate one from the other during assessment. By using a variety of performance measures and embedding language development strategies within their science lessons, teachers can better inform their teaching practices and assess students' content knowledge. The strategies outlined here are just a small sample of those which might be profitably employed, and educators are encouraged to utilize as broad a range of assessment measures as possible, in order to promote success for all children.

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BIOLOGICAL PROFILE: A DREAM FULFILLED

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My biographical profile is a beautiful story that goes like this: There once was a young man who was an exceptional student. He graduated from elementary school and took room and board in Rio Grande City, TX to attend what was then the only high school. Following graduation, (ninth grade at that time and not an easy feat for a poor Hispanic in South Texas), he received sponsorship to a young men's preparatory school.

This young man returned to work in Rio Grande City where he met a beautiful young woman who, due to having worked as a domestic for bread and board all her young life, never received schooling. He, however, recognizing her natural ability, taught her at age 20 to read and write in Spanish. The learning was at high speed due to her intrinsic motivation of a need to learn. His intention was to strengthen her ability to cope with the changes that he, with keen foresight, knew would be coming in her life and their lives together.

My parents Filemon and Guadalupe Garza were married in 1930. Mastering reading and writing opened up such a bright new world for her, that to her marriage vows she added that, "her children, should there be any, would never, as long as she could draw a breath of air, flounder in ignorance." They raised eight children and mother was our first teacher. We all knew our "abecedario" and our "numeros" by the time we went to school. Mother even had visuals such as La Prensa newspaper out of Laredo, Texas. The best was the colored comic strips. My personal favorite "El Fantasma", purple tights and all.

When I was an infant, Mother and the family would migrate ever summer to Kennedy County to pick cotton, beans, and broom corn. Father would remain in Rio Grande City to continue his job. They would take the train from McAllen, Texas and that train would traverse the actual farm where they worked. The income earned would help prepare the family for the new school year.

The result was that all eight children are college graduates and five of us are educators. Our parents helped as best they could, and as each graduated he/she would help the next one. This was the time before financial aid.

Forty years later, I read in an article by Alvin Toffler what my beloved late mother instinctively knew:

> "Education is not just something that happens in the head. It involves our muscles, our senses, our defenses, our total chemistry. Education springs from the interplay between the learner and the changing environment."

However, with all the due respect to Mr. Toffler, I think my mother had one up on him. Mother understood only too well that learning occurs best in the native language. She knew my father could have taught us English, but in teaching us in Spanish she fulfilled an accomplishment and instilled in us an unquenchable pride in our heritage in addition to letters and numbers.

What factors persuaded me to become a teacher? I have to say it was my mother's influence. The joy of learning from her, the childish delight at her praise, but mostly the glint in her eyes at having communicated to us an indelible message which is that education is not a luxury, but a privilege that we are fortunate to have and use as a survival tool in an ever changing environment.

When I finally went to "La Escuelita", lucky for me, my teachers were Spanish speakers. The curriculum was "all English" and even though it was against regulations, if help in Spanish was needed, it was kindly and nobly given "a las escondiditas". I will forever be grateful to them all.

My first experience with special education was in 1978. I worked with resource students that needed help with reading and writing. The need for a bilingual approach was immediately obvious; however, Spanish assessment and bilingual materials for special education were extremely limited at that time. Reflecting on that need, I became a strong advocate for equal and fair assessment and placement. At my district, the first test is a language dominance test. That is the child's right by the law and I continue to fight for equality.

Through the years, I have tried to improve my skills by participating in various committees and programs that are part of the school community and important to serving my students. My experience with my bilingual special education students are a treasure trove that is priceless. I often think of my mother who would say, "Make the best of the most minute experience to grow and learn". I make every effort to instill that thought in my students. They must try to do the best they can at whatever they do.

Professionally, if the opportunity to learn or expand my knowledge is given, then that is shared with my peers. Modern education is ever evolving and sharing helps me stay tuned-in to what is happening in our profession. Additionally, rarely does any one person do anything a lone. There are contributors along the way or behind the scenes that help make all of us successful. Student success lies on the teachers team efforts, and that is what the school community thrives upon...student success.

Education has come a long way from 1930. Every day new methods are developed and new technology amazes us, but in spite of that, we always fall back to the old traditions and the old value taught us by our parents.

My parents are both deceased now. The void their passing left will never be filled, but the influence they forged to improve the lives of their children is everlasting.

RESEARCH
BRIEF

TEXAS STUDY PROFILES QUALITY EDUCATION FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS

Oscar M. Cárdenas
Texas Education Agency

The findings of **The Texas Successful Schools Study:** *Quality Education for Limited English Proficient Students* were released by the Texas Education Agency on September 6, 2000 after a 24-month effort was conducted in seven successful elementary schools. The Study, which can be accessed at the Agency's web site at www.tea.state.tx.us/tsss/, was headed by Oscar M. Cárdenas, Senior Project Manager of the Program Evaluation Unit in the Office for the Education of Special Populations. The Study was conducted as a result of a recommendation made in **A Report to the 75th Texas Legislature** from the Texas Education Agency in December 1996 to, "...further educational research concerning the instruction and assessment of limited English proficient students." The Study was realized through collaborative efforts between the TEA, the seven elementary campuses, and Texas A&M University~Corpus Christi [research support] as part of the Commissioner's Educational Research Initiative for 1998-99.

The Study profiles programs, policies and instructional practices of seven successful schools, and documents their contributions to the academic success of limited English proficient students over a five-year period. The seven schools were selected based on prescribed criteria that included:

- ✓ Enrollment of 40% or more LEP students during the 1996-97 school year
- ✓ Enrollment of 50% or more economically disadvantaged students during the 1996-97 school year
- ✓ Zero TAAS LEP exemptions during the 1996-97 school year, and
- ✓ Rating of either "Recognized" or "Exemplary" in the Texas school accountability system based on the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) of May 1997 that included English Texas Academic Assessment System (TAAS) scores in Reading, Mathematics and attendance rates

The Texas Successful Schools Study: *Quality Education for Limited English Proficient Students* is the first in a series of studies to be conducted by the Office for the Education of Special Populations in keeping with the Agency's mission to educate all children in Texas public schools. According to demographic data available through the Public Education Information Management System

(PEIMS) as reflected in the 213-page study document, the LEP student enrollment in Texas increased by forty-four percent (44%) from 361,127 in 1991-92 to 519,921 in 1997-98.

The Study focuses attention on the geographic concentration and the grade level distribution of the new LEP enrollment that yields noteworthy statistics. For example, the PEIMS data for 1997-98 show that eighty-five percent (85%) of the 158,794 new LEP enrollment was evident in six of the twenty education service center regions, e.g., Edinburg, Houston, Richardson, Ft. Worth, El Paso and San Antonio. Additionally, seventy-seven percent (77%) of the new LEP enrollment was reported in the elementary grades (Early Education through Grade 5). These data show that many school districts in and along the US/Mexico border, and in metropolitan counties such as Bexar, Harris and Dallas, are experiencing a rapid growth rate of LEP students. This rapid growth presents numerous challenges associated with teacher training, recruitment and retention, assessment, implementation of quality programs, and instruction that facilitate academic success. The Study notes that more school districts are faced with the need to provide bilingual education for an increasing LEP population as required by state policies. **The Texas Successful Schools Study:** *Quality Education for Limited English Proficient Students* was conducted by the Office for the Education of Special Populations in an effort to assist these school districts.

Because the Study was not conducted as traditional research, there are a number of significant features in the Study that are not evident in other national studies on bilingual education that have been conducted over the years as part of the national research agenda on the education of language minority students. The Study, which was disseminated by the TEA as a policy leadership document, does not focus on the traditional questions: "Does the program [bilingual education] work?" or "Is the program effective?" Consequently, the effort was not a study on bilingual education as much as it was a descriptive study of the practices that can be attributed to the academic success of LEP students. It is important to note that bilingual education does appear as the dominant program offering in each of the case studies of the seven successful schools as presented in the Study document; however, information regarding this program is merely presented in the context of the daily campus occurrence.

It was not the intent of the Study to test hypotheses, causality or seek to explain relationships beyond employing descriptive methods. By employing descriptive methods and incorporating mixed-methodology, the Study design allowed the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods in obtaining and presenting data. In order to address the guiding research questions adopted by the Program Evaluation Unit, the methodology for the multiple operation framework of the Study relied on third-party research support and statistical analyses that provided for the cross-validation of data sources emanating from:

✓ Teacher and principal questionnaires

✓ Teacher and principal interviews
✓ Focused-group parent interviews
✓ Classroom observations
✓ Analyses of student and campus performance data, and
✓ A review of the literature

Another significant feature of **The Texas Successful Schools Study:** *Quality Education for Limited English Proficient Students* was the concept of vertical progression that was developed by the Program Evaluation Unit to establish two student cohorts for the Study by identifying students in the PEIMS that were coded as LEP and enrolled in a bilingual education program since Kindergarten. These students comprised the study or "target" group and were tracked for six years in Cohort 94, and for five years in Cohort 95. The statistical analyses section of the Study profiles the academic performance of this "target" group as LEP and Former LEP students on the TAAS test in contrast to the group averages of LEP, Former LEP and Never LEP students in two different comparison groups. Additionally, the Study profiles the number of years it took for LEP students to transition to Non-LEP status, e.g., English proficient, in the seven successful schools as contrasted to the comparison groups. The Study did not attempt to establish the comparison groups as a control group. Since the TAAS performance data were available for at least three years, for both the "target" group and the comparison groups, the Study utilized a longitudinal feature that provides for disaggregation of academic data at the individual student, grade and campus levels over an extended period of time. Most national studies rely exclusively on performance data in the aggregate.

For purposes of the Study, the results of the student and campus performance analyses relied exclusively on the results of the TAAS test (English and Spanish as applicable) for all seven campuses and the comparison groups. The TAAS tests were used for the following reasons:

✓ The results of the norm-referenced tests (NRTs) utilized in the seven study sites were not considered reliable for purposes of **The Texas Successful Schools Study:** *Quality Education for Limited English Proficient Students* because (1) NRTs are treated primarily as a pre-assessment [diagnostic] measure that are administered prior to program participation, (2) there are numerous NRTs in the state's approved list of tests that can be used, thereby eliminating consistency in application of test measures, (3) the NRTs may be normed with populations that are different then the subject groups in the Study. These tests are also administered at different times, and (4) the test scores in NRTs do not assess the performance of LEP and Former LEP students in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum required of all students in Texas public schools, and

✓ The TAAS test is a criterion-referenced test required to be given to all students, other than those exempted, in Grades 3-5 in English or Spanish to assess achievement according to specific objectives that are aligned with

the curriculum being offered in Texas public schools. These features of the state's TAAS test provide greater reliability and validity, which are not available from a specific norm-referenced test

Strengths of the Schools Studied

In the student and campus performance analyses section of the Study, the third-party that conducted the statistical analyses of all TAAS data, e.g., passing and mastering, makes numerous observations regarding the performance of students and campuses in **The Texas Successful Schools Study:** *Quality Education for Limited English Proficient Students*. Two of the statements read: "In almost every comparison, the study campuses were superior to the external [comparison group] campuses." "In addition, comparisons to TEA comparison campus group, with few exceptions, indicated a strong advantage for the study campuses." Other strengths of the schools studied as reported in the Study document include:

✓ Strong instructional leadership at both the campus and district levels
✓ Equal prestige of both languages
✓ Literacy-rich environments in both languages
✓ Staff development focused on second language learners
✓ Vertical/horizontal team planning
✓ Culture infused throughout the curriculum through fine arts
✓ Literature and social studies
✓ Research-based training
✓ Continuous monitoring and assessment of language and academic growth
✓ Extensive and participatory parental involvement
✓ After school enrichment and tutoring programs
✓ Strong ESL methodologies

The Study report will be supplemented by an *Educator User Guide for Administrators and Educational Personnel* that is designed to enable school districts to meet the challenging state content and student performance standards for curriculum and assessment for all students. The Guide provides detail on how schools districts may adapt or replicate features of the successful schools study in their efforts to address the needs of students with special needs such as ESL, Title I, Migrant, Immigrant and students in at risk situations. The seven schools participating in the study were: Bowie Elementary, Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD, Lydia Savedra, Principal; Campestre Elementary, Socorro ISD, El Paso, Carmen Moran, Principal; Castañeda Elementary, Brownsville ISD, Minerva E. Hasfjord, Principal; Clover Elementary, Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD, Rosalinda Díaz, Principal; Kelly Elementary, Hidalgo ISD, Trine Barrón, Principal; La Encantada Elementary, San Benito CISD, Sara Galarza, Principal; and Scott Elementary, Roma ISD, Ludivina Ybarra, Principal.

Copies of **The Texas Successful Schools Study:** *Quality Education for Limited English Proficient Students* may be purchased by contacting the Publications Distribution & Sales at (512) 463-9744 or by writing to TEA

Publications, P. O. Box 13817, Austin, TX 78711-3817. Questions on the Study, or the Guide, may be directed to ocardena@tmail.tea.state.tx.us or sseidner@tmail.tea.state.tx.us or by calling the Program Evaluation Unit at (512) 463-9714.

HISTORICAL
PERSPECTIVE

THE COMMITMENT OF A STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO BILINGUAL EDUCATION[1]

Severo Gómez
Texas Education Agency

There have been several significant happenings in our State in the past two years, which reflect its commitment to Bilingual Education. Some two years ago, the Office of Bilingual Education was established: by Office in our Department is meant that it is a major division, at the Assistant Commissioner's level. This in itself is evidence of the importance of Bilingual Education to the Commissioner of Education and to the State Board.

Shortly after ht establishment of the Office, a task force was formed from a cross-section of professionals from throughout the State Department of Education- from social sciences, languages, the arts, special education, teacher education, vocational education, etc. In addition, two committees were appointed by the Commissioner. One which is called the Commissioner's Advisory Committee on Bilingual Education is a 15-member committee comprised of educators, businessmen, and government officials. Included in the group is a psychologist, a state senator, a state representative, an official of the State Association of School Boards, a historian, a lawyer, representatives from LULAC, and the American GI Forum, local school administrators, and a director of a regional educational service center. There are also representatives from colleges of education, the International Good Neighbor Commission and Vocational Education. The second committee is called the Consulting Committee on the Confluence of Cultures. It too is a 15-member committee whose purpose is to assist the State Department of Education in developing materials, which will reflect the cultural contributions of the 26 ethnic groups of the State. This group also has a diversity of background among its members and includes playwrights, folklorists, and anthropologists.

Another very important happening in our state in the past year was the passage of the Bilingual Bill by the State Legislature. This bill permits the use of two languages in instruction, but is optional at the local district level. The Spanish-speaking population is not the only group in the State, which is potentially bilingual. There are a considerable number of Czech speakers and German speakers in some of our communities. Czech is the third language of the state and we encourage Czech speakers. This year, we have a Czech national working in the Department helping our languages consultants develop curriculum materials for the teaching of Czech. In previous years, we have had

French, German, and Mexican nationals assisting us in developing materials for each of their languages. After the Bilingual Bill was passed, the State Board of Education passed a state board policy compatible with the Bill.

Another significant happening, which influenced activities in the State, but sponsored by the Federal Government, is Title VII, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, ESEA. Two million dollars were allocated to the state of Texas for 19 projects (16 schools and 3 regional education service centers). Bilingual education not limited to Title VII. There are other schools that are using local funds for bilingual programs, and others are engaged in some activities using Titles I and III funds.

The task force that I mentioned earlier developed a Statewide Design for Bilingual Education, which was modified and approved by the Advisory Committee and then approved by the State Board of Education. It has three basic and broad objectives: (1). Implementation of programs for students whose first language is Spanish which will allow successful experiences in the education process while developing literacy in the use of English and Spanish in the total school curriculum and knowledge of the history and culture associated with the languages, (2). Implementation of programs for students whose first language is English and a knowledge of the history and culture of the speakers of Spanish and their contribution to the development of the state and country, (3). Development of proper measuring instruments for children in bilingual programs.

If a is to commit itself to Bilingual Education then it must have a definite philosophy about Bilingual Education. In the next few minutes I shall attempt to describe Bilingual Education as our State Department of Education interprets it. Many school districts have been involved in something called Bilingual Education in the past few years. However, none function fully in the concept of Bilingual Education as the State sees it.

First, I must say that bilingualism is not getting to English through Spanish and then eliminating Spanish as a child fully develops in English. Bilingualism is more than oral English language training or for that matter English and Spanish language training. It certainly is not English as a second language as a total process. If we visualize the educational process as an entity encompassed within a circle or as a pie, if you please, when we add the term bilingual to it-we are still thinking of the total process except that two languages are used instead of one. The total process includes all of the experiences that a school and community think are necessary to meet the needs of a child in order that he may succeed in the educational process. In Bilingual Education, a second language is added without removing the parameters of the process. English as a second language is just one segment of the circle. For the child whose first language is English there would also be a segment of English as a first language and another of Spanish as a second language. For children whose first language is Czech, there would be a significance for the instruction of Czech as a first languages, etc.

Other segments of the circle would include subject matter in the two languages. Concepts may be developed in the first language and enriched or expanded in the second language.

The teacher should decide what concepts need to be learned by the children. They should be developmental, i.e., from the simple to the complex. Instruction should be in the first language of the child initially, and then developed in the second language as the child becomes ready for it. One of the hang-ups that teachers have in teaching children whose first language is Spanish is that when they move into English, and the children are not ready to function in English they become so concerned with English that they forget about the learning of concepts and concentrate on language learning. We know this is what has been going on for many years and what has caused us to fail with these children.

All our teachers have been trained in English and are completely oriented toward the English language process. Teachers should be oriented to recognize the fact that it is better for children to learn concepts and experience intellectual growth than to be involved in language exercises only. For some children, concepts may have to be taught in Spanish for a whole year. Not all children can learn in two languages simultaneously. A teacher needs to recognize this ability in each child and that the retardation of intellectual growth is a s abnormal as the retardation of physical growth. Children need to learn many things other than language in the total educational process. But, let us not overlook the fact that some children can develop intellectually in programs that use two languages in the first learning experience.

The objectives of our Statewide Design as stated earlier propose to bilingualize all children in the bilingual environment. The State Department, however, must set priorities. Our priority, and I assume yours also is with the Spanish-speaking population, although some of our schools are bilingualizing our English speakers in some of the bilingual programs.

And we encourage this. Why do we set this priority? I am sure all of you are aware the statistics which show the large percentage of dropouts among the Spanish-speaking children who, when they become adults, are handicapped and perhaps become a burden to the state and nation. We also know that by getting adequate preparation, they can become an asset as well as productive citizens to the state and nation. In our state, we have half a million Mexican American school children and if the rate of dropouts were to continue, we could very well lose about four hundred thousand of these students. We can't afford that. The loss of these students can be attributed to the traditional educational process alien to non-speakers of English. It is our responsibility to provide a program that will permit success in the process and full development of all students. In the case of the Mexican American, the process should develop a student who can function proficiently in two languages. Bilingual schools that I have observed in Latin America are examples of the kinds of schools we should have in our States. Students may study math in Spanish and science in English and it really does not

matter what language is used. They can learn in either or both. We should be able to do this too. But many of our people in the schools do not believe this is true about bilingualism. This is not an easy accomplishment. We must have proof. We must remove the stigma attached to languages other than English in this country. It is a proven fact that the melting pot concept of the United States does not really apply to our part of the country. If Canada were all French-speaking, the situation in our northern border would be the same as it is in our southern border. In fact, we have a similar situation in Maine where it borders the French-speaking province of Quebec.

When we analyze our circle, or the total educational process for the Spanish-speaking children, we see Spanish as a first language, English as a second language, course content in Spanish, and course content in English. What is left? Is this everything?

We as a State Department feel that the speakers of languages other than English or children who have been categorized as members of a minority group, and who have been designated as other than first-class members of society because of ethnic affiliation, need experiences in the educational process which will help them overcome this blatant stereotyping. The experiences may be in terms of the development of the self-image by including the historical and cultural contributions of the group. A cognizance of the psychological, sociological, and economic forces that cause retardation in the learning process is important in planning these experiences.

It is very important to note here that the development of minority group children with a positive self-image concept cannot be done in isolation. The magnificence of a heritage and its cultural contribution does not mean anything unless it is accepted by all. The only way that a majority group can fully accept the characteristics and heritage of a minority group positively is to become part of it. Language is an obvious and very influential cultural characteristic. Why not begin with it?

I have said so many times, and I will repeat it here, that the culture of the Southwesterner, be he English speaker or Spanish speaker, is more Hispanic than he realizes. In Texas, the cattle process by which the whole world recognizes and idolizes her and is a vital part of our development is totally Hispanic in process and in terminology. Our legal system is based on the Spanish system and so much of our architecture is Hispanic. An English speaker from Texas is markedly different than one from Ohio because he has been influenced by this wealth of Hispanic culture.

Culture is not static. Southwestern culture, Texas culture, and Mexican American culture, have their own characteristics different from that of Mexican culture Spanish culture, English culture, etc. This is an important factor that needs to be recognized. Our State Department is committed to be promulgating of this concept.

Our social science consultants in collaboration with the staff of the Office of Bilingual Education and the Consulting Committee on the Confluence of Cultures are preparing materials and developing proclamations to textbook publishers so that there may be changes in the way that the social sciences are taught today (with almost complete Northern European orientation) in terms of the development of the United States. The black legend concept which has been unfair to the Spanish colonization as it appears in American History texts will be eliminated. Texas History will include the contributions of the Spanish-speaking population to the development of the state. There will be a clarification of the War for Independence in which there is agreement by historians that the War could have not been won by either group independently of the other. History will include the Spanish or English. School children will know that it was a Spanish speaker who led the cavalry charge in the battle of San Jacinto and that it was this cavalry support that provided Sam Houston with the impetus to rout Santa Anna's armies.

The State Department of Education last year approved the establishment of course in Mexican American studies. The course will be an elective one and will carry a half unit of credit. There has been so much interest in this course, that we are very optimistic that as many as 10,000 students will soon be taking it; therefore permitting the State Department of Education to request free textbooks for the course. Until this number has been reached, local school staffs will have to develop the materials they are to use. At this time, there are several school districts who have done an excellent job of accumulating such materials for the course. The State Department of Education has provided a highly researched list of books and other materials for use. It is anticipated that other materials will be coming out soon; that there is great interest in the contributions of the Mexican Americans to the development of this nation.

The Office of International and Bilingual Education is preparing a Guidelines Bulletin for implementing Bilingual Education Programs. It will be directed at administrators and teachers. It will include some of the things of which I have spoken, but in greater detail. There will be sections on methodology with sample activities for developing and enhancing bilingualism. There will be sections devoted to the sociology and psychology of the Mexican American. It is strongly believed that the teacher who teaches the Mexican American must know all about him and his cultural characteristics. The bulletin will attempt to motivate the English-speaking teachers in becoming bilingual. There is no question about it; there are not enough native bilingual teachers in the state. If the job is done, it will have to be done with the aid of Anglo teachers. The ratio of Anglo teachers to Mexican American teachers is 20 to 1, while the ratio of the children is almost five to one. We hope to have a massive in service training program to help our teachers develop in the bilingual technique.

In conclusion, I would like to say that bilingualism is not a new phenomenon. It has occurred for centuries all over the world wherever frontiers separate

people with two languages. We all know the situation in Switzerland having countries with different languages bordering her. Bilingualism in Spanish is very important in this country because of its proximity to the Spanish-speaking world. Science and technology are making this world ever closer today. The destiny of this country will be determined by the relationship that it has with the other countries of this hemisphere. If it were not for the Portuguese-speaking Brazilians, today there would be more Spanish speakers than English speakers in the Western hemisphere. By the end of the century, the ratio of Spanish speakers to English speakers will be almost two to one. We have the natural resources in our part of the country for bilingualizing all of our population. We can serve as the fulcrum of a balance between the two languages. And for those who still think of the melting pot idea as the only way to be the same, to speak one language, and to have one culture---let me relate the message from Ralph Linton on speaking about the 100% American.

Before going our for breakfast he glances through a window, "who sleeps on a bed originated in the Near East, throws back covers domesticated in India or the Near East, slips on his moccasins invented by the Indians of the Eastern woodland, takes off his pajamas invented in India, washes with soap invented by the ancient Gauls, shaves, a rite derived from ancient Egypt.

Made of glass invented in Egypt, and if it is raining puts on overshoes made of rubber discovered by the Central American Indian and takes an umbrella invented in southeastern Asia. At breakfast he eats from a plate of pottery invented in China. His knife is of steel, an alloy first made in southern India, his fork a medieval Italian invention, and his spoon a derivative of a Roman original. When he has finished eating he settles back to smoke, an American Indian habit. While smoking he reads the news of the day, imprinted in characters invented by the ancient Semites upon a material invented in China by a process invented in Germany. As he absorbs the accounts of foreign troubles he will, if he is a good conservative citizen, thank a Hebrew deity in an Indo-European language that he is 100 percent American."

ENDNOTE

[1]This article was originally published in Olstad, C. (Ed.). (1969). *Reports bilingual education commitment and involvement*. Tucson: Southwest Council for Bilingual Education.