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## Editorial Introduction

Dear Colleagues,

The *Journal of Bilingual Education Research and Instruction* is committed to the exchange of educational data, studies, ideas, practices and information with researchers, practitioners and policymakers in this public forum. It is published online once a year and can be accessed at the TABE website homepage, [TABE.org](http://TABE.org).

In this issue readers are invited to an in-depth examination of research, best practice, and advocacy topics that frame our work as bilingual educators. In the lead article, *Bilingual Education in Texas: A Look at the Numbers*, Gregory B. Pulte, explores the factors and demographic changes in Texas that have led to the critical shortage of certified bilingual educators. He documents the number of ELs enrolled in bilingual programs, the bilingual models employed in the state of Texas and the number of bilingual teachers that could serve ELs in Texas. Next, Amy Weaver, Isela Stephens and Joy Esquiedo investigate bilingual learners' perceptions of language experiences in home, school, and community and the significance they placed on speaking two languages in their article, *Spanish and English-Speaking Bilingual Learners' Experiences in the Home, School and Community*. In their article, *Poemas Bilingües, La Patria Grande Latinoamericana y El Gran México en Letras de Estudiantes Mexicanos*, Raul Olmo Fregoso Bailón and Sheila M. Shannon exponen la manera en que unos estudiantes de una escuela secundaria en un barrio de los más pobres y violentos de la ciudad de Guadalajara, México escriben poemas bilingües para describir la manera en que significan las siguientes dos ideas: a) La Patria Grande Latinoamericana, de Simón Bolívar y b) El Gran México, de Américo Paredes.

In *Brokering Biliteracy: Developing Ethnic Identity and Cultural Understandings Through Literacy*, Anissa Wycktor Lynch presents a case study of a third grade transitional bilingual class where she explores the connections participants made during literacy related activities. In their article, *Language of Instruction (Bilingual and English-Only) & It's Effects on 5<sup>th</sup> Grade English Language Learners' Reading Comprehension Proficiencies*, Alison Bailey and Marlen Quintero, examine the impacts that bilingual and English-only instruction have on fifth-grade Spanish-speaking English Language Learners' (ELL students) reading comprehension proficiency. In *The Principal's Role in Advocating an Engaging Curriculum for English Learners*, Emiliano Gonzalez and Susana Franco-Fuenmayor, examine best practices principals should know when working with ELs in their vital role as campus instructional leaders.

Finally, we have added two book reviews. The first is a book review written by Cody Starr of the book *The Translanguaging Classroom: Leveraging Student Bilingualism for Learning* by O. Fernandez Garcia, O., S. Ibarra Johnson, & K. Seltzer published in 2017. The next review is by Lucy Montalvo. She reviews a book written by Kathryn Henn-Reinke and Xee Yang, *The Literacy Club: Effective Instruction and Intervention for Linguistically Diverse Learners*, published in 2017.

Special thanks are due to Editorial Assistant, Cinthia Meraz Pantoja and Technical Assistant Jerry Urquiza. In addition, this issue would not be possible without the members of the Editorial Advisory Board (our manuscript reviewers) and the 20 individuals who submitted manuscripts for publication consideration—a 31% acceptance rate for this issue.

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**Bilingual Education in Texas: A Look at the Numbers**

**Gregory Pulte  
University of Texas at Austin**

## **Abstract**

The population of Texas is growing and driving that increase is growth in the number of Latinos and the number of children whose first language is not English. These changes in school demographics and increases in the number of native Spanish speaking students has important policy implications for Texas public schools and school districts, particularly as the changing demographics of Texas call into question the efforts made by the state and its school districts to support bilingual learners. The purpose of this article is two-fold, to document the number of BLs enrolled in Texas bilingual programs and bilingual models employed in the state of Texas, and to document the numbers of bilingual teachers that could serve English Language Learners in Texas as reflected by Texas' Public Education Information Management System PEIMS. As will be demonstrated, Texas has a critical shortage of the certified bilingual educators needed to meet the needs of the current population of Bilingual Learners.

**Keyword:** Bilingual teacher shortage, bilingual program models



**Background and Introduction.** The purpose of this article is two-fold: 1) to document the number of Bilingual Learners enrolled in Texas bilingual programs and the models employed in the state of Texas, and 2) to report the numbers of bilingual teachers that could serve in Texas classrooms as reflected by Texas' Public Education Information Management System PEIMS. Additionally, this article will reflect upon challenges to providing support for BLs in bilingual classrooms as well as possible solutions.

The population of Texas is growing, and driving that increase is the growth in the Latino population and subsequent growth in the number of children whose first language is not English. For the 2017-2018 school year 5,399,682 total students enrolled in Texas public schools. Among these students, 1,015,372 were identified as ELLs with 525,331 enrolled in a bilingual program and 490,641 English as a Second Language Students ESL (Table 2, PEIMS Standard Reports).

By the year 2040, demographic projections indicate that Texas will be home to 18.09 million Latino people (Texas Demographic Center). Data reported by the Texas Comptroller for Public Accounts Office indicates that Latinos will become the majority demographic group in Texas by 2020 (Texas Comptroller, 2008; Table 3). Other projection data from the Texas Demographic Center's State Demographer indicates that the Latino population of Texas will become the majority population in the year 2024 (Table 5). While growth in Texas' Latino population does not preclude a need to expand bilingual education programs in Texas, growth in the Latino population implies continued growth in the number of native language Spanish speaking children. In other words, as the number of Latinos in Texas grows, the number of children who benefit from bilingual instruction will also grow.

The increase in the number of Latinos in Texas in the coming years, and subsequently Bilingual learners, engenders important implications for education policy, implications that must be considered proactively rather than reactively. Policy-makers must recognize that continued growth in this population requires efforts to develop curricular and instructional practices designed for these students.

To support the needs of bilingual learners, there is a need to assess where the state of Texas is situated in relation to bilingual learners, particularly students whose native language is Spanish as these students are by far the most numerous, and to proactively address the needs of this group as they become the majority population in Texas. Table 7 provides the number of Spanish speakers within Texas public schools. While not all Spanish speakers are enrolled in a bilingual program or identified as ELLs, the high representation of Spanish speakers represents an opportunity for the state of Texas to realize the value of bilingualism and biliteracy, an advantage not found in other states. Additionally, consideration must be given to the number of teachers required to teach in bilingual classrooms. This analysis indicates, based on the Texas Education Agency's data, that Texas has a shortage of bilingual teachers needed to serve its ELL population.

## Literature Review: Bilingual Education Benefits

Bilingual education is important, and especially important in the state of Texas where there are high numbers of Spanish speakers. Texas is at an advantage because Texas law authorizes the use of bilingual education to support ELLs. Effective bilingual education programs are important because they develop language and literacy in two languages. The benefits of literacy are cognitive, economic, and social (Moore, Fee, Ee, Wiley, & Arias, 2014).

**Linguistic and Cognitive Student Benefits.** Linguistic and cognitive benefits of bilingual education are reflected in student achievement. Education in a student's native language is critical for many reasons. Among these reasons are the recognition of the importance of the student's native language for literacy development and that native language as a strength in a student's linguistic development (Rodriguez, Carrasquillo, Lee, 2014).

According to Baraca, Bialystok, Castro, and Sanchez (2014), a change in understanding about the positive benefits of bilingualism occurred in the early 1960s with the publication of Peal and Lambert's (1962) research that bilingual children outperform monolingual children on measures of both verbal and nonverbal intelligence, as well as scoring higher on skills that required symbolic manipulation and reorganization (Peal & Lambert, 1962; Baraca et al., 2014).

Detailed in Baraca, Bialystok, Castro, and Sanchez (2014), is a comprehensive review of the literature that focused on the cognitive development of bilingual children. Their observations include cognitive benefits for bilinguals in the areas of executive control, brain function, and theory of mind (Baraca, Bialystok, Castro, and Sanchez, 2014).

Long-term longitudinal research from Collier and Thomas (20017), over the course of 32 years from 1985 through 2017, demonstrates significant achievement for bilingual learners participating in bilingual programs that value the students first language as well as the target language (Collier & Thomas, 2017). Collier and Thomas (2017) find that English only programs and short-term programs such as transitional early-exit are not as effective at closing the achievement gap between English speakers and ELLs.

**Economic Benefits.** In addition to the linguistic and cognitive benefits of bilingual education, recent studies increasingly demonstrate economic benefits for being bilingual. While results from past studies did not associate economic benefits with bilingualism in terms of greater income, recent work employing diverse methodologies counter this conclusion (Agirdag, 2014, Callahan & Gandara, 2014; Porras & Gandara, 2014). Recent studies indicate that employers prefer hiring bilingual workers across all sectors of the economy (Agirdag, 2014; Porras & Gandara, 2014).

In addition to bilinguals having a greater chance of being hired when compared to English monolinguals, some studies indicate that bilinguals also earn greater income. Using multinomial linear regression analysis, Agirdag (2014) used data from two independent data sets, the National Educational Longitudinal Study NELS and the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study CILS, where he investigated the cost to those who experience "linguistic assimilation". Agirdag found that bilinguals were more likely to be employed fulltime when compared to monolingual peers,

but they also earned significantly more income than English dominate counterparts. Agirdag estimated a difference of \$2,000 to \$3,200 annually (Agirdag, 2013; Agirdag, 2014). Moore, Fee, Ee, Wiley & Arias (2014) also found that for the middle and older age brackets, bilinguals were as likely to be employed as monolingual peers and to earn more than speakers of English only. Similarly, Rumbaut (2014), using regression analysis, found that “balanced” bilinguals, that is being equally proficient in both Spanish and English, earned significantly more income over linguistic minorities who were dominate English speakers (Rumbaut, 2014).

Alternatively, Robinson-Cimpian (2014) found slightly lower earnings for male bilinguals, but significantly higher participation within the labor market of bilingual females compared to monolingual English speakers. In fact, a research study from Alarcon, Di Paolo, Heyman, & Morales (2014), and Agirdag (2014), using multinomial logistic regression analysis, each found that bilinguals were more likely to be employed overall than non-bilingual counterparts.

In addition to higher income and a greater likelihood of being hired, Alarcon et al (2014) found a practical value of bilingualism with bilinguals highly represented across several occupations involving high oral and written interactions in a multilingual setting. These include medical professionals as well as attorneys and first-responders (Alarcon, Di Paolo, Heyman, & Morales, 2014). Moore, et al (2014), using American Community Survey ACS data, also found that bilingual ability in some instances improves employability as well as improving the likelihood of higher wages (Moore, Fee, Ee, Wiley, Arias, 2014). Ultimately, the prevailing evidence demonstrates that there is a wage bonus for being bilingual, although not in all cases, as well as a greater opportunity to be hired if one is bilingual and greater employability across many career fields.

**Benefits to the State and Society.** Bilingualism brings long-term benefits to the state. Not only does bilingualism promote employability, and the potential to earn more over one’s lifetime, bilingualism improves the chances that students will graduate from high school. Quantitative research conducted by Rumbaut (2014) found that balanced bilingualism had a negative counter effect to dropping out of high school and that balanced bilinguals were significantly less likely to drop out of high school than monolingual English speakers and students with limited bilingual ability (Rumbaut, 2014).

In addition to increased graduation rates for fluent bilinguals, Santibañez and Zárata (2014) found a statistically significant relationship between the likelihood of bilinguals going to college (Santibañez & Zárata, 2014). Santibañez and Zárata (2014) proffer that the odds of graduating high school and attending college are significantly increased when bilingual children interact with family members at a high level of proficiency from the early years forward. Additionally, they argue that the public discourse that favors the notion of “linguistic assimilation”, or “language assimilation” as Agirdag (2014) described it, is counter-productive and reduces the chance that bilinguals will attend college and ultimately become productive contributors to the labor market (Santibañez and Zárata, 2014), as well as to state and local economies.

Students who graduate high school complete college ultimately contribute through their labor and through the expansion of tax revenue that the state absorbs. For the state to benefit from

having many thousands of bilingual and biliterate people within its boundaries, Texas must take advantage of the opportunity such language diversity presents (Gandara & Callahan, 2014).

The research literature indicates that there are cognitive, economic, and social advantages to being bilingual. Rather than engaging in the perpetuation of language assimilation detrimental to future student success, the state of Texas needs to improve support for bilingual education and bilingual learners by demonstrating a commitment to the recruitment and training of bilingual teachers.

**Bilingual Education Policy in Texas.** In 1973, Texas Senator Carlos Truán introduced the Bilingual Education Act (Rosado, 2005). The Bilingual Education Act became law and requires that bilingual education be offered by a school district when 20 or more students in any grade level share a language other than English (TEC §29.053(c)). If less than 20 students share a language other than English, schools are authorized to offer ESL instruction (Lara-Alecio, Galloway, Irby, Rodriguez, & Gomez, 2004). Despite the legal requirements mandating the implementation of bilingual education for students who share a common language other than English, struggles remain in the recruitment of teachers.

Efforts and funding for the provision of academic programming that promotes bilingualism is important to the long term social and economic well-being of the state. As ELLs approach nearly one-fifth of the Texas school student population (Table 2), it becomes more necessary than ever to support robust bilingual education policies and practices that serve the needs of Texas students. There is also a need to assess where the state of Texas is situated in relation to bilingual learners, particularly native Spanish language bilingual learners as these are by far the most numerous, and to proactively address the needs of this group whose population continues to increase. One of these needs is to consider the number of teachers required for bilingual classrooms. As I will show, Texas has a shortage of the certified bilingual educators needed to meet the needs of the current population of ELLs, and the need will increase in the coming years.

### **Theoretical Framework: Critical Theory**

This paper employs a critical theory framework to draw attention to the oppression and subordination of traditionally disenfranchised groups. Critical theory seeks to link schooling's historical, political, economic, and social contexts (Sirotnik & Oaks 1986a, 1986b; Capper, 1998), by engaging in intellectual, rational dialogue to discuss problems in educational practice (Apple, 1998; Popkewitz, 1984, as cited in Capper, 1998). This manuscript interprets through a critical theory lens how linguistically diverse students suffer disenfranchisement, denial of resources, and cultural subordination.

**Bilingual Education Practice in Texas.** Currently, language programs offered for ELL students in Texas include various models of bilingual education as well as English as a second language ESL. Slightly less than ten percent of ELLs in Texas public schools are enrolled in a bilingual education program, while slightly more than nine percent of ELLs are enrolled in ESL (Table 2, 2012-2018). For a breakdown of the percent of ELL students enrolled in a bilingual education program or an ESL program in Texas see Table 2. According to PEIMS reports, during

the 2017-2018 school year, 5,399,682 students were enrolled in public schools with 525,331 enrolled in a bilingual program and 490,641 students enrolled in ESL (Table 2, PEIMS 2017-2018).

In light of the trend of an increasing population of Latinos in Texas and particularly ELLs assuming the trend continues, it is important to ask:

- 1) How many bilingual educators should Texas school districts require to support linguistically diverse students in a bilingual program according to state legal requirements?
- 2) What are mechanisms that the Texas State Legislature and school districts can use to address the need for bilingual teachers?
- 3) What challenges exist that limit the supply of bilingual educators?

Answering these questions will contribute to the formulation of policy that serves Texas' evolving population and best meets the needs of its students.

While bilingual education program models differ, bilingual programs share characteristics that benefit non-native speakers of English. These characteristics include: the development of the student's primary language through native language instruction, the learning of a second language, which for the U.S. and Texas language minority student is English, and finally, the development of content areas using both the native language and the second language (Ovando, Combs, & Collier, 2006).

In Texas, school districts report to TEA the bilingual education model in which ELL students are enrolled. From the PEIMS data, the number of students enrolled in each bilingual program model offered in Texas public schools can be reported. Focusing on the elementary grades, Texas offers four bilingual education program models for grades Kindergarten through grade five, these models as defined by TEA include:

1. *Transitional bilingual/early exit*: a bilingual program that serves students identified as students of limited English proficiency in both English and Spanish and transfers a student to English-only instruction not earlier than two or later than five years after the student enrolls in school (Texas Education Agency, Division of NCLB Program Coordination Title III, Part A – English Language Acquisition).
2. *Transitional bilingual/late exit*: a bilingual program that serves students identified as students of limited English proficiency in both English and Spanish and transfers a student to English-only instruction not earlier than six or later than seven years after the student enrolls in school (Texas Education Agency Division of NCLB Program Coordination Title III, Part A).
3. *Dual language immersion/two-way*: a biliteracy program that integrates students proficient in English and students identified as students of limited English proficiency in both English and Spanish and transfers a student identified as a student of limited English proficiency to English-only instruction not earlier than six or later than seven years after the student enrolls in school (Texas Education Agency Division of NCLB Program Coordination Title III, Part A).
4. *Dual language immersion/one-way*: a biliteracy program that serves only students identified as students of limited English proficiency in both English and Spanish and transfers a student to English-only instruction not earlier than six or

later than seven years after the student enrolls in school (Texas Education Agency Division of NCLB Program Coordination Title III, Part A).

In addition to the bilingual education program models provided at the elementary school level, Texas education code authorizes Content-Based ESL and Pull-Out ESL. Content-based ESL is:

“an English program that serves students identified as students of limited English proficiency in English only by providing a full-time teacher certified under TEC §29.061(c) to provide supplementary instruction for all content area instruction. It integrates English-as-a-second-language instruction with subject matter instruction which focuses not only on learning a second language but using that language as a medium to learn mathematics, science, social studies, or other academic subjects.” (Texas Education Agency Division of NCLB Program Coordination Title III, Part A, 2008-2009).

Pull-out ESL is also offered for students ELLs at the elementary school level and is defined as:

“an English program that serves students identified as students of limited English proficiency in English only by providing a certified teacher under Section 29.061(c) to provide English language arts instruction exclusively, while the student remains in a mainstream instructional arrangement in the remaining content areas.” Texas Education Agency Division of NCLB Program Coordination Title III, Part A, 2008-2009).

Literature suggests a move from transitional bilingual education models to dual language models as dual language programs have become increasingly popular (Gomez, Freeman, D. & Freeman, Y., 2005). It is also challenging to know precisely how many students participate in dual language programs. According to Gomez, Freeman, and Freeman (2005), “It is extremely difficult to keep track of the number of dual language programs, in part because of their rapid growth” (Gomez, Freeman D., & Freeman, Y, 2005, pp. 147).

There is agreement among bilingual educators that the optimal approach to teaching linguistically diverse Spanish speaking students is through dual language (Collier & Thomas, 2005; Amaro-Jimenez & Torres-Elias, 2012). According to Rosado (2005), there is remarkable growth in the occurrence of dual language programs constituting a new trend. This assessment is supported by the PEIMs data when one-way dual language and two-way dual language models are aggregated with the total number of ELLs enrolled is 287,554 or 53.4% while 46.6% of ELLs are enrolled in a transitional model (Table 6).

Dual language programs provide instruction in the student’s native language and in English balancing the development of language, academics, and social development while not sacrificing the development of one language at the expense of the other. (Christian, 1994; Lara-Alecio et al, 2004; Collier & Thomas, 2005). Two-way dual language models develop the language skills of all students, English language dominant and language minority (Lara-Alecio et al, 2004; Collier & Thomas, 2005).

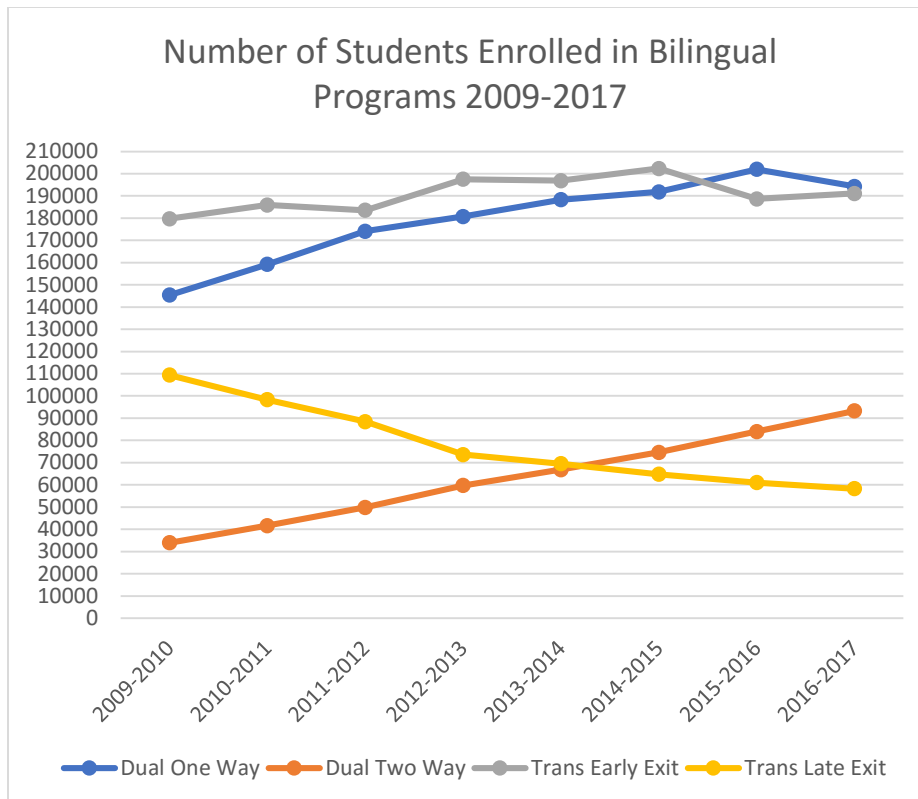
The popularity of the two-way dual model is that the two-way dual language is viewed as an inclusive model because it does not segregate speakers of the other language from speakers of English and values both languages equally (Lara-Alecio et al, 2004; Collier & Thomas, 2005; Collier & Thomas, 2017). Two-way dual language models emphasize the development of proficiency in both languages when students employ both languages within the classroom (Collier & Thomas, 2005). Dual language programs use 50-50 models including 50% English speakers and 50% speakers of the other language, but programs can have varying proportions (Rosado, 2005).

While the popularity of dual language programs has grown, this growth has not come without pushback, specifically regarding the two-way dual language model. Two-way dual language is under scrutiny because of the potential for preferencing English language dominance over the content instructions and linguistic development of ELLs (Cervantes-Soon, Dorner, Palmer, Heiman, Schwerdtfeger, & Choi, 2017; Heiman & Yanes, 2018). The concern emerges from the ways in which English dominate parents can exert influence to support their interests and those of their children to the exclusion of ELLs (Heiman & Yanes, 2018). Research in Utah from Valdez, Freire, and Delevan (2016) found a significant drop in access for students who were not White, wealthy, or English language dominate. They argue that this two-way dual language approach benefits those with privilege to the exclusion of those who bilingual education was historically intended to serve, referring to the outcome as the “gentrification” of dual language (Valdez, Freire, & Delavan, 2016).

### **Findings**

According to data derived from PEIMS, for the 2016-2017 school year, just under 195,000 students were enrolled in a dual one-way program, and a little less than 60,000 students were enrolled in a transitional late-exit program (Table 6). It should be stated that while one-way dual language and transitional late-exit bilingual programs are recorded as distinct by PEIMS data from TEA, practitioners sometimes regard these two models as essentially the same, with distinctions being made in the percentage of instructional time spent in English and Spanish. Based on PEIMS data for 2016-2017, the number of students aggregated across the dual one-way model and transitional late-exit model is 252,555 students out of a total 536,944 students or about 47% (Calculated from data Table 6). The remaining number of students enrolled in a bilingual education model is 284,389 across transitional early-exit and two-way dual language models (calculated from Table 6). This indicates that more ELLs are enrolled in transitional early-exit programs and two-way dual language programs than one-way dual language and transitional late-exit models, with most ELLs remaining enrolled in the transitional early-exit model. Given that the dual one-way model closely resembles the transitional late-exit model, the assertion that dual language programs are more popular than transitional models may be dubious on this point. It may be the case that school districts are changing the model from transitional late-exit to one-way dual language nominally but not distinctly in practice.

In the chart that follows, the PEIMS data reveals that, in Texas, the most prevalent bilingual program models are the transitional early-exit along with the dual one-way program model. The transitional late-exit model appears to be in decline while dual two-way bilingual programs are trending upward over the past eight years in terms of the number of students enrolled in the particular program.



*\*Chart adapted from a report generated September 11th, 2017 from the Texas Education Agency's Public Education Information Management Systems (PEIMS) PEIMS custom report.*

**Bilingual Teacher Shortage.** From the PEIMs data, the number ELLs in Texas public schools is given, and the number of ELLs enrolled in a bilingual program is given. From this data, the number of ELLs not being served by a bilingual program can be determined as well as the number of bilingual classrooms in need of a bilingual teacher with 22 students per classroom. Derived from PEIMs standard reports, an estimate of the number bilingual teachers per governing institution can be made, whether statewide, region-wide, or per Texas public school district.

The total number of teachers needed to serve bilingual classrooms can be determined by taking the number of ELLs identified and subtracting the number of ELLs currently enrolled in a bilingual program along with the number of ELLs enrolled in Special Education only along with the number of bilingual program parent denials for grades Kindergarten through grade five, as these students do not require bilingual services (see Tables 8-13 examples). The solution to this calculation provides the number of ELLs enrolled in an ESL program plus the number of ELLs not enrolled in any program. For this calculation, the assumption is made that ELLs enrolled in an ESL program would ideally be better served in a bilingual education program and would be enrolled in a bilingual program if the bilingual teachers were available.

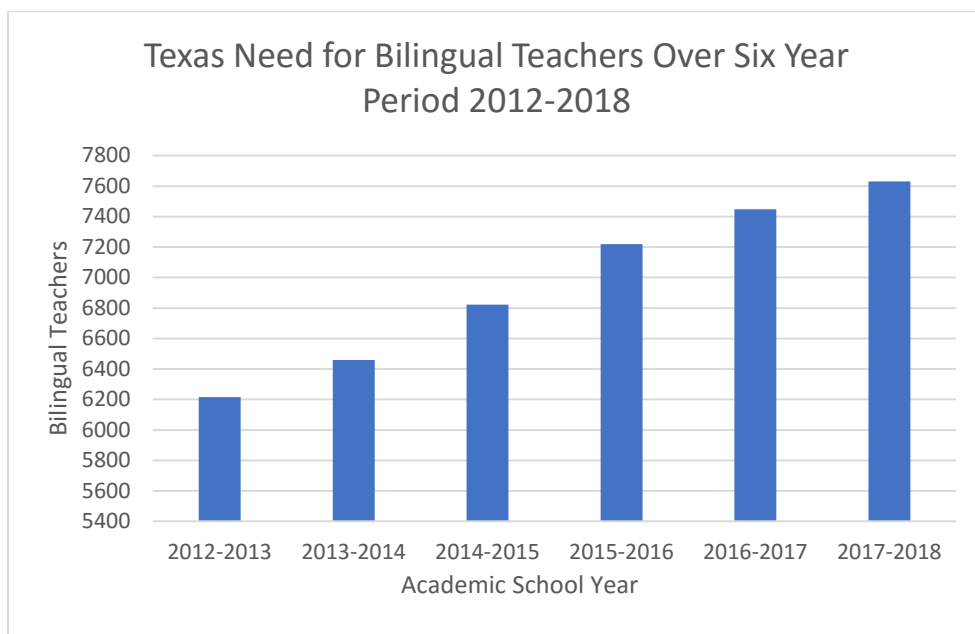
For this calculation, the assumption is made that the high numbers of ELL students enrolled in ESL reflected in Tables 8-13 are enrolled in ESL because the school districts were not required to provide a bilingual program for these students. Not requiring a bilingual program reflects that the school district requested and was granted an exception or that the number of ELLs at any grade



level was less than 20. However, with the enrollment of nearly fifty percent of the state’s ELLs in ESL programs there appears to be an inability to staff classrooms with bilingual teachers, indicative of a shortage.

Calculating the number of bilingual teachers needed using PEIMs data from Kindergarten through grade five presents a conservative estimate of the number of bilingual teachers that could be recruited to provide bilingual services because data for Kindergarten through grade five does not include ELLs enrolled in early education, prekindergarten, or grade six and beyond as school districts are not required to support these grade levels with bilingual programs (Texas Education Code, §89.1205). However, this calculation does reflect the number of bilingual classroom teachers that Texas schools ideally should provide ELLs for grades Kindergarten through grade five understanding that ELLs would better be served by a bilingual program rather than an ESL program.

Derived from the TEA’s PEIMs data, tables 8 through 13 demonstrate that for academic school years 2012-2013 through 2017-2018 there is a deficit in the number of bilingual teachers available for ELLs. In the 2012-2013 school year, the number of teachers that could be recruited to serve in a bilingual classroom is approximately 6,215 (Table 8). By the 2017-2018 school year, that number had grown to 7,630 possible teachers that could meet the needs of its Kindergarten through grade five ELL students (Table 13). As the chart that follows shows, the need for certified bilingual teachers has increased over the past five years. A growth of 6,215 potential teachers to 7,630 represents a percent increase of 19.8 percent over five years. The overwhelming majority of these ELLs that are not being served by a bilingual program are enrolled in ESL.



*\*Chart derived from PEIMS data presented in Table 8-13. PEIMS Standard Reports.*

State and federal laws mandate that ELLs are provided bilingual services, yet this mandate is not being carried out through the inability to recruit and retain teachers to serve in bilingual

classrooms. The 2017-2018 deficit of 7,630 of teachers is unsettling in lieu of the state mandate to implement bilingual education.

**Challenges to Bilingual Education in Texas.** Contributing to this critical shortage of bilingual teachers is the allowance of exceptions or waivers to the law because of a purported inability to recruit bilingual teachers. Exceptions to bypass the state mandate to support ELL students as outlined in Texas Education Code §89.1205 (Required Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language Programs) are granted with the submission of an application waiver. According to TEA, “A district or charter school that does not have the appropriately certified teachers to serve ELLs in accordance with Texas Education Code (TAC) §89.1205 must apply to TEA for a bilingual exception and/or ESL waiver. This application must be made each year there is a need for an exception and/or waiver” (Texas Education Code §89.1207).

In addition to insisting that school districts provide certified bilingual teachers to classrooms, effective efforts to support linguistically diverse students in Texas must be supported through funding from the state legislature. According to Judge John Dietz of the 250<sup>th</sup> Civil District Court in Travis County (Travis County Courts, 2013), “Bilingual education programs should be receiving at least four times the funding weight that they currently receive if children are going to receive an adequate education” (Tinajero, 2005, p. 17-18). Due to the substantial lack of funding for bilingual education, and Texas public schools generally, bilingual program decisions are made not based on what is best for students but rather on which program is the least expensive regardless of effectiveness (Tinajero, 2005).

At the community level, Anglo ideological opposition to bilingual education and the disenfranchisement of students in bilingual programs is predominate in areas where there has occurred a rapid expansion of an already large Latino community (Hempel, Lynn M., Dowling, Julie A., Boardman, Jason D., & Ellison, Christopher G, 2012). Dowling et al (2012), conducted a research study of attitudes toward bilingual education in Texas and documented anti-bilingual attitudes through survey results. This research employed a critical theory lens and observed that the interests of students in bilingual education programs are subordinate to the dominant Anglo culture as Anglos increasingly perceive bilingual education as a threat.

Amaro-Jimenez & Torres-Elias (2012) also conducted a qualitative study of bilingual education practice in Texas from a critical perspective by engaging in discussions with bilingual teachers. Amaro-Jimenez and Torres-Elias documented challenges to bilingual education and determined that a shallow commitment, as well as deficit and biased thinking from school personnel in supporting bilingual education emerged as a strong challenge to the efficacy of bilingual education in school districts (Amaro-Jimenez & Torres-Elias, 2012). “There exists a cultural bias against bilingual students directed particularly against students who may not be in the country legally” (Amaro-Jimenez & Torres-Elias, 2012, pp. 59). This bias provides a basis for the failure to provide resources and services to bilingual students and educators (Amaro-Jimenez & Torres-Elias, 2012).

## Conclusions

This look at the numbers reveals a large number of ELLs who could be enrolled in bilingual programs but are not. Most ELLs who are not enrolled in a bilingual program are enrolled instead in ESL, however, the incredible number of ELLs enrolled in ESL and the number of teachers that would be needed to staff bilingual program classrooms calls into question the efforts made by support bilingual learners. One must conclude that ELLs enrolled in ESL are enrolled there because of the shortage of bilingual teachers, otherwise these ELLs would be enrolled in a bilingual program an accordance with state law.

Interpreted through a critical lens, this analysis reveals that the dominant culture subordinates and disenfranchises students in bilingual programs through a failure to support teacher training or to support the bilingual programs that would empower bilingual learners. The Texas State Legislature has not adequately provided incentives for university teacher preparation programs as well as alternative certification programs to recruit, train, and retain bilingual teachers.

If the state of Texas by law requires ELLs to be enrolled in bilingual programs where twenty or more of the same language group are represented per grade level per school, the onus is on the state to support the bilingual programs required, particularly through the implementation of policies and funding for the recruitment of teachers into the classroom. Rather than requiring school districts to supply classrooms with bilingual teachers, TEA allows a dodge of the law through the completion of an exception waiver.

Educational pathways for young people to enter the teaching profession must be created, and where they exist they must be expanded. The state's lawmakers need to not only support bilingual learners in Texas for their own educational well-being, but also to take advantage of the wealth of linguistic capital found within the state of Texas.

Additionally, the placement of ELLs in ESL programs needs to stop as students would be better served by bilingual teachers. Efforts must be made at the state legislature to adhere to the state's legal obligations to provide for the academic needs of ELLs through bilingual education programs that stress native language development rather than through the allowance of English only based approaches.

A shortage of bilingual educators constitutes a denial of the resources required to effectively implement bilingual programs for students. The denial of resources, including teachers, demonstrates a tenet of Critical Theory on the part of the dominant group through the failure to provide for appropriate recruitment, training, and funding of programs for linguistically diverse and non-dominant culture students. Ultimately, the refusal to support linguistically diverse students subordinates and assimilates bilingual learners rather than taking advantage of the cultural and linguistic experiences they bring to the classroom. While Texas appears to demonstrate a commitment to bilingualism through the implementation of bilingual education programs, what happens in practice is a process of cultural hegemony as ELLs are not adequately supported through the provision of bilingual teachers.

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## Appendix A

Table 1  
Texas Student Enrollment Demographics 2017-2018

Ethnicity	Number Students
Black or African American	680,777
American Indian or Alaska Native	20,586
Asian	235,491
Hispanic	2,827,874
Two or More Races	122,440
White	1,504,515
Total All Ethnicities	5,399,682

\*Table 1 derived from report generated July 25, 2018 from the Texas Education Agency's Public Education Information Management Systems (PEIMS). Retrieved from: [https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/adhocrpt/Standard\\_Reports.html](https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/adhocrpt/Standard_Reports.html)

Table 2  
Total 2012-2018 Texas ELL, Bilingual, and ESL Student Enrollment

YEAR	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL ELL STUDENTS	TOTAL BILINGUAL STUDENTS	TOTAL ESL STUDENTS	PERCENT BILINGUAL	PERCENT ESL
2017-2018	5,399,682	1,015,372	525,331	490,641	9.73	9.09
2016-2017	5,359,127	1,010,756	537,055	468,710	10.02	8.75
2015-2016	5,299,728	980,487	535,660	433,475	10.11	8.18
2014-2015	5,323,065	949,074	533,600	397,776	10.02	7.47
2013-2014	5,151,925	900,476	521,591	357,635	10.12	6.94
2012-2013	5,075,840	864,682	511,629	329,095	10.08	6.48

Table 2 derived from report generated July 25, 2018 from the Texas Education Agency's Public Education Information Management Systems (PEIMS). Retrieved from: [https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/adhocrpt/Standard\\_Reports.html](https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/adhocrpt/Standard_Reports.html)

Table 3  
Texas Population Growth 1980-2040 (in millions)

Year	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
White	9.4	10.3	11.1	11.3	11.5	11.7	11.8	11.8	11.8	11.7	11.5
Hispanic	3	4.3	6.7	7.8	9.1	10.4	11.9	13.4	15.1	16.9	<b>18.8</b>
Black	1.7	2	2.4	2.6	2.8	2.9	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.4
Other	0.2	0.4	0.7	0.8	1	1.1	1.3	1.4	1.6	1.8	2
Total	14.2	17	20.9	22.6	24.3	26.2	28	29.9	31.8	33.8	35.8

\*Table 3 adapted from a report issued by Texas State Comptroller Office Texas in Focus, a statewide view of opportunities honorable Susan Combs presiding.

Table 4

## Texas Population Growth 1980- 2040 (in millions)

Year	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
White	9.4	10.3	11.1	11.3	11.5	11.7	11.8	11.8	11.8	11.7	11.5
Hispanic	3	4.3	6.7	7.8	9.1	10.4	11.9	13.4	15.1	16.9	18.8
Black	1.7	2	2.4	2.6	2.8	2.9	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.4
Other	0.2	0.4	0.7	0.8	1	1.1	1.3	1.4	1.6	1.8	2
Total	14.2	17	20.9	22.6	24.3	26.2	28	29.9	31.8	33.8	35.8

\*Table 4 adapted from a report issued by Texas State Comptroller Office Texas in Focus, a statewide view of opportunities honorable Susan Combs presiding.

<http://www.window.state.tx.us/specialrpt/tif/961286.pdf>

Table 5

## Texas Population Projections by Ethnic Group

Year	Age_Group	total	Total Anglo	Total Black	Total Latino	Total other
2010	ALL	25,145,561	11,397,345	2,886,825	9,460,921	1,400,470
2011	ALL	25,368,140	11,420,275	2,910,041	9,619,067	1,418,757
2012	ALL	25,587,758	11,441,256	2,932,774	9,777,086	1,436,642
2013	ALL	25,804,803	11,460,467	2,955,154	9,935,099	1,454,083
2014	ALL	26,018,996	11,477,791	2,977,005	10,093,070	1,471,130
2015	ALL	26,230,098	11,493,072	2,998,297	10,251,044	1,487,685
2016	ALL	26,438,031	11,506,219	3,018,948	10,409,113	1,503,751
2017	ALL	26,642,846	11,517,175	3,038,931	10,567,403	1,519,337
2018	ALL	26,844,587	11,525,875	3,058,209	10,726,098	1,534,405
2019	ALL	27,043,215	11,532,278	3,076,708	10,885,229	1,549,000
2020	ALL	27,238,610	11,536,110	3,094,463	11,044,873	1,563,164
2021	ALL	27,430,846	11,537,397	3,111,505	11,205,047	1,576,897
2022	ALL	27,619,758	11,536,122	3,127,711	11,365,689	1,590,236
2023	ALL	27,805,264	11,532,082	3,143,074	11,526,811	1,603,297
2024	ALL	27,987,306	11,525,253	3,157,628	11,688,388	1,616,037
2025	ALL	28,165,689	11,515,558	3,171,310	11,850,277	1,628,544
2026	ALL	28,340,192	11,502,873	3,184,103	12,012,361	1,640,855
2027	ALL	28,510,652	11,487,277	3,196,030	12,174,404	1,652,941

\*Table 5 adapted from Age, Sex and Race/Ethnicity (ASRE) Population by Migration Scenario Texas State Demographer. <http://txsdc.utsa.edu/Data/TPEPP/Projections/>

Table 6

## Total Texas Bilingual Education Program Student Enrollment 2009-2017 School Years

Program Type	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Dual One Way	145397	159233	174138	180709	188259	191853	201939	194293
Dual Two Way	33918	41656	49865	59705	66843	74598	83963	93261
Trans Early Exit	179733	185898	183540	197520	196853	202316	188661	191128
Trans Late Exit	109382	98323	88420	73606	69543	64726	60980	58262

\*Table 6 adapted from a custom report requested September 28th, 2017 from the Texas Education Agency's Public Education Information Management Systems (PEIMS). PEIMS Custom Reports.



Table 7  
2017-2018 Total Student Enrollment, Total ELLs, Total Native Spanish Speakers

YEAR	HOME LANGUAGE	EE	PK	KG	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2017-2018	STUDENTS ENROLLED	23,998	232,177	371,618	388,637	394,362	409,974	413,819	414,386	402,596	402,472	398,598	432,951	397,209	371,871	345,014
2017-2018	ELLs IDENTIFIED	190	88,932	97,663	106,031	104,827	105,589	96,042	87,114	70,308	62,658	53,487	51,896	38,624	29,504	22,507
2017-2018	SPANISH SPEAKERS	173	76,196	83,613	92,077	92,662	94,731	87,572	80,396	64,891	57,989	49,423	47,458	34,869	26,397	19,857
TOTAL STUDENTS ENROLLED =		5,399,682														
TOTAL ELLs IDENTIFIED =		1,015,372														
TOTAL SPANISH SPEAKERS =		908,304														

\*Table 7 adapted from a report generated July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018 from the Texas Education Agency's Public Education Information Management Systems (PEIMS). PEIMS Standard Reports (note: Spanish speakers are not a subset of ELLs identified).

Table 8  
2012-2013 Total Certified Bilingual Teachers Statewide per ELL Classroom

Year	Category	KG	1	2	3	4	5
2012-2013	A. ELLs IDENTIFIED	107,554	111,700	106,034	99,525	85,067	68,495
2012-2013	B. NON-SP ED ELLs IN BIL	76,613	77,148	71,911	65,827	54,753	41,908
2012-2013	C. SP ED ELLs IN BIL	3,382	3,757	3,755	3,466	3,605	3,570
2012-2013	D. ELLs IN BILINGUAL	79,995	80,905	75,666	69,293	58,358	45,478
2012-2013	E. NON-SP ED ELLs IN ESL	22,189	23,697	22,542	21,801	18,510	15,746
2012-2013	F. SP ED ELLs IN ESL	1,285	1,644	1,799	2,007	2,331	2,286
2012-2013	G. ELLs IN ESL	23,474	25,341	24,341	23,808	20,841	18,032
2012-2013	H. ELLs IN SP ED ONLY	428	580	708	864	984	973
2012-2013	I. ELLs W/PAR. DEN	3,426	4,652	5,224	5,465	4,740	3,896
2012-2013	J. ELLs NO PROGRAMS	231	222	95	95	144	116
ELLs NOT SERVED IN BILIGNUAL PROGRAM =		23,705	25,563	24,436	23,903	20,985	18,148
AT 22 TEACHERS PER STUDENT =		1,078	1,162	1,111	1,087	954	825
TOTAL BILINGUAL TEACHERS NEEDED =		6,215					

\*Table 8 adapted from a report generated July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018 from the Texas Education Agency's Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), PEIMS Standard Reports.

Table 9

## 2013-2014 Total Certified Bilingual Teachers Statewide per ELL Classroom

Year	Category	KG	1	2	3	4	5
2013-2014	A. ELLs IDENTIFIED	107,214	114,316	108,071	102,178	86,325	71,901
2013-2014	B. NON-SP ED ELLs IN BIL	76,293	78,624	72,505	67,396	55,787	44,319
2013-2014	C. SP ED ELLs IN BIL	3,389	3,914	3,805	3,802	3,800	3,572
2013-2014	D. ELLs IN BILINGUAL	79,682	82,538	76,310	71,198	59,587	47,891
2013-2014	E. NON-SP ED ELLs IN ESL	22,271	24,541	23,907	22,538	18,782	16,775
2013-2014	F. SP ED ELLs IN ESL	1,396	1,675	1,912	2,082	2,379	2,496
2013-2014	G. ELLs IN ESL	23,667	26,216	25,819	24,620	21,161	19,271
2013-2014	H. ELLs IN SP ED ONLY	382	611	759	868	959	1,026
2013-2014	I. ELLs W/PAR. DEN	3,173	4,687	4,989	5,277	4,342	3,653
2013-2014	J. ELLs NO PROGRAMS	310	264	194	215	276	60
ELLs NOT SERVED IN BILIGNUAL PROGRAM =		23,977	26,480	26,013	24,835	21,437	19,331
AT 22 TEACHERS PER STUDENT =		1,090	1,204	1,182	1,129	974	879
TOTAL BILINGUAL TEACHERS NEEDED =		6,458					

\*Table 9 adapted from a report generated July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018 from the Texas Education Agency's Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), PEIMS Standard Reports.

Table 10

## 2014-2015 Total Certified Bilingual Teachers Statewide per ELL Classroom

Year	Category	KG	1	2	3	4	5
2014-2015	A. ELLs IDENTIFIED	106,758	114,962	110,612	104,972	92,437	77,646
2014-2015	B. NON-SP ED ELLs IN BIL	75,531	78,707	74,417	68,786	59,919	47,748
2014-2015	C. SP ED ELLs IN BIL	3,423	3,985	3,849	3,790	4,039	3,744
2014-2015	D. ELLs IN BILINGUAL	78,954	82,692	78,266	72,576	63,958	51,492
2014-2015	E. NON-SP ED ELLs IN ESL	22,748	25,272	24,742	24,193	20,812	18,919
2014-2015	F. SP ED ELLs IN ESL	1,434	1,865	1,942	2,245	2,419	2,701
2014-2015	G. ELLs IN ESL	24,182	27,137	26,684	26,438	23,231	21,620
2014-2015	H. ELLs IN SP ED ONLY	382	616	757	885	941	958
2014-2015	I. ELLs W/PAR. DEN	2,985	4,322	4,803	4,991	4,221	3,492
2014-2015	J. ELLs NO PROGRAMS	255	195	102	82	86	84
ELLs NOT SERVED IN BILIGNUAL PROGRAM =		24,437	27,332	26,786	26,520	23,317	21,704
AT 22 TEACHERS PER STUDENT =		1,111	1,242	1,218	1,205	1,060	987
TOTAL BILINGUAL TEACHERS NEEDED =		6,823					

\*Table 10 adapted from a report generated July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018 from the Texas Education Agency's Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), PEIMS Standard Reports.

Table 11

## 2015-2016 Total Certified Bilingual Teachers Statewide per ELL Classroom

Year	Category	KG	1	2	3	4	5
2015-2016	A. ELLs IDENTIFIED	102,570	114,388	111,382	107,355	94,505	82,158
2015-2016	B. NON-SP ED ELLs IN BIL	70,885	77,131	73,650	69,786	60,431	50,803
2015-2016	C. SP ED ELLs IN BIL	3,308	4,094	3,972	3,856	4,043	4,092
2015-2016	D. ELLs IN BILINGUAL	74,193	81,225	77,622	73,642	64,474	54,895
2015-2016	E. NON-SP ED ELLs IN ESL	23,395	26,559	26,171	25,653	22,274	20,040
2015-2016	F. SP ED ELLs IN ESL	1,498	2,018	2,168	2,366	2,695	2,869
2015-2016	G. ELLs IN ESL	24,893	28,577	28,339	28,019	24,969	22,909
2015-2016	H. ELLs IN SP ED ONLY	378	565	772	855	973	1,028
2015-2016	I. ELLs W/PAR. DEN	2,824	3,813	4,485	4,669	3,962	3,184
2015-2016	J. ELLs NO PROGRAMS	282	208	164	170	127	142
ELLs NOT SERVED IN BILIGNUAL PROGRAM =		25,175	28,785	28,503	28,189	25,096	23,051
AT 22 TEACHERS PER STUDENT =		1,144	1,308	1,296	1,281	1,141	1,048
TOTAL BILINGUAL TEACHERS NEEDED =		7,218					

\*Table 11 adapted from a report generated July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018 from the Texas Education Agency's Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), PEIMS Standard Reports.

Table 12

## 2016-2017 Total Self-Contained Certified Bilingual Teachers Statewide per ELL Classroom

Year	Category	KG	1	2	3	4	5
2016-2017	A. ELLs IDENTIFIED	100,390	109,586	110,338	107,500	97,449	85,202
2016-2017	B. NON-SP ED ELLs IN BIL	67,874	72,883	72,860	69,425	62,177	51,662
2016-2017	C. SP ED ELLs IN BIL	3,456	4,071	4,188	3,998	4,198	4,204
2016-2017	D. ELLs IN BILINGUAL	71,330	76,954	77,048	73,423	66,375	55,866
2016-2017	E. NON-SP ED ELLs IN ESL	24,011	26,223	26,284	26,079	23,471	22,002
2016-2017	F. SP ED ELLs IN ESL	1,654	2,116	2,295	2,553	2,794	3,054
2016-2017	G. ELLs IN ESL	25,665	28,339	28,579	28,632	26,265	25,056
2016-2017	H. ELLs IN SP ED ONLY	372	507	682	847	909	1,012
2016-2017	I. ELLs W/PAR. DEN	2,676	3,520	3,853	4,410	3,726	3,120
2016-2017	J. ELLs NO PROGRAMS	347	266	176	188	174	148
ELLs NOT SERVED IN BILIGNUAL PROGRAM =		26,012	28,605	28,755	28,820	26,439	25,204
AT 22 TEACHERS PER STUDENT =		1,182	1,300	1,307	1,310	1,202	1,146
TOTAL BILINGUAL TEACHERS NEEDED =		7,447					

\*Table 12 adapted from a report generated July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018 from the Texas Education Agency's Public Education Information Management System (PEIMSs), PEIMS Standard Reports.

Table 13

2017-2018 Total Self-Contained Certified Bilingual Teachers Statewide per ELL Classroom

Year	Category	KG	1	2	3	4	5
2017-2018	A. ELLs IDENTIFIED	97,663	106,031	104,827	105,589	96,042	87,114
2017-2018	B. NON-SP ED ELLs IN BIL	64,522	68,398	67,712	67,554	60,448	51,955
2017-2018	C. SP ED ELLs IN BIL	3,522	4,192	4,333	4,316	4,315	4,312
2017-2018	D. ELLs IN BILINGUAL	68,044	72,590	72,045	71,870	64,763	56,267
2017-2018	E. NON-SP ED ELLs IN ESL	24,647	26,977	25,818	26,190	23,671	23,419
2017-2018	F. SP ED ELLs IN ESL	1,903	2,302	2,551	2,810	3,002	3,286
2017-2018	G. ELLs IN ESL	26,550	29,279	28,369	29,000	26,673	26,705
2017-2018	H. ELLs IN SP ED ONLY	427	559	637	788	936	932
2017-2018	I. ELLs W/PAR. DEN	2,371	3,385	3,524	3,763	3,481	3,030
2017-2018	J. ELLs NO PROGRAMS	271	218	252	168	189	180
ELLs NOT SERVED IN BILIGNUAL PROGRAM =		26,821	29,497	28,621	29,168	26,862	26,885
AT 22 TEACHERS PER STUDENT =		1,219	1,341	1,301	1,326	1,221	1,222
TOTAL BILINGUAL TEACHERS NEEDED =		7,630					

\*Table 13 adapted from a report generated July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018 from the Texas Education Agency's Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), PEIMS Standard Reports.



**Spanish and English- Speaking Bilingual Learners' Experiences  
in the School, Home and Community**

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### **Abstract**

The present study investigated bilingual learners' perceptions of language experiences in home, school, and community and the significance they placed on speaking two languages. Participants included 51 (25 female, 26 male) children, ages 10 to 12 years, enrolled in dual-language educational programs located in South Texas. Measures included demographic surveys to parents, standardized language surveys of vocabulary in Spanish and English, and in-depth interviews about language experiences in home, school, and community. Commonly emergent themes and the emotional tone (positive, negative, or neutral) of experiential accounts of experiences were identified. Overall, most participants described positive bilingual experiences around themes of family connectedness and translation, and some described negative experiences of discrimination. Implications for theory and practice are discussed.

## **Spanish and English- Speaking Bilingual learners' Experiences in the School, Home and Community**

Bilingual learners can achieve the same or higher levels of competency compared to English monolinguals when placed in supportive educational environments (Genesee, 2015; Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, & Borsato, 2006; Thomas & Collier, 2002). However, little research explores how experiences across environments affect bilingual learners' desire to maintain their heritage language and remain bilinguals. Given the extensive research on how students' investment in their education relates to long-term success (Broussard, & Garrison, 2004), it is important to identify how experiences across contexts collectively shape learners' investment in their own development as a bilingual person. The present study investigates bilingual learners' perceptions of Spanish and English use in their homes, school, and community and the significance they place on speaking two languages.

### **Theoretical Framework**

To understand any aspect of development, such as the development of bilingualism, it is important to consider the contexts in which the language practices and bilingual identity are emerging. The bioecological model of development is a useful framework to apply to consider how this might unfold. This model of development describes changes as occurring through the shaping roles of social contexts in which children live (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Ceci, 2006). The social contexts are described as interacting, nested systems, surrounding and affecting the child at multiple levels. Most immediately affecting the child's language acquisition are such factors as parental and sibling interactions (i.e., factors in the home); followed by factors in the child's broader context (i.e., schools, child care settings, and peer groups); and then more distant factors such as historical time of development. Taking this theoretical framework, the present study examines bilinguals' experiences at home, school, and in the community and the impact of these experiences with family, at school, and in community give shape to bilingual practices and views of bilingualism.

#### **Language at home**

The relationship between home language use and bilingual children's language practices depends on many factors (Cha & Goldenberg, 2015). Some researchers have found a positive relationship between *quantity* of English spoken at home and English outcomes in bilinguals (e.g., Hoff et al., 2012; Oller & Eilers, 2002), while others have emphasized that it is the *quality* of language input that plays an important role in language development (Bohman et al., 2010; Golberg et al., 2008; Hammer et al., 2009, 2011, 2012; Paradis, 2011). Beyond proficiency level, parental beliefs and attitudes also have an impact (De Houwer, 2009). Parents' language ideologies influence children's language development (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Kirsch, 2011). Thus, parents' value of a language and how they support the development of the language can have a positive or negative impact on the child's perception of that language.

Socioeconomic factors also are important moderators of child language development. National studies have shown that bilingual children from low-income families may face particular challenges academically, compared to peers who are not from low-income families (Reardon & Galindo, 2006). Hammer and colleagues (2009) also found that among Spanish-dominant mothers, increases in English usage did not impact children's English vocabulary or emergent

literacy development, but rather it slowed children's Spanish vocabulary development. They suggest that if Spanish-dominant parents wish to build their bilingual child's overall (additive) vocabulary, parents might be better off strengthening their Spanish. This fits well with others' recommendations and scaffolding models of development that suggest building the first language (L1) will strengthen the second language (L2) (e.g., Hoff, Rumiche, Burrige, Ribot, & Welsh, 2014). Correspondingly, Quiroz et al. (2010) found that the more mothers asked labeling questions in L1, the higher their children's vocabulary was in both L1 and L2, though the effect was stronger for L1. Similarly, students with strong reading skills in the home language also have strong reading skills in their second language (August & Shanahan, 2006; Genesee & Riches, 2006).

The present study focused on the child's perceptions about language experiences at home in order to ascertain insight about the relationship between home language use and children's language practices. It was expected that if children perceived Spanish use and bilingualism to be valued and/or necessary at home, this might lead to increased bilingualism, as compared to negative experiences.

### **Being a Bilingual at School**

Spanish-speaking bilingual learners are often stereotyped as poor or low achieving (Smith et al., 2002; Toppelberg, Tabors, Coggins, & Lum, 2005). These negative contextual cues, subtlety, or overtly, provide budding bilinguals with disincentives to invest in learning two languages. Thus, a school climate that devalues its bilingual students likely negatively shapes learner's perceptions of bilingualism and interest in developing as biliterate and bicultural people. Thomas, Apolloni, and Lewis (2014) found that the location of a school and general school atmosphere can affect the students' interest in becoming bilingual. Other researchers also have found that a limited focus on the affective, bicultural aspect of education, hinders students' development into proud bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural citizens (Babino & Steward 2015; Potowski, 2004). Similarly, Kiuru et al. (2015) found that learners who perceived a positive attitude and support from their teachers and classmates and/or peers tended to excel more than those who did not receive such support. Lastly, Oller, Pearson, and Cobo-Lewis (2007) explored profile effects in early bilingual language and literacy (i.e., the idea that bilingual children's language and literacy is stronger in some domains than others) and indicated that bilingualism, when nurtured in well-designed environments of teaching, offers learners many advantages. Thus, the present study focused on examining the child's perceptions about language experiences at school with the expectation that positive experiences might lead to increased bilingualism, as compared to negative experiences.

### **Language of Community**

Few studies have examined the community effects on children's language outcomes. Sneddon (2000) investigated language use and literacy practices of 36 children (aged three-and-a-half, seven and 11) from a Gujarati and Urdu-speaking Muslim community in north-east London and found that children with greater access to the culture and leisure facilities of the community had a higher level of linguistic vitality in Gujarati and were more creative story tellers in both Gujarati and English than children who did not have those opportunities.



Despite rich language resources in a community, there may be only minor effects on language development. Eilers, Pearson, and Cobo-Lewis (2006) reported several cases in the bilingual community of Miami, in which children were losing their Spanish or not developing it as well, despite viewing bilingualism among community leaders. Reese, Thompson, and Goldenberg (2008) examined children's language development, who came from 14 bilingual communities across California and Texas. They found that community-level characteristics only modestly predicted children's language and literacy experiences. The authors suggest that this finding was due to variability across communities with respect to language use, ethnic composition, and education levels. Thus, the impact of any one of the multitude of community factors may be difficult to parse out. The present study asked children directly about their experience speaking in their community as one approach, and provides a useful beginning to understanding the impact of community on bilingual identity development.

### **Purpose**

Despite the few studies focused on the environments of bilingual learners, there are still many unanswered questions about how these interrelate to impact bilingual learners' experiences and perceptions of bilingualism in general. Thus, the present study (a) examines bilingual learners' personal accounts of speaking two languages across a broad range of contexts including home, school, and community; and (b) describes bilingual children's perceptions about the importance of Spanish and English language use. Commonly emergent themes and the emotional tone (positive, negative, or neutral) of experiential accounts of experiences are identified and the implications of these themes are discussed. Specifically, the following research questions were addressed:

1. What are learners' perceptions about opportunities to use the English and Spanish languages in home, school, and community?
2. What are learners' perceptions about the significance of the Spanish and English languages?

### **Method**

#### **Participants**

Participants included 51 (25 female, 26 male) children, ages 10 to 12 years, enrolled in dual-language educational programs located in South Texas. Language proficiency scores revealed that six were monolingual students. Since these six were currently enrolled in the same dual language education programs as others, and the recognition that language acquisition takes time, their responses were retained as part of the sample. The household income varied among the participants' families, from less than \$10,000 (23%) to more than \$100,000 (2%), with 31% ( $n = 16$ ) having an income of \$10,000 to \$20,000.

#### **Procedure**

Parents provided consent and completed demographic surveys. Bilingual learners were assessed in their school by research assistants with a demonstrated proficiency in speaking, understanding, reading, and writing both Spanish and English. The assessments measured bilingual learners' language proficiency and video-recorded interviews provided qualitative data.

As incentives, parents received a small gift, children received a bilingual book, and teachers received a small classroom supply.

## Measures

**Demographic surveys.** Socioeconomic status was determined using parental reports of yearly total household income.

**Language proficiency and dominance.** Participants were administered English and Spanish versions of the Picture Vocabulary subtest of the Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey-Revised (WMLS-R; Woodcock, Muñoz-Sandoval, Ruef, & Alvarado, 2005). Raw scores were converted to standardized scores with a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15, according to standardized procedures.

Using scores from the WMLS-R, participants were classified into one of the following categories: Monolingual, Weak Bilingual, Balanced Bilingual, or Strong Bilingual. Overall, most participants were categorized as balanced (47.1%) or strong bilinguals (37.3%), very few classified as weak bilinguals (3.9%) or monolingual (15.8%).

**Interviews about bilingualism and educational experiences.** Qualitative data were obtained via video-taped interviews. Semi-structured interviews consisting of open-ended questions designed to generate narratives from bilingual learners. Questions asked learners to speak in an open-ended fashion about their experiences in school with special attention focused on instruction, feelings developed during interactions with teachers, school staff, and peers at school. The semi-structured interview included questions such as: “How comfortable do you feel speaking Spanish at school?” “What else can you tell me about your teachers, your experiences at school?” Most interviews occurred in English (50%), Spanish (47%), or used a mixture of both languages (3%).

## Results

Overall, responses varied broadly, but three themes surfaced frequently. The majority of participants described language experiences as they related to (a) family connectedness; (b) translation; and (c) discrimination. Emotional sentiments about these experiences varied across contexts.

### Family Connectedness

The first emergent theme was that of family connectedness. Children reported that they viewed bilingualism as a way to connect with family members and as a way of contributing to the household. Most participants (72.5%) identified Spanish as the language of preference in the home and that they used Spanish to communicate with family. For example, some learners stated, “[I speak Spanish] with my stepmom's mom, 'cause she only speaks Spanish. So, I kind of like to talk to her in Spanish.” Others also talked about speaking to family members in Spanish saying, “Porque mi familia es todos español... y me gusta que me hablen en español... porque como... es más fácil para ellos.” The learners also described talking with extended family in Spanish, “Hablo español con mis abuelitos y mi mom y mi dad... les gusta más el español.”

One stated, “I don’t want her to learn English; I like helping by translating, like every time we watch an English movie she's like, ‘what did they say?’” This example is particular revealing of the commitment to helping family, as it would be quite a task to translate an entire movie!

Other learners also described their love of helping family via translating, “Porque es bastante ayudar a mi mamá...y mi papá.”

Others described other types of positive experiences when teaching and learning language with family, “A veces le enseño un poquito de inglés, le digo a mi mamá vamos al cuarto y te enseno a hablar en inglés ... [mi mama] dice que es muy bonito, y le digo que si aprende los tres idiomas que agarras es una mejor oportunidad de agarrar un trabajo.” Similarly another child said, “I like helping my sister when she doesn’t understand English because then she can learn English...to be bilingual.” Other children described teaching more formally, “What I do with my tía back in Mexico; they have this room like one on the second story and they have a bunch of crayons and a white board with markers and some papers and so, I teach my tías how to speak English and they will call me their teacher.” These statements illustrate that children placed importance of speaking Spanish with family in the context of home.

In one case, the child explicitly contrasts home and school stating, “I am fine with my teachers not teaching me more Spanish. I think my dad can teach me more Spanish... when I read to my dad in Spanish ...he tells me what I am saying wrong and how to pronounce it and anything like that, and after that he gives me a snack.” In some cases, the children also described how they have learned about new ways of thinking because of Spanish in the home. For example, “Mi mamá me enseña cosas de matemáticas Mexicanas.” Collectively these experiences show that children desire to maintain their ability to speak Spanish language to stay connected with family.

Learners also described experiences in school and in community settings. Astoundingly, all respondents had at least one positive comment about using both English and Spanish in the classroom. This likely related to the dual language programs in which they attended, or could have been due to a perceived need to tell interviewers something positive. For example, one child expressed her opinion that having bilingual classrooms was a good idea because she thinks students learn more. While it was not clear if she meant learning more content was possible as a bilingual learner, other students made connections between knowledge gained in the classroom and practical applications, “I can read a lectura and do the lectura workbook...Because if I know both, I can talk to my friends in both languages, and I won’t feel left out.” However, some participants (23.53%) also described negative experiences at school, “Le decía a la maestra que me enseñara más inglés porque a veces unas amigas me hablaban puro inglés y no les entendía lo que decían.” Others described feeling fearful when they did not know English. Another stated, “Mi primer día de escuela, me sentí mal por no saber los dos idiomas...Tenia vergüenza de hablar en español...No sé, es que casi todas mis amigas hablaban en inglés.” Thus, some reported negative experiences of fear, shame, embarrassment, and general feelings of discomfort.

Interestingly, many children’s responses suggested that children were learning about the importance of being bilingual, but that they did not consider the present importance of it. They spoke of the distant benefits of bilingualism, “Uh, when I grow up I want to be a singer ... and whichever state you’re in, or whatever place, you have to know both languages...because if you go touring and go anywhere and if people know Spanish or English you can do both.” They also understood bilingualism as beneficial financially. For example, “...because well if you work as a truck driver some hire people who know English and Spanish, so, um, better money, Spanish is gold.”

Collectively these experiences reveal that children desire to maintain their ability to speak Spanish language to stay connected with family. Maintaining Spanish language use in the home

was overall important. Experiences at school were more diverse. While generally positive, there were more descriptions of negative encounters in the school setting, as compared to the home. Very few children spontaneously described experiences in the community as a bilingual. Perhaps, because data collection occurred within a bilingual community, the school and home contexts were more salient settings to contrast.

### ***Translation***

Translation was a second emergent theme across the interviews. Many (78%) participants also described experiences in which they served as translators, especially for family members. Most (74%) described positive experiences. This revealed the children's desire to be helpful in their families. For example, one stated, "[Being bilingual helps because] my mom doesn't know how to talk English, and also to my dad, ...so I help my mom. I translate to her to Spanish." Another said, "Cuando voy a algún lado con mi abuelita y le hablan en ingles, yo le digo a la señora o señor...pues lo que sea que le pregunten yo se lo contesto en inglés...me gusta traducirle"

However, there were varied responses, and some (16%) expressed negative perceptions of translating experiences. For example, one child said "She says, 'what did he say? ¿Que dijo?' and I tell her what he said, but I get confused and [there are] some things I can't translate into Eng-Spanish." Others also described the experiences negatively, "Cuando voy al algún lugar y como mi papá no habla inglés, yo le digo lo que dijo y [traduzco]...No [me gusta]...me da mucha vergüenza," and another stated, "Sometimes it gets boring 'cause I do it a lot. I get tired." Thus, some children reported the negative emotions of frustration, shame, and fatigue about translating, but others (10%) had neutral experiences, "Si, les digo que significa."

Overall, there were more reports of positive translating than negative or neutral experiences and the majority also mentioned that children generally enjoyed assisting others. They viewed their ability to translate as a way to help their family or other Spanish-speaking people they encountered in the community.

### **Discrimination**

A small, but notable, percentage (5%) of participants described feelings of discrimination associated with their language practices. Children reported feelings of shame and dissatisfaction in the school setting in particular. For example, "Es que, como vamos una escuela en [el norte] porque soy migrante y pos fuimos allá y como na'mas casi las personas siempre hablan inglés allá y una maestra nos había dicho ya para no hablar el español...Yo me sentía incomoda porque pues no es mi culpa que yo sé cómo hablar más el español que ingles...mis papás son de México y yo hablamos el español. Y como quiera lo seguí hablando porque pos pues no tienen derecho de que me tienen que decir..."

The negative experiences were mostly about feeling disconnected. For example one child said, "Like me daba vergüenza... Que yo no sabía inglés y los otros niños, si." A few responses that described discrimination (4%) were coded as neutral (e.g., "I felt fine," when the interviewer probed a comment they had made about discrimination").

## Discussion

While bilingual learners have many different experiences with language, three common themes were identified as occurring across most. Specifically, most participants described experiences around: family connectedness, translation, and discrimination. Learners readily recalled positive accounts of serving as a translator and maintaining connections with family, and negative accounts of perceived discrimination.

Results support models that describe language development and practices as occurring through the shaping roles of social contexts, especially the contexts of home and school (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1988; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Hoff, 2006). The interviews revealed that children had salient and memorable experiences with parents, families, and at school that affected their desires to maintain Spanish, or learn English. The home and school contexts clearly shaped their bilingual practices and views of bilingualism.

These results have many implications for bilingual learners. Children's reports of wanting to retain family connectedness through language strengthen advocates of dual-language programs (Babino & Gonzalez-Carriedo, 2015; Babino & Stewart, 2015), as findings suggest that the benefits of these programs extend beyond academics. The possible impact dual language programs can have on the affective domain of children's development is worth further exploration. Findings also suggest that losing Spanish (losing their bilingualism) might reduce their ability to translate; a skill that most felt positive about. Perhaps more importantly, they may lose the ability to communicate with parents and grandparents, and lose a sense of connectedness to family. These findings are in line with past research highlighting the importance of providing effective and language-affirming bilingual education programs to facilitate language acquisition in both languages (e.g., Marian, Shook, & Schroeder, 2013). Without high-quality bilingual education, many of the learners may lose their ability to communicate with Spanish-Speaking family members and therefore may lose the sense of family support and a connection to their heritage. Therefore, dual language programs can contribute to fostering the biculturalism, along with the bilingualism and biliteracy.

The accounts of discrimination reported by a few of the learners reveals a continued disturbing reality for language minority individuals. Umaña *et al.*, (2015) examined perceived perception of discrimination within the young adolescent Latino(a)s and found that discrimination by adults at school was perceived as a strong threat if connected to the learner's ethnic group. The outcomes of this study can inform the development of outreach and educational programs for educators and community members. When the minority language has been marginalized and learners penalized for the use of their native language, this limits the use of the minority language and restricts personal and academic opportunities (Thomas *et al.*, 2014). Additional research is needed to identify more details about when and how discrimination occurs to develop methods to combat it and provide equity in education.

Lastly, the present study has important implications for educational practices. They suggest that teachers may need to work toward making the *present* and future advantages of bilingualism more salient to children. Several children mentioned a desire to use language to connect with family and friends. Perhaps bilingual education programs could highlight the social usefulness of bilingualism. It should be noted that overall there were positive sentiments about bilingualism perceived by children in this study, suggesting that at least in some school districts

that implement dual language programs there are linguistically affirming practices that have a positive impact. Thus, this study supports others that find cause for sustaining and supporting dual language programs over subtractive programs (Hinton, 2016). By continuing to develop native language, linguistically affirming additive programs not only improve academic outcomes, but also promote family connections, enabling family members to serve as important support mechanisms for their children, increase learning opportunities, and strengthen bilingual children's success.

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**Poemas Bilingües, La Patria Grande Latinoamericana y El Gran México en Letras de  
Estudiantes Mexicanos**

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## Abstract

Este artículo expone la manera en que unos estudiantes de una escuela secundaria en un barrio de los más pobres y violentos de la ciudad de Guadalajara, México escriben poemas bilingües para describir la manera en que significan las siguientes dos ideas: a) La Patria Grande Latinoamericana, de Simón Bolívar y b) El Gran México, de Américo Paredes. El objetivo de este trabajo es contribuir a la discusión sobre como la unidad de los Latinxs desde Canadá hasta Argentina podría ser la clave para cambiar la situación de vida de millones de Latinxs que sufren procesos de colonialidad del poder y la colonialidad de la educación. Utilizando un marco teórico Latinx creado desde la periferia, se utilizó la perspectiva de la colonialidad del poder, así como el trabajo del filósofo mexicano Ramón Xirau para mostrar cómo los poemas bilingües que realizaron los estudiantes son un recurso importante para la creación de la gran patria Latinx continental.

**Palabras clave:** Poemas bilingües, La Patria Grande Latinoamericana, El Gran México, colonialidad de la educación.

## **El contexto de colonialismo en el que se insertan las ideas de la La Patria Grande Latinoamericana y El Gran México**

El colonialismo actualmente se ve representado en una separación simbólica entre los Latinxs que viven ya sea en Canadá o en Estados Unidos del resto de América Latina, cuando Estados Unidos es el país en el que tal vez haya una representación demográfica importante de todos los países Latinoamericanos. Este fenómeno ha presentado a la migración como un proceso que depende de los Latinxs en sus países. Sin embargo, esta versión no habla de cómo la pobreza en los países Latinoamericanos es el resultado de un financiamiento millonario por parte del imperialismo en el contexto de la Guerra Fría para controlar las naciones Latinoamericanas trayendo con sigilo el sufrimiento y migración de millones de Latinoamericanos (Galeano, 1971, 1978, 1986).

En este sentido, se puede examinar la política de la reforma migratoria desde varios puntos de vista. Un punto fundamental en la relación colonial entre Estados Unidos y América Latina es la mano de obra barata y su relación con la migración. Como dirían Massey, Durand y Nolan (2003), esta ha sido una política de humo y espejos desde el Programa Bracero donde el tratamiento de los Latinxs dependía de un cálculo sobre su mano de obra barata (Holmes, 2013), lo cual se olvida en un debate donde se habla solo de la migración como un asunto de criminales (García Hernández, 2015) o de derechos humanos (Compa, 2004), cuando en realidad es un asunto de convergencia de intereses (Bell, 1980). por la mano de obra y no tanto como un asunto donde los migrantes Latinoamericanos les quitan los trabajos a los estadounidenses, algo muy discutible dado que es bien sabido que a los estadounidenses privilegiados no les gustan trabajar por tan poco dinero en condiciones malas sin derechos ni protección (Holmes, 2013).

Sin embargo, es fundamental mencionar que esta relación de convergencia de intereses (Bell, 1980) entre Estados Unidos y México es parte de una agenda diseñada para mantener la influencia colonialista en toda América Latina. En este tenor, durante las últimas décadas, se han formado tres escenarios en Latinoamérica (Preciado, 2008), a saber: 1) una semiperiferia subordinada al neoliberalismo ortodoxo. Este es el caso de México y su agenda de ser una nación bisagra entre norte y sur América; 2) Una semiperiferia postneoliberal que aspira geopolíticamente a ser una región de contrapeso, donde Brasil es el líder; 3) Semiperiferia contrahegemónica fortalecida por Venezuela, donde se han sumado Cuba, Ecuador, Bolivia, Nicaragua y otros países que forman parte del ALBA- TCP. Este último grupo de naciones abiertamente cuestionan la hegemonía de Estados Unidos en el área (Preciado, 2008).

De esta forma, este contexto solamente intenta mostrar el punto de vista de que si para el sentido común de las personas hay una separación entre lo que ocurren en Estados Unidos con lo que pasa con América Latina, esta división no existe para la geopolítica de colonialismo que sufren los Latinxs en el continente. De esta forma, se pretende señalar como la educación bilingüe que ocurre ya sea en Estados Unidos o en México es un producto del colonialismo dinámico, histórico y cultural desde el siglo XVI hasta la actualidad. Esto pretender llamar la atención del riesgo de solamente limitar el estudio de la educación bilingüe como procesos instrumentales y técnicos, lo cual le resta la importancia histórica y política dentro de un proceso de colonialismo que es preciso erradicar.

## Marco Teórico

Américo Paredes expuso el término El Gran México (Paredes, 1958) como una categoría que hoy tienes implicaciones importantes en cuanto a la unidad entre los Latinxs en tiempos cuando se habla de muros y divisiones. Américo Paredes y su idea del El Gran México se erige como un gran esfuerzo por construir una geografía cultural y un imaginario político: "...*imagined community created through shared cultural and historical pasts, memories and practices*" (Paredes as cited in Gómez, 2016, p.2). "una comunidad imaginada creada a través de un compartir de pasados históricos y culturales, de un compartir de memorias y prácticas" (Paredes as cited in Gómez, 2016, p. 2, traducción propia).

Si El Gran México representa un esfuerzo por hacer visible que México y sus descendientes escapan a la construcción de fronteras arbitrarias, esa comunidad imaginada es también un espacio cultural geográfico compartido. Este concepto de Paredes manifiesta la manera en que las geografías son dibujadas más que por delimitaciones del Estado, son expresiones de redes simbólicas construidas aún antes de que la modernidad europea creara los límites de los Estado-nación. En ese espacio-Otro, pueblos enteros de descendencia Indígena o mestiza viven y desde antes de la invasión europea hacen su vida. De esta manera, no es el Estado-nación de la modernidad, sino los nexos simbólicos los que cobran importancia: "*The point of view is local rather than national...Its meaning is cultural;...All people of Spanish culture are mexicanos*" (Paredes as cited in Calderón, 2004, p. 23). "El punto de vista es local, en lugar de ser nacional...Su significado es cultural...Todas las personas de cultura española son mexicanos" (Paredes as cited in Calderón, 2004, p. 23, traducción propia).

El concepto de El Gran México es útil en cuanto que enriquece una agenda teórica para construir otro mapa, pero de conceptos que haga visible y posible como la unión de los Latinxs más allá de las fronteras es la clave para lograr su emancipación del colonialismo (su consecuente racismo) y la pobreza. Así, esta categoría de Américo Paredes ayuda a construir un programa político de unidad entre los Latinxs en Estados Unidos, ya que ellos son parte de El Gran México, esto es, no están solos, son parte de un gran espacio cultural histórico Latinx, lo cual puede ser política y simbólicamente útil en su lucha contra el colonialismo interno en Estados Unidos.

Por otro lado, el concepto de La Patria Grande Latinoamericana de Simón Bolívar (Bolívar, 1950a, 1950b, 1950c) es otro concepto útil en la construcción de un programa para la unión de los Latinxs no solo de descendencia mexicana en Estados Unidos, sino también de todos los Latinxs en todo el continente, desde Canadá hasta Argentina. Para Bolívar era claro que la primera meta para acabar con la pobreza y el retraso en que vivían las naciones latinoamericanas era: 1) dar por terminado el colonialismo y 2) unir a los latinoamericanos para impedir que los imperios instauraran el colonialismo y así instaurar una independencia real. Primero en *El Juramento de Monte Sacro* en 1805 y después en *La Carta de Jamaica* de 1815, Simón Bolívar erigió un pensamiento que aún tiene vigencia en cuanto a que es precisamente la unidad de los Latinxs de todo el continente el punto nodal que permitirá destruir el colonialismo que sufren los Latinxs en Estados Unidos y Canadá así como el colonialismo que aún sigue vivo en América Latina.

Bolívar creó el término de "suburbios tributarios" en *El Juramento de Monte Sacro* en 1805 para ilustrar la forma en que las naciones latinoamericanas eran colonias de los imperios en turno. Esta metáfora es importante en cuanto a que es una ventana y un espejo de la situación de

colonialismo que experimenta los Latinxs aún hoy (Fregoso, 2015a). Así, Bolívar y su marco referencial sobre la necesidad de eliminar el colonialismo y su énfasis en que dicha meta solo es posible mediante la unidad de todas las colonias latinoamericanas es fundamental para que los Latinxs hoy en día no sigan engañados con la esperanza de que de la agenda es que los Latinxs resuelvan aisladamente las desigualdades sociales que sufren dentro de los Estados Unidos y que por otro lado los Latinxs (retornados o no) que radican en los demás países latinoamericanos traten de resolver las desigualdades sociales de forma separada.

Así, tanto el concepto de El Gran México de Américo Paredes, como el categoría de La Patria Grande Latinoamericana de Simón Bolívar forman parte del marco teórico mediante el cual se da sentido a la manera en cómo significan los estudiantes mediante sus poemas bilingües el tema de la unidad de los Latinxs en todo el continente para acabar con el problema fundante de cómo el colonialismo no desapareció, sino sólo se sofisticó, como lo señala el marco teórico de la colonialidad del poder (Quijano & Wallerstein, 1992a, 1992b, Quijano, 2000a & 2000b). Más que oro o plata, el colonialismo Europeo logró implantar una distinción racial para conseguir una esclavitud que le permitiera la mayor fuente de excedente: una mano de obra gratuita, elemento que persiste sobre todo en la relación entre México y Estados Unidos como una relación colonial. Como lo explica Quijano y Wallerstein: “*incluso una vez acabado el status formal de colonia, la colonialidad no terminó, ha persistido en las jerarquías sociales y culturales* (Quijano & Wallerstein, 1992a, p. 584).

Como se mostrará en la sección siguiente, es interesante dar cuenta no solo de como esta agenda teórica puede ser empleada hoy, sino como estudiantes concretos la pueden enmarcar en su marco de sentido para así construir una educación bilingüe ya sea en Estados Unidos México o el resto de los países latinoamericanos para eliminar el colonialismo actual y lograr la unidad de los Latinxs en el continente.

### **El Estudio**

Un grupo aproximado de ochenta estudiantes de educación secundaria han participado en un curso de historia que ha incorporado la creación de poemas bilingües como un recurso innovador dentro de la construcción de una educación bilingüe para eliminar el colonialismo en el continente y crear una agenda de unidad Latinx. Cuarenta estudiantes participaron en la creación de dichos poemas bilingües seis horas semanales desde agosto de 2017 a Marzo de 2017.

Los alumnos forman parte de un curso de historia en la escuela secundaria “Los no-poder” (pseudónimo), la cual es una escuela pública localizada en el barrio de “La Periferia Real” (pseudónimo) en el municipio de Zapopan, Jalisco, México, y que forma parte del sistema de educación pública en México. Dicha institución educativa atiende aproximadamente a seiscientos estudiantes en el turno matutino, así como otra cantidad similar en el turno vespertino. Como escuela secundaria pública en México no cuenta con áreas verdes o deportivas apropiadas, sino solamente con las aulas, las cuales están construidas con material de construcción<sup>1</sup>, las cuales son de tamaño irregular, y no tienen aire acondicionado tanto para el calor abrazante que va de Abril

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<sup>1</sup> A pesar de ser una escuela secundaria con condiciones de pobreza para su operación, destaca el hecho de que las aulas no son móviles o de plástico. Durante el trabajo de campo realizado en esta parte de México por más de diez años, se ha podido observar como muchas escuelas cuentan con aulas de plástico a falta de aquellas construidas de ladrillo, concreto, cemento, etc.

a Julio o para el frío de Diciembre. Cada aula contiene un aproximado de 40 estudiantes en sillas individuales, lo cual da lugar al hacinamiento y condiciones no óptimas para el aprendizaje. Este estudio pretende de dar cuenta de un proceso bilingüe al que los mencionados estudiantes mexicanos fueron expuestos ya que participaron en este curso de historia llevado a cabo de forma bilingüe en tanto que la investigación participante permitió dotarles de herramientas transdisciplinarias para escribir en el idioma inglés tomando en cuenta los aprendizajes y los materiales didácticos que los alumnos utilizan del curso de inglés que toman en otros espacios de tiempo en la semana de clases. Si bien la hegemonía del idioma inglés (Shannon, 1995) es la causa del énfasis del aprendizaje de esta lengua extranjera en México, dicha experiencia bilingüe fue una oportunidad para acercarse a los estudiantes mexicanos y sus significados.

Esta escuela secundaria tiene una antigüedad de aproximadamente veinticinco años en la comunidad de “La Periferia Real”, la cual es caracterizada por el narcomenudeo<sup>2</sup>, la pobreza y la violencia, elementos que sorpresivamente no son documentados en los medios locales en el área considerada como la ciudad de Guadalajara, Jalisco, México. Es decir, pese a que todos los días suceden hechos violentos, hechos reveladores de pobreza y drogas, estos eventos no son cubiertos por los medios locales; solo los propios habitantes de la comunidad comunican entre sí lo que acontece en su barrio, lo cual dota de una cierta invisibilidad a esta realidad triste en México. Por ejemplo, durante marzo de 2017, a decir de los vecinos de la comunidad y de varios estudiantes de la escuela secundaria, un grupo de policiales locales estaban “jugando carreras” usando vehículos oficiales de la policía, es decir, estaban conduciendo dichos vehículos a velocidades extremas a manera de juego, lo cual llevó a que atropellaran a varios jóvenes que iban en la banqueta. Varios de ellos murieron y otros más resultados con heridas graves e irreversibles. Este tipo de hechos suceden en la comunidad, pero solo nos enteramos de ellos puesto que asistimos todas las semanas a desarrollar las actividades de los poemas bilingües. De lo contrario estos hechos de violencia y marginalidad serían anónimos.

La colonia “La Periferia Real” está insertada en el municipio de Zapopan, el cual forma parte de la zona metropolitana de Guadalajara, es decir, los siguientes municipios se agrupan en una sola urbe que aunque es conocida como Guadalajara, esta es el resultado de la confluencia de ocho municipios los cuales se enumeran a continuación con la población que cada municipio tiene de acuerdo al Censo de Población y Vivienda 2010 realizado por el Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía de México:

Número	Municipio	Población	Superficie (km <sup>2</sup> )	hab./km <sup>2</sup>
1	Guadalajara	1,495,189	151.4	9,874.4
2	Zapopan	1,243,756	1,163.6	1,068.9

<sup>2</sup> Con este término se expresa en México cuando una comunidad o barrio contiene varios puntos de venta de drogas a menor escala, es decir, cantidades de consumo diario o de varios días. La diferencia serían las fronteras norte y sur de México u otras áreas donde se comercializan cantidades que no puede llevar un individuo consigo y que dan cuenta de una comercialización transnacional.

3	San Pedro Tlaquepaque	608,114	110.4	5,506.2
4	Tonalá	478,689	166.1	2,881.9
5	Tlajomulco de Zúñiga	416,626	714.0	583.5
6	El Salto	138,226	87.9	1,573.3
7	Ixtlahuacán de los Membrillos	41,060	202.4	202.9
8	Juanacatlán	13,218	138.3	95.6
	Total Área Metropolitana de Guadalajara	4,434,878	2,734.1	1,622.1

(Fuente: Gobierno del Estado de Jalisco, México. <https://www.jalisco.gob.mx/es/jalisco/guadalajara>)

### Metodología

El presente estudio utilizó como base metodológica la indagación narrativa Latinoamericana, fundamentalmente desde las aportaciones del filósofo mexicano Ramón Xirau (1968, 1971, 1993, 1995). En la aplicación de las aportaciones de Ramón Xirau en la investigación educativa, es posible dar cuenta de la manera en que las imágenes poéticas o metáforas son vehículos de conocimiento que pueden expresar lo que acontece en el hecho educativo (Fregoso, 2015a). Por un lado, el trabajo de Xirau (1968, 1971, 1993, 1995) se desarrolló en la tesitura de establecer la manera en que la poesía era fuente de conocimiento. De esta manera, este pensador mexicano dejaba claro los límites de la epistemología occidental al mostrar como la racionalidad en sí misma no puede ser el vehículo para acercarse a la realidad. La poesía, entonces, es un lugar y destino de donde emana un conocimiento que contiene lo que la racionalidad no puede contener, ya sea emociones, ya sea elementos innombrables, pero que forman parte del caos social.

Para Ramón Xirau (1968b), las imágenes poéticas refieren los objetos en lugar de solamente nombrarlos, por lo que, para él, *“las imágenes, más que espejos, son así ventanas* (1968, p. 50). Po un lado una metodología basada en estas herramientas conceptuales marca los límites de la racionalidad occidental y por otro lado expande los universos mediante los cuales el conocimiento puede ser más completo, puesto que no se limita a lo cognitivo positivista del canon occidental.

En el terreno educativo, la metodología basada en el trabajo de Xirau rinde frutos en cuanto a que las imágenes poéticas son vehículos epistemológicos en educación que posibilitan dar profundidad a lo que tanto teóricos como estudiantes pueden tratar de enseñar, ya sea mediante todo un sistema educativo, como mediante actividades didácticas (Fregoso, 2015a). De esta forma, del trabajo de Xirau (1968, 1971, 1993, 1995) se puede obtener el aporte de que las imágenes poéticas pueden ser usadas para crear argumentos filosóficos. Para Bernárdez (2010), la gran estudiosa de Ramón Xirau, el estudio exhaustivo de Xirau permite identificar como este pensador mexicano indica una presencia nueva en la filosofía; entendiéndose por presencia un nuevo sitio filosófico no indicado hasta ahora que es como un río de fuego que en su constante cambio, reposa (Bernárdez, 2007)

En este trabajo se analizan los poemas bilingües realizados por los estudiantes mexicanos en una escuela secundaria pública en uno de los barrios pobres de la ciudad de Guadalajara. Para efectos del análisis se utilizaron las categorías metodológicas del pensamiento narrativo Latinoamericano, sobre todo abrevando del trabajo de Ramón Xirau (1968, 1971, 1993, 1995) para dar cuenta de como dentro de los procesos educativos se crean propuestas epistémicas descoloniales (Fregoso, 2015a, 2015b) ya que los estudiantes hacen uso de imágenes poéticas y metáforas tanto para manifestar sus significados como para vislumbrar todo aquello que la racionalidad no es capaz de capturar, pero que sin embargo forma parte de todo lo que sucede en una aula de clases.

## Resultados

Los alumnos elaboraron alrededor de 180 poemas después de discutir algunas ideas de El Gran México y La Patria Grande Latinoamericana. Después de ello, se les pidió escribir en poemas cortos lo que opinan sobre estas dos ideas escribiendo el mismo poema tanto en español como en inglés. Aquí se presentan algunos de los poemas tratando de encontrar algunos temas comunes, aunque se encontró que son muy heterogéneos.

### La recuperación de lo perdido de El Gran México y La Gran Patria

#### Latinoamericana

El siguiente poema es un ejemplo del tipo de poemas que sugieren una lucha por recobrar lo perdido históricamente:

*Juntos somos y estamos*

*Ya no tememos*

*No nos pueden echar*

*Recuperamos lo nuestro*

*Lo arrebatado con sangre*

*¿dónde estaba nuestro futuro cuando cogemos a otro país aceptando las burlas y callando por paz?*

*Estamos ahora de pie*

*Lejos de ustedes*

*Donde no pueden llegar*

Together we are, and we stay,

We are not afraid anymore,

They cannot drive us out,



Recover what belongs to us,

What was snatched with blood.

Where was our future when we take another country accepting the mocking and keeping silent for peace?

We are up

Far from you,

Where you can reach us.

Una de las líneas parece dar cuenta de un proceso de sofisticado colonialismo a la luz de la colonialidad del poder (Quijano & Wallerstein, 1992a, 1992b, Quijano, 2000a & 2000b), dado que se habla de un sometimiento de un país a otro propio de una lógica colonial del siglo XIX, pero mencionada por el estudiante en el siglo XXI: “¿donde estaba nuestro futuro cuando cogemos a otro país aceptando las burlas y callando por paz?” La última línea es reveladora cuando menciona que se aceptan las burlas, dado la tensión actual en la política exterior de Estados Unidos hacia México. Además, el estudiante habla de que se calla por paz, lo cual da cuenta de un sometimiento simbólico, lo cual podría ser parte de un proceso de colonialidad del poder (Quijano & Wallerstein, 1992a, 1992b, Quijano, 2000a & 2000b) entre Estados Unidos y México, pero ahora de una forma distinta a la del siglo XIX cuando se trató de una invasión por territorio y ahora se expresa como una demarcación para demarcar semánticamente quién es el país que se impone y cual otro se subordina, como dice el estudiante “por paz”.

Este otro poema es un ejemplo del conjunto de poemas que muestran la preocupación por restaurar algo que se perdió en la historia teniendo como punto nodal la unificación de los Latinxs, noción fundamental que se desprende tanto del concepto de Américo Paredes de “El Gran México” y de “La Gran Patria Latinoamericana” de Simón Bolívar:

*México*

*Puedes tener todo el poder y dinero si te lo propones.*

*Podemos recuperar lo que nunca debimos perder, nos uniremos todos y defenderemos el país como pájaros defendiendo su nido.*

Mexico,

You can have all the power and money if you indeed want it.

We can recover what we should never have lost,

We will unite united and we will defend the country like birds defending the nest.

## ¿Cómo sería El Gran México y La Patria Grande Latinoamericana?

Varios de los poemas se pueden agrupar bajo el criterio de cómo los estudiantes imaginan cómo sería la gran patria latinoamericana, si está se llevará a cabo. A continuación, se muestran ejemplos de este grupo. Este poema contiene imágenes poéticas, sobre todo metáforas: “*un paisote, una luz que produce trabajo*”, que a su vez son los puntos de partida para los significados que el estudiante erige: “*trabajo, respeto, donde ayudan a las personas y no las excluyen*”, significados que fueron posibilitados por el uso previo de las imágenes poéticas:

*De lejos se ve una luz que nunca se apaga de lo grande que es, pues es la gran patria latinoamericana*

*Somos un paisote, una luz que produce trabajo, respeto, donde ayudan a las personas y no las excluyen.*

In the distance, a small light that will never be extinguished can be seen, thus, it is the great Latin American homeland. We are a big nation, a light that produces employment, respect, where the people are supported and are not excluded.

Los siguientes es otro poema que podría englobarse en esta misma sección de un imaginar cómo sería esa patria Latinx continental:

*Estamos bien, no somos el peor país para vivir. El trabajo es igual, pero con mayor ganancia. Los productos son accesibles y el presidente es justo. Las escuelas son buenas y las personas felices. Esto es lo que somos y lo que hemos avanzado, lo que hemos progresado para ser mejores.*

We are fine, we are not the worst country to live in. The work to be done is the same, but with better pay. Essential goods are affordable, and we have a very fair the president. We have good schools and the people are happy. This is what we have, the progress we have made, the progress we have made to be better.

*País, el gran México, muy conocido por todo el mundo, sobre todo por tener una buena economía, poder y tener territorio muy grande donde es un país muy visitado. Donde su presidente es muy buen gobernante. Culturas diferentes, pero en una sola. Sus habitantes con estudios, buenas escuelas sin corrupción.*

Country, the Greater Mexico, well known in the entire world, above all for having a good economy, power, and vast territory visited by people from across the world, where the president is a good ruler. Different cultures but merged into a single one. Its inhabitants with university education, good schools, with no corruption.

Como lo menciona Xirau (1968, 1971, 1993, 1995), el conocimiento fue reducido por una epistemología occidental ya limitada también en cuanto a creer que solo un argumento lineal podría contener todo lo que los individuos construyen al conocer. El siguiente poema es un

ejemplo de cómo se asoman algunas nociones sobre la manera en que la unión de los latinxs del continente podría traer la autonomía, concepto interesante que manejan los estudiantes porque parece mostrar que dicha unión podría acarrear independencia, tal como lo proponía Bolívar (1950a, 1950b):

*Ya unidos los latinos formaron un gran país en el cual pueden unirse para combatir a Estados Unidos, quitarle los territorios que el pertenecen a México y ser el continente más unido, autónomo y poderoso que podría dominar la tierra.*

When Latinos united, they created a great homeland in which they are able to come united together to deal with the United States, to retake the territories that belong to Mexico and being the most united continent, autonomous and powerful what would dominate the globe.

Algunos alumnos usaron una proyección hacia el futuro para imaginar cómo sería el escenario donde los latinxs ya sea que vivan en Estados Unidos o en el resto de América Latina se unieran y crearan una gran nación para los latinxs:

*País la gran patria latinoamericana. Es la unión de diversas culturas en las cuales unieron poder, dinero, naturaleza, culturas y armas. Un país muy visitado por sus diversidades, cada día su economía y poder crecerá. Mejores estudios productos y una gran comercialización.*

The great Latin American homeland. It is the union of different cultures in which power, money, environment, cultures and weapons got together. A well-visited tourist destination due to its diversity, its economy and power will grow. Better education, goods and great commercialization.

Este tipo de poemas tiene gran potencial por la agenda política que se instaura a partir de estos procesos de formación bilingüe en los que se crean espacios para que los estudiantes imaginen, dibujen en sus mentes cómo serían sus vidas una vez que la situación colonial fuera erradicada en los lugares donde viven. Así, los procesos educativos de la educación bilingüe se presentan como la oportunidad para literalmente “figurar”, “trazar” mundos distintos para los Latinxs (Fránquiz, Leija, y Garza, 2015; Lara y Fránquiz, 2015). Como se describió en secciones anteriores, los procesos de colonización, sobre todo por parte de Estados Unidos contra México en el siglo XIX permiten entender el por qué es preciso situar los procesos pedagógicos bilingües como productos y espacios de agencia de un proceso de colonización que ha tenido como presa los pueblos indígenas, Afrodescendientes y Latinxs a lo largo del continente.

### **Significatividad del Estudio**

La creación de los poemas que presenta este estudio es importante porque permiten estudiar el proceso de educación bilingüe como un producto y espacio de cambio de un proceso de colonialismo contra los Latinxs a lo largo del continente. La meta ha sido mostrar cómo no es posible hablar de procesos de educación bilingüe sin hablar sobre el proceso de colonización, sobre todo de Estados Unidos y América Latina que le dio y le sigue dando origen y sentido a la educación bilingüe. Sin hablar de cómo el colonialismo en El Gran México y en la Patria Grande

Latinoamericana no puede entenderse la creación de la educación bilingüe como manifestación de ese proceso colonial que hoy continúa.

Más específicamente, este tipo de trabajos este estudio se enmarca en la discusión sobre el desarrollo de competencias académicas y lingüísticas (Cummins, 1979) en la que los profesores de secundaria desarrollan el bilingüismo como forma de lidiar entre la enseñanza de una disciplina y la enseñanza de una lengua. En este sentido, la incorporación de la enseñanza de una lengua Otra se ve interrumpida y oscurecida por la forma en que los conocimientos son encerrados en disciplinas (Ruiz-de-Velasco, Fix y Chu Clewell, 2001, Fernández y Carlino, 2010).

De esta manera es fundamental estudiar en el campo de la educación bilingüe la forma en que los maestros de secundaria enseñan la lengua dentro del proceso de la enseñanza de una asignatura (Krashen y Lee Brown, 2007, Hakuta, 2011), que en este caso es la materia de historia en una escuela secundaria en México.

Así, la creación de los poemas es importante dentro del campo de la educación bilingüe además porque muestra un poco la manera en que dentro de los procesos bilingües de enseñanza-aprendizaje se puede pasar del aprendizaje de la competencia escrita a la competencia literaria, (Cassany, Luna y Sanza, 1998, Colomer, 1991) ya que los estudiantes de secundaria al realizar los poemas se acercan a desarrollar sus habilidades productivas en el proceso de bilingüismo en que los alumnos pasan de ser pasivos a activos en su competencia literaria y oscilan entre recepción literaria y expresión bilingüe escrita.

De igual manera, este trabajo puede abonar a la construcción pedagógica de “translanguaging” (García, 2009), sobre todo en México. Este concepto entiende el bilingüismo en el siglo XXI como algo dinámico (García, 2009) donde una lengua Otra es todo un proceso social complejo y no solo instrumental, lo que pudiera entenderse como “translenguar”. Como lo indica Ofelia García: “Anteriormente he definido el translenguar como las prácticas discursivas complejas de todos los bilingües y las pedagogías que utilizan esas prácticas discursivas para liberar las maneras de hablar, ser y conocer de comunidades bilingües subalternas” (García, 2013, p. 36).

Los estudiantes mexicanos fueron una comunidad bilingüe subalterna y colonizada que hizo uso de los poemas bilingües para hablar sobre ideas tales como El Gran México y la Patria Grande Latinoamericana y así, quizá, lanzar un esfuerzo para eliminar el colonialismo que sufren los Latinxs del continente.

### **Conclusiones**

Los procesos de educación bilingüe deben entenderse como producto y espacios de agencia de un proceso de colonialismo que han sufrido los Latinxs del continente, en especial aquellos de El Gran México y la Patria Grande Latinoamericana. El enfatizar como la educación bilingüe entre México y Estados Unidos no existiría sin un proceso de colonialismo es necesario para dotar a la educación bilingüe de su exacta dimensión, más allá del espacio constreñido de lo instrumental que le han querido dar. Así, de los poemas bilingües que los adolescentes, emergen categorías epistémicas descoloniales (Fregoso, 2015b). La situación de colonialidad en la educación (Fregoso 2015a) les otorga a los estudiantes una legitimidad como creadores de conocimiento ya que escriben desde una situación real de un colonialismo sofisticado (desde una escuela periférica, desde un barrio peligro, violento y pobre). Dentro de ese conocimiento experiencial de colonialidad en la educación, los estudiantes vislumbran los conceptos de El Gran

México y La Patria Grande Latinoamericana de Simón Bolívar una realidad alternativa a dichos procesos de colonialidad del poder.

El utilizar la indagación narrativa Latinoamericana desde las aportaciones del filósofo mexicano Ramón Xirau (1968, 1971, 1993, 1995) permitió identificar como los estudiantes al usar imágenes poéticas piensan que estos conceptos que implican la unidad de los Latinxs se pueden entender como un proceso de a) la recuperación de lo perdido de El Gran México y La Gran Patria Latinoamericana y b) el imaginar cómo sería dicha patria extendida para los Latinxs del continente.

Por un lado exponen como los Latinxs viven en una situación de colonialidad al decir que es parte de lo que se vive el estar “...aceptando las burlas y callando por paz?”. Sin embargo, también señalan una agenda de un futuro diferente donde: *Ya no tememos/No nos pueden hechar/Recuperamos lo nuestro*. Valdría la pena continuar con esta línea de análisis sobre la colonialidad en la educación (Fregoso, 2015a) y “la recuperación de lo nuestro”, ya que sería interesante ver como los estudiantes significan de manera más profunda el proceso de colonialismo contra los Latinxs del continente del siglo XVI a la fecha.

En el ejercicio de escribir los poemas bilingües, los estudiantes también vislumbraron el cómo sería, qué condiciones o cambios habría para ellos si se hiciera una realidad la unidad de los Latinxs del continente en una patria grande y generosa para ellos. Llama la atención, desde la indagación por las imágenes poéticas, la metáfora de “*un paisote*”, que sería como “*una luz que nunca se apaga*”. Los jóvenes usan la poesía para mostrar a la colonialidad del poder como un proceso tanto simbólico como material. Como uno de los poemas dicen, en “el paisote”, “*El trabajo es igual pero con mayor gananci/ Los productos son accesibles... Las escuelas son buenas y las personas felices*”. Este hallazgo es fundante en tanto que parece indicar que para los estudiantes la existencia de esa patria Latinx continental tendría sentido como un pensamiento crítico narrativo (Salinas, Fránquiz, & Rodríguez Naseem, 2016) en tanto que represente una redistribución de los recursos concretos, es decir, parecen, como lo indicaba Bolívar, que la manera de cambiar las condiciones concretas en que las naciones colonizadas en este continente viven serán transformadas como resultado de una unidad Latinxamericana.

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**Brokering Biliteracy: Developing Ethnic identity and Cultural Understandings  
through Literacy**

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### **Abstract**

While language brokering, the act of crossing linguistic borders to make meaning for the self and others, is quite common, the implications this discursive practice has on emerging bilinguals' literacy and identity development in U.S. classroom settings has received only recent attention. This qualitative case study of a third grade transitional bilingual class explored the connections participants made during literacy related activities, the role that language brokering played in these connections and the ramifications they had on participant's positional identities. Results suggest that there are benefits to brokering language and biliteracy in bilingual classrooms where the class culture is characterized by building mutually supportive relationships and rooted in an understanding that drawing on one's linguistic repertoire helps everyone do biliteracy better.

**Keywords:** biliteracy, ethnic identity development, language brokering, bilingual education

## **Brokering Biliteracy: Developing Ethnic identity and Cultural Understandings through Literacy**

Language brokers are the children of immigrant families that translate and interpret for others (McQuillan & Tse, 1995). These children translate written documents or materials and interpret verbal communication for parents and other adults in a number of situations acting as mediators in a wide variety of situations (Orellana, 2009; Tse, 1996). Their tasks range from simple and routine to complex and sensitive in nature. Research related to language brokering has focused on ways that children engage in this practice for adults in oral and written text (Guerra, 1998; McQuillan & Tse, 1995; Orellana, 2009; Orellana, Dorner & Pulido, 2003; Orellana & Reynolds, 2008; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Tse, 1995; Weisskirch & Alva, 2002). Children have performed as language brokers for centuries and this practice is widely accepted in immigrant communities (Morales & Hanson, 2005). The roles children play as language brokers and the range of tasks vary widely so there is debate in the literature about the appropriateness of children acting as language brokers and the effects this might have on them (McQuillan & Tse, 1995; Morales & Hanson, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999). However, there is little debate regarding the need for more research with the aim of building better understanding of the impact of language brokering on children, their families and their communities.

Recent work has generated a more comprehensive definition of language brokering than had previously existed. Language brokering is currently understood as something more nuanced than simply interpreting or translating by moving words from one language to another in an effort to help others. Language brokers regularly cross-linguistic borders as they manage different ways of thinking about and using their languages to communicate (Orellana & García, 2014). Sometimes language brokers see languages as separate and other times as one, but in both cases they tap into their full repertoire of language to make meaning for others (Orellana & García, 2014). In the U.S., language brokers are more than English learners who have developed exceptional understandings of languages and nuanced social interactions. They are learning and using language for their own and others' survival (Morales & Hanson, 2005). Shifting the focus away from what these children lack in language proficiency to the amazing and innovative ways in which they use languages whilst they are learning them allows us to describe them more accurately. Children who act as language brokers are in fact emerging bilinguals (Escamilla, 2006) and will be referred to as such since this term provides a more apt description of them and what they are doing when they engage in language brokering.

Emerging bilinguals enact their emergent bilingualism through language brokering both in and out of the classroom. They do this by continuously leverage their linguistic abilities as they develop resources to optimize their growing abilities to make meaning for themselves and others through translanguaging (García, 2012). Translanguaging is a hybrid practice in which people strategizing from the languages they are learning to make sense of these languages. According to Orellana and García (2014), emerging bilinguals develop a translanguaging repertoire through the process of using what they know in one language to help them make sense of another. This represents an enormous asset for the language brokers and those around them, one that is frequently overlooked in schools.

Language brokering is one translanguaging practice that contributes to understanding the engagement of social relations of emerging bilinguals (Alvarez, 2014). Language brokers act as liaisons between individuals (Orellana, 2009) and ideas. One of the only studies to focus on the academic benefits for language brokers by Dorner, Orellana & Li-Grining (2009) suggests that higher levels of language brokering were linked to higher scores on standardized reading tests. In supportive school environments, emerging bilinguals are expanding their translanguaging repertoires as they respond to schoolwork and use language to make sense of their world (García, 2009; García & Kleifgen, 2010; García, Flores & Woodley, 2012). Translanguaging practices have invaluable community based functions, yet they are rarely recognized or integrated into school literacy curriculum (García, 2011). Consequently, further study of how schools can foster translanguaging, specifically language brokering, could help build understanding of how schools can emphasize this practice to empower emerging bilingual students.

### **Theoretical Frames**

This study employs two theoretical perspectives: literacy, specifically connections, and positional identity. In a larger study at the same research site, this theoretical lens was used to examine how emerging bilinguals develop academic literacies in the context of bilingual classrooms. Literacies were defined in accordance with “New Literacy Studies” (Gee, 1992; Street, 1995) as social practices that are rooted in the context and community in which they occur (Barton, 1994; Barton & Hamilton, 2012; Gee, 1992; Street, 1995). To examine language and literacy, the study focused on the literacy events, or observable activities people engaged in where the written word played a role and the patterns, or literacy practices, in them that were shaped by social rules and cultural ways that people used written language (Barton & Hamilton, 2012). To understand identity, the study explored the ways people positioned themselves or were positioned in literacy practices.

In the present study, the focus is on making connections, a very common discourse strategy observed in the literacy events and practices seen in the larger study. Skillful readers use schema, comprised of experiences, knowledge, emotion, and understandings that influence what and how they learn (Harvey & Goudvia, 2000) to make connections. Keene & Zimmerman (1997) argue that people understand texts better when they make different kinds of connections. Connections fall into three categories: text-to-self, text-to-text, text-to-world. The emphasis here is not on the value of connections per se, but on how people demonstrate identity through connections to texts.

Some connections are intertextual connections, or a juxtaposition of texts where a connection is proposed, acknowledged and recognized as having social consequence (Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto, Schuart-Feris, 2005). Describing the social consequence of intertextuality, or “a consequence for social relationships or social action” (Bloome, et al., 2005, p. 238), requires the identification of social positionings and other social work done through the social construction of intertextual connections. Identifying social consequences often requires considerable inference based on sociolinguistic theories and relationships between language and social processes, as they are not always revealed by explicit actions on the part of the speaker or writer.

Connections require negotiation and reaching a “working consensus of what is happening and what meanings are being established” (Bloome, et al., 2005, p. 44-45). Connections of all kinds including intertextual connections provided fruitful sites for exploring peoples’

demonstration of identity development over time because the social nature of connections allowed for examination of the dynamics of interpersonal and group relationships.

Identities are understood here as self-understandings that are flexible and socially developed across contexts (Holland, Lachiotte, Skinner & Cain, 1998). Identities are formed, reformed, and negotiated discursively through social interactions during which people position themselves and are positioned by others (Davies & Harré, 1990). These positions define each person's roles, relations, rights, obligations, norms and expectations. Over time, positions become positionings (Heras, 1994) where the process of positioning is "an event of identification, in which a recognizable category of identity gets explicitly and implicitly applied to an individual in an event that takes place across seconds, minutes, or hours" (Wortham, 2004, p. 166). Positionings are shaped by social categories and social identification. Only when one identifies and is repeatedly identified over time, does her identity become "thickened" (Holland & Lave, 1991; Wortham, 2006). Identity thickening requires that the self and others understand it according to the types of people (i.e. a leader in the classroom) and ways of participation expected of that social category (i.e. class leaders are expected to lead through solidarity with classmates) in the community.

This study was guided by the research question, What connections do people in a bilingual 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class make during literacy activities and what do these show about their identity development? The aim was to examine the connections people were making during the reading block and what could be understood about participants' positional identities in the interactional spaces opened in making these connections. Of particular interest was the ways in which participants' leveraged their languages (Spanish and English) in this transitional bilingual classroom as they engaged in classroom literacy related activities.

### **Methods**

This qualitative case study (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003) in a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade transitional bilingual classroom included multiple sources of data collected during the reading block (literacy was taught in Spanish) during the fall semester of the 2009-2010 academic year. Data that included audio recordings of children, video recordings of the teacher, interviews with the teacher and students, student artifact, instructional materials and field notes were used to provide a thick description of the connections made during literacy related activities and positional identities. While collecting data, time stamps from recording equipment were noted in field notes so the researcher could return to them after leaving the site and analyze literacy events and practices that occurred in them. Over 40 literacy events were transcribed for coding to establish the literacy practices and to perform analysis of the discourse on segments where connections occurred.

Data analysis was ongoing from the time data collection began since the researcher noted wonderings, impressions, reactions, and reference to frameworks or literature in field notes and on data as it was collected and transcribed. Open-coding (Glaser, 1992) began as the researcher reviewed field notes, instructional materials, and returned to identified literacy events in recordings to determine initial themes and discern patterns or literacy practices present in each literacy event. Two of the codes for literacy events and practices were: intertextual connections (propose, acknowledge, recognize), connection to home country/family/last year in school. Codes for identities included steward, helper, demonstrating expertise, extending response, reference to cultural/ethnic identity of self, parent or family in regards to identity and positioning. As the study

progressed, the researcher zeroed in on connections specifically for deeper analysis and examined the discourse in transcribed connections to add and refine codes. Analysis included cycling back and forth between data and theoretical frameworks (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to organize codes to establish themes that could then be tested, modified and changed as data collection continued. In this study, themes were related to the social significance of connections and the labels assigned to participants' positions and positionings that were related to types of people and ways of participation expected of these types of people in the space.

Discourse analysis drew on ethnography of communication (Schiffrin, 1994). Emphasis was on the particularities in transcribed data and written artifacts in order to discover generalizations in discourse to describe, interpret and explain ways that discourse was constructed, became constructed by, represented, and became represented by the social world (Gumperz, 1986; Hymes, 1994). A micro-ethnographic approach (Bloome, et al., 2005) to discourse analysis allowed for examination of the ways that participants used language since language "involves complex social, cultural, political, cognitive, and linguistic processes and contexts—all of which are part of the meaning and significance of reading, writing and using language" (Bloome, et al., 2005 p. 17). In the examples that follow, language was the objective of classroom lessons (i.e. Spanish vocabulary needed for reading and writing), but also the means of learning (i.e. discussions surrounding texts). Analysis of connections demonstrated how language brokering played a key role in establishing connections and positional identities.

### **Participants & Setting**

#### *Mrs. Rivera*

Mrs. Rivera (all names are pseudonyms), the teacher in the transitional bilingual class, was a Mexican national who had been a bilingual teacher for nine years, three of those years at Andrew Elementary. She had worked previously in Monterrey, Mexico where she grew up and had completed all of her formal education. Many people at the school considered her to be a good teacher. Other faculty members admired her for her willingness to collaborate and her administrator because her students tended to score well on state tests. Her students' parents held her in high regard because they saw her as a support because she was approachable and willing to help when they had questions or concerns about their children or other school related issues. Mrs. Rivera's class during the reading block consisted of 14 students. 13 of them were of Mexican descent and a few like Gabriela had one Mexican parent and one from another Latin American country.

#### *Gabriela*

Gabriela, was nine years old at the time of the study. Her mother is Guatemalan and her father Mexican. She was the oldest of three children, soon to be four, as her mother was expecting a baby girl. Gabriela's father worked in construction and her mother had worked at a restaurant, but had recently left her job due to the imminent birth of the baby. Gabriela had been enrolled in the bilingual program at Andrew Elementary since she entered school at age five. Gabriela came to Mrs. Rivera's class only for the reading and writing blocks since the three bilingual 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teachers exchanged students to target their specific language and literacy needs during these times. She spent the rest of her day in her homeroom class (also a transitional bilingual class) with Mr. Marks. She would take the state reading exam in Spanish and math exam in English. Her

teachers thought it was very likely that Gabriela would be transitioned out of the bilingual program in fourth grade.

Gabriela was an outspoken member of Mrs. Rivera's class. She was reading and writing on grade level in Spanish (not yet in English) and prided herself on knowing answers to questions posed by Mrs. Rivera. She enjoyed being recognized for her contributions in class and often responded to questions not directed to her. Gabriela had well developed opinions, was skilled at arguing her position in conversations and frequently offered unsolicited advice to her classmates. Her classmates were not averse to any of this, however, and wanted to work with her in class and play with her at recess. Gabriela was respectful and affectionate with Mrs. Rivera and all the teachers. The third grade bilingual team, which consisted of three teachers, interpreted Gabriela's behaviors as mature and commented that she was one of the first third graders that year to exhibit adolescent type behaviors (i.e. interest in her appearance, boy bands, etc.). They said she was influential to other children because of her maturity. Mrs. Rivera described her as bossy and thought that other children likely considered her as such. Gabriela was chosen because she was not pulled out for tutoring so was present during the reading block, was willing to talk with and be interviewed by the researcher, and was a proficient enough writer in Spanish to produce writing samples lengthy enough for analysis.

#### *Andrew Elementary*

Andrew Elementary was one of eighty schools in a large school district in Central Texas. The area surrounding the school was experiencing a slow, but steady gentrification because of its proximity to downtown. What had historically been a neighborhood of working class Mexican and Central American families was being transformed by expensive subdivisions and commercial and shopping centers, which were shifting the landscape and demographics of the neighborhood. The school did not yet reflect these changes, however. Nearly all the students at Andrew Elementary were considered economically disadvantaged (90%). The student body was 85% Hispanic/Latino, 7% African American, and 8% White. Andrew Elementary educated a large number of students classified as Limited English Proficient (41%) and these children were enrolled in either bilingual or English as a Second Language programs.

Andrew Elementary had been "recognized" for its test scores by Texas Educational Agency's Division of Performance Reporting<sup>3</sup> in the past, but the year before data collection began, their scores had dropped to "academically acceptable". There were several consequences for administration, faculty and students as a result. Teachers were required to submit more structured and detailed lesson plans after they received professional development to ensure their alignment with state standards. The school was monitored by district personnel to make sure everyone was adhering to mandates such as the scheduling of math and reading blocks, intervention teachers taking identified students out of class and during lunch for tutoring to prepare for the state exams, and that teachers were using required test prep materials sent each week from the district.

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<sup>3</sup> School/district ratings in ascending order: academically unacceptable, academically acceptable, recognized, and exemplary

## Results

To answer the question, What connections do people in a bilingual 3<sup>rd</sup> class make during literacy activities and what do these show about their identity development?, segments of discourse from classroom literacy events that contained connections were examined from two distinct angles: 1. types of connections and ways in which members of the class proposed, acknowledged and recognized them and 2. how people demonstrated identities through these connections. This study focused on they ways in which participants used language as they engaged with and created texts by examining the connections they made to texts and how they positioned themselves and were positioned in doing so.

On 9/15/10 Mrs. Rivera and the class had just read the bios and looked at the photos of the author and illustrator of a story. This text was located in a section at the end of the story of the week *Las tortillas de Magda* (from basal reader *Tesoros de lectura*) (Durán et al., 2008), which the class had just finished reading. Mrs. Rivera proposed a connection between the work of the author, Becky Chavarría-Cháirez, and illustrator, Anne Vega, in creating this story and the personal narratives students were writing. The bios explained that *Las tortillas de Madga* was based on their own childhood experiences growing up in Mexico. She said, “*NOSOTROS podemos hacer lo mismo.*” (WE can do the same thing.) [emphasis added by speaker] to remind students that they were engaged in a similar kind of writing assignment. Students were in the process of crafting personal narratives about memories from their own lives and were at varying points in the writing process, mainly pre-writing and drafting. Her comment was intended to motivate students and build their confidence in their abilities as writers of important texts.

Mrs. Rivera assured the class that there were ample sources of material from their own lives worthy of writing about and that they could write interesting things too. She reminded the students of some of the stories she had told them about her childhood in Mexico and that these could be written as personal narratives too. She retold a class favorite about how she loved Barbie dolls when she was a girl, but Barbie clothes were difficult to find in Mexico in those days. Her mother and the mothers of her friends made Barbie clothes that the girls swapped so that they could have a variety of Barbie clothes to play with. She told students about her favorite Barbie outfits (the wedding dress and bathing suits with matching towels) and that she thought the way the mothers and children worked around the lack of store bought Barbie clothes was beautiful since they were working together and being resourceful. Next, Mrs. Rivera shared examples of what students were writing about. She picked up some papers and read what a student had written about recently traveling to Mexico for an aunt’s wedding and then another about a recent visit to the Six Flags amusement park with her family. She said that these stories were just as interesting to read as the story of Magda and the tortillas she made with her grandmother. Mrs. Rivera connected the literacy activities of people like them, a Mexican author and illustrator, to those they were doing (writing a personal narrative about a memory) and the fact that these stories were valuable and should be shared with others.

This was the only time the class read the author and illustrator bios during data collection for this study. After this episode, the researcher went through all the stories in the basal reader. While all the stories in it were written in Spanish, this was the only one originally written in Spanish and not translated from English. This story was also the only one that seemed to have cultural relevance to many of the students’ lives since many of them excitedly spoke of cooking with family members and making or eating tortillas during class discussions surrounding this text.



The author and illustrator shared many characteristics with the children (ethnicity, country of origin, family mentoring experiences, foods) and this seemed to forge a connection between the author and illustrator and members of this class. Put differently, this story had cultural authenticity (Ada, 2003; Escamilla & Nathenson-Mejía, 2003) that none other stories in the basal reader did not. This fact stood out to Mrs. Rivera too since the class spent time learning about the author and illustrator and connecting their work to the students' personal narratives.

Gabriela was the first student to respond after Mrs. Rivera's proposed the connection between the story and the personal narratives students were writing. She excitedly pointed to an illustration and said that she thought the people in it were from Mexico. The characters depicted in the illustration were a grandmother and children with brownish skin, dark hair, and facial features not unlike those of many children in the class and they were making tortillas. Gabriela appeared to have found this book to be culturally authentic perhaps because of the topic, the Mexican author and illustrator, and/or the illustrations in the story. It is also possible that she had responded to Mrs. Rivera's opening up an interactional space to discuss noteworthy aspects of the story. Mrs. Rivera smiled and replied that it seemed that they were from Mexico. At this point, several students who were looking at the illustrations smiled or nodded and commented by talking over each other about cooking with family members, knowing how to make tortillas, enjoying eating them and where to get the best ones in the area.

These connections positioned both Mrs. Rivera and Gabriela as language and literacy brokers since they brokered the interpretation of meaning from certain aspects of the text and illustrations. This suggested that the text had cultural significance possibly because it was different than others in the basal reader since it had not been filtered through English to be made into a Spanish text, because people like them wrote and illustrated it and/or because it was written about people like them engaging in an activity that they recognized. Furthermore, the connection made between this text and students' personal narratives prompted students to think about their identities as authors of Mexican/Guatemalan/Latin American descent capable of producing culturally authentic texts.

In this exchange, Gabriela demonstrated a sense of ethnic identity as a Mexican/Guatemalan child living in the U.S. According to Phinney (1990, 2003) "ethnic identity is a dynamic, multidimensional construct that refers to one's identity, or sense of self as a member of an ethnic group" (2003, p. 63). One claims an identity within a subgroup whose members share at least one of the following: similar culture, race, religion, language, kinship, or place of origin. In keeping with the general definition of identity used in this piece, Phinney's (1990, 2003) notion of ethnic identity is a fluid and dynamic understanding of self and ethnic background. Individuals, like Gabriela, construct and modify ethnic identity as they become aware of their ethnicity, within a large sociocultural setting. Connections like the ones Mrs. Rivera and Gabriela made prompt others to consider their ethnic self-understandings in relation to those around them.

Gabriela authored, *!Cuando mi Mamá Hizo Tamales!* (Figure 1), for the personal narrative writing project. This piece of writing demonstrated how Gabriela deepened the connection to the Magda text to show her identity as an emerging author of culturally authentic stories. In this piece, she presented certain elements of her ethnic identity that she valued as Mexican/Guatemalan (eating certain foods associated with an identity) and her expectations for maintaining ethnic identity (knowing how to make tamales).

Figure 1 ¡CUANDO MI MAMÁ HIZO TAMALES!

# ¡Cuando Mi Mamá hizo tamales

Era un día de las Vacaciones  
Cuando mi mamá hizo tamales.  
Ella No Sabia hacer tamales,  
entonces fue con una amiga que  
era de Guatemala Como mi  
Mamá. Entre las 2 compraron las  
cosas Para hacer tamales de elote,  
Carne, Puerco y Tajas de queso. Mi  
Mamá llegó a la casa de su ami-  
ga y se pusieron a lavar las hojas  
y pusieron a hervir ~~la~~ agua para  
que se lavaran mejor las hojas.  
Luego empezaron a picar el pollo  
y el puerco y el queso para los  
tamales. Luego hicieron la masa  
para poner las carnes. ¡Oliabien  
rico en el apartamento que  
te des maravas!. Cuando termina-  
ron me dieron 4 tamales bien  
ricos que ya queria 100 Pero mi  
Mamá dijo "Le llevamos a tu papá"  
¿Si?. Entonces mi mamá llevo 12 tam-  
ales a la casa mi Papá se comió  
8 y yo me comi 3 y mi ma-  
ma se comio 1. Lo malo es que  
mi mamá se le olvido como hacer tamales

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(Figure 1 Translation: When my mother made tamales! It was one day during summer vacation when my mother made tamales. She did not know how to make tamales so she went over to a friend's house that was from Guatemala like my mother. Between the two of them they bought the things to make corn tamales: meat, pork, filling made of roasted sliced poblano chilies, onions, cheese and cream. My mother arrived back home with her friend and they started to wash the cornhusks and began to boil water so they could wash the husks better. Next, they started to shred the chicken, pork, and cheese for the tamales. Next, they made the dough to put the meat inside. The apartment smelled so good that you could just faint! When they finished they gave me 4 delicious tamales and I wanted 100, but my mom said "Let's bring some to your father, ok?" So my mother brought 12 tamales home. My father ate 8, I ate 3 and my mother ate 1. The bad thing is that my mother had forgotten how to make tamales.)

Gabriela wrote about when she and her mother went over to a friend's house to make tamales. According to Gabriela, they had to go to the friend's house because her mom had forgotten how to make tamales so needed help to make them properly. Gabriela's story included a vivid description of how they gathered and prepared the ingredients for the tamales and explained why certain steps in the process were necessary demonstrating her own growing knowledge of how to prepare tamales. According to Gabriela, the smell alone was so delicious that it nearly caused fainting. She said the tamales were so tasty that she wanted to eat 100 of them, but her mother said that they should really save some for her father. At the end, Gabriela expressed her sadness over the fact that her mother had forgotten how to make tamales. Gabriela's text showed her feelings about the importance of maintaining the knowledge of how to make tamales since making tamales was an important aspect of demonstrating and maintaining an ethnic identity as Mexican/Guatemalan.

In these examples, Gabriela did not engage in language brokering by moving between languages, rather she brokered biliteracy by leveraging her linguistic abilities to optimize her growing skills for making meaning for herself and others in a way consistent with translanguaging (García, 2012) by using literacy as a vehicle to convey a message about ethnic identity and her expectations regarding it. The text that Gabriela authored showed that she 1. defined (at least in part) what it means to be Mexican/Guatemalan (possesses similar racial, linguistic, cultural or kinship characteristics to others in this ethnic group), 2. understood and communicated the norms and expectations of this social category (maintaining the knowledge of how to make tamales), and 3. engaged in activities (making tamales) that demonstrated this identity for others to reinforce. She brokered biliteracy by using it to act as a liaison between people (Orellana, 2009) and her own ideas about ethnicity and culture (by acknowledging and recognizing a connection to and identifying ethnic identity in a culturally authentic text, defining what it means to be Mexican/Guatemalan, preserving this identity by writing about ingredients and processes for a *tamalada* and communicating the importance of not forgetting how to make tamales).

On 10/19/10 the class read *Dale al bate* (Durán, et al., 2008) a nonfiction text from the basal reader about a baseball academy established in Compton, California wherein professional baseball players volunteered their time to teach children about baseball. After reading the text, Mrs. Rivera asked students a series of comprehension questions. In the discussion that followed (Table 1.1), Mrs. Rivera asked how much children paid to attend the academy. Daniel, one of the students, guessed and answered one hundred dollars after he raised his hand to respond. Mrs. Rivera probed him further since this was not the correct answer and she knew he often struggled

with reading, especially in the whole group setting when using the basal reader. Her prompting paired with Daniel's shake of the head positioned him as a struggling reader. Other students seemed to be aware of his position as a struggling reader since when he expressed confusion, some of them tried to help him by reaching over and pointing to the section of the text where it said that the academy was free. When his classmates Victor and Juan answered for him in lines 104 and 106 saying that the academy was *gratis*, Mrs. Rivera halted them. Their repetition of the word *gratis* (free) did not seem to generate meaning for Daniel since he repeated the word *gratis* in line 107 while looking from the text to his teacher, but seemed to not understand what it meant or why his guess of *cien dólares* was incorrect. This move reinforced his position as a struggling reader. Gabriela attempted to help after Mrs. Rivera asked Daniel what *gratis* meant. Gabriela drew on her knowledge of English to broker language for Daniel since he had not responded to two other classmates giving him the word in Spanish. This move proved effective since Daniel's expression in line 109 signaled that he understood what the word free in English meant. Mrs. Rivera interpreted his smile as understanding and provided an oral definition of free in Spanish and an extension of what it meant by saying Daniel would not have to pay if he attended the baseball academy.

Table 1.1 Free!

Line	Discourse	Discourse (translation)	Positions During Connections
101	Daniel: Cien dólares	Daniel: \$100	
102	Mrs. Rivera: ¿Mande?	Mrs. Rivera: What?	
103	Daniel: [confused expression, shaking head]  (students seated at table near him trying to point to location of information in the text)	Daniel: [confused expression, shaking head]  (students seated at table near him trying to point to location of information in the text)	Struggling reader.
104	Victor: Gratis	Victor: Free	Expert.
105	Mrs. Rivera: ¿Qué? [looking at Daniel, signals for Victor to wait with her hand]	Mrs. Rivera: What? [looking at Daniel, signals for Victor to wait with her hand]	
106	Juan: Es gratis. Cierto que es gra- [pointing to text]	Juan: It's free. Right, that it's fr- [pointing to text]	Expert. Clarifying and attempting to elaborate by referring to the text.
107	Daniel: Gratis [hesitant, speaking	Daniel: Free	Struggling reader.

	softly and looking from text to teacher]	[hesitant, speaking softly and looking from text to teacher]	
108	Mrs. Rivera: ¿Cómo? ¿Cuánto? ¿Qué quiere decir gratis?	Mrs. Rivera: What? How much? What does free mean?	Authority. Probing for a more developed answer.
109	Gabriela: Free!	Gabriela: Free!	Translator, bilingual/biliterate language broker.
110	Daniel: [broadly smiling]	Daniel: [broadly smiling]	Learner. Acknowledging and recognizing proposed connection.
111	Mrs. Rivera: ¡NADA! ¡Que no pagan! Los niños de 7 a, ¿cuántos años?, [looks at a student's textbook to find location of information is text] a 17 no pagan.  ¡Tú no pagarías nada Daniel!	Mrs. Rivera: Nothing! They don't pay a thing! Children from ages 7 to, How old?, [looks at a student's textbook to find location of information is text] to 17 do not pay. You wouldn't pay Daniel!	Authority. Acknowledging and recognizing proposed connection and modeling how to locate information in the text.

Gabriela positioned herself as a language broker/translator by demonstrating her knowledge of both English and Spanish and using it to help Daniel make meaning. Victor and Juan tried to help Daniel by referring to the text, but Gabriela responded to Daniel's position as a struggling reader differently employing her full repertoire of language to make meaning for him by using English as a scaffold. While Mrs. Rivera did not directly respond to Gabriela, she affirmed Gabriela's position as a language broker by recognizing that Daniel had made meaning, no doubt in response to Gabriela's help. Gabriela positioned herself as a broker of language and biliteracy and had been positioned by others as such over a period of weeks, which resulted in a thickening of her identity as a broker of biliteracy.

### Discussion & Conclusion

Participants in this study made literacy related connections and engaged in language brokering in ways that highlighted the benefits of language brokering that have been demonstrated in other studies. These benefits included fostering the development of ethnic identity thereby raising people's ethnic and cultural pride (Orellana, 2003; Weisskirch, 2005) and strengthen cognitive and linguistic abilities (Halgunseth, 2003, McQuillan & Tse, 1995; Valdés, Chavez & Angelelli, 2003). Gabriela's ethnic identity as a Mexican/Guatemalan growing up in the U.S.

developed and thickened over time as she brokered language and biliteracy to adeptly make connections by identifying people like herself in literature and by authoring her own text. She also brokered language and biliteracy to scaffold other people's language and literacy development as seen in the example with Daniel. Mrs. Rivera modeled her own dynamic ethnic identity by frequently talking about her experiences growing up in Mexico and now living in the U.S. She was proud of these experiences and made connections between them and the development of valuable biliteracy skills likely inspiring similar feelings in her students and a motivation to them to make connections like these.

Previous research has suggested that language brokering can lead to negative (Umaña-Taylor, 2003) or unintended consequences for students' identities (Lee, Hill-Bonnet & Raley, 2011). In contrast, here, Mrs. Rivera and her students created a classroom culture that centered around relationships, specifically on building mutually supportive relationships that affirmed people's bilingual/bicultural identities and counteracted marginalized identities that could develop related to language or literacy related competence. Brokering language and biliteracy were key components of the classroom culture, where culture is understood to be the repertoires of practice or ways that people engage in activities where they observe and participate in cultural practices (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003). Mrs. Rivera purposefully opened up interactional spaces for students to co-construct and expand their bilingual/biliterate repertoires of practice by exploring the languages they shared and their similar places of origin, culture and kinship. Students were encouraged to draw on their "full linguistic toolkits in order to process information, make meaning and convey it to others" (Orellana & García, 2014, p. 386) or to be experts in using language for doing biliteracy. This study demonstrates how translanguaging repertoires like brokering language and biliteracy can be successfully used to cultivate a classroom culture that reflects an understanding that emerging bilinguals draw on their entire linguistic repertoire (rather than two or more separate sets of language practices) to make meaning. These spaces empower emerging bilinguals by positioning them in ways that positively shape their ethnic identities and encouraging them to broker language and biliteracy to deepen their knowledge of languages and literacies in ways that support their academic develop and of those around them.

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**Language of Instruction (Bilingual & English-Only) & Its Effects on 5<sup>th</sup> Grade English  
Language Learners' Reading Comprehension Proficiency**

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### **Abstract**

Influenced by the limited availability of bilingual instruction in California public schools, this study examines the impacts that bilingual and English-only instruction have on fifth-grade Spanish-speaking English Language Learners' (ELL students) reading comprehension proficiency (Mongeau, 2016). The current study consisted of 40 ELL students (20 from an English-only classroom and 20 from a bilingual classroom) whose English reading comprehension proficiency was measured based on a verbal summary of a fifth-grade reading passage. Findings from independent sample t-tests and chi-square tests demonstrate that results were non-significant. In regards to reading comprehension skills, ELL students receiving bilingual instruction are on par with children who receive instruction solely in English. Findings from this study could inform educators about the implications arising from the fact that although both groups are on par in English reading comprehension skills, bilingual ELL students are simultaneously developing their Spanish reading comprehension skills.

**Key Words:** English Language Learners, Elementary Curriculum, Reading Comprehension, Native Language Instruction, Bilingual Education, Proposition 58

## **Language of Instruction (Bilingual & English-Only) & Its Effects on 5<sup>th</sup> Grade English Language Learners' Reading Comprehension Proficiency**

### **Introduction**

In recent years, there has been a substantial increase in the number of students who are learning English as their second language. These students are identified as English Language Learners (ELL students). There are approximately 1.41 million ELL students in California's public schools (California Department of Education, 2014). Of these ELL students, a vast majority are native Spanish speakers (84.24%) (CDE, 2014). After 18 years, California voters finally revoked the ban on bilingual education through the passage of Proposition 58 (2016), also known as the California Non-English Languages Allowed in Public Education Act. Proposition 58 makes it legal for schools to both offer bilingual education and incorporate ELL students' native language(s) within the classroom. Proposition 58 reflects current attitudinal changes towards bilingualism and thus, plays a major role in the current study.

Research has found that bilingual education is more effective than English-only instruction in improving ELL students' academic achievement (Francis, Lesaux, & August, 2006; Greene, 1997; Haubrich, 2010; Rolstad, Mahoney, & Glass, 2005). Thus, it would be ideal for all ELL students to be placed in bilingual classrooms. Realistically, however, even after Proposition 58, the majority of ELL students will continue to be placed in English-only classrooms for the foreseeable future because of the shortage of bilingual teachers (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2015; Mongeau, 2016). The high enrollment of ELL students in English-only classrooms and the limited availability of bilingual education makes it imperative to analyze these students' academic performance in their respective language program.

### **Language of Instruction and its Impacts on ELL students**

In regards to the pedagogical options for ELL students, the most common choices are bilingual and English-only programs. While bilingual programs incorporate, English-only programs primarily exclude, a student's native language from the curriculum. Much of the literature regarding the educational curricula of ELL students tends to focus on comparing the impacts that bilingual and English-only language programs have on ELL students' English attainment. While some studies (Conger, 2010; Rossell & Baker, 1996) report that English-only methods of instruction are more effective than bilingual instruction in increasing ELL students' English proficiency, others (Francis et al., 2006; Greene, 1997; Haubrich, 2010; Rolstad et al., 2005) report that bilingual programs are more effective than English-only. Given the conflicting studies, it is imperative to conduct more specific comparisons of language programs.

In an attempt to contribute to the current aforementioned studies, this study will measure the effects that these two language programs specifically have on ELL students' reading comprehension proficiency, a subset of "reading." Even though most studies (Conger, 2010; Francis et al., 2006; Greene, 1997; Haubrich, 2010; Rolstad et al., 2005; Rossell & Baker, 1996) provide data on students' "reading" performance, they do not specify whether this performance

is associated to students' reading comprehension, reading fluency, mastery of vocabulary words, or other reading skills. Furthermore, there are studies (Gottardo & Mueller, 2009; Proctor, August, Carlo, Snow, 2006) that deviate from the comparison of language programs and instead, compare whether Spanish or English decoding and oral language skills are predictors of ELL students' English reading comprehension. Similar to other studies (Conger, 2010; Francis et al., 2006; Greene, 1997; Haubrich, 2003; Rolstad et al., 2005; Rossell & Baker, 1996), Gottardo & Mueller (2009) and Proctor et al. (2006) also solely used standardized test scores to measure ELL students' academic performance. According to research, standardized test scores may not be an accurate measure of ELL students' academic proficiency (Bailey & Butler, 2003; Gandara, Rumberger, Maxwell-Jolly, Callahan, 2003). The current research study expands upon these previous studies by measuring ELL students' reading comprehension proficiency through a mixed-methods research.

## **The Effectiveness of Bilingual and English-Only Language Programs**

### **Studies Supporting English-only Programs**

Research has revealed that English-only instructional programs, such as English-as-a-second language (ESL) and structured immersion (SI), are more effective than native language instructional programs, such as transitional bilingual education (TBE), in developing ELL students' English proficiency. In an attempt to find which language program proved more effective for ELL students, Rossell and Baker (1996) conducted a meta-analysis of 72 previous studies to compare the effectiveness of two separate language programs: TBE and structured immersion. While TBE incorporates both native language and English, SI programs predominantly operate in English, sometimes incorporating a student's native language solely as a scaffold. Based on the 72 studies, Rossell and Baker (1996) observed that, in regards to ELL students' reading standardized test scores, "83% of the studies showed TBE to be worse than structured immersion" (p. 21). In other words, Rossell and Baker (1996) found that English-only instructional programs, such as ESL and structured immersion, are more effective than bilingual programs in improving ELL students' English acquisition. A limitation to Rossell and Baker's (1996) study, which Greene (1997) addresses, is that the majority of the 72 studies are not methodologically acceptable. The inconsistency of the methods used in the 72 studies, thus, challenges the validity of Rossell and Baker's findings.

### **Studies Supporting Bilingual Programs**

Although some research (Conger, 2010; Rossell & Baker, 1996) promotes English-only programs, there is a growing consensus that native language programs are more beneficial than English-only instructional approaches in improving ELL students' academic performance. Through a meta-analysis of 17 studies, Rolstad et al. (2005) found that the use of native language had a positive impact on ELL students' standardized reading and math test scores. From these analyses, they reported that native language programs are more effective than those classified as English-only.

### **No Evidence to Support the Superiority of One Language Program Over Another**

Although most studies (Conger, 2010; Greene, 1997; Haubrich, 2010; Rolstad et al., 2005; Rossell & Baker, 1996) have reported that one language program, either bilingual or English-only, is more effective than another, others (Linguanti et al., 2006) have reported that there is no difference between the effectiveness of these programs. Through an analysis of standardized test

scores, school personnel interviews, and classroom observations of 66 schools and five districts in California, Linquanti et al. reported that there is not sufficient evidence to prove that one instructional program is more effective than another. In other words, Linquanti et al. found that bilingual programs are not superior to English-only programs, and vice versa. Even if bilingual and English-only programs are equal for teaching English, both programs differently impact students' educational careers. It is worth noting that bilingual programs may be seen as superior overall because they equip ELL students with proficiency in two languages (i.e., Spanish and English) rather than one. Within their study, they particularly focused on schools in which ELL students were academically proficient. They suggest that these students may have a higher academic achievement because the teachers focused more on implementing efficient learning strategies rather than strictly employing a bilingual or English-only language program. Rather than being guided by such language programs, the teachers in this study altered their method of instruction so that it addressed the needs of their particular population of ELL students. Thus, these teachers had a positive impact on these high-achieving students' reading comprehension proficiency. The implementation of teaching strategies is more flexible in that it allows for shifts in the curriculum so that it meets ELL students' linguistic needs.

### **Transfer of Language Skills from Spanish [L1] to English [L2]**

One of the findings that provides support for bilingual education is that there is an interrelationship between ELL students' native language and English language skills. Studies have shown that ELL students' native language cognitive and language skills not only transfer, but have a positive effect on their attainment of English language skills. The amount of transfer that occurs between language and the types of phonological abilities that transfer depend on ELL students' native language (Bailey, Osipova, & Kelly, 2015). Although native languages contribute different phonological skills to ELL students' English language skills, Bailey et al., in a review of this literature, report that phonological awareness in Spanish-speaking ELL students' native language is a good predictor of their English phonological awareness, which contributes to their reading capacities. In accordance with Yopp and Stapleton (2008), Bailey and colleagues (2015) also report studies showing that ELL students' phonological awareness in their native language transfers to and positively contributes to their reading abilities in English. Other scholars (Yopp & Stapleton, 2008) found that the native language skills of ELL students transfer and positively contribute to their English language skills. Based on this aforementioned effective transfer of skills between languages, it is imperative to develop ELL students' native language skills alongside their English language skills.

### **Cummins' Interdependence Theory**

Not only is there empirical, but also theoretical evidence to support the effectiveness of bilingual education. Jim Cummins (2007), a prominent scholar, reveals the benefits of bilingual education through his Interdependence Theory. His theory maintains that "although the surface aspects (e.g. pronunciation, fluency, etc.) of different languages are clearly separate, there is an underlying cognitive/academic proficiency that is common across languages" (p. 232). This underlying proficiency allows for the transfer of "cognitive/academic proficiency" between languages. Although this theory has encountered disapprobation from those who oppose bilingual education, there are studies that corroborate its validity (Proctor et al., 2006). For example, various scholars have found that ELL students' phonological awareness in their native language contributes to their English reading abilities (Bailey et al., 2015; Yopp & Stapleton, 2008).

Cummins' theory also promotes that "students' L1 [native language] is not the enemy in promoting high levels of L2 [English] proficiency; rather, when students' L1 is invoked as a cognitive and linguistic resource through bilingual instructional strategies, it can function as a stepping stone to scaffold more accomplished performance in L2" (p. 238). Overall, Cummins' theory proposes that language skills transfer from one language to the other. In other words, ELL students' native language skills transfer and contribute to their acquisition of English. Overall, his theory has found support among the advocates of bilingual education.

### **Closing the Literature Gap**

Although studies have already measured the impacts that bilingual and English-only instruction have on ELL students' academic performance, they have limitations. One of the overarching limitations is that most of the aforementioned studies solely use standardized test scores to measure ELL students' academic performance (Conger, 2010; Francis et al., 2006; Gottardo and Mueller, 2009; Greene, 1997; Haubrich, 2003; Proctor et al., 2006; Rolstad et al., 2005; Rossell & Baker, 1996). Regardless of the test, there are limitations in interpreting ELL students' test scores because the exams are conducted in English, a language which ELL students have not yet fully grasped (Gandara et al., 2003). The validity of standardized test scores is questioned by Bailey and Butler (2003), who maintain that it is unclear whether ELL students' exam scores, particularly in "content-area assessments," depict a student's English "language abilities or their content knowledge" (p. 3). These scholars indicate that standardized test scores may not be an accurate measure of ELL students' academic performance. The current study contributes to this body of literature by evaluating the impacts that bilingual and English-only instruction have on Spanish-speaking ELL students' English reading comprehension proficiency through quantitative and qualitative measures, not solely relying on standardized test scores. The quantitative data consisted of participants' reading domain score in the California English Language Development Test (CELDT). The CELDT reading domain is a measure of ELL students' overall attainment of English, including their ability to identify phonemes, use decoding skills, and comprehend reading passages. The qualitative data consisted of the participants' verbal summaries of a fifth-grade passage.

### **Current Study**

The current study contributes to the gaps in the literature by using a mixed-methods approach, having less emphasis on standardized test scores, and focusing on a particular grade level [fifth grade], native language [Spanish], and reading component [reading comprehension]. This study addresses the following question: What impacts does bilingual and English-only instruction have on fifth grade Spanish-speaking ELL students' reading comprehension proficiency? A verbal summary of a fifth-grade reading passage was used to measure ELL students' English proficiency through the following reading comprehension features: main ideas, characters, and setting.

Based on previous research (Francis et al., 2006; Greene, 1997; Haubrich, 2010; Rolstad et al., 2005), it is evident that using a student's native language can assist with the acquisition of English. The current study contributes to this existing research base by evaluating the relationship between native language instruction and ELL students' English reading comprehension proficiency. The current research project evaluates the impacts that bilingual and English-only instruction have on fifth grade Spanish-speaking ELL students' reading comprehension proficiency. It is important to conduct research on Spanish-speaking ELL students because they

constitute the majority (84.24%) of the ELL population in California's public schools (CDE, 2014). The fifth-grade population is also of special interest because during this school year, ELL students either remain classified as an ELL or are re-designated as fluent English proficient (R-FEP). This classification is significant because it impacts the courses that these students are allowed to take during middle school. For instance, if an individual is still classified as an ELL in fifth grade, he/she will continue to be placed in English Language Development (ELD) classes in middle school, which may limit his/her access to the core curriculum. ELL students are pulled out of their core curriculum classes to receive additional assistance in mastering the English language. The challenges that arise from being classified as an ELL student for a long time puts students at risk for school dropout and failure, negatively affecting their preparedness for and access to higher education.

There is a need for research that particularly focuses on reading proficiency because of the pervasive achievement gap between ELL and native-English speaking students. A nationwide assessment, which measures reading performance, has consistently reported that in 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, the reading scores of ELL students were lower than the scores of non-ELL students (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2016). In fourth grade, non-ELL students' average reading scores were 37 points higher than that of ELL students (NAEP, 2016). This reading performance gap is particularly evident in reading comprehension. At the fifth grade level, ELL students have been found to be two full years behind their native English-speaking classmates in reading comprehension (Butler et al., 2003). Studies have also found that ELL students are not receiving sufficient instruction in reading comprehension (Anderson & Roit, 1996). Although other studies have measured ELL students' "reading" performance, they have not specified whether "reading" measures reading fluency, reading comprehension, mastery of vocabulary words, or other reading components. This study will contribute to these studies by specifically measuring ELL students' reading comprehension. With such a level of specificity, this study's findings can inform administrators, teachers, and policy makers about the weaknesses and strengths of ELL students' reading comprehension skills. This knowledge on ELL students' reading comprehension strengths and weaknesses can be a call to action for transforming the elementary school curricula so that they better address the linguistic needs of ELL students.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

The current study was conducted at Bilingual Elementary School (a pseudonym) in a Los Angeles-area school district. This study examined the English reading comprehension proficiency of 40 fifth grade Spanish-speaking ELL students. Of the 40 participants, 20 came from a classroom that equally integrates both Spanish and English within its language-arts curriculum [Group A] and 20 from an English-only classroom [Group B]. This study was conducted at the beginning of ELL students' fifth grade school year. In an attempt to measure the impacts of both methods of instruction with more accuracy, participants who have been part of their specific language program (bilingual or English-only) for at least one academic school year were recruited. After receiving UCLA IRB approval for the study, each participant received an assent and consent form for their parents to sign. It is worth noting that although these abovementioned variables may slightly differ among students, all of the participants have a similar linguistic background in that English is not their first language, rather they were all native Spanish speakers.



## Procedures

Before data collection, students were provided with an assent form. The consent form was sent to the parents, requesting access to their child's fourth grade California English Language Development Test (CELDT) scores for the reading domain and permission to audio-record their child.

As for the qualitative method, one-on-one semi-structured interviews were conducted. Students' English reading proficiency was measured based on the following reading comprehension features: main ideas/content, characters, and setting. Within these in-person interviews, a short two-minute Spanish language screening before the verbal summary task (see Appendix A) was conducted. The purpose of this Spanish screening is to gain a sense of ELL students' Spanish language proficiency. It is significant to understand how much exposure students have to Spanish at home or within their community because their Spanish language skills may transfer and positively impact their English reading comprehension proficiency (Cummins, 2007; Proctor et al., 2006; Yopp & Stapleton, 2008). Then, the verbal summary task was explained to the participants in English. Each participant was given as much time as they needed to read the fifth grade reading passage (see Appendix A). The verbal summary was prompted from each participant through reading comprehension questions (see Appendix A). Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed.

## Data Analysis Plan

### Scoring Method—Verbal Summary Responses

Each participant's response was scored using the point-scale system similar to the one used by Bailey and Heritage (2014) in their "Dynamic Language Learning Progressions" research project (see Appendix B). Students were given a score between zero and three on the following three reading comprehension features: main ideas, characters, and setting. The *Main ideas/content* feature measures students' ability to identify and give a synopsis of the most important or central thoughts of the passage. For the *Characters* feature, the student is expected to identify and characterize the characters in the short story. Lastly, the *Setting* feature measured students' ability to identify and describe the location in which the short story took place.

For each reading comprehension feature, a score of zero indicates that the feature is *Not evident* in the student's verbal summary. Consequently, a score of one reveals that the feature is *Emergent*, a score of two demonstrates that the feature is *Developing*, and a score of three indicates that the feature is *Controlled* (see Appendix B). Rather than evaluating their English reading proficiency solely through a standardized test score as other scholars have done (Conger, 2010; Francis et al., 2006; Gottardo & Mueller, 2009; Greene, 1997; Haubrich, 2003; Proctor et al., 2006; Rolstad et al., 2005; Rossell & Baker, 1996), the current study provided different scores on these three reading comprehension features (Bailey & Heritage, 2014) and in doing so, identified the particular reading comprehension strengths and weaknesses of the ELL participants in this study.

Like many other studies, this study compared the impacts that bilingual and English-only instructional programs have on ELL students' reading comprehension proficiency. The current study contributes to the existing studies by providing a new type of assessment, which may

influence the instructional practices so that teachers focus more on identifying and targeting students' specific linguistic needs, rather than solely implementing a language program. Independent t-tests and chi-square tests were conducted to determine if ELL students' reading comprehension scores in the bilingual classroom was statistically different or similar to those in the English-only classroom. Additionally, correlational analyses were conducted to examine the relationship between students' performance on this study and their CELDT reading scores.

### **Descriptive Characteristics of Population**

#### **ELL Students in Bilingual Classrooms**

Of the 20 ELL students in this research study, 9 of them were in intervention, or receiving extra academic support outside of the classroom because of their low academic achievement. From these 20 students, 8 had been re-classified as fluent English proficient (R-FEP), 10 remained classified as English Learners (EL), and 2 were native-English speakers who were learning Spanish as their second language. Similar to this study's sample, the majority (58%) of 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in bilingual classrooms remained classified as EL students, while 42% are R-FEP. From the ELL students in bilingual classrooms, the majority (65%) demonstrated a preference for speaking Spanish-only or a mixture of both Spanish and English at home, while 35% of these students preferred speaking predominantly English.

#### **ELL Students in English-Only Classrooms**

In this study's sample of ELL students in English-only classrooms, 4 students were in intervention, or receiving extra academic support outside of the classroom because of their low academic achievement. Of the 20 ELL participants in English-only classrooms, 7 were R-FEP, while 13 remained classified as EL. Although the majority of students in this study remained classified as EL, the majority (54%) of ELL students in English-only classrooms are R-FEP, while 42% remained classified as EL. Similar to the ELL students receiving bilingual instruction, the majority (75%) of ELL students in English-only classrooms demonstrated a preference for speaking Spanish-only or a mixture of both Spanish and English at home, while 25% preferred speaking more English.

### **Descriptive Findings**

#### **Main Ideas**

For the *Main Ideas* feature, none of the students receiving either bilingual or English-only instruction received a score of a 0. In other words, this feature was evident, to varying degrees, within each students' verbal summary. The feature is *emergent* or *developing* for the majority of students (80%) in both groups. Only 20% of students within each group had a *controlled* grasp of the main ideas of the reading passage. Within the *Main Ideas* feature, it is evident that the ELL students receiving bilingual instruction are performing at a similar level as those receiving English-only instruction.

Table 1

*Main Ideas*

Group-Language of Instruction	Rating	Frequency	Percent
Bilingual	0	0	0%
	1	7	35%
	2	9	45%
	3	4	20%
English-Only	0	0	0%
	1	9	45%
	2	7	35%
	3	4	20%

**Characters**

The majority of students' (70-75%) ability to characterize the characters are *emergent* or *developing*. On the other hand, only a small amount of students (15-20%) have the *Characters'* feature *controlled*.

Table 2

*Characters*

Group Language of Instruction	Rating	Frequency	Percent
Bilingual	0	2	10%
	1	8	40%
	2	6	30%
	3	4	20%
English-Only	0	0	0%
	1	9	45%
	2	8	40%
	3	3	15%

## Setting

When describing the setting, 70% of ELL students in the bilingual classroom and 75% of ELL students in the English-only classroom had performances that indicated that this feature is either *emergent* or *developing*. It is rare for ELL students in either groups to have their *Setting* feature *controlled*. It is imperative to note that, similar to the *Main Ideas* and *Characters* features, the *Settings* feature also demonstrates an overlap between the performances of ELL students in both groups.

Table 3

### Setting

Group Language of Instruction	Rating	Frequency	Percent
Bilingual	0	4	20%
	1	10	50%
	2	4	20%
	3	2	10%
English-Only	0	2	10%
	1	9	45%
	2	6	30%
	3	3	15%

### Findings: Data Analysis

Chi-square tests<sup>4</sup> were conducted for each of the reading comprehension features: *Main ideas*, *Characters*, and *Setting*. Results from the chi-square test were non-significant, which means that the bilingual group is not doing worse than the English-only group. In regards to reading comprehension skills, ELL students receiving bilingual instruction are on par with children who receive instruction solely in English. It is significant to note that while both groups are on par in English reading comprehension skills, bilingual ELL students are simultaneously developing their Spanish reading comprehension skills.

### CELDT Scores

When analyzing participants' CELDT scores, it is imperative to note that 50% of those in the bilingual classroom and 35% of those in the English-only classroom did not have CELDT

<sup>4</sup> Conducted independent t-tests and found that the means were not significantly different.

scores because they had already been re-classified as fluent English proficient speakers (R-FEP). In order for students to be classified as R-FEP, they must receive a score of a 5 (“Advanced”) in the majority of the subject areas. For the purpose of this study, a score of 5 was given to those participants who lacked CELDT scores. In order to compare participants’ performance in the verbal summary with their performance on the CELDT, Spearman’s rho nonparametric correlations were conducted. These analyses indicated that there was no correlation between students’ verbal summary scores and their CELDT reading scores. The lack of correlation could have resulted from the fact that the CELDT measures features that differ from the discourse-level set of features that the verbal summary measures. The CELDT particularly focuses on word analysis, fluency, and vocabulary. Additionally, although the CELDT measures reading comprehension, it does so through a multiple-choice activity, not through a verbal summary.

Table 4

*California English Language Development Test (CELDT) Scores*

	Bilingual Group	English-Only Group
Beginner	0	1
Early Intermediate	3	1
Intermediate	6	9
Early Advanced	1	1
Advanced	10	8
Re-classified as Fluent English Proficient (R-FEP)	10*	7*

\*Students who were R-FEP received an **Advanced** in the reading domain.

### **Discussion/ Conclusion**

For all the reading comprehension features (i.e., *main ideas*, *characters*, and *setting*), the ELL students in the bilingual classroom performed on par with ELL students receiving English-only instruction. It is imperative to note that in addition to language of instruction, there are other factors that may have impacted ELL students’ reading comprehension proficiencies. A salient factor is language spoken at home. Despite the fact that ELL students were in different language programs, the majority of students in both the English-only (75%) and bilingual (65%) classrooms predominantly spoke Spanish, or a mixture of Spanish and English, at home. Regardless of the language of instruction they were receiving, their native language skills could have transferred over to their English language skills (Bailey et al., 2015; Yopp & Stapleton, 2008).

The current research study is particularly significant because it seeks to narrow the overarching literature gaps addressed within the literature review. Most studies that have analyzed the impact that native language instruction has on ELL students’ academic achievement are predominantly quantitative (Greene, 1997; Francis et al., 2006; Haubrich, 2010; Rolstad et al., 2005). Thus, mixed-methods research approach, such as the current study, contributes to the existing literature. Additionally, though several studies (Greene, 1997; Francis et al., 2006; Haubrich, 2010) analyze ELL students’ academic achievement in reading, they fail to address

students' proficiency in specific aspects within this subject. Some specific aspects are reading comprehension, reading fluency, and mastery of vocabulary words. By analyzing ELL students' performance in reading comprehension, this study provides a better understanding of the aspects of reading in which students are either excelling or struggling with.

Lastly, the majority of studies were conducted before the year 2000 (i.e., Greene, 1997). Not only was the debate of native language instruction different, but so was the generation of ELL students, who were faced with the initial impacts of Proposition 227. It is imperative to note that while the data was collected for this study, Proposition 58, which makes bilingual education legal, had not yet passed. Thus, the effects of Proposition 227 were still in effect at the time of data collection.

### **Limitations**

There are several limitations to the current research study. The findings are based on a small population of Spanish speaking ELL students. Due to time limits, these students' reading proficiency were analyzed only during fifth grade. Thus, this study's conclusions address the effects that the inclusion and exclusion of ELL students' native language has on 5<sup>th</sup> grade ELL students.

### **Future Directions**

In the future, it is important to expand the analytical sample by conducting research on Spanish-speaking ELL students in different grade-levels, not just in fifth grade. By broadening the grade level range, the developmental stages that ELL students undergo while learning English will be analyzed. It is also imperative to analyze different teaching methods (not solely language of instruction) and factors that may impact ELL students' performance in schools. The location, school resources, teachers, and community are factors that also impact students' English proficiency. The diversity of participants will also broaden by incorporating more than one school into the study. ELL students whose first language is neither Spanish nor English (i.e., Vietnamese, Korean, Pilipino, etc) will also be included. Lastly, future studies should expand on the current study by measuring different aspects of English proficiency, not solely reading comprehension.

### **Implications for Education Policies and School Curriculum**

The results of this study, which showed that English-only and bilingual instruction had similar effects on fifth grade Spanish-speaking ELL students, may be used to change the negative conceptions of bilingual instruction in educational practices. Although Proposition 227 was repealed by Proposition 58 (2016), which allows that native language(s) be used in the classrooms, the availability of bilingual education in CA public schools continues to be limited (Mongeau, 2016). The current study is a call to action, informing and encouraging individuals to re-conceptualize their thoughts regarding the effectiveness of bilingual education. These results may also serve as a trigger for politicians and researchers to move away from comparing the effectiveness of language of instruction to analyzing different learning methods and other factors (i.e., language used at home) that contribute to ELL students' academic performance. While a comparison of language programs (i.e., bilingual and English-only) is important, it is also significant to study the impact that different teaching methods (i.e., hands-on, culturally-relevant curriculum, etc.) and factors (language used at home, students' Spanish competence, etc.) have on ELL students' academic proficiencies. This study may be influential in transforming the manner in which ELL students are taught. Through this transformation towards a more effective

approach in teaching ELL students, the achievement gap may become narrower and in the long-run, ELL students may have access to a more equitable education.

## *Appendix A-Methodological Tools:*

### **Spanish Language Screening Questions [in Spanish]:**

- (1) How are you?; (2) Is Spanish spoken in your house? If so, by who and how often? (3) When you're at home, do you speak more English or Spanish? Why?

### **5<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading Passage: A Family of Artists**

"I think we should paint a mural," suggested Beth. "What's a mural?" Sam asked. "A mural is a huge picture that is painted on a wall," Grandma said. "It's something that is sure to attract more customers to our store." For the last two weeks Beth, Sam, and Tim had been busy redecorating the shoe store their grandparents owned on Main Street. They had finished painting the inside of the store and were pleased with how it looked all fresh and clean. Now, they needed to focus on the outside of the building. At first their grandparents were not sure how to improve the outside; there was just a large, plain wall that faced the street. They asked their grandchildren if they had any ideas how to grab the attention of people who passed the store. Beth suggested a mural.

Grandpa had been a little wary of painting on the wall, but everyone else in the family agreed that a mural was a great idea, even Sam. He was not as enthusiastic as his brother and sister, but he had helped paint the walls inside and had found it to be fun. The outside of the building was different though; it required creativity, and he was not sure he would be a great help.

It wasn't that Sam didn't like painting. It was just that when he attempted to transfer the images from his mind onto a piece of paper, things never looked quite like he wanted them to.

On the other hand, Tim, Sam's older brother, made painting seem easy. Many of Tim's paintings could be found throughout their grandparents' apartment on the second floor of the shoe store. Tim could study an object and his painting would look exactly like the real thing. Beth, their sister, did not like to use color, but she was a terrific sketch artist. She liked drawing people and buildings. Grandpa called down the hall, "Sam, come on. We need to go help the others soon." "Okay, Grandpa," replied Sam. "I'll meet you downstairs in a minute." Beth, Tim, and Grandpa had gone outside to the store earlier in the morning to complete some tasks before beginning to paint. Beth began to sketch the design on the wall while Tim walked to the hardware store across the street to buy different colors of paint. Beth sketched people trying on shoes. She created rows of shoes just like the ones inside the store. Across the top of the wall Grandma wrote, "Simmons Shoe Sales" in large letters. Tim returned with the paint, ready to begin painting. Sam was not sure what his role would be. He wanted to help but did not think there would be anything for him to do. By the time Sam and Grandpa came outside, Tim was opening the cans of paint.

Grandpa and Grandma went inside the store to finish some paperwork, and Tim started painting. Sam sat on the ground and watched him. "Sam, you can't just sit there. We need your help to complete this project," Tim said. "You work on painting the bottom sections of the picture while I work on the top." "I'm not sure," Sam said. "I don't want to ruin any of your ideas." Tim reached down and handed Sam a paintbrush and said, "Be creative with the colors, and just paint the objects Beth drew." Sam grabbed the paintbrush and began to paint. Sam was having so much fun that he was surprised to see that he had finished the bottom of the wall. "Great job, Sam," Grandpa said as he came out to check on their progress. "Maybe, just maybe, I am an artist after all," thought Sam.



**Verbal Summary Questions [in English]:**

(1) What happens in the short story? (2) Can you describe the characters?; (3) Where did the short story take place?

*Appendix B-Description of Scores:*

<b>Not Evident</b>	<b>Emergent</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>Controlled</b>
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

**Main Ideas:**

<p><b>Not Evident</b></p> <p><b>0</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student doesn't remember any of the main ideas; he/she can't provide a summary without looking back at the passage</li> <li>• Summary is very brief</li> <li>• Solely reads from the passage</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: If the student requires assistance from the Principal Investigator, their summary will be coded as a 0.</i></p>
<p><b>Emergent</b></p> <p><b>1</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary consists of minor details, such as the interactions between the characters (grandma said, etc).</li> <li>• Identifies the main idea (painting)</li> <li>• Most of the summary [that is in their own words] is inaccurate</li> <li>• Student's summary primarily consists of in-text citations (student reads off of the passage; not in their own words)</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: If the student requires assistance from the Principal Investigator, their summary will be coded as a 0.8.</i></p>
<p><b>Developing</b></p> <p><b>2</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies the main idea (painting)</li> <li>• Some of their details are inaccurate or missing</li> <li>• Identifies either the purpose for building a mural or Sam's transition</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: If the student requires assistance from the Principal Investigator, their summary will be coded as a 1.8.</i></p>
<p><b>Controlled</b></p> <p><b>3</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details are accurate</li> <li>• Students does not look back at the passage for help</li> <li>• Identifies the purpose for building a mural (to attract more customers, or to make the building more attractive/creative)</li> <li>• Identifies Sam's transition from lacking confidence to believing he is actually an artist</li> </ul>

	<i>Note: If the student requires assistance from the Principal Investigator, their summary will be coded as a 2.8.</i>
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**Characters:**

<b>Not Evident</b> <b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student does not remember any of the characters' names</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: If the student requires assistance from the Principal Investigator, their summary will be coded as a 0.</i></p>
<b>Emergent</b> <b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student names some (2-3) characters (Sam, Tim, Beth, Grandma, and Grandpa)</li> <li>• Describes only one character</li> <li>• Predominantly reads from the passage</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: If the student requires assistance from the Principal Investigator, their summary will be coded as a 0.8.</i></p>
<b>Developing</b> <b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student names most (4-5) characters (Sam, Tim, Beth, Grandma, and Grandpa)</li> <li>• Describes more than one character</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: If the student requires assistance from the Principal Investigator, their summary will be coded as a 1.8.</i></p>
<b>Controlled</b> <b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student names all (5) characters (Sam, Tim, Beth, Grandma, and Grandpa)</li> <li>• Describes most characters (3-5)</li> <li>• Draws comparisons between characters</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: If the student requires assistance from the Principal Investigator, their summary will be coded as a 2.8.</i></p>

**Setting:**

<b>Not Evident</b> <b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not remember the setting or provides an inaccurate setting</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: If the student requires assistance from the Principal Investigator, their summary will be coded as a 0.</i></p>
<b>Emergent</b> <b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies the setting as a "store" or a "shoe store"</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: If the student requires assistance from the Principal Investigator, their summary will be coded as a 0.8.</i></p>
<b>Developing</b> <b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies the setting as a "store" or a "shoe store"</li> <li>• Expands upon the setting by revealing one other aspect of the setting, either its ownership (owned by the grandparents) or location (on Main Street)</li> </ul>

	<i>Note: If the student requires assistance from the Principal Investigator, their summary will be coded as a 1.8.</i>
<b>Controlled</b> <b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies the setting as a “store” or a “shoe store”</li> <li>• Reveals two other aspects of the setting, including its ownership (owned by the grandparents) and location (on Main Street)</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: If the student requires assistance from the Principal Investigator, their summary will be coded as a 2.8.</i></p>

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**The Principal's Role in Advocating an Engaging Curriculum for English Learners**

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### **Abstract**

National statistics show that English Learners (ELs) continue to be the fastest growing segment of the public-school population (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). Many ELs not only face many challenges in acquiring and learning English while trying to learn content matter to meet state mandated standards, but also face social barriers as they try to succeed academically in US schools. Along with the many daily responsibilities of a principal, it is crucial that he/she is knowledgeable about best practices and curriculum assessment to provide a rigorous, challenging, and engaging curriculum for optimal teaching and learning where ELs experience daily academic success. The principal can lead teachers to ensure there is a teaching/learning environment where educators deliver an engaging and inviting curriculum for optimal teaching/learning to occur. This paper examines best practices principals should know when working with ELs in their vital role as campus instructional leaders.

# **The Principal's Role in Advocating an Engaging Curriculum for English Learners**

## **Introduction**

Foreign-born residents of the United States, inclusive of children and adults, has increased from approximately 9.6 million to 38.5 million since early 1970s to 2010 (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). As in any US Census, such statistics do not capture the actual number of individuals for various reasons. Many of these foreign-born individuals attend US schools and face many challenges in acquiring and learning English while trying to learn content matter to meet state mandated requirements. In addition to schooling, many of these individuals face social barriers that add to pressure in achieving and succeeding academically in US schools. Factors that impact student success may be, but are not limited to the following: a) poverty, b) substance abuse, c) gangs, d) dropout rates, e) teenage pregnancy, f) runaways, g) homeless, h) sense of belonging, i) discipline problems, j) violence, k) low socioeconomic status, l) mental health issues, m) cultural differences/expectations, n) gender, o) lack of engagement in school, etc. As students and educators grapple with such variables that hinder student success and academic performance, unfortunately, many ELs exit school early prior to graduation hindering opportunities for a successful future. The reality is many students remain resilient and overcome many of these hardships and social peer pressures. Educators at all levels do and can make a difference in the lives of all students. To support and develop ELs, the principal in a given school, has a vital role as a curriculum and instructional specialist to advocate for an engaging curriculum for ELs. The principal of a school is the leader and thus makes the difference in whether students rise to the challenge of high expectations. Principals need to provide a conducive teaching/learning environment where educators deliver an engaging and inviting curriculum for optimal teaching/learning to occur.

Some common best practices a principal should be familiar with when working with ELs are as follows: a) the use of pairs or cooperative group; b) challenging content vocabulary and word walls; c) learning centers for lower grades; d) research centers for upper grades; e) authentic and meaningful writing across the content areas; f) authentic reading opportunities; g) journal reflective writing; h) project-based learning activities; i) vocabulary enrichment activities/games; j) primary and supplementary learning materials accessible in both languages; and k) rigorous computer software in different content areas.

Along with the many daily responsibilities of a principal, it is non-negotiable that the leader be an expert in curriculum assessment and evaluation to provide a rigorous, challenging, and engaging curriculum for optimal teaching and learning where ELs experience daily academic success. Thus, the principal must be viewed as the instructional leader of the campus.

## **Background**

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2017) states that English Learners (ELs) are the fastest growing segment of the public-school population. NCES (2017) further predicts that by 2025, nearly one out of every four public school students will be an English Learner. Contrary to public opinion, most ELs are native US born citizens, second and third generation, where 76% and 56% can be found in elementary and secondary schools respectively (Capps, Fix, Murray, Ost, Passel, & Herwanto, 2005). As such, many come from poverty-stricken homes where three out of four ELs are considered of Spanish-speaking descent (NCES,



2017) and most troubling is their academic performance falls below the norm when compared to their counter peers (NEA, 2007).

### **Demographics and Implications for Educators**

The face of the US continues to change daily as mobility of individuals from different countries and regions bring their customs, portable culture, language, religion, values, and ways of being (Banks, 2016; U. S. Census Bureau, 2013, 2014). Given the shift in demographic changes, schools face a responsibility to welcome and make the transition into US schools for these 21<sup>st</sup> century learners (Capps, Fix, & Mwosu, 2015; Fry & Gonzales, 2008; Gambino, Trevelyan, & Fitzwater, 2014; Turner, 2015).

In US society and in many schools today, many different native languages can be heard spoken, indicating the diversity that exists unlike before. Lopez, Gonzalez-Barrera, & Cuddington (2013) reported 42.6% of Californians being bilingual or multilingual, the highest in the country. Ryan (2013) reported the most common native languages being Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Arabic, Armenian, and Tagalog. New Mexico, the state coming in second, reported 35.7% of its population being bilingual or multilingual, where Spanish was the most common language spoken followed by Navajo. Texas, came in third at 33.9% of its people being bilingual or multilingual where the most common languages spoken were Spanish, Chinese, German, and Vietnamese. Other states who reported their people being bilingual or multilingual were New York at 28.9%, Arizona at 28.5%, New Jersey at 27.8%, Nevada at 27.4%, Florida at 26.1%, Hawaii at 25.5%, and Illinois at 21.8% rounding up the top ten states where many different languages are spoken.

The five states with the highest English Learner (EL) population are reported as follows: 1) California (43.8%), 2) New Mexico (36.5%), 3) Texas (34.7%), 4) New Jersey (30.4%), and 5) New York (30.1%) (Migrant Policy Institute, 2013). Most immigrants come from countries like Mexico, Central America, and South American, but recently these states are seeing an influx mainly from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East (Migrant Policy Institute, 2013). Besides English spoken in these communities, other common languages are Spanish, Asian languages from India, China, Vietnam, Korea, and the Philippines; French; Russian; Italian; and Portuguese (American Immigration Council, 2010; Schultheis & Ruiz-Soto, 2017; U.S. Census Bureau, 2014).

In Texas, for example, an influx of immigrants from what is referred to as the northern triangle, Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, are enrolled in local public schools (Wolgin & Kelley, 2014). These youth risk their lives due to increased death and violence in their home countries (Wong, Garcia, Abrajano, Fitzgerald, Ramakrishnan, & Le, 2013) arrive unaccompanied to be united with family already in the area or become wards of the state. Interestingly, from October 2013 to August 2015, over 102,000 unaccompanied children, from Central America and Mexico were apprehended by U.S. Customs and Border Patrol as they made their way into the United States (Pierce, 2016). Moreover, according to the Center for Migration Studies, a total of 10.9 million undocumented immigrants currently reside in the United States (NCES, 2017). Declines from South America and Europe have been documented; however, immigration from Central America has increased.

Such facts, at best, are estimates as they change daily. They do however provide an awareness of the varied cultural groups and languages found in our US schools. The aim of such demographics is to provide a sense of the complexities many educators face in providing an

optimal education for all students, especially those who are struggling to learn English and academic content simultaneously. Research shows students of color as well as ELs trail their White counterparts when it comes to academic achievement (Gándara & Contreras, 2009; O'Connor, Horvat, & Lewis, 2006; Valencia, 2000; Vega et al., 2012). The educational and academic achievement gaps between students of color, ELs, and their White counterparts point to public institutions failing to meet these students' academic needs (Moore & Lewis, 2012). Staying in school and not dropping out is yet another issue many ELs face, where many do not see graduation as an attainable goal.

**ELs' dropout and educational gap.** Research suggests different reasons as to why many students of color and ELs do not stay in school. Some of the common factors may be, but are not limited to poverty, language, cultural expectations, employment, geography, parents' level of education, teachers and school expectations, drugs, teenage pregnancies, bullying, violence, personal hardships, etc (Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007; Bridgeland et al., 2006; Snyder & Dillow, 2010; Wyner, Bridgeland, & DiIulio, 2007). Unfortunately, a high number drop out of school as they transition from eight and/or ninth to tenth grade (Blum, 2005; Cohen & Smerdon, 2009; Vega et al., 2012).

As a consequence, students of color, inclusive of ELs, tend to have the highest dropout rates of all racial/ethnic groups. Many, who face obstacles in life and amidst of adversity, confront resiliency, rise to the challenge, succeed academically and socially, and graduate; some do so with honors (Snyder & Dillow, 2010; Waxman, Gray, & Padrón, 2004; Wyner, Bridgeland, & DiIulio, 2007). Although much is to be celebrated for those who graduate and go on to higher education, unfortunately, for a great and alarming number, many fall through the cracks and never walk across the stage to graduate. The goal and main objective of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2002 was not merely for accountability purposes, but to close and eventually eliminate the achievement gap of Hispanic and Black students when compared to their White counterparts (Noguera and Wing, 2006). As seen around the country and in almost every school report, included in many of these statistics, ELs do not perform well on standardized tests and many simply leave school prior to graduation causing alarming dropout rates around the country.

With that said, the following section covers the premise of the paper examining the principal's role in advocating an engaging curriculum for English Learners. The premise argues for principals to be the instructional leaders of their respective campuses highlighting best practices when working with ELs.

### **Principal's Role as Instructional Leader**

The role of the campus principal today continues to change daily as accountability for all students is the norm. Along with the many daily duties, it is a non-negotiable the principal be an expert in instructional delivery and implementation to provide for a rigorous, challenging and engaging curriculum for optimal teaching and learning for all students, more so, for ELs who struggle learning content and language at the same time. Now more than ever, today's principal must be viewed as the instructional leader in the building. In many ways, the school has become the principal's classroom. The principal must have the latest knowledge and pedagogy of the many activities occurring along with the infusion of 21<sup>st</sup> century technology on campus in educating and embodying the concept of high expectations for all students. The expectation of educating "all students" consists of White, Black, Hispanic, English Learners (ELs), special education students, gifted and talented students, at-risk students, ESL students, students in

bilingual and dual language programs, Pre-AP classes, AP students, low socio-economic students, to name but a few. As evident, this is not easy feat.

The campus principal must model this vision and expectation of educating all students. It becomes essential and imperative the principal understands the teaching and learning processes as s/he is seen as the instructional leader in the building. Aside from having sound knowledge and pedagogy, the principal should be able to identify what consists of excellent teaching and assists those who need help or remediation to improve in the teacher's delivery of instruction. It goes without saying the principal must have knowledge and skills in how students learn as well in order to better assist teachers. In this case, the principal as instructional leader must have not only leadership knowledge and skills, but be versed in the theories of how ELs acquire a second language as well as best practices to best help teachers who work with predominately ELs who are learning grade level academic concepts and English at the same time.

In addition to this, a serious and pervasive problem needing to be addressed is the biased perception of ELs being misidentified as Learning Disabled (LD) as many educators confuse language acquisition with learning disabilities (Allison & Young, 2016). Principals must reiterate ELs are struggling learning English and content and this does not mean they are LD. In some cases, students are LD, but the perception and misunderstanding of ELs being LD as they cannot quickly grasp English needs to be addressed. Labels, in general, follow students and have adverse effects, especially when misidentified causing possible stigmas, ridicule, and the potential to not receive the actual academic services needed (Allison & Young, 2016).

As a result, a principal should be familiar with the most common and current best practices when working with ELs. Although many practices exist in the field, researchers highlight some of the best common practices a principal should be familiar when working with ELs.

### **Bilingual Pairs**

Alanis (2011) highlights the importance of hearing language in rich and meaningful contexts to develop language skills as well as academic concepts. The advantages of using bilingual pairs consist but are not limited to the following: a) concepts are learned in the language of the student; b) students work together on a single project to meet linguistic and academic concepts being introduced; c) students reinforce their learning while creating a sense of community based on relying upon each other; d) students express, communicate, and challenge each other's ideas; e) relationships are formed; f) students are actively engaged in the teaching/learning process; g) students take risks; and h) students have opportunities to feel successful as opposed to working alone figuring out language and content with no assistance (Alanis, 2011). Bilingual pairs should work together throughout the day and changed over a period of time as the teacher sees fit. The use of bilingual pairs is a powerful practice in dual language, bilingual or general education classes where the teacher may utilize its effectiveness for optimal teaching/learning. Having the knowledge and research basis of using bilingual pairs allows the principal as the instructional leader to help teachers provide optimal teaching/learning environments for its ELs.

**Challenging content vocabulary word walls.** A rich print environment consists of challenging content words in the classroom to accelerate linguistic and academic content. The words, whether in content bulletin boards or in other formats, should be used to enhance linguistic and academic content (Ernst & Richard, 1995). Words should not be up on the walls for mere

decoration, but serve a purpose whether it be spelling when students may not know how to write a given word, review of definitions used in context, game activities to build vocabulary, content integration be it science, math, language arts, etc., and other sound pedagogy used in building words for a strong linguistic and academic background. Learning challenging vocabulary through read-alouds, visuals, realia, gestures, dramatization, demonstrations, and graphic organizers to illustrate key concepts and vocabulary needs to be comprehensible and meaningful to students (John, 2015).

As students continue to work in their assigned bilingual pairs, word building will develop and improve as students challenge each other throughout the assigned tasks. Acquiring a second language does not happen in isolation and thus working in bilingual pairs allows for learning in social contexts through meaningful and purposeful interactions (Ernst & Richard, 1995). Providing concrete examples for teachers on behalf of the principal as the instructional leader in how to build vocabulary for ELs is essential to acquire linguistic and academic content.

***Learning centers for lower grades.*** Learning centers, especially for lower grades, Pre-K through second or third grade, can be beneficial to the acquisition of not only language, but of learning the needed academic content. As students work together in their bilingual pairs, students can work together to complete activities that are challenging and rigorous as a pair. Students, in their bilingual pairs, produce organic and authentic work as opposed to filling in worksheets. Learning centers can be created in the different content areas to reinforce concepts or academic content through carefully organized activities based on the objectives of the day (Alanis, 2011). The learning centers should be a place where students explore, create, develop and take ownership for their learning while working in pairs. The teacher acts as a guide where s/he monitors what is happening throughout the different learning centers created for the different content areas (John, 2015). Bilingual pairs can be changed from one content area to the next depending on the student's strengths in a given content. Having well established and consistent learning centers affords students high levels of content, linguistic, personal and interpersonal growth and connections otherwise not found if working in isolation (Alanis, 2011; Juel, 1994). The principal as the instructional leader can assist and ensure the learning centers are well established to meet the desired learning outcomes both linguistically and academically for optimal learning and engagement.

***Research centers for upper grades.*** For upper grade students, from third grade on up, research centers have great benefits not only linguistically and academically, but improve the capabilities of internet searching, reading, conceptualizing, deciphering and most of all, acquiring research skills greatly needed for 21<sup>st</sup> century learners (John, 2015). Teachers provide opportunities and invite ELs to first learn the process of mechanics and grammar through guided instruction before requiring students to do research independently (Ammon, 1985). Teachers set up research centers in the varying content areas based on the objectives. The research centers are meant to enhance and promote a more in depth knowledge base. Students learn in breadth and depth certain topics by doing research (John, 2015). Of course, this type of work requires the teacher has clear goals and outcomes for a research project that may take a couple of days to weeks depending on what is being studied and how long it will be covered. Carefully designed research projects on behalf of the teacher allows for authentic and organic work to be produced by bilingual pairs as teachers draw upon the ELs' background knowledge, home and cultural ways of knowing, and personal experiences. Utilizing research centers in the upper grades allows ELs to explore explicit concepts about language and literacy when the information is grounded in a

familiar context that draws on students' background knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). The principal as the instructional leader can assist and model how to investigate a topic of interest, how to search and analyze for credible information, and how to structure the final product to provide for an optimal teaching/learning environment.

*Authentic reading opportunities.* Classrooms should have many genres and different types of reading materials where the environment is conducive to linguistic and academic development (John, 2015). Children's books and other types of books, age appropriate magazines, newsletters, advertisements, iPads, to name a few, should be available to ELs at the different reading and grade levels. It is without saying that technology, in all its forms, should also be used to access a variety of reading materials. It is imperative academic textbooks of all genres are available to ELs. In the reading center for lower grades, for example, a variety of reading materials should be available for ELs (John, 2015). Students can read and work in their bilingual pairs using the three strategies: turn and talk; think-pair-share, and clarify/verify (Alanis, 2011) to process and verbalize the information. Within this reading center, opportunities should be provided where students record each other reading and then hear themselves where the teacher spot-checks for pronunciation. Knowledge of these practices when working with ELs will propel the principal as the instructional leader to assist any teacher having difficulties on how to best serve such students.

*Journal reflective writing.* Aside from the use of phonological, graphic, orthographic, semantic, syntactic, and discourse rule systems in writing (Dyson & Freedman, 1991, p. 762) and the challenges ELs face in acquiring oral and literacy skills (August & Hakuta, 1997), reflective journal writing is a way to allow students to openly express themselves without constraints when first modeled by the teacher. Many ELs may know how to write in their native language and as such, these transfer skills will help in making the transition easier. The reality is ELs still face many difficulties in the writing process in English (Kroll, 1990). Through a rich print environment containing word walls and reading materials, ELs can utilize these in their writing. ELs can first draw their understanding of the prompt or story and then begin to write to illustrate their journal entry; this supports the writing process (Peregoy & Boyle, 1997) and provides opportunities for teachers and ELs to dialogue and encourage a more elaborate journal entry (Yedlin, 2003; 2004). The goal and purpose behind journal reflective writing are to allow students opportunities to write, contextualize and reflect on what they are learning to internalize not only language and content, but the process of writing (Dolly, 1990; Kreeft-Peyton & Reed, 1990). As such, using simple familiar prompts related to family, friends, festivities, holidays, or other culturally relevant topics can serve as a springboard to motivate ELs to write (John, 2015; Peregoy & Boyle, 1997). The idea is to find a starting point and get ELs to start writing in English and feel comfortable in the process. The principal as the instructional leader can assist teachers with this practice.

*Linguistic and academic opportunities through thematic instruction.* ELs can greatly benefit from thematic unit instruction as they see the connectedness of all content areas (John, 2015). This type of practice contextualizes instruction when hands-on or project based activities cut across the content areas incorporating the key elements of listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Blum, 2005; John, 2015). Integrating bilingual pairs, learning and research centers, along with reflective journal writing, promotes cooperation and motivation in learning functional linguistic and academic content across multiple content areas (Alanis, 2011; John, 2015). Instead of fragmented content by disciplines, ELs are receiving the benefits of cross-cultural curriculum comprehending content while acquiring language. In addition, language development in the different contents allows for ELs to explore multidisciplinary resources that are interconnected

and interrelated as they see connections in math, science, language arts, social studies and other disciplines (John, 2015). As ELs are exposed to the different content activities, they experience opportunity to grow in listening, speaking, reading, and writing and process information for comprehension and understanding which is essential to their academic success (Blum, 2005; John, 2015). Principals as instructional leaders understand that when ELs make connections to their content, linguistic and academic success will ensue.

*Rigorous computer software in the different content areas.* Finding meaningful and rigorous computer software for ELs is a challenge many teachers face. Much of the software for ELs is too technical, abstract, and complicated. ELs not only need challenging and rigorous computer software to support linguistic and academic content, they also need technology as a whole to prepare them for the 21<sup>st</sup> century digital world. Their futures and careers depend on a combination of learning technological skills and academic content. The needed software in the different content areas should develop and support their linguistic and academic content, and build technical skills and digital literacy as well to prepare them for the future. Many ELs understand how technology works; their difficulty is with learning English and making sense of the vocabulary and content being presented. This is why the principal as the instructional leader must find appropriate, rigorous and challenging software in the different content for overall linguistic and academic performance. Unfortunately, many ELs do not have access to computers or the Internet at home, and many may not know of the available free services at the local libraries. This limited access puts many ELs at a disadvantage. In essence, many ELs may know about technology through their social apps, but the differentiation in technology instruction and application at school leaves many behind. On the same vein, many schools are equipped with the latest technological tools and advances, but firewalls blocking access to educational websites cannot be attained for instruction. Still, many schools barely have any technical infrastructure and/or equipment, typically found in low income or poverty stricken geographical areas that tend to serve predominately ELs. A principal as the instructional leader understands finding appropriate software to support linguistic and academic content is essential for the success of ELs. Some best practices to keep in mind should be considered, but not limited to having as many computers and iPads in the class as possible; finding software that has many visuals and/or graphics with language that is comprehensible; instructions and toolbars that are easy to follow or navigate; content that is presented in pedagogical manner from easy to challenging to more complex; software that is culturally relevant and meaningful with real world applications; and software where students can practice integrating the essential skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking.

### **Implications for Future Research and Practice**

The campus principal seen as the instructional leader must know the instructional implications for teachers working with ELs. Classrooms in today's schools should be a place where ELs are actively involved in listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities. Activities with a small group of students working together or students working in pairs are beneficial for English learners. These activities give ELs more opportunities to be actively involved in the acquisition of language while learning academic content. This active participation builds on the students' academic knowledge and provides them practice with the English language integrating the different disciplines or content areas. The principal as the instructional leader must assist teachers to create positive, conducive learning environments for students to learn English and content at the same time; the two are interdependent of each other and not in isolation. Principals

as instructional leaders must work together to create an environment where teachers can contextualize knowledge for ELs, moving one subject to the next in a natural transition, and organizing curriculum for ELs around big questions or thematic units to increase comprehensible input (Freeman & Freeman, 2007; John, 2015). Principals as instructional leaders must ensure teachers know how to integrate language and literacy objectives into each content area utilizing the best practices when possible as teachers provide differentiated instruction, child-centered interaction, attention to experiential learning, and many other practices that inform their teaching when working with ELs. The principal as the instructional leader understands the nuances of integrating all subject matters to provide ELs with a view of how subjects are interrelated and connected; no subject is more important than the other. Moreover, the principal as the instructional leader understands the balance between rigorous software and technology and the importance of human interaction and making those connections. The role of the principal as instructional leader understands and engages in problem-solving with other educators, administrators, and influential people. The primary goal is to work together for the common good of English Learners and to ensure all teachers are provided with the resources, support and assistance needed to be successful.

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**Book Review of**

**Garcia, O., Ibarra Johnson, S., & K. Seltzer. (2017). *The Translanguaging Classroom: Leveraging Student Bilingualism for Learning*. Philadelphia: Caslon.**

**By**

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**Garcia, O., Ibarra Johnson, S., & Seltzer. (2017). *The Translanguaging Classroom: Leveraging Student Bilingualism for Learning*. Philadelphia: Caslon. 196 pp.**

This book offers a description of a translanguaging classroom from a pedagogical, instructional, and ideological perspective. The idea of translanguaging has been part of the academic discussion surrounding bilingual education in recent years (Garcia, 2009; Garcia & Kleyn, 2016; Horner, Lu, Jones Royster, & Trimbur, 2011; Musanti & Rodriguez, 2017; Otheguy, Garcia, & Reid, 2015; Pacheco & Miller, 2015; Velasco & Garcia, 2014; Zapata & Tropp Laman, 2016). The CUNY-NYS Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals provides guidebooks and videos on their website to support teachers with the implementation aspects of creating a translanguaging classroom. This book takes the resources they have provided thus far one step further by providing a framework with comprehensive tools and templates to plan and create a translanguaging classroom. Everything about this book is for the teacher that serves emergent bilinguals in diverse classrooms.

The foreword to this book is written by Guadalupe Valdes, a professor of Bilingual Education at Stanford University. She highlights how the book pushes back on the status quo that has so often led educators to the “pobrecito” mentality of educating emergent bilinguals with curriculum that is watered down and expectations that are lowered. The authors of this book are, instead, leading from a critical pedagogy paradigm in which they believe that cognitive, cultural, and linguistic resources must be valued in each classroom. The foreword also provides the reader an introduction to the social justice stance that is evident in every part of this book as well as a quick overview of some of the key concepts presented throughout the book. The three purposes of the book are clearly explained in the preface.

- \* To provide a clearly articulated translanguaging pedagogy in practice
- \* To guide teachers’ efforts to adapt the translanguaging pedagogy to any context
- \* To provide the foundation for teachers and researchers to gather empirical evidence in the translanguaging classroom

### **Dynamic Bilingualism at School**

The book is divided into three sections with each section containing 3-4 chapters each. The first section contains the first three chapters and lays the foundation to understanding translanguaging and the ideology and philosophy behind it. The authors do this by discussing the concepts of dynamic bilingualism and how it allows us to take additive bilingualism one step further by allowing for what they coin the translanguaging corriente. Through use of the translanguaging corriente educators move away from the standardized language expectations in order to build upon the diversity of languages and cultures that exist in classrooms all over the U.S.

While this first section provides a focus on the ideological and philosophical background, the authors do introduce some of the practical tools necessary for implementation of a translanguaging pedagogy. They stress the importance of creating a multilingual ecology and

establishing profiles for each student. Through this discussion it becomes clear how important it is for teachers to know each of their students and how necessary it is to create the environment or multilingual ecology for that to happen. Furthermore, in this section the readers are introduced to three teachers in three different kinds of programs for emergent bilinguals. These vignettes are used throughout the book. This is very useful because it allows the reader to make connections with the theory to the practical application or praxis. I loved the real world examples and their diversity, no class or context was the same but they made it work in their own way. The three teachers represented are a dual language 4th grade teacher, a high school social studies English medium teacher, and a middle school push-in teacher who supports content classrooms.

### **Translanguaging Pedagogy**

In section two the authors go deeper into the translanguaging pedagogy and practice. This section focuses more specifically on the teacher and their beliefs. The authors discuss translanguaging stance and a *juntos* stance that they deem as necessary philosophical orientations for the teacher. While the translanguaging stance focuses on the teacher's belief of the students' linguistic repertoire and the necessity for student access to it in order for successful learning to occur, the *juntos* stance takes us into the dynamics between students and teacher. The *juntos* stance reinforces the necessity of collaboration and co-creation of students with teachers and students with students with the translanguaging pedagogy.

In this section we begin to see exactly what implementation looks like from planning for instruction all the way through to classroom instruction. It is clear to see that the lesson design cycle is designed from a constructivist approach to pedagogy as it is a cycle that is strategically planning for instruction that is responsive to the translanguaging corriente. Throughout this section and the entire book the authors stress the importance of flexibility in instruction and design.

Finally, in this section the authors take us into a classroom, the high school social studies English medium classroom. They walk the reader through the teacher's instructional moves to show how she uses bilingual profiles, her translanguaging and *juntos* stance, and specific instructional strategies as well as the interplay of assessment and shifts throughout her instruction. It is in this section that the reader is provided with a clear list of strategies to use in a translanguaging classroom.

### **Reimagining Teaching and Learning through Translanguaging**

The third and final section of this book discusses the use of standards, importance of content-area literacy, biliteracy, and reemphasizes the idea of social justice that is present throughout the book. The authors point out that a teacher should use their translanguaging stance to guide their use of standards rather than the standards driving the instruction. They stress the importance of providing instruction that is authentic and based on students' experiences. They point out that while curriculum design in this manner is quite difficult, we cannot afford not to.

Through their discussion on content-area literacy the authors emphasize the idea that every teacher is responsible for literacy instruction and that within that instruction students should have access to resources and choice in all of the linguistic moves within the classroom. While the idea

of content-area literacy instruction is not new or different, what the authors propose in this book is quite different from what we typically see with sheltered instruction techniques where encouragement of L1 usage is minimal at best. In their discussion of biliteracy, they bring forth the idea of using a flexible multiple model rather than the linear model of bilingualism we are typically faced with in bilingual programs. It is here that they authors stress the importance of approaching language use in the classroom from the perspective of cultural practices and contexts and moving away from a focus on language dominance. They emphasize the need to focus on instructional practice that helps teachers support the naturalness of being bilingual.

While the idea of social justice is prevalent throughout this book, it is in the last section where the authors address it directly. Through this discussion they introduce the idea of what they call *valorización* design. This design stresses the importance of student identity development and social-emotional support and demonstrates how those elements are key factors in the translanguaging classroom.

### **Reflection**

This book very clearly meets each of the three purposes that were defined in the preface. The authors provide a clear explanation of what translanguaging pedagogy is in section two by walking the reader through the various considerations that must be made as a teacher plans to take this pedagogical approach. Throughout the book it becomes evident that collaboration and flexibility are key factors in the translanguaging pedagogy. Teachers are directed to create extensive bilingual profiles in order to utilize a translanguaging stance that allows them to incorporate design and shifts to meet the needs of each learner. The foundation to the translanguaging pedagogy and its implementation provides researchers with a starting point for gathering empirical evidence. The three teacher scenarios provided throughout the book serve as a guide along with the appendix that is full of templates for each of the strategies and expectations introduced by the authors.

In a time where there seems to be growing interest in bilingual programs that promote biliteracy and a movement toward examining assessment strategies that are developed through a bilingual lens rather than a monolingual lens, which has historically been the norm, this book does a good job of extending the conversation with the presentation of practical classroom explanations and strategies. It promotes viewing instruction through a bilingual lens for all students and recognizing the diversity that is very much a part of each classroom. Furthermore, the book is designed to guide instruction that is created for the learner while utilizing the learner's resources to enhance the learning experience. These ideas contribute to the discussion of culturally relevant pedagogy and push it further by offering a specific look through the bilingual lens.

While overall, I see this book as a great resource to teachers with bilingual students in their classrooms, I did find myself wondering how feasible some of the suggestions were for a teacher who may have 150+ students in their classes each day. This approach requires a deep knowledge of each student both culturally and linguistically, which I understand is important for effective instruction, but I found myself consistently being pulled into concerns about the logistics of how to implement in schools and classrooms with large numbers of students. Furthermore, I wonder about the book's practicality and acceptability in our current climate of extreme accountability in English. Policy that drives the accountability culture we are currently under cannot be ignored as

it often drives decisions made both by education leaders and teachers (Enright & Gilliland, 2011). So, I wonder, how do we get past this seemingly impassible barrier to be able to implement a translanguaging pedagogy?

Overall this book is a great resource for teachers looking for ways to improve their instruction of the bilingual students in their classroom. It fits very nicely with culturally relevant pedagogy, social justice, and the development of biliteracy, which are all key concepts in education right now. However, it presents ideas that need more research. I believe the authors certainly recognize this need as one of their purposes for the book is to provide a foundation for researchers wishing to explore the translanguaging pedagogy.

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**Book Review**

***The Literacy Club: Effective Instruction and Intervention for Linguistically Diverse Learners (2017). En español: El club de literatura: Instrucción efectiva e intervención para estudiantes lingüísticamente diversos*** por Kathryn Henn-Reinke y Xee Yang Philadelphia, PA: Caslon, Inc.

**By**

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***The Literacy Club: Effective Instruction and Intervention for Linguistically Diverse Learners. Reseñado por Lucy Montalvo, Universidad de Texas, Rio Grande Valley***

Proveemos educación a estudiantes bilingües emergentes y tenemos varios años de experiencia como educadores. Sin embargo, cada año tenemos al menos tres estudiantes que tienen dificultad con la lectoescritura en inglés y español. Cuando estos estudiantes continúan cambiando de grados, preguntas acerca de su progreso y aún siguen con dificultades. También siguen por debajo de los niveles de lectura deseados. Estos estudiantes han participado en algún tipo de intervención desde los grados primarios y te preguntas, ¿Qué falta? ¿Cómo podemos ayudar a estos estudiantes alcanzar niveles apropiados de acuerdo al tiempo que lleva expuesto a un segundo idioma? Kathryn Henn-Reinke es una profesora recién retirada especializada en inglés como segundo idioma/educación bilingüe en la Universidad de Wisconsin, Oshkosh. Xee Yan es una maestra de inglés como segundo idioma en una escuela elemental en Wisconsin. También es una instructora de cultura e idioma Hmong en un colegio técnico en Wisconsin. Juntas, han escrito el libro *El Club de Lectura: Instrucción efectiva e intervención para estudiantes lingüísticamente diversos*. El Club de Lectura fue un método desarrollado con “un enfoque basado en la investigación, probado en el campo para abordar las necesidades de alfabetización y aprendizaje de diversos estudiantes de idiomas en entornos de K-5, en Wisconsin” (p.1). Este libro presenta un modelo de intervención nivel dos que ha sido comprobado y ajustado para incluir estrategias de instrucción efectiva y pertinente especialmente dirigida hacia estudiantes bilingües emergentes. Las autoras identifican una ocurrencia común que puedes observar en estudiantes emergentes bilingües a través de varios entornos educativos. La ocurrencia que me refiero es la de siempre tener un grupo pequeño de estudiantes que reflejan tener dificultad en adquirir conocimiento literario en ambos idiomas que están aprendiendo (Henn-Reinke & Yang, 2017). Muchos de estos estudiantes se encuentran en niveles de lectura por debajo de los deseados para su respectivo grado. Aunque hay varias razones para explicar esta situación, la realidad es que estos estudiantes muestran la falta de estrategias efectivas para ser un/a lector/a exitoso/a. Año tras año vemos esta situación repetirse. ¡Es hora que cambiemos las viejas tradiciones educativas que no satisfacen las necesidades de nuestros estudiantes bilingües emergentes!

Las intervenciones del Club de Lectura incluyen prácticas efectivas para desarrollar la biliteracidad para estudiantes bilingües. Este sistema de intervención es uno organizado y específico que ofrece estrategias que aplican al desarrollo de dos idiomas. Esta instrucción estratégica está diseñada para complementar y aumentar el trabajo brindado a la instrucción general (p.vi). Encontrarás estrategias reconocidas como el marco de enseñanza de biliteracidad (Escamilla et. al, 2014), metalenguaje, conexiones entre lenguajes y el puente (Beeman & Urow, 2012). Muchos emergentes bilingües han carecido estas estrategias mencionadas. Este método de intervención se puede ofrecer en grupos pequeños como parte de grupos de lectura o como tiempo de intervención fuera del salón de clase. Cuando comienzas a buscar métodos para poder proveer intervención efectiva para tus estudiantes bilingües, verás que hay pocos formatos adaptados específicamente para esta población. Otro detalle de este método es la flexibilidad para implementar el formato y el hecho de que se puede utilizar para estudiantes bilingües sin importar los idiomas que hablan. Por esta razón, pienso que la implementación del club de literatura sería una que proveerá cambios positivos para aquellos estudiantes que tienen dificultades en la lectoescritura en ambos idiomas.

## Resumen del contenido

“Este libro es para educadores, administradores, especialistas en lectoescritura, padres y otras personas que trabajan con estudiantes bilingües emergentes que están luchando con la lectoescritura y que están interesados en aprender más sobre intervenciones efectivas para usar con esta población estudiantil” (Henn-Reinke & Yang, 2017, p.V). Si conoces el marco de enseñanza Literacy Squared creado por Escamilla et. al, 2014, conoces que el fundamento de la biliteracidad es instrucción que se concentra en cuatro componentes. Estos cuatro componentes incluyen instrucción que le dedica tiempo equitativo a la lectura, la escritura, el metalenguaje y el lenguaje oral. El fundamento de este formato de intervención se enfoca en estos cuatro componentes durante la instrucción. También enfatiza la instrucción constante de estrategias lectoras. Las estrategias de enseñanza que proponen son aquellas dirigidas a estudiantes aprendiendo un segundo idioma como andamiaje, conocimiento de fondo y datos comprensibles. Evaluaciones constantes realizada por maestras y maestros, al igual que evaluaciones y metas propias realizadas por los estudiantes proveen información precisa. Por último, este formato enfatiza la enseñanza culturalmente receptiva. La instrucción y materiales utilizados deben representar la cultura de los estudiantes, al igual ofrecer discusiones donde la/el estudiante tenga facilidad en poder aportar al diálogo.

Este libro contiene siete capítulos, cada uno proveyendo información pertinente al proceso de implementación. El primer capítulo provee un resumen general, el formato a seguir y sugiere dividir a los estudiantes en dos grupos dependiendo de su capacidad lingüística que muestra en ambos idiomas. El primer grupo, *Bilingües emergentes*, contiene aquellos estudiantes con dificultades en la lectoescritura en ambos idiomas. El siguiente grupo, *Bilingües avanzados*, se compone de estudiantes que muestran buen dominio en su idioma nativo. Estos dos grupos son específicos para estudiantes participando en programas bilingües. El último grupo, *inglés como idioma adicional*, se puede implementar en escuelas que no ofrecen un programa bilingüe. El segundo capítulo habla sobre las estructuras de las evaluaciones que se utiliza para tener una medida constante que demuestra niveles actuales de los estudiantes. También discute la importancia de la evaluación propia que los estudiantes realizan durante el transcurso del año. Los capítulos tres al seis proveen ejemplos para implementar esta intervención a grupos de estudiantes en kínder (comenzando el segundo semestre), primero y segundo, al igual que estudiantes que cursan del tercero al quinto grado. Cada grupo requiere intervenciones específicas que aplica a los grados que la/el estudiante necesita. El último capítulo denota sugerencias y guías realistas para implementar el Club de Lectura.

## Análisis

En mi opinión, este libro provee información específica y aplicables para todos aquellos que trabajan con estudiantes aprendiendo un segundo idioma. El hecho que las autoras usan los marcos de enseñanza de biliteracidad como base de instrucción muestra que han diseñado este formato cautelosamente para proveer enseñanza efectiva para estudiantes bilingües. Este método de instrucción enfatiza el uso de mejores prácticas de enseñanza al igual que estrategias apropiados en base al desarrollo literario de los estudiantes involucrados. El libro provee toda la información para poder implementar este tipo de instrucción en cualquier escuela. El decidir implementar este método requerirá mucho desarrollo profesional para todos aquellos educadores involucrados durante este proceso. La información proveída es extensiva y detallada. Instituciones

educativas no deben esperar poder implementar este método y alcanzar las metas deseadas sin antes aprender acerca de tales marcos de enseñanza fundamentales.

Hay varios aspectos logísticos que tomarán tiempo organizar. Dependiendo de la implementación que la escuela o distrito decida, quizás sea necesario emplear profesionales especializados en educación bilingüe. Si el personal ya se encuentra en la escuela, tendrán que tomar varias decisiones en cuanto al proceso, horario, materiales y métodos de evaluaciones entre otras cosas. Si tienes un equipo que está de acuerdo con estos principios y los métodos para implementar, podrás tener éxito en ofrecer esta intervención para estudiantes bilingües emergentes. Debes tener en cuenta que este proceso requiere colaboración entre maestros al igual que el monitoreo constante de cada estudiante. Al seguir estas sugerencias, opino que estos estudiantes tendrán mayor éxito académico.

### **Conclusión**

Con el fin de eliminar la brecha de logros académicos para estudiantes aprendiendo un segundo idioma, es importante proveer instrucción diseñada para estudiantes bilingües. Si has trabajado con estudiantes bilingües conoces que sus necesidades son diferentes a las de los estudiantes monolingües. La intervención no es una excepción. Las autoras han comprobado este método de intervención y han observado grandes cambios en estudiantes bilingües. La intervención para estudiantes bilingües debe ser específica y debe cumplir los requisitos necesarios para desarrollar la bilingüidad. El Club de Lectura promete ser un método que cumple con estos requisitos.

Este libro provee información específica y detallada para poder implementar esta intervención. También te provee un formato detallado y específico que es fácil de organizar al tiempo de proveer instrucción. Un aspecto positivo acerca de este método es que no estás proveyendo instrucción desconectada al contenido ofrecida en el salón de clases. Esta intervención va en conjunto con el contenido ofrecido. Esto significa que estudiantes no perderán instrucción por motivo de recibir ayuda adicional. Estudiantes bilingües tienen la oportunidad de desarrollarse a la par con sus compañeros monolingües. En fin, este método es ideal para ofrecer las herramientas necesarias para que estudiantes bilingües obtengan éxito en el desarrollo de ambos idiomas.

## References

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