

# An In-Depth Investigation of a Local Bilingual Dual Immersion Program

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# Organization

- Objective of the study
- History of bilingual education in California
- What is a dual-immersion program?
- Characteristics of effective programs based on existing literature
- The dual-immersion program in the city of Seaside
- Analysis
- Suggestions for improvement
- Conclusion



# Objective

- A comprehensive investigation of a local bilingual dual immersion program in the city of Seaside.
- To discover what aspects of the program-- curriculum, personnel, student population, etc.-- contribute to its success, and how our findings can inform the development of similar programs in other areas of Monterey county.



# Bilingual Education in California

- 1967: Governor Ronald Reagan signs SB 53, allowing the use of other languages for instruction in California public schools. This bill overturned the 1872 law requiring English-only instruction.
- 1974: The Chacón-Moscone Bilingual-Bicultural Education Act established transitional bilingual education programs to meet the needs of limited English proficient (LEP) students.
- 1981: Bilingual Education Act strengthened.



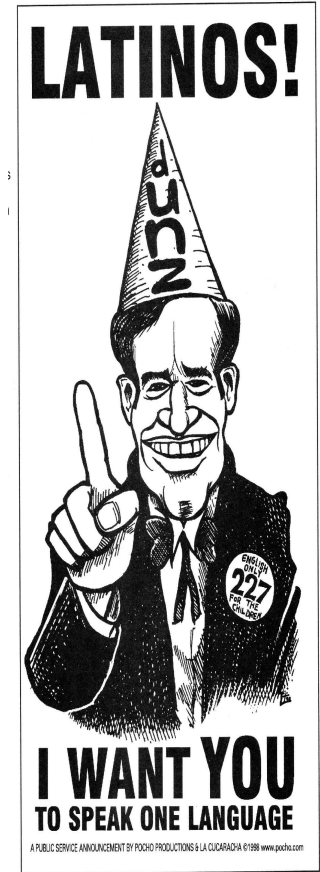
# Bilingual Education in California (cont.)

- 1986: Governor Deukmejian vetoes AB 2813 that would have resulted in bilingual education becoming a law.
- 1998: Governor Pete Wilson vetoes Senate Bill 6. SB 6 contained many of the provisions of the Chacón-Moscone law, but granted flexibility to school districts to use bilingual education or English immersion according to local needs and preferences.
- However, in the late 90s, inspired by the "English Only" movements originating in Florida, a conservative segment of the population and the ruling class begins to fight to abolish bilingual education in the state.



# Proposition 227

- Movement initiated by Ron Keeva Unz
- Requires California public schools to teach LEP students in special classes that are taught nearly all in English.
- Had the effect of eliminating "bilingual" classes in most cases.
- LEP students should move from special classes to regular classes when they have acquired a good working knowledge of English and these special classes should not normally last longer than one year.



# Bilingual Education Programs

- There are different types of bilingual programs, but the most effective are those that promote **additive bilingualism**, whose objective is the development and maintenance two languages, regardless of their status.
- There are several models that foster and develop both languages, but the most successful ones have been **the dual immersion** programs (Field, 2011; Gómez, Freeman, & Freeman, 2005; Quintanar-Sarellana, 2004) .
- This is the type of program on which we focus in this paper.





# Dual Immersion Programs

The main objectives of these programs are:

- To promote the development of majority and minority languages in the same way;
- To develop students' intercultural competence;
- To use two languages as instruction tools for the teaching of academic context;
- To promote the authentic use of both languages for communication (both in and outside the classroom), instruction, and learning.





# Dual Immersion Programs (Cont.)

Characteristics of dual-immersion programs:

- Native speakers of the majority (English) and the minority (Spanish) languages are in a class together;
- The academic content is taught in both English and Spanish;
- The pedagogical materials used are in both languages;
- Teaching can be organized in different ways (e.g., 70-30, 50-50, etc.).



# Characteristics of Effective Dual Immersion Programs

These characteristics are based on previous work in this area (Alanís & Rodríguez, 2008; Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, 2000; Fortune, 2001; Freeman & Freeman, 2001; Genesee, 1999; Gómez, Freeman, & Freeman, 2005; Haddi-Tabassum, 2005; Potowski, 2004; Quintanar-Serellana, 2004):

- Qualified bilingual teachers;
- Collaborative work among instructors;
- Opportunities for professional development and reflective teaching;



# Characteristics of Effective Dual Immersion Programs (Cont.)

- Both languages are given the same importance and are equally used for instruction;
- Use of the minority language for communication beyond the classroom (sociolinguistically authentic use of the language among students) is encouraged and promoted;
- Appropriate academic resources in both languages, particularly in the minority language, are used for instruction;
- Curriculum incorporates cultural content (“weaving multiculturalism into every academic area of the curriculum” [Quintanar-Serellana, 2004, p. 98]);
- Active parent involvement in curricular and extra curricular activities.



# The Present Study

- Focus: A dual immersion K-8 program in a public school in Seaside.
- Case study; Data collected through classroom participant observations (Creswell, 1998) and a semi-structured interview with the school's principal. Three classes were observed: First, fourth, and sixth grades.
- Schools composition:
  - 19 bilingual teachers; students have two teachers: One that teaches in Spanish and one that teaches in English.
  - 50/50 instruction: Half of the day academic instruction is in Spanish and the other half, in English;
  - In each class, half of the students are native speakers of Spanish and the other half are native speakers of English.
- The school belongs to the Monterey Peninsula Unified School District, but the curriculum is different (instruction in both languages);



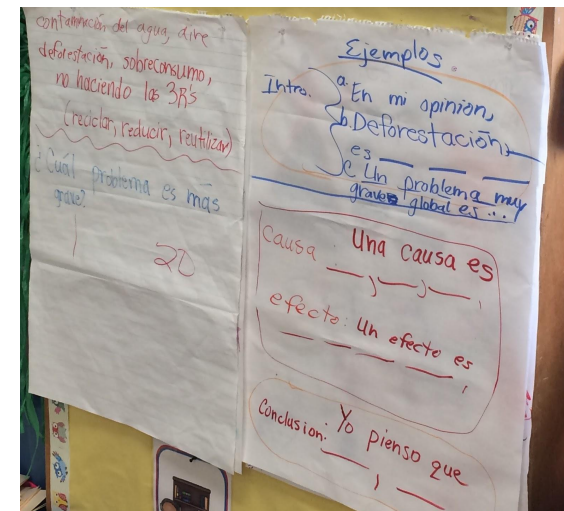
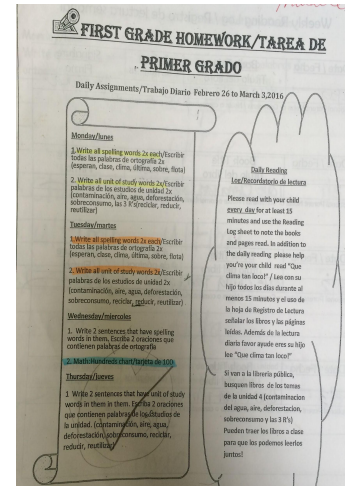
# The Present Study (Cont.)

- Instructors work together in the development of all pedagogical materials and they are compensated for this work;
- Instructors are given opportunities for professional development (the school is affiliated with various bilingual education state and national organizations);
- All school personnel, including the principal, are bilingual;
- Both languages are present in all common areas, but particularly emphasis is placed on Spanish (minority language);
- Instruction promotes learner autonomy and collaboration among students;
- Parents collaborate in curricular activities (e.g., after school homework assistance) and extra curricular clubs/organizations (e.g., chess club, athletics, etc.), as well as on the maintenance of school grounds.



# Classroom Observations: First Grade

- Classroom decorated with students' work and grade appropriate posters in Spanish;
- 25 students working collaboratively in groups of 5 (native speakers of both languages in each group);
- Instruction and discussion were conducted in Spanish:
  - Topic: deforestation;
  - Material:
    - PPT presentation with text and illustrations;
    - Students' worksheet.





# Classroom Observations: First Grade (Cont.)

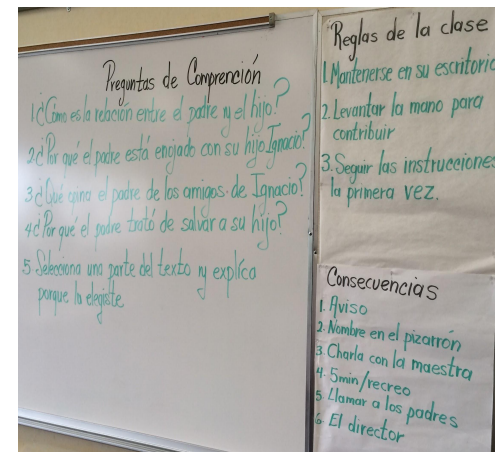
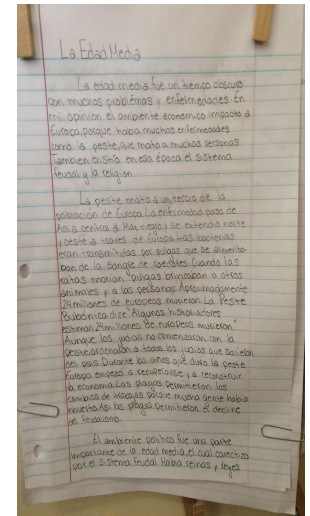
- Teacher would ask questions and a student in each group would be required to answer;
- Instructor encouraged collaboration among students, and she nominated native speakers from both languages to answer her questions;
- When a native speaker of English had difficulties with the language, a native speaker of Spanish would help him/her;
- Help and participation were rewarded with points for the group (regardless of correct answer);
- Among groups, the common language was Spanish, even when students were not discussing academically-related topics;
- The instructor provided scaffolding for the native speakers of English using cognates, and resorting to visual props to ensure comprehension.





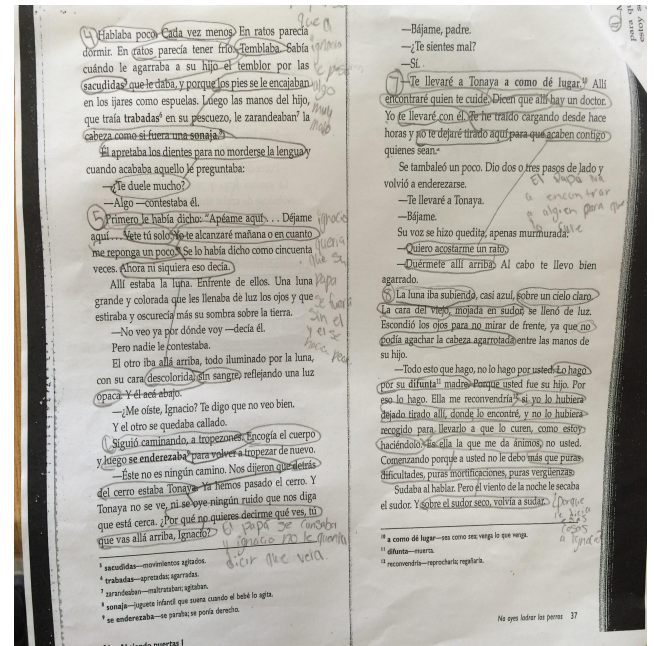
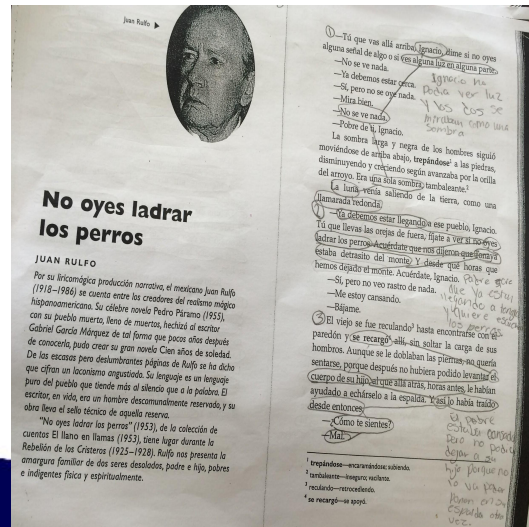
# Classroom Observations: Sixth Grade

- Classroom decorated with students' work and grade appropriate posters in Spanish;
- 25 students working collaboratively in pairs (native speakers of both languages in each group);
- Instruction and discussion were conducted in Spanish:
  - Topic: Discussion of a short story by Mexican author Juan Rulfo;
  - Material:
    - Copies of the story “No oyes ladrar los perros;”
    - Students’ worksheet (questions for analysis).
- Proficiency level: Intermediate high/Advanced low



# Classroom Observations: Sixth Grade (Cont.)

- Students' task was to analyze the story in pairs;
- This was a learner-centered activity: Students were working collaboratively, but independently (from the instructor);
- Among groups, the common language was Spanish, even when students were not discussing academically-related topics;
- Example of students annotated work:



# Analysis

Based on our observations and the interview with the principal, we believe this school reflects most of the characteristics that distinguished successful programs:

- Effective bilingual teachers who can not only use Spanish for instruction, but also promote collaboration and independent work among students;
- Opportunities for reflective and collaborative teaching/materials development activities (for which instructors are compensated);
- Opportunities for professional development;
- The minority language has a strong presence in and outside the classroom, and it is used as means of communication among instructors and students;



# Analysis (Cont.)

- Even though the curriculum follows the district's requirements, it is adapted to be taught in both Spanish and English;
- Thus, the curriculum gives importance to both Spanish and English as tools for the instruction of academic content;
- Some of the academic content is culturally relevant (e.g., Juan Rulfo's story);
- The school offers opportunities for parent involvement and collaboration.
- **But perhaps the most important aspect of this institution is its commitment to additive bilingualism and multiculturalism.**





# Suggestions for Improvement

- In spite of its excellent program, we feel there is always be room for improvement. 😊 For example, more grades could be incorporated to continue with students' bilingual development.
- Also, when it comes to the promotion of multiculturalism, we believe:
  - The cultural content could be stronger in the curriculum (as per our interview with the principal, we believe there is not enough promotion of minority cultures' history, values, etc.). For example, most of the books in the classrooms and library are Spanish translations of English works. Not enough presence of Latino and Hispanic writers.
  - More field trips to culturally-relevant places should be organized;
  - More academic subjects should be taught in Spanish.



# Conclusion

- The school seems to possess most of the characteristics that make a dual-immersion program successful.
- Spanish is alive and thriving at the school, and it is not just used as language of instructions, but also as a means of communication.
- The teachers are highly proficient in both languages, and they also seemed to be cognizant of the latest methodologies in content-based language teaching and learning.
- There seems to be a high level of parent participation.
- This school could offer the template for the development of similar programs in this area.



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Thank you! ¡Gracias!  
Questions? ¿Preguntas?

